

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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15p

REMEMBER TAFF VALE!

DEFEND TRADE
UNION RIGHTS
See page 9



£££ MILLIONS FOR RICH



Financiers' brokers [above] jostle in the Stock Exchange on 23 February to buy lucrative gilt edge issued by the Bank on the previous day. Below: Brighton dustmen's mass picket [26 Feb] at Sheepcote tip: still fighting for £60 a week

While over a million low-paid workers are still refused a minimum wage of £60 a week, rich parasites in the City of London make millions every day. All they have to do is speculate.

A few days ago the Bank of England was the scene of a sensational punch-up between City "gentlemen" scrambling to buy up the latest issue of government stock.

This stock—one means by which the government raises the cash it needs to borrow to pay for public spending—is called "gilt edge"—and for good

By
Eileen Short

reason.

Financiers who managed to buy up some of two new lots of gilt edge up for sale on Thursday 22nd February made a staggering £45 million potential capital gain overnight.

This was the time, remember, when the radio, television and Tory press were going all out to pressurise the public service workers into accepting a totally inadequate 9% or £3.50 a week rise.

Concern for families who have to manage on £50 or even £40 a week, however, was the last thing to hold back the financial sharks pushing and shoving to grab their precious gilt edge.

Gilt edge bought for £15 at the Bank of England on Thursday

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BACK PAGE



Gerry Gilman

COMPARABILITY SWINDLE

Promises of comparability payments in the dim and distant future have rightly failed to convince NUPE workers [and many other public sector workers] that the management's present 9% offer is in any way adequate.

Last week, as 300,000 civil servants took strike action over the implementation of a comparability study, Gerry Gilman, general secretary of

Civil servants' pay action, reports page 14

the Society of Civil and Public Servants, summed up his members' bitter experience of comparability promises:

"More promises of comparability at some time in the future do not pay today's bills.

"In the civil service, we have had government commitments to the principle for twenty-four years; we have a specific agreement that our pay should be fixed by comparability, and yet the government still refuses to implement the results of an independent study.

"The government's refusal so far to implement its comparability agreements with half a million civil servants has wide-ranging implications.

"Over 200,000 government industrial workers are due pay rises in July based on a similar comparability study. The government is seeking to settle with 1½ million local authority and health workers on the basis of a promised comparability study.

"The credibility of the government's promises to these workers is now at stake.

"If they persist in breaking their comparability agreements with civil servants, other workers will draw the conclusion that government promises of comparability in the future are worthless."



Photo: Julian McKirtick/MILITANT

PEANUTS FOR LOW PAID

BRIGHTON WORKERS RESIST POLICE ATTACK

Over a hundred and fifty angry local authority workers in Brighton picketed the Sheepcote tip on Tuesday 27th following a week of police harassment of dustmen. Over forty pickets had been arrested.

The Friday before eight dustmen had been arrested at the tip when police charged a picket of nearly 200 striking council workers. A further 32 were arrested on Monday.

Clashes with the police have become a daily occur-

By Ray Apps
Brighton Labour Party

rence as lorries, escorted by the police, drive convoys through the pickets.

Six hundred council workers are now out on indefinite strike in protest at the Corporation's use of private contractors to clear the town's emergency rubbish tips. From the start of the low pay dispute, dustmen have been prepared to deal with emergencies, including hospitals, but they were not prepared to cross picket lines set up by striking tip attendants.

They reported for duty every day. Gangs were selected by management to clear hospitals, yet at the end of the week only those who had been out on emergency duty received any wages, and then only for the hours spent on that work.

Ray Potts, G&MWU senior steward, told me: "As far as I know, Brighton Council is the only one to take the attitude that refusing to cross a picket

line means you are on strike."

Pickets commented that the presence of TV cameras at the picket line on Monday

NUPE rejects offer, page 2
Public service workers, reports page 3

meant that the police were less heavy-handed than before. After the very rough treatment previously, many pickets had legs black and blue with bruises. Apart from the police action, the workers are angry at the enormous cost of the whole strike-breaking operation. The contractor's lorries each cost £50 a day. They are very inefficient as rubbish is not compressed, so at least four lorries are needed to clear the sites—by which time they are full

again.

Police have been drafted in from all over Sussex—also at considerable cost to the ratepayers—all to prevent workers struggling effectively for a living wage!

Brighton Council's Tory leader has invited the strikers to a meeting today [Tuesday]. Eddie Blake, G&MWU official, told me: "We are going to these talks. But there will be no concessions on the two basic questions: [1] The withdrawal of private contractors [2] The payment of wages owed for last week."

At a Brighton Labour Party meeting on Monday evening, Eddie [who was interviewed in 'Militant' 16 Feb] pointed out the national importance of this dispute and called for full support from all workers. The Labour Party itself showed the way, raising £45 for the strike fund from members present.

Militant

DEVOLUTION

We go to press shortly before the referendums on the Assemblies in Scotland and Wales; by the time of publication, the results will be known, one way or another.

Recognition of the national aspirations of the Welsh and especially the Scottish people are vital democratic reforms. Labour has rightly supported this step forward.

In the cases of both Scotland and Wales big business, who once welcomed the nationalists as a stick to beat Labour, are now fearful of losing its grip on these parts of Britain, and are opposing even the very limited measures of devolution now proposed. The Tories are also afraid of facing permanent Labour majorities in the Assemblies in these overwhelmingly working class and Labour regions.

National aspirations in

Scotland and Wales have come to the fore precisely because they are among the areas which have felt the worst effects of the crisis in British capitalism. They have generally the highest unemployment, the worst conditions, the biggest share of slum housing, and so on.

Nationalist sentiments have also been stimulated in the recent period because of bitter disillusionment among the workers with the failure of successive Labour governments to carry through bold measures to tackle the underlying social and economic problems.

Had the Labour government already carried through a bold socialist transformation, there would not have been a turn to sterile nationalist ideas nor a revival of the nationalist parties.

Nevertheless, given the revival of national aspirations, it is vital that the Labour movement fights to

grant autonomous Assemblies to both Scotland and Wales if there are majorities in favour.

However, it seems that a "Yes" vote is far from being assured in Wales, and even in Scotland, where national demands have been stronger, there is no certainty of 40% of the eligible voters casting a "Yes" vote.

There are several reasons for this.

There are the limitations of the proposed Assemblies. In Wales, the proposed Assembly would be little more than a glorified county council. Although the proposed Scottish Assembly will have more powers, control over industry and finance, the key to any real change, will remain with the Westminster government.

At the same time, although the nationalists may have been pushed into the background by recent industrial struggles which have led to more of a class polarisation politically, the failure of the Labour leaders to campaign for the Assemblies on the basis of a socialist programme has meant a lack of real enthusiasm for the present proposals among the workers.

Disgust among workers with the government's policies, particularly wage restraint and its failure to deal with unemployment, has also temporarily dampened enthusiasm for devolution measures identified with the right-wing Labour leaders.

Many of the more politically conscious workers who correctly reject the nationalistic poison of Plaid Cymru and the SNP are opposed to devolution. But it is vital for the labour movement to recognise the national aspirations of the middle class and sections of the workers to forestall a future revival of nationalism which could become a serious obstacle for the working class.

Even if there is no majority for an Assembly in Wales now, there will be renewed calls for devolution in the future, particularly if a Scottish Assembly becomes an important platform for the labour movement.

To its credit, the Labour Party in Wales and Scotland has fought for a "Yes" vote on an independent Labour basis, and has refused to enter into joint campaigns with either the nationalists or the pro-Assembly Tories.

This is in marked contrast to the police of the so-called Communist Party, which has repeated the disastrous experience of its Common Market campaign when it joined with Tories and other reactionaries in opposing the EEC on a crudely nationalistic basis. In recent weeks, the CP has been rejoicing at being able to share platforms with tartan Tories, and those in the Tory Party who support the Assemblies.

The CP has even condemned the Labour Party as "sectarian" for—rightly—conducting an independent campaign. In doing this, the CP has forgotten the ABCs of the labour movement that only through its own organisations, pursuing its own socialist aims, can Labour achieve any real advance for the working class.

If a majority of those actively voting in Wales and Scotland are in favour of Assemblies, but the 40% quota of eligible voters is not achieved, it is nevertheless essential that the government immediately moves in parliament to carry through the setting up of the Assemblies.

Whatever the present mood, it is by no means

ruled out that, in the future, national sentiments and national demands will not come to the fore again, particularly during the crises and upheavals which will open in the next few years, and particularly if future Labour governments fail to carry through a fundamental socialist change of society.

The Labour Party must therefore exert the maximum pressure on the government to carry the necessary legislation measures through in parliament to establish the Assemblies if there are simple majorities in Scotland and/or Wales.

Labour must fight for the Assemblies in both Wales and Scotland to be given real powers of autonomy, with control over finance and industry.

Finally, in any campaign for Assembly elections, Labour must campaign for a socialist programme—based on nationalisation of the big monopolies and banks with minimum compensation on the basis of need, and a plan of production with workers' control and management of industry—which would go to the roots of the problems facing the working class in Scotland and for Wales.

Militant Readers' Meeting:

IRAN - "LINK WORKERS' AND SOLDIERS' COMMITTEES"

"The Bazargan government is suspended in mid-air... Long ago Engels and Lenin explained that the state is basically armed bodies of men, and in Iran for the moment Bazargan has no force with which to enforce his rule."

"However", Ted Grant declared, the "tragedy of the situation is that in Iran there is no organisation of real Marxists, no Bolshevik Party, which is capable of leading the working class to power."

By Ian Ilett

Ted Grant had opened the 250-strong meeting by showing how the magnificent movement of the young Iranian working class had once again confirmed the decisive role of the working class in the struggle to change society.

These events "completely refuted the idea that the working class was only capable of trade union consciousness, as can be seen as the workers begin to take over factories, oil refineries and demand control over production."

When the Iranian masses began to move, this provoked a crisis within the ruling class and the Shah made limited reforms. In this sense, revolution starts at the top.

In the same way as in the Russian revolution, the working class became the people's battering ram against the dictatorship. The spontaneous three-month general strike, unprecedented in history, showed the key position of the working class.

The victorious insurrection against the Shah's state machine completely refuted the reformists argument that today it is impossible to make a revolution because of the strength of the army. More than ever, the army today is made up of skilled workers, and when they saw that the working class was making a



Ted Grant speaking at the meeting serious challenge to the old order the ranks simply melted away.

Now in Iran, Ted Grant said, the central issue was the need to build committees of workers in the factories, in the localities and especially in the armed forces, linking them together nationally, and electing a central committee in Tehran.

"A Bolshevik Party in Iran would not be demanding a place in Khomeini's Revolutionary Council or in Bazargan's Cabinet but would be saying to the working class 'have no confidence in this government, rely only in your own power and solidarity. Build, extend and link up the committees. A Bolshevik Party would be patiently explaining the necessity for the working class to seize power as the only road to victory.'"

At present, "Large masses still have illusions in the Ayatollah's Islamic Republic, but this will be a capitalist

republic". The working class will begin to organise in trade unions, building its organisations, and in the impending struggles the religious illusions will evaporate."

Ted concluded by saying that the "revolution will be long, and protracted over a number of years, because of the strength of the Iranian workers and the slowness with which capitalists will have to move towards reaction. Let us hope that in these years a tendency of genuine Marxists will develop and help prepare the working class for victory."

In the discussion which followed an Iranian comrade from the Campaign Against Repression in Iran (CARI) emphasised the importance of building solidarity with the Iranian struggle in the labour and student movements of the imperialist countries.

Lynn Walsh, assistant Editor of the 'Militant', stressed the enormous historical significance of the events

within Iran. It was a bitter blow to imperialism, which had lost its basis in this key economic and strategic area in a matter of months.

He explained that the events took on a religious guise because of the absence of a revolutionary party and how the political position of the churches is affected by the movement of the masses.

Martin Elvin, an ASLEF train driver, pointed to the impact of these events on the workers in Britain as they watched them on TV. He told the meeting of the comment of a fellow train driver that "it looked so easy the way they cracked. It could happen anywhere in the world, it could happen here."

In closing the meeting Ted Grant pointed to the importance of the national question in Iran and how Lenin's demand for the right of self-determination was a key weapon in the Russian revolution. Marxists must fight in Iran for the unity of the working class, at the same time as defending the democratic rights of the minorities.

The courageous struggle of the Iranian workers was not unique, Ted Grant said: "Chinese workers in 1925-27 and the Spanish workers in July 1936 showed the same bravery, but in both cases the leadership of the labour movement handed power back to the ruling class."

"Civil war is rooted in the situation in Iran; the generals are burning with anger and waiting for their revenge."

The key question now is the creation of a Marxist tendency rooted in the working class, capable of leading the working class step by step to the seizure of power.

"Religion cannot be the liberator of the people, the emancipation of the people is the task of the working class itself."

NUPE REJECTS OFFER

Last week the Executive Council of NUPE rejected the employers' pay offers and overturned the recommendation of the union's negotiators. This decision reflected the feelings of rank-and-file union members who have been on strike since 22nd January in support of their £60 and 35-hour week claim.

The employers' offer—accepted by the negotiators—is only a fraction more than what was on offer before 22nd January. The feelings of NUPE's executive—quite rightly—was that the offer was completely inadequate.

The negotiating team at the three main Whitley Councils—the National Joint Council for Local Authority manual workers, the Ancillary Staffs Council, and the ambulance men's Council—consists almost exclusively of senior full-time union officials. These officials are, in the main, unelected and therefore only indirectly accountable to union members through their union executive councils.

Public service workers will now be demanding that the negotiating teams at these Whitley Councils should consist overwhelmingly of democratically elected rank-and-file union members. In this way, the membership would not be excluded from important negotiations and could keep an important check on their full-time officers.

NUPE members will be rather confused at the contradictory circulars sent to branch secretaries by the union's general secretary. One circular—giving details of the pay offer—said the union's negotiators are recommending acceptance. A second circular—sent on the same day—explained why the Executive Council is recommending rejection of the pay offers.

The press, radio and television, is now predictably

conducting a massive campaign urging public service workers to reject NUPE's advice and to accept the pay offers as the "best available".

Government ministers have clearly been bombarding the union's national officers with threats of an election defeat and the possible return of a Tory government. Such threats, however, should be correctly redirected at right-wing ministers. By standing out against low-paid workers and attempting to preserve a 5% pay policy they are themselves burying the nails into the coffin for the government.

The capitalist political commentators who try to create a division between the 'electorate' and the 'trade unions' are deliberately distorting things. The 12 million trade unionists are the backbone of Labour's electoral support.

The way really to ensure an election victory would be to stand out against the employers and profiteers and meet the just demands of the low paid for a £60 minimum wage and a 35-hour week.

After the key role that he played in launching the union's campaign against low pay, Alan Fisher's expression of disappointment at the Executive's rejection of the offer will have come as a surprise for many NUPE members.

They will have been even more amazed to hear Alan Fisher say on the radio last Sunday that he had considered resigning as general secretary after the Executive's decision. Such a comment is a serious warning as to the pressure brought to bear on union leaders and the extent to which they can become out of touch with their members.

The fight for a decent wage should continue with committees of NUPE and other trade union members who refuse to accept the latest derisory offer.

END LOW PAY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

A demonstration and rally against low pay and unemployment, organised by Manchester Youth Campaign Against Unemployment attracted about 100 people on Saturday. Banners from local Labour Parties, Young Socialists' branches, the Bakers' union and the AUEW Young Workers' Committee were in evidence.

At the rally, Rodney Bickerstaffe (National Officer for Local Authority Workers in NUPE) produced wage slips of public sector workers taking home less than £40. "We're not asking for a place in the sun, just for a window to be knocked into the cell." Mary Abbotts (Rossendale

Trades Council) caught the attention of the audience when she recounted the campaign of her Trades Council against incredibly low wages earned by disabled workers.

They are paid the princely sum of £1.15 a week—and £1 of this is promptly reclaimed by the Local Authority for meals! When the Trades Council lobbied Lancashire County Council about this, they heard a Tory declare that the workers should be happy with what they earned, since they had the opportunity to get out and eat a meal!

Joe Marino (Bakers' Union Executive Committee member) told of an attempt by the Manpower Services Commission to supply cheap labour to

his bakery at £22.50 a week. He didn't see why the bakery bosses should benefit from the scandalous unemployment total.

The Bakers' Union was all in favour of more people being taken on—provided that they became union members and received union rates. Working people had made enough sacrifices, he said; it was time to fight back through the Labour Party and the unions.

Phil Frampton (LPYS National Chairman) pointed out that while British bosses were "the most pampered in Western Europe", receiving £25m a day in government subsidies, they still couldn't provide every worker with a job and a decent wage. As

Malcolm Clark (Moss Side LPYS) argued, the bosses would always try to claw back any concessions won by the workers. Hence the need for a fundamental socialist transformation of society.

Brian Gilmore (NW Region LPYS Committee) closed the rally by urging everyone to step up the battle in the labour movement for socialist policies to end low pay and unemployment forever.

Report by
John Hunt

(Ardwick LPYS)

FASCISTS ATTACK UNION MEMBERS

Press statement by Bristol Royal Infirmary branch T&GWU:

On Thursday 22 February, following a T&GWU branch meeting at Transport House, members of the T&GWU were attacked by four men.

Our members are currently involved in action for a decent living wage, and were described as murderers and scum by the four, who were putting up National Front posters of a racist character.

One of our members had to have hospital treatment following this vicious assault.

The NF is a fascist organisation which uses racism to divide the workers,

but its real aim is to smash the organisations of the trade union and labour movement.

The T&GWU is totally opposed to the anti-trade union NF. We are not prepared to tolerate this kind of thuggery and intimidation against the trade union movement.

The T&GWU Hospital branch intends to raise this issue throughout the local movement.

The matter is also in the hands of our legal advisors and the members involved have made statements to the police.

Such attacks will not go unanswered.

SOUTHAMPTON: A Grim job

I've got here the pay slip for one of my members, who has four kids. He grossed £48.80 for 40 hours. Soon he will be able to claim Family Income Supplement, and rent and rate rebates. This will bring him up to £54 a week.

He was recently unemployed and getting £64.28 a week. He was £10 a week better off on the dole. This isn't unusual. Many of my members take home around £34 for 40 hours. That's why so many people do overtime. Two hours every night and Saturday mornings. Some blokes work a 66-hour week, to survive.

Cremating is a pretty grim job. We do up to 100 cremations a week; at the moment we're averaging 90. In the summer the bodies are often rotting before they go in the furnace. The smell then is terrible, since many coffins are thin and poorly made. You often see the coffin bearers walking with handkerchiefs over their faces.

In the cemeteries we sometimes have to do exhumations. The coffins have collapsed and the bodies are rotting away. Blokes are often sick on the job, and we get no extra money for this.

At the crematorium there is a constant smell of burning meat, and often you get thick black smoke from the furnace everywhere. You have a constant stream of mourners crying and upset. You can cry yourself sometimes, especially when you have to push young kids coffins into the furnace.

After the furnaces have been used, the bones have to be crushed in a special machine. There's bone dust everywhere and you can actually taste the dust.

In the cemeteries, men often work in the rain with no wet weather gear. The turnover of blokes is very high. Many will start one day and not come back the next. At the crematorium, I've been

there 2 3/4 years, and only one bloke and the boss have been there longer.

Andy Montgomery, T&GWU shop steward for Southampton crematorium and cemeteries spoke to Nick Brookes (Southampton CLP)



Leeds UNITY IN ACTION

Unity in action has been the key in Leeds. Joint strike committees have conducted the dispute in each hospital and for the first time have been linked up through a joint meeting of all branch representatives in the city.

It was this body which at its first meeting decided to call out the Leeds General Infirmary for a three day strike. They joined some 200 porters at the city's other massive hospital, St James, where a 24-hour picket was manned for the two week strike.

In the eyes of the membership such action has not finished and a COHSE meeting at the Infirmary (and covering other hospitals) voted unanimously to throw the offer out. Similar votes were taken by NUPE in sections throughout the hospital.

Over 55 people packed into an LPYS meeting to hear a discussion which hammered home the need for the full claim. A union branch secretary stated that things would never be the same in relations with the management, now the unions had fought on this issue they can fight again.

Bitterness and disappointment was spelt out in relation to the role of the labour leaders but the meeting resolved to take the fight of the low paid back into the Labour Party and make it stand by its history and also to fight for its original intention of changing society to a socialist system where a decent living wage and a decent health service will be ours by right.

By Jon Ingham

"WE CAN'T AFFORD TO TRAVEL TO WORK!"

"The original offer was a joke," said Mike French, convenor of the Wandsworth Council Joint Shop Stewards Committee at a trades council public meeting on low pay.

"It meant 60p for some workers per week. Even the current offer of 9% plus, is totally inadequate.

The government's proposals on comparability should be rejected out of hand. How much does a gardener or a laundry worker earn in the private sector?

The unions must stand full square for the £60, and fight for the comparability of two-thirds of average earnings. This would only get them back to 1974!

Alan Elliss, convenor of St Thomas's Hospital, Tooting, spoke for the hospital workers. "Militant action pays, we have increased our member-

ship by 100 at St Thomas's and by 700 in the NUPE branch since the strike started—we have even got the blood bank into the union now, they are new, but they are ready to fight."

Alan showed that the £3.50 on offer was laughable. Half went in deductions—then what about rent increases, and rising prices? There was no way that his members would accept this—they were very angry! Any offer negotiated should be put to the branches to decide.

"Percentages are rubbish, our members are so low paid they can hardly afford to go on strike. Absenteeism is becoming a serious problem, as by Wednesday some of our members cannot even afford to travel to work!"

By Jon Aylett

activity restructured to deal with emergencies only. Workers were angered when the District Administrator told the CSSD (Central Sterile Supply Dept. Staff they were a "bunch of shits". They walked out immediately two days before the other ancillaries.

Also, management on Saturday and Sunday closed casualty "due to short supplies of sterile equipment". The CSSD girls maintained that supplies were adequate and at St Leonards Hospital, one mile up the road, routine operations were proceeding due to stock-piling of sterile equipment!

When CSSD returned to work the following Thursday they were appalled at the filthy state of the department which (as usual) they had left spotlessly clean the previous week. This was due mainly to mess created by voluntary help working in CSSD during the strike.

The CSSD girls, expected to clear up with no extra pay, walked out again in disgust, until further notice. This was despite being the worst paid ancillaries relying solely on their basic with no shift pay or bonuses.

At a stormy mass union meeting it was decided to give financial support and keep the CSSD girls on full pay until the department is fit for them to work again.

By Stella Gibling

(NUPE St Bartholomews Hospital)

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"SHOULD NURSES GO ON STRIKE?"

A 'Militant' pamphlet. (3p plus 7p post and packing. From Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN)

LABOUR PARTY

WORKERS CANDIDATE SELECTED FOR MERSEYSIDE IN EURO-ELECTIONS

By Richard Knight
(Wavertree Labour Party)

The nine Labour Parties which make up Liverpool's European Assembly constituency have voted overwhelmingly to select a candidate standing on a clear socialist programme.

Terry Harrison, of Wavertree CLP, received 65 votes out of a total of 115 cast. A member of the Boilermakers' Society, he must be one of the few non-academics to be selected as a candidate.

Terry has been a member of the Labour Party for 21 years, and has consistently fought for the leaders of the Party to adopt socialist policies. He made a major contribution to the formation and building of the Party's youth section.

Terry went forward as a candidate who totally opposes the Common Market, which has shown itself to be essentially a club for European big business.

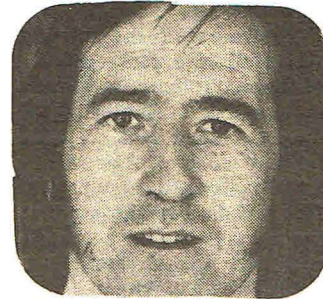
He made it clear that he

stands for socialist internationalism and sees the fight for the creation of a united socialist Europe as vital for workers both in Britain and Europe. "Capitalism will solve none of the problems facing working people in

Britain or other countries in the EEC."

The struggle against unemployment (now over 6 million in the EEC) and for a 35-hour week, says Terry, is a major example of the need for workers, throughout Europe to fight together. The call for a 35-hour week will be at the forefront of the campaign to get Labour's candidate elected for the Liverpool seat.

Within the Labour Party, the issue of accountability of MPs and their salaries is of crucial importance to rank-and-file members. Terry has made it clear that he stands not only for the right of recall over MPs, but also that they should receive no more than the average wage of a skilled worker, with all expenses vetted by the labour movement. Terry has undertaken



Terry Harrison

that, if elected, this would apply to himself.

The selection of a candidate who has consistently fought on a socialist programme will provide the Labour Party in Liverpool with an excellent opportunity to spell out the alternative to the chaos of the capitalist EEC with a fighting socialist policy for the workers of Britain and Europe.

YORKSHIRE LP REGIONAL CONFERENCE 'BREAK WITH GOVERNMENT POLICY'

The majority of resolutions submitted to this year's Yorkshire Regional conference are concerned with improving the living standards of working people.

Such items as child benefits, housing and blind persons' allowances are covered, but most go beyond this to call for a decisive break from the government's present policy.

The biggest number of resolutions on any one subject are on low pay, with all calling for a minimum wage for workers, set by the government.

The ending of pay restraint

is also called for in a resolution from AUEW-TASS.

Many resolutions point to the failure of British capitalism and call for nationalisation. UCATT have a resolution calling for a counter-campaign on the part of the NEC against the propaganda of the Campaign Against Building Industry Nationalisation.

A resolution calling for the revitalisation of the machine-tool industry from Sheffield AUEW has been amended correctly by Bradford AUEW to call first of all for its nationalisation before any revitalisation can occur.

Two resolutions, from Bridlington and York, give a fully rounded-out programme of a socialist planned economy and a resolution from Leeds North East calls for its inclusion in the Labour Party Manifesto.

Party Democracy

Labour Party democracy is also an important issue. It's by no means certain how many of these resolutions will be chopped by the infamous three-year rule which is used increasingly to stifle debate on issues that might be uncomfortable to the government.

Two resolutions call for an ending to this rule—it would be ironic if they were omitted because of that same rule!

Sheffield Brightside call for the NEC to submit details for mandatory re-selection to the 1979 National Conference.

It is certainly true that, in order for the policies outlined to be implemented, part of the fight must be to have democratic control over Labour's parliamentary representatives.

YORKSHIRE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE
'Militant' Public Meeting
'Fight Low Pay'

Speakers: Pat Wall (Shipley CLP)
A COHSE member.
Saturday 3rd March 7.30

Londesborough Hotel, West Street, Bridlington, Yorks.

By Keith Narey

(Delegate to Regional Conference)



Joan Maynard speaking at N Region LPYS Conference

NORTHERN REGION LPYS CONFERENCE

Fight big business vandalism—strengthen the trade unions

The Northern Regional Young Socialists' conference turned out to be a marvellous event. Despite the weather, delegates from 20 branches and a record number of visitors turned out, and demonstrated the real array of talent in the ranks of the LPYS.

The low pay dispute set the tone of the discussions, and the issues arising from this ran like a red thread throughout the whole of the conference.

The infamous remarks of Callaghan about crossing picket lines provoked an angry response from delegates. Joan Maynard MP pointed out in her address that the Labour leaders should be acting on how to strengthen the power of the trade unions, not how to weaken them.

Joan was in favour of no interference with picketing or the closed shop: "The best closed shops are amongst the employers. The Milk Marketing and Wool Boards are classic examples. But the employers don't like the closed shop for workers because it strengthens their position".

Unemployment

The actions of the leaders of our movement will obviously have one effect—to strengthen the demands for re-selection and accountability of representatives in the movement. Again, this was an issue raised insistently throughout the conference.

Unemployment and regional development figured as major issues during the conference. Dave Darling, in

introducing the Regional Committee document on unemployment, gave the example of Sunderland to show the devastating effects of unemployment.

He gave the example of a worker who had suffered a heart attack at work and the next day 14 people applied for his job at the factory gate. As one speaker pointed out. It was the free collective vandalism of big business which was responsible for this sort of situation.

Given that the LPYS branches put into action the decisions taken at the conference there is every possibility of the LPYS gaining further strength and stature in the labour movement.

By Wilf Flynn

(LPYS National Committee)

LPYS Conference 13th - 16th April Blackpool

'MAKE SURE YOU'RE THERE'

By Steve Higham

(NW Regional Committee LPYS)

"I've heard that the political debates are fantastic, the lively social atmosphere only adds to make this a great three days. Everybody's looking forward to going."

In these words Ross McMullen, Southport LPYS and NUSS, summed up the mood of excitement in this area as branch preparations get well under way for the 18th National Labour Party Young Socialists' conference.

Over the past 12 months some two dozen young people have stepped onto the political arena, forming new branches and revitalising others in the process. These first-time conference attendees will benefit enormously from the thorough political debates,

now a traditional feature of our conferences.

This adds to the political understanding not only of the individual members, but also of the branches.

Leaflets advertising the conference have been distributed in most of the branch areas and we will be following them up by visiting the local factories and speaking at trade union meetings.

Days of action have been held in St Helen's and the LPYS conference brochure has been given out to young people who have taken a particular interest. A massive recruitment drive is on the top of the agenda for St Helen's LPYS, so that as many young people as possible can attend the conference and hear a real socialist alternative to the problems facing working class youth in Britain.

The 'Charter for Young Workers' will be used at Bold

colliery and at the glass giant Pilkingtons to attract as many young working people as possible.

Past conferences have been good, recent conferences have been great but the 1979 conference promises to be fantastic. Without complacency, that's the degree of optimism now being demonstrated by the branches. Young workers, school students, and unemployed youth will pack out the Winter Gardens making this the biggest and most successful national event ever staged by the LPYS.

The conference will consolidate the new branches and members in the national work of Labour's youth movement, in preparation for the general election campaign. It will generate the enthusiasm necessary for the busy times that lie ahead. Make sure you're there!

Party needs Youth campaign in election

At the January meeting of Chester-le-Street Constituency Labour Party a motion sponsored by Chester-le-Street LPYS was overwhelmingly carried, calling for the services of Andy Bevan, the Labour Party National Youth Officer, to be used to the full in campaigning for the votes

of youth at the forthcoming general election.

About three million young people will be eligible to vote for the first time in a general election—we stressed the importance these votes could have in securing a Labour victory. There was only one dissenter, who did not speak

in the debate.

Another motion called on the NEC of the Labour Party to release all information held on the right-wing organisation, Truamid.

By W Scott

(Chester-le-Street LPYS)

LEFT & RIGHT

A CLASSIER CUT

Spam is food for fun in 'Monty Python' and elsewhere. Not quite so funny for those who have to work in the meat industry. One of the country's largest Spam manufacturers is the Dewhurst butchery chain, owned by Lord Vestey.

Vestey's fortune is over £200 million. But when one of his butchers retired recently after 60 years 'service', his sole reward was a company tie. Not that the Vestey's are opposed to spending money. Why Lady Vestey has just come back from a 'marvellous' holiday in the Soviet Union.

But perhaps Lord Vestey will best be remembered by workers as the owner of the warehouse, where picketing led to the jailing of five dockers in 1972.

CUT THE LINKS

Everyone in the labour movement claims to be against apartheid. But actions speak louder than words. The Labour government has sent a record number of trade unions to South Africa. Trade between the two countries increased last year by 18%.

And it will continue. The British Ambassador to South Africa told the Port Elizabeth Chamber of Commerce on February 21st that neither country could afford to do without the other.

Black workers in South Africa could well afford to do without apartheid. Instead of economically bolstering up this repressive system, the Labour government should be disengaging from the region.

They could start by nationalising British firms with interests in South Africa. Run under workers control and management these firms could swiftly cut away much of the financial support that keeps the racist regime going.

LIFE ISN'T A GAME

What's in a game? Fed up with playing Monopoly, Cluedo or Diplomacy. Well why not try a new game, just on the market. Only trouble is it's not much fun. It's called 'No Bed, No Job', and is produced by Community Service Volunteers.

'No Bed, No Job' is about how difficult it is for young people to find work or a place to live. Cards are drawn at random, so that the player may find a job only to discover that the only available bed-sits or hostels are miles away. Anyone who has been through that depressing experience will know how true it is. The aim of the game is to show how a job, a place to live and morale are all linked. If one fails, the others may crumble.

And the solution? Well in 'No Bed, No Job' you have to draw a card called 'warmer weather'. Perhaps in real life, socialists might be able to find a more permanent answer than that.

IMMIGRATION X-RAY TESTS

'AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL'

Shortly after the revelations exposing the "virginity tests", it was further disclosed that immigrants were being subjected to dangerous X-ray examinations "to prove their identity". Like gynaecological tests, X-ray examinations are by no means new, but have been part and parcel of the entry procedure for years.

Bone X-rays, allegedly used to determine age, have been described as "notoriously unreliable". But the damages and risks involved in them is not in doubt. They have been condemned by the World Health Organisation for exposing people to "unnecessary radiation risks" and a British radiologist described it as an unethical abuse of medical practice ('Guardian' 8.2.79).

It was reported that one case involved the X-raying of the skull of a woman known to be pregnant, "despite the fact that Department of Health regulations would prevent such a test on pregnant British women, except in cases of absolute medical necessity, because of the danger of an X-ray damaging the unborn baby."

The DHSS code of practice on ionizing radiation says: "Patients exposed to radiation for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes may be subject to some personal hazard, and the direct or indirect irradiation of their gonads may constitute a hazard to future generations."

"Consequently, it is important that only those radiological examinations and treatments that are necessary should be requested. Special precautions should be adopted in the radiography of women known to be pregnant. Only absolutely essential examination should be carried out during pregnancy..."

Yet, such tests, which would never be carried out on a British person, unless it is "absolutely necessary", are indiscriminately employed by the immigration service with callous disregard to the health risks involved. And such tests are not rare, but are used in virtually every case.

These outrageous tests are practised alongside many other repressive measures that are used against black people. Before any black person enters this country, they are subjected to a whole series of gruelling bureaucratic procedures. This was well illustrated in the report compiled by the journalist collective, CIS (Counter Information Services), in association with the Institute of Race Relations.

This report, 'Divided Families', states: "To get an entry certificate the sponsor in this country sends a declaration form to his family who take it to the British Embassy and are given an interview date..."

"Some 15 to 20 documents have to be produced...All members of the family over the age of eight are interviewed separately, and each interview lasts up to six hours. No limits whatever are placed on the questions asked."

A typical version goes like this: How long has your

husband been in the UK? How did he travel? What does he do? Does he send you any money? Where do you live? What is the house built of?

"Four hours later the questions continue. Where do you cook your food? What colour is your goat? Women have been asked meaningless questions like: What is on the left of your house? and questions on the most intimate details of her married life."

"The whole family has to face this interrogation, and any discrepancy in their answers is enough to mean a permanently divided family. The right to live together turns on the precise knowledge of five members of your family as to the colour of the goat."

Harassment

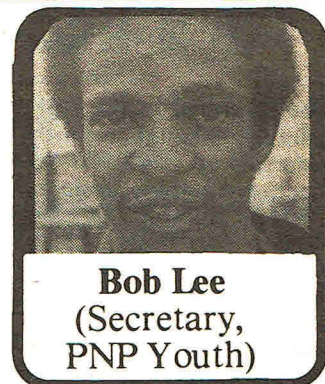
The repression of blacks is equally severe when they arrive and settle in this country (as often reported previously in 'Militant').

Under the immigration laws, every black person is under suspicion as an "illegal" immigrant. The laws which apply in this instance deprive immigrants of all their rights, and are virtually without precedent in English legal history except during war.

Any person suspected of being an "illegal" immigrant can be arrested without a warrant, detained indefinitely and thrown out of the country without even having appeared in any court. And there is no right of appeal.

A 17-year-old Bangladeshi boy was recently detained for 15 weeks and was only released after pressure had been brought to bear on the Home Office. The boy, Abdul Azad, whose mother was murdered, said that he was not fed for the first 24 hours of his detention, he was lifted by his hair, hit by detectives with their elbows and eventually signed a confession because he was frightened.

His case follows the general pattern of many, many others. In the 18 months to



Bob Lee
(Secretary,
PNP Youth)

June 1978, 103 people arrested as illegal immigrants were found not to be so.

All these immigration laws are an attempt to pick on blacks as the most oppressed section of the working class. 'Virginity' and 'X-ray' tests, and the victimisation by the state are a threat to the whole working class.

A divided working class is a weak working class. The capitalist class is attacking the living standards and indeed the rights (e.g. picketing) which the working class have won through painful sacrifice and struggle over generations. In the final analysis, immigration laws are class laws, and therefore the labour movement must mount a genuine campaign around the historic slogan, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

AN UNDECLARED SOCIALIST? Review of Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde is usually remembered as a rather trivial playwright, given to flamboyant dress and clever epigrams such as his definition of fox-hunting—"the unspeakable in full pursuit of the uneatable." Critics tend to 'accidentally' overlook his essay 'The Soul of Man Under Socialism'.

This essay, as you would expect, is both elegant and witty, but it makes a number of serious points which the hired 'literary experts' would sooner keep hidden. It shows a keen insight into the workings of capitalism and the hypocrisy of the ruling class.

The Victorian capitalists tried to salve their consciences over the conditions of the working class through charity, as Wilde explains: "Just as the worst slave-owners were those who were kind to their slaves, and so prevented the horror of the system being realised by those who suffered from it, so, in the present state of things in England, the people who do most harm are those who try to do most good...It is immoral to use private property in order to alleviate the horrible evils that result from the institution of private property."

Along with the charity went moral demands for gratitude, obedience and thrift—"Why should they be grateful for the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table? They should be seated at the board, and are beginning to know it. As for being discontented, a man who would not be discontented with such surroundings would be a perfect brute...Sometimes

the poor are praised for being thrifty. But to recommend thrift to the poor is both grotesque and insulting. It is like advising a man who is starving to eat less."

Wilde also answers the old, old argument that Socialism is hostile to the freedom of the individual.

"Private property has crushed true individualism and set up an individualism that is false. It has debarred the other part of the community from being individual by putting them on the wrong road, and encumbering them. Indeed, so completely has man's personality been absorbed by his possessions that the English law has always treated offences against a man's property with far more severity than offences against his person, and property is still the test of complete citizenship."

Artistic

Thatcher's recent pronouncements on the 'freedom' to cross picket lines show how little has changed since those days—except that we now have 'Labour' leaders to echo the edicts of the ruling class!

Wilde's arguments for the independence of art were particularly prophetic because they foreshadow debates which took place in Russia after the revolution. Lenin and Trotsky opposed censorship of the arts, and argued for freedom of creative expression. Stalin, on the other hand, insisted that "Art should serve the needs of society", which we could translate as "Art should praise

Stalin"—which was the result. The attitude of the Stalinist 'vanguard' on this question is summed up by the attitude of Mao Tse-tung who thought that listening to Beethoven's symphonies led to the restoration of capitalism!

Capitalism separates off an elite group of "artists" who have the time and money to indulge in self-expression. Socialism—while it wouldn't automatically turn everyone into a Wagner or a Flaubert—would use machinery to create the necessary environment for creative work. Capitalism greeted with amused tolerance those romantic writers who harked back to the 'good old days of feudalism'. In the same way, socialism has nothing to fear from artists who wax sentimental about the 'good old days' of low wages and unemployment under capitalism.

The essay is not without its faults. For example, Wilde thought that socialist ideas could only come to the working class from 'outside', but it should be remembered that this was a common opinion even among socialists in that period, and that Wilde did not live to see the Russian revolution which was a living repudiation of that idea.

Wilde was hounded and ultimately imprisoned by the British ruling class. The apparent reason was his alleged sexual conduct, but any worker who reads this essay can have a good guess at the real reason why they hated him so much.

Derek McMillan

THE TORY PUPPETS

Who pulls the string?

The President of the CBI, John Greenhough, recently launched an attack on the finance of trade unions. "We in Britain", he said "are now talking openly about the way strikes are financed." Workers may be more interested in talking about who finances the mouthpieces of the rich, particularly the Tory Party.

The latest available figures show that in 1977 a total of £1,439,594 was donated by various companies to the Tory Party and other right-wing organisations. Of this amount half (£771,038) went to the Tory Party and a further 30 per cent (£452,226) went to the British United Industrialists, which in turn channels its money to the Tories.

But even this is not the complete picture because many firms either do not need to declare political donations in their accounts, or they choose not to do so, using loopholes in the law.

For example, Aims, which is one of the right wing organisations, declared in 1977 an income of £255,534 yet donations declared by various companies only amounted to £30,000. Similarly Angus Maude, deputy Chairman of the Conservative Party recently stated that only 15% of Tory funds came from political donations—which probably means that different channels are used to donate money.

This incidentally means that if the donations of £748,000 to the Conservatives and £450,000 to the British United Industrialists only represented 15% of income



Tory Party Executive members at their 'conference', 1978—but their policy is decided elsewhere

then the total election fund of the Tories would be between £12 million and £15 million.

The telling point in all these figures is that the Tories prefer not to reveal details of their sources of incomes. Could it be that their story of representing the nation would look a little silly?

However, big business also looks after its day to day interests by funding organisations such as the Economic League (£126,959 in donations in 1977—whilst their income was £660,000) and Aims (£30,100). It is these organisations that provide employers with details of trade union and political activists, who they keep extensive records on.

For example in 1977 the Greenwich factory of Rein-

By Dave Cotterill

forcement Steel Services, a subsidiary of the British Steel Corporation went to both the Special Branch and the Economic League for information on workers in that enterprise.

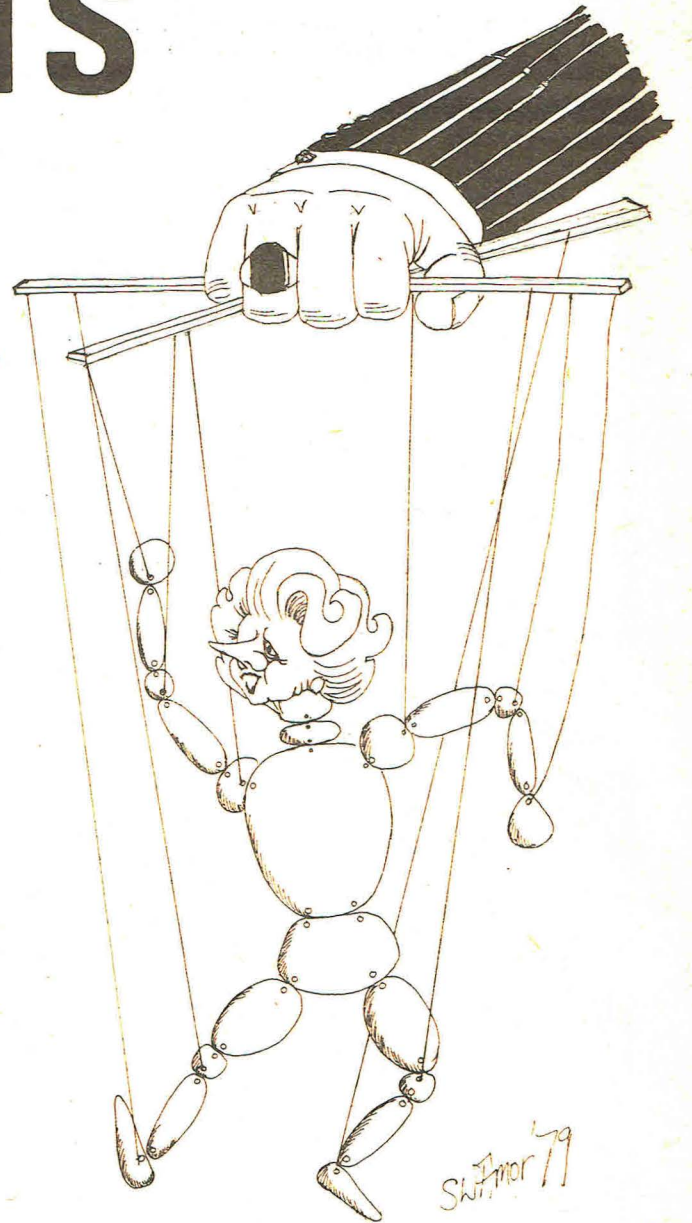
The typical attitude of the employers is summed up by Shell who said of the Economic League "they give us pretty good value. We are interested in identifying overt opponents of the system to which we are committed. The last thing we want to do is to have political subversives on our payroll".

In addition to this service the Economic League organ-

ises lectures at the request of management at work sites, most of which are directed at supervisors and apprentices. An activity which could and should be taken up by the trade union movement.

The donations of big business clearly indicate where their sympathies lie. The myth that the CBI is non-political is also clearly revealed when you study its relationship to these organisations. For instance in 1972, during the miners strike, the CBI circulated its member organisations asking for support for the Economic League and Aims.

This, however, should come as no surprise when you consider that the 'Captains of Industry' are all involved in these organisations. Here



quite clearly is the organisational structure of what Marxists term the ruling class. Through their economic power they pull the purse strings which in turn pull the political puppets in the Tory Party.

So the next time you hear the Tories ranting about compulsory donations from the trade unions to the Labour Party don't forget to ask for a 1p reduction on your bank statement or your bottle of beer or anything else you might wish to buy.

FORBIDDEN RESEARCH

Historians would not seem to be the most dangerous of men. But it obviously depends what they are researching. Emergency plans made during the Second World War are obviously dynamite, if the activities of the Thames Valley police are anything to go by.

According to the latest issue of 'State Research', the police have admitted that a Special Branch Officer interviewed a man researching Emergency Planning in the Reading area under totally false pretences.

Guy Smith had been doing this research for some months during which he had contacted the Thames Valley police for information on their role in the war-time Emergency Planning scheme.

Shortly after he had been refused information because 'internal security' was concerned, Smith was visited at his home by a police officer. The officer said he was from the CID, and that Smith's motor bike was suspected of having been involved in a wages' snatch. The officer then questioned Smith about the work he was doing; who was paying for it, why was he doing it?

Many details about the visit were suspicious. A 125 cc bike is not a usual get-away vehicle. The officer had checked the bike registration

with the Police National Computer, and this was how Smith's address had been found. However, the address at which the bike was registered was a very old one in north-west London, so clearly other checks had been made.

Smith made a strong complaint to the police following this visit. In response he received a letter from the Assistant Chief Constable which admitted first that the officer, Constable Mooney, was in fact working for the Special Branch at the time, not the CID.

Also he admitted that "...Mooney did see you under the pretext of an entirely fictitious matter, and as you say, no such robbery did in fact occur."

While the letter apologised for the way in which the enquiries had been made, it justified Special Branch interest in people working in such fields: "I think it right that police should satisfy themselves of the authenticity and intentions of persons making such enquiries (i.e. into Emergency Planning)."

The question remains. What kind of information was involved? And why should the police be so concerned to hush it up?

TAX BURDEN SHIFTS TO WORKERS

It is unlikely that many 'Militant' readers will have been misled by press stories and Tory Party wailings about taxation. They claim that if only they could reduce the "excessive", "punitive" taxation imposed by a "socialist" government on business interests and wealthy individuals, they could begin to increase investment and take us all towards a level of prosperity similar to that of Japan and Germany etc.

However, before anyone is overcome with sympathy for our betters fallen on hard times they may be interested to note some recent information from Inland Revenue Statistics (HMSO) published in 'New Society' magazine.

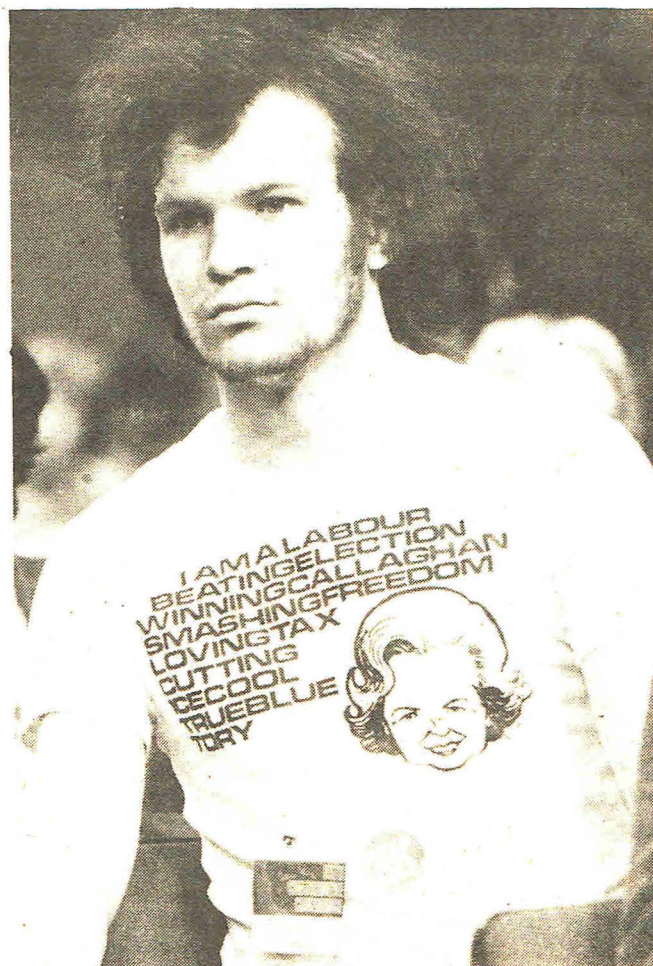
1. Over the last 10 years the burden of direct tax has moved away from companies and the wealthy to income tax payers.

2. In 1968-69 companies paid 21% of direct taxes in Britain. By 1978 this was only 17%.

3. The yield from wealth taxes (Capital Transfer Tax, Estate Duty, etc.) has fallen from 6% in 1968-69 to 1% in 1978. (CTT wasn't introduced until 1975)

4. Meanwhile income tax has grown to 78% of total direct tax from 66% in 1968.

All this is bad enough but there is worse to come. For example, the income tax burden has fallen increasingly heavily upon low paid workers. 600,000 extra low income earners began to pay income



Young Tory 'tax-cutter'

Photo: MILITANT

tax in 1978, while higher rate tax was paid by 300,000 less people than in 1977 (so much for socialist taxation policy!).

If we compare Britain with other countries we find Brit-

ish companies are paying a smaller proportion of total tax than virtually all other capitalist countries (4.7%). In Japan companies pay 39% of total tax. Furthermore overall

taxation in UK has fallen by 3% of GNP since 1970 while in Sweden (up 12%), Finland (up 9%) Switzerland (7%), Norway (7%) it has increased (Economic Trends 302, HMSO).

So why do the Tories moan about "punitive" taxation? Why do they accuse the Labour government of pauperising us all in pursuit of "dogmatic socialism"? Another Thatcher vote catcher?

More likely these spurious complaints are made to mislead workers into accepting pay restraint "for the good of their firms". Also, this sort of attitude leads to a political climate in which even further tax cuts (to benefit business at the cost of public services) can be undertaken.

It also provides a very useful cover for where the money that big business is saving is actually going. It certainly isn't being invested to provide jobs, increase efficiency and improve conditions etc. as the Tories would have us believe it should be. Perhaps it's being spent on luxury goods, exported to tax havens, or spent on private health, education and other perks for the well-off.

So much for the "patriotism" and "Dunkirk spirit" which the Tories so admire in trade unionists but conveniently forget when considering their business backers!

P Higgs
(Whitehaven CLP)

blunders, shortages, capitalist anarchy - but

MANAGEMENT KNOW BEST DON'T THEY?

From our own experiences at work we have found out the truth about capitalist competition: rather than producing cheap, worthwhile goods, it actually brings the opposite with progressively smaller rewards for society as a whole.

For 18 months we at Britten-Norman (Aircraft manufacturers) have been working for a firm in the hands of the receivers. During this period of capitalist turmoil, the work-force has suffered all sorts of setbacks. Because of management's inability this once proud example of free enterprise, with two Queens Awards for Industry has for the umpteenth time fallen into financial ruin and decay.

Whilst the dogs of private ownership scavenged amongst the bones of the Fairey Group of companies which went bust in autumn 1977 (the majority of which was finally sold to the NEB), BN was being offered to any one with the cash to buy it.

It seems this cash was of utmost importance for the Company, otherwise they would have to eventually close. None-the-less the workers have continued to move aircraft out of the hangar doors, despite the lack of the capitalist's magic ingredient: money! So it appears obvious to us that real wealth is the ability to produce with finance being the essence of control over our ability.

The receiver, though, did not want to lay-out any of this all-powerful cash lest any new owner were to gain. Or alternatively, the company folded and he was left with a pile of second-hand components. In consequence he was very reluctant to buy some of the necessary goods to maintain a smooth production service. We subsequently have encountered shortages of many items such as hack-saw blades, skin-clips, quarter and eighth-inch drill bits (there are thousands of eighth-inch holes in an aircraft) and even cleaning cloth; all very essential but unavailable for weeks at a time. How are we, capable as we are, supposed to work efficiently with this sort of mis-management?

Probably the cruelest twist the receiver has been able to administer was over a small boom in orders that management felt they could not overcome with the workforce they

had. In January last year they had made a batch of fitters redundant. Most of them had found jobs in a nearby factory at £8 a week more than here.

Now our management proposed that they should sub-contract these ex-employees to meet the extra work. They expected us to work beside temporary labour on more wages than us. We didn't allow that!

Just one more proof that capitalism cannot be planned. We did however complete the task by taking on a small number of unemployed fitters and by a supreme effort by the workforce in general. Needless to say we never even received a pat on the back!

By Tony Beere (shop steward) and Ron Stringer (health and safety rep.), Britten Norman, Isle of Wight

internationally only by cutting the value of our wages! And the Belgian workers have been punished for having decent wages.

Even with wage labour so cheap this has not encouraged investment. If decent returns are made from restrained wages, the logic of the capitalist seems to be to accept what he is given and not take any

The aircraft in question also had no engines fitted and so was abnormally light. This was because in the past management failed to plan sales with manufacturing levels and over-produced leaving us with a stock of aircraft corroding and engines rusting on the airfield.

Coupled to this there are two types of inhibition to prevent engines corroding. In our case the lower grade with a shorter life was applied presumably because it was cheaper. This proved inadequate for an aircraft left standing outside for such a long time. The engines had to be removed for refurbishing at great expense of money and labour

costs!

The new Managing-Director gave us a pep-talk in which he claimed this could be a picture-book company! We are very sceptical. Our only hope under capitalism of expansion in orders for a long sustained period, without poaching work from other workers, is if governments start to use our product as a war machine!

If we workers had control of the running of our factory, in the midst of a planned economy, we could produce aircraft for useful tasks rather than destroying more workers in the barbaric waste of war.

We could also do away with the need for the layers of bureaucracy that keep the workforce and the materials in the stores separate. If society was producing in abundance, as would be the case under socialism, workers personal demand could easily be fulfilled. Then the goods at our factory needed for production could in the main be left on shelves without fear of petty pilfering.

More than this, most workers at our factory have small tools and gadgets they have made in order to overcome snags on the job, and they co-operate between one-another in order to make each others' jobs a little easier. This could be extended to do away with the mass of waste and errors that occur. But for the moment management know best don't they?

We could easily fill this entire paper with blunders, but that will become more and more irrelevant as workers look to take over the reins in order to keep their jobs. Many raised the question of nationalisation and co-ops when we first went into difficulties 18-months ago. Revolution is becoming an almost common-place word as the pressure builds up!

Rates and mortgages to go up soon as well as petrol. A large pay rise might help but with world inflation set to rise again soon, wage value will be whittled away rapidly.

Then an almost certain clamp-down on wages next year will see the recent industrial struggles pale in comparison. B.N. workers will play their part, just like when a person get impatient and moves aside the person who is struggling over a simple task, so capitalist control and management will be shifted in order that production may be carried out in a sane and unwholesome manner.



Rolls Royce aircraft workers march against redundancy threats in 1976. The crisis goes on...

At B.N we make two aircraft, the Islander and Trislander. However the making of components is now being brought into our factory. We have suffered terrible trouble with templates and tools in our section. These were previously made in the Belgian section, which was part of the B.N. set-up, but that factory is to close because production costs were so dear.

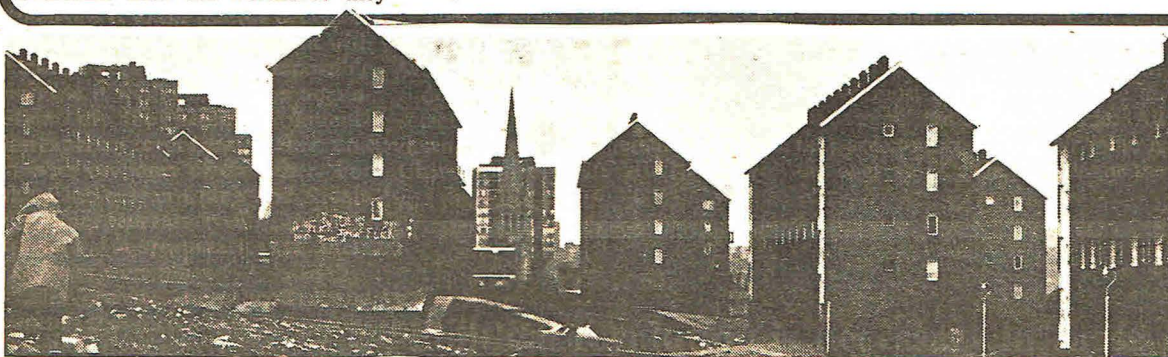
Whilst we in Britain embarked on the Social Contract Belgian workers secured an index-linked scheme to protect wages against inflation. So we have become a bit more competitive with other workers

risk with the capital out-lay, and there has certainly been little risk at B.N. in the past.

To give one example of their penny pinching attitude on capital expenditure. Recently five aircraft were damaged. They had been out on the airfield and instead of securing them to a concreted anchor with cables, they were fixed only by stakes driven into the rain-soaked ground. During the night the wind lifted one of the aircraft off the ground and it bounced across the line of planes before coming to rest, wrecked, on the back of another aircraft!

Despite this we have finally managed to attract a new owner. Pulatis, a Swiss company, are preparing to take full control. Apparently they have been attracted by the low costs, particularly the cheap labour. Perhaps if work is transferred to cheap labour markets like Britain and Ireland, Switzerland and Germany will have more unemployment. Who will we export our goods to then?

Nonetheless, this multinational has taken a step towards monopoly and has two workforces, one in Switzerland, one in Britain, competing over labour costs!



Tories aggravate housing slump

The last few years' cuts in public expenditure are having a disastrous effect on working class families.

Housing starts nationally are at their lowest for ten years, as capital expenditure is slashed. Tory councils, of course, are taking full advantage of this to save money at our expense.

This year one authority, the City of Westminster, is not planning to offer a single home to a family. And another four boroughs will be housing under 100 families from lists of thousands.

Westminster's housing director predicts that the authority's waiting list will climb from 8,300 to 9,500 of whom 4,400 will be people facing considerable hardship.

Other London boroughs with large waiting lists but precious few homes on offer are Kensington and Chelsea, which plans to house 19 families from a list of

6,500; Kingston upon Thames will house 35 families from a list of 2,112; Harrow 93 out of 2,949 and Sutton 88 out of 1,900.

Nationally unemployment amongst building workers stands officially at 11.3%, one in nine. The figure is probably really far higher. The Merseyside unemployment rate for building workers is more than 23%!

Building workers on the dole. Families homeless. What could be crazier? The only thing preventing a solution of these problems is the existence of capitalism.

The private building companies' profits depend on shortages. The banks and finance houses cream off enormous interest from council housing (see 'Militant' February 23rd). And crisis-ridden capitalism demands cutbacks in public spending!

Yet another reason for workers to fight for the quick demise of this despicable system.

A DAUGHTER OF THE REVOLUTION?

Let's face it. Lord Lambton is not chiefly known among the great British newspaper-reading public as the author of erudite treatises upon academic political theory in general, or upon the thoughts of nineteenth century Russian revolutionaries in particular.

Not to put too fine a point upon it, Lord Lambton rose from the obscurity he so richly deserves chiefly by disporting himself with high-class prostitutes. His mistake was to be caught out. We had hoped that the noble Lord would be decent enough to go away and bury himself.

But up he pops, bold as brass, in the 'Evening Standard' to tell us about the "Daughter of the

Revolution" who succeeds to the mantle of Alexander Herzen and Mikhail Bakunin—both revolutionaries against the Tsar and lifelong fighters for freedom.

In the opinion of Lord Lambton the new enemy of freedom is the state (and not bastions of privilege like the institution of the peerage) and freedom's new champion is... Margaret Thatcher!

Of course there may be some superficial similarities—perhaps Mrs Thatcher is growing a beard? Workers might notice some others. Bakunin was the father of anarchism. One of his favourite sayings was, "The passion for destruction is a creative passion."

LONDON LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE



Last year's London LP Conference

Photo: Mark Rusher/IFL

The resolutions submitted show that the mood of the delegates is one of anger at the reactionary policies pursued by the Tory GLC during the last two years. There is also fierce criticism of the failure of the Labour government to implement socialist policies.

The subject which attracts the largest number of resolutions is housing. The housing policies of the Greater London area are immense.

Many London boroughs have waiting lists of more than 10,000 families. 35,000 dwellings are officially classified as unfit for human habitation.

It is estimated that at the present rate of house improvements the number of dwellings with less than 15 years of useful life by 1981 will be 203,000—double the 1967 figure.

Large areas of the capital city which could be developed for new housing and industry—notably the 5,000 acres of Docklands—lie derelict, and hundreds of square miles are subject to inner city decay.

Young people and childless couples stand practically no chance of housing unless they can afford to buy—and house prices have shot up by 25% in the last year.

The Tory GLC's response to these problems has been to drastically reduce the house building programme, run down its direct labour force, and sell off council houses by the thousand. Tory leader Horace Cutler has publicly stated that the GLC should "get out of housing".

Cutler, who recently made over a million pounds' profit for himself in a single land deal outside London, has launched a "sale of the century" of council houses. The Tories plan to sell 10,000 by April 1979, and are already well on the way to this target.

£250,000 of public money has been spent on TV and newspaper advertising to try to promote these sales. £2¼ million is being spent on engaging outside staff—solicitors, estate agents etc.—to push the programme. Just as serious as the

FIGHT TORIES WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES

By David White

David White is a councillor on Croydon Council and prospective Labour Parliamentary candidate for Croydon Central. He is a member of the Regional Executive of the Greater London Labour Party

number of homes being sold is the fact that they are the best of the housing stock—nearly all houses with gardens which many a family living in a tower block would dearly love to transfer to.

Houses are being sold not only to sitting tenants but also on the open market.

By December 1977, 2,512 GLC homes were being held empty pending sale. They are left empty on average for 5-6 months, and this has already cost £1 million in terms of lost rent, security charges and lost rates.

The GLC Tories are also trying to transfer their existing estates to the borough councils. This would be disastrous as it would reduce the prospects of mobility for families who wish to move from high-rise accommodation to the houses with gardens which are mainly located in the Outer London boroughs.

The GLC is likely to start building only 1,000 new homes in the current year, 1978/79. This compares with an average of 5,000 a year during the 1973-77 Labour administration, though even this figure was woefully inadequate.

Tory sales

The extreme right-wing Thatcherite policies of most Tory Outer London boroughs are adding to the problems. In my own borough of Croydon, for example, the Tory council is selling far more houses than it is

building. In addition it is evicting people for so-called "under-occupation" after the death of their parents.

Some families have become so desperate after years of languishing on the housing waiting list that they have squatted in empty council property. The response of the council has been to use the Labour government's Criminal Trespass law to get them out.

The main housing composite resolution at this weekend's Conference asserts "the fundamental right of all citizens to a decent standard of housing." It calls for a massive increase in resources devoted to housing, and a campaign including the following demands:

- ★ The Secretary of State to issue a new circular to stop the sale of council housing and building for sale
 - ★ A massive increase in house building and to better standards
 - ★ The municipalisation of all rentable housing stock and requisitioning of properties empty for more than six months
 - ★ Nationalisation of the construction and building supplies industries under workers' control and management
 - ★ Nationalisation of the land
- It is clear that the housing problems of Greater London will not be solved until socialist policies are pursued both at local and at national level.

Another key debate at the Conference will be on racialism. At the GLC elections in

1977 Nazi-type parties won 120,000 votes. By the time of the London borough elections a year later this figure had been cut by nearly two-thirds.

However, there is no cause for complacency. Following their electoral setbacks, National Front members are turning increasingly to physical violence against members of the immigrant communities. There have been a large number of attacks by racist thugs on immigrants in the streets of London over the last year.

The resolutions on racialism at the Conference unfortunately make no reference to the crucial need for active mobilisation by the labour movement against the racists.

However, the main resolution does correctly point out that "racialism breeds on slum housing, bad living conditions, and unemployment, which are the products of the capitalist system." It calls for a campaign to combat racialism through a socialist programme.

All the major problems of the big cities—racialism, bad housing, inadequate public transport and health services, inner city decay and the decline of industry and jobs—have as their root cause the capitalist system under which we live.

Capitalism puts profit before the needs of the people. London Labour this weekend must point clearly in the direction of socialist solutions.

The main motion before the Annual Meeting on unemployment (composite D) not only puts forward a fighting programme to attack unemployment but also spells out the alternative socialist policies which the Labour government must follow if it is to be re-elected and act in the interests of working people.

In this year of elections it is vital that London Labour adds its weight to the campaign for the labour

WHY WE ARE STANDING

CLPs, Group 2
Bob Labi
Hampstead CLP
[sitting member]

'Militant' supporters stand for Executive



We are standing for election to the London Regional Executive of the Labour Party in order to campaign for clear socialist policies and for greater democracy within the Labour Party.

1979 is undoubtedly a crucial year for the Labour Party. Faced with the threat of the return of a Tory government and further attacks on the living standards of working people, we believe it is vital that our party adopts a clear socialist programme.

We are seeking election to fight for a 35-hour week, an end to all wage restraint, reversal of all public expenditure cuts, a minimum wage of £70, and the implementation of Clause IV part 4 of the LP constitution to enable the drawing up of a socialist plan of production.

We are also seeking election to campaign for greater democracy within our Party. More control needs to be exercised by Party activists over Party leaders. We stand for all CLPs to have the right of recall over Labour MPs and for mandatory re-selection.

If elected we will campaign to get the NEC to allow the issue of re-selection to be debated again at the Annual Conference. For too long members of the Parliamentary Labour Party have in many cases been totally out of touch with the problems faced by working people.

We stand for all Labour MPs to take no more than the average wage of a skilled worker, plus expenses to be vetted by the party, with any surplus to be donated back to the labour movement.

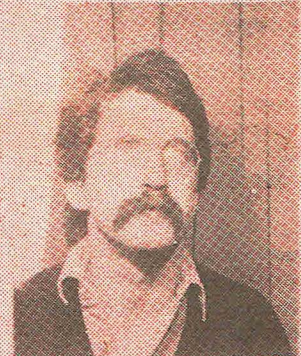
We also stand for Conference decisions to be binding on the PLP and for the election of the Party leader to be at annual conference. The leader of the GLC Labour Group must be elected at regional Party conference.

These are the policies which will enable the Labour Party to defeat the Tories and open the way to the building of a socialist society. We therefore appeal to CLPs to support us in seeking election to the executive.

CLPs, Group 4:



Nick Bradley
Deptford CLP



Eddie McParland
Greenwich CLP



David White
Croydon Central CLP
[sitting member]

movement to adopt and fight on a bold socialist programme.

A clear call from this Annual Meeting and the next Executive for a sharp change

of course by the government before it is too late would find an immediate response and effectively help to mobilise support against the Tories.

London Labour Party Conference MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING 'DEFEAT THE TORIES'

Speakers: Bob Labi [GLLP Regional Executive]
David White [PPC Croydon Central]
Chairman: Nick Bradley [Delegate Deptford CLP]

12.45 pm, Saturday 3rd March,
Council Chamber, Camden Town Hall

YORKSHIRE REGIONAL CONFERENCE, see page 4

THE BATTLE FOR TRADE UNION RIGHTS

By Lynn Walsh

The success of the pickets and the power of the local strike committees in the recent lorry drivers' strike provoked howls of outrage from the bosses and the Tories.

Once again, the Tories are calling for new laws to fetter trade union organisation, particularly to undermine the closed shop and curb effective picketing.

They are terrified by the strength and confidence of the organised workers.

Unfortunately, these attacks on trade union rights have been echoed by the Labour leaders themselves. Jim Callaghan and other ministers have openly encouraged workers to cross picket lines in the public service workers' strike.

Some of our leaders, it seems, have forgotten the fundamental principles on which the trade union movement was built. They have also forgotten that the Labour Party itself grew out of the fight to defend and extend trade union rights.

In the last decade of the 19th Century and the first few years of this—the period in which the foundations of the workers' mass organisations were laid down—herculean battles were fought out on some of the basic issues which have been brought to the fore once again.

In the boom period of the 1870s and '80s the capitalist class was obliged to allow a slight increase in the share of the wealth going to certain relatively privileged sections of the workers.

After a struggle on the part of skilled workers the bosses had to concede a number of basic trade union rights to this minority.

Later, however, when the great mass of semi-skilled and unskilled workers began to organise, it was a different question. The awakening of the workers who bore the brunt of the system, down-trodden and living in grinding poverty, was symbolised by the East End match girls' strike and then the great dock strike of 1889.

As always, when crisis heightened the social tension, the benign liberal mask slipped and the rulers revealed their naked class face. The 1871 and 1875 Trade Union Acts had established the minimum rights necessary for trade unions to function, immunity from liability to damages arising from strikes, and the right to organise strikes and picketing.

But when the aroused masses of unskilled workers began to use these rights the



Ben Tillet, the dockers' leader, who denounced the judges as "class creatures and instruments for the maladministration of the law."

In spite of—and directly contrary to—existing trade union law, the courts in the 1890s upheld the employers' interests against the workers' rights. Consult any authoritative textbook of trade union law and you will quickly find that the overwhelming majority of cases show judges interpreting trade union statutes — by narrowing, bending and outright contradiction—to curb the rights of trade unionists and enhance the bosses' power.

When on behalf of the dockers he denounced the courts as "creatures of corruption" and the judges as "class creatures and instruments for the maladministration of the law", Ben Tillet was no more than summing up the workers' actual experience.

Those, like Jim Callaghan and some of the right-wing trade union leaders, who have joined the chorus decrying so-called "secondary" picketing (i.e. effective picketing) have forgotten the ABCs of trade unionism. They are now arguing, even, that shop

the National Union of Gas Workers and General Labourers (1892), for instance, recognised that the "hope of the workers for the future" lay with "that trade unionism which clearly recognises that today there are only two classes, the producing working class and the possessing master class. The interests of these two classes are opposed to each other."

The militants would have agreed with a prominent manager of a gas company who said in a letter to 'The Times' that the employers "are not fighting legitimate trade unionism [meaning "peaceful conciliation] but socialism" (28 November 1897). They saw that when capitalism enters a period of crisis there is no possibility of peaceful conciliation: either the employing class solves its problems at the expense of the working class, or the organised workers change society in the interests of the vast majority.

We must defend ideas of Labour's pioneers

This view was borne out in the 1920s. Following the defeat of the General Strike, the Tory government imposed its notorious Trade Disputes Act (1927)—the most reactionary labour legislation since the infamous Combination Laws of 1799-1800.

The gains of the past were eradicated. General strikes were made illegal; picketing was made almost impossible; wages were approved by which blacklegs could be freely used and unemployed workers be pressurised to scab; civil servants were banned from joining unions; and 'contracting out' of the political levy was replaced by 'contracting in', which was designed to hit at trade union support for the Labour Party.

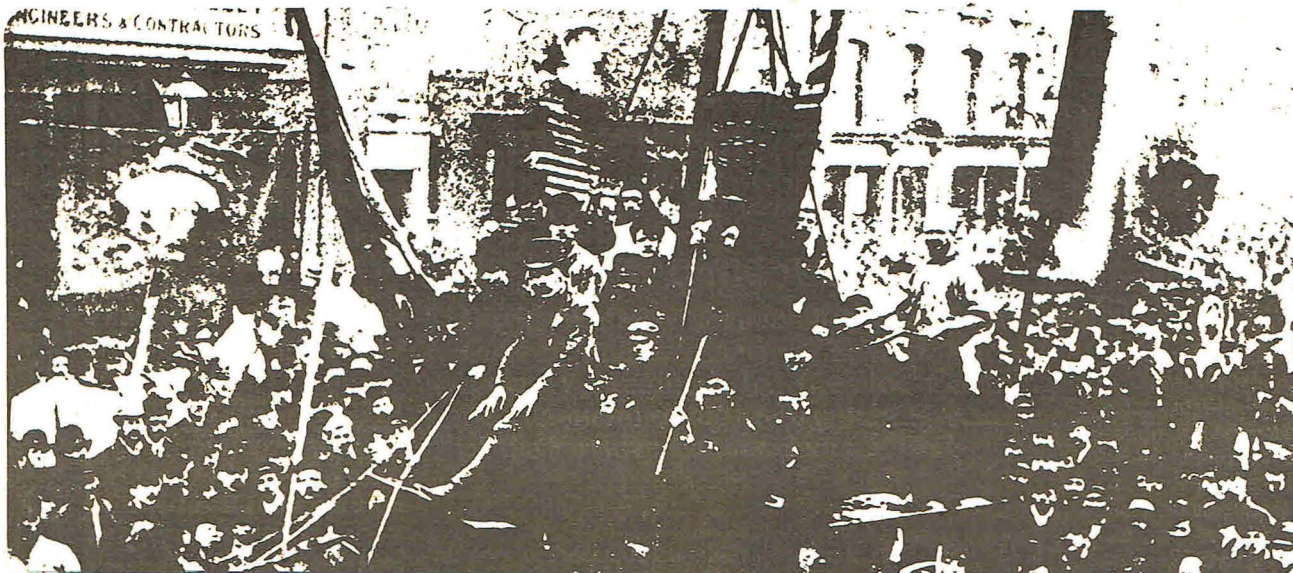
Having broken the power of the unions, the British capitalists proceeded ruthlessly to slash the wages and conditions of the working class.

It was to some of the worst features of the 1927 Act that the Heath government attempted to return with its own anti-trade union legislation in 1971. But despite legal harassment, fines and the jailing of shop stewards, the Tories completely failed to undermine the power of the trade unions.

Whereas the membership of the trade unions was under a million in the 1890s, by the 1970s it had risen to 10 million, and is now over 12 million. With the growth of numbers, moreover, has come an enormous increase in strength and confidence.

It is still the organised strength of the labour movement which stands in the way of the capitalists' plans to restore their profitability through draconian attacks on workers' living standards. Renewed attempts to shackle the unions are inevitable if there is the return of a Tory government.

The answer to this threat must not be retreat and concessions, but the energetic defence of hard-won rights and a return to the socialist ideas of the labour movement's pioneers.



The success of the great dock strike of 1889 led the bosses to try to destroy the trade union rights previously won by the movement

employers launched a determined offensive to smash the unions.

The bosses' direct assault in the factories was accompanied by a series of moves in which they utilised the courts to whittle away trade union rights.

The most notorious action was the 1901 Taff Vale case, which was a serious blow to the labour movement—but which provided a powerful new impulse for action on the political plane.

The House of Lords (as final Court of Appeal) awarded damages and costs of £23,000 to the Taff Vale Railway Co. against the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants following strike action. This completely undermined the 1871 and 1875 Acts. From then on any trade union organising a strike could be liable to crippling damages frustrating further action.

There was also another vital issue at stake.

Right from the time of the dockers' strike, which set a successful example to the rest of the workers, the employers began to make organised attempts to break strikes with scab labour, which they called 'Free Labour'.

Such was the indefensible misery and oppression among the lowest-paid workers revealed by the great dock strike that even the Tory press was constrained to express high-minded sympathy for the strikers' demands.

But sympathy for the exploited went so far and no further: class action to change things was a different matter. The strike, lectured 'The Times' (2 September 1889), "must be conducted with a proper regard for personal freedom."

What 'The Times' really meant was that blackleg labour should not be interfered with. But for unskilled workers, such as dockers, gas workers, tram drivers and labourers, who could easily be replaced at a time of rising unemployment, toleration of scabs would render strike action utterly futile.

The seriousness of the threat posed by blacklegging and the hatred which all organised workers have for scabs, was summed up in the

dividual employees' the courts were providing a cover for the employers, who already had the advantage of being able to starve out strikers, to use all their resources to organise the down-and-outs, thugs and objectionable rags of society, to masquerade as 'free labour' to break strikes.

Needless to say, the scabs, as they do today, had all the protection the police and the troops could provide—which was not always sufficient!

How little have things changed in this respect! When Mrs Thatcher and the Tories champion the "right of individuals to work" and denounce the evils of the closed shop, what are they doing but advocating the right of bosses to break strikes with scab labour?

The Labour Party itself grew out of the fight to defend and extend trade union rights

rules of the Factory Operatives and General Labourers' Union: "All respectable members will avoid living, eating, drinking, working, walking, speaking or in any way encouraging these objectionable rags of society to exist to any extent in our midst."

Under the pretext of protecting the 'freedom of indi-

The bitter struggle of the 1890s also taught the labour movement something about the law and the courts. The old, old claim—echoed unfortunately by the labour leaders—that the law is impartial and protects alike the rights of Capital and Labour has no historical justification at all.

The pioneers who led the struggle to organise the unskilled and semi-skilled workers understood that it was not simply a question of gradually improving wages and conditions. The rules of



THE BUREAUCRATIC ROAD TO CONFLICT

The invasion of Vietnam by an estimated 100,000 Chinese troops, has provoked headlines and front page articles throughout the capitalist world. This invasion follows a whole series of border incidents between Vietnam and China.

This had been provoked by the border clashes between the Vietnamese and Cambodian Stalinists which resulted in the recent Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia in alliance with a section of Cambodian Stalinists.

The Russian bureaucracy which has a defence treaty with Vietnam, has issued threats of intervention if the Chinese invasion does not end and the Chinese troops are not withdrawn. There is a build up of Russian and Chinese troops on their respective borders, especially around Sinkiang.

It is as if the actions of these self-styled 'socialist countries' were especially designed to discredit the ideas of workers' solidarity, socialism and internationalism. The capitalists, their press and media hirelings can hardly conceal their malicious glee.

But class-conscious workers, shop stewards and socialist activists must understand that in reality the rulers of all these "socialist" countries have nothing to do with the struggle for world socialism. What concerns all these gentlemen is not socialism or even state ownership of industry and the means of producing wealth, on which their economies rest, but their own power, privileges, incomes and prestige.

They are forced to defend state ownership and a plan of production because it is on this that their privileges are based. But these countries cannot even begin a transition to socialism until the workers and peasants control industry and the state.

Thus these events indicate the monstrous character of absolutist Stalinist rule. They show that though they are workers' states they are Bonapartist or military police deformed workers' states, which are a caricature of the ideals of socialism and the methods of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky.

Fought American Imperialism

In the conflict with American imperialism Russia and China supported the struggles of the Vietnamese people for national and social liberation. They gave economic and armed aid to the embattled Hanoi regime. The Chinese bureaucracy in particular did not want American troops and bases so near to their borders. It was for this reason that American imperialism did not dare to attack the North with troops, but restricted themselves to aerial bombardment. Any drive to Hanoi would have brought China into the war.

With the collapse of American imperialism, contradictions appeared between the Vietnamese and Chinese Stalinists. The former wanted to dominate the whole of former French Indo China (now Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia). But the Cambodian regime preferred to play off China against Vietnam. In turn the Vietnamese tried to play off the Russian bureaucracy against the

By Ted Grant

Chinese.

This led to tension and friction between former "comrades". In 1974 while Vietnam was preoccupied with defeating American imperialism, the Chinese regime swooped on the Paracel islands, off the coast of Vietnam, but claimed by China. The Paracels are important for their off-shore oil. The Vietnamese bureaucracy began to regard the Chinese population as agents of China. Many were merchants and when their property was seized they tried to flee to China. 200,000 Chinese have either fled or been forced out of Vietnam. Using the mistreatment of the Chinese population as an excuse, the Chinese Stalinists ended all economic aid, withdrew their specialists and economic experts.

The Chinese bureaucracy thus emulated the Russian bureaucracy. When the quarrel between Russian and China broke out the former tore up plans and blue-prints, leaving half-completed factories and machinery in ruins. Such is the malice of affronted bureaucrats and dictatorial upstarts!

The ruling bureaucrats of these countries look at world politics purely from the standpoint of their own vested interests and not what would be most beneficial to the economies and peoples of their countries.

Socialist Federation

If workers' democracies existed then a socialist federation of Vietnam and China would have taken place, to the mutual benefit of the workers and peasants. But with Stalinist regimes this is impossible because it would mean the domination of the stronger national bureaucracy over the weaker and smaller economy of the other. For the same reason China and Russia could not federate even in the days when the bureaucracies of these countries were allies.

The greedy bureaucrats who control these countries are indifferent to the public opinion of the world working class and the world labour movement. They are determined to show their power to their capitalist rivals and to their fellow bureaucrats. World politics for them, as with the capitalist powers, is power politics. Their policy is the opposite of that of Lenin, who throughout his life and especially when in power, saw the Russian revolution as part of the world revolutionary struggle for socialism. Socialism and internationalism were always indivisible.

The elimination of capitalism and landlordism in these countries undoubtedly marked a gigantic step forward for them and for the world working class.

But it is only the first necessary step towards socialism. Because

these were economically backward countries and Stalinist Russia was their model, dictatorial domination by a bureaucratic elite has been established.

They are more progressive than capitalist regimes because the brake on economic and cultural development, which is represented by private ownership of industry and the land, has been broken. But they are only superior to capitalism in this one decisive respect. That is the only thing which they have in common with a genuine workers' democracy. Apart from this they are repulsive Bonapartist or military-police dictatorships.

Both sides are to be condemned as standing for the interests of bureaucratic cliques, not for 'national' or international socialism.

any real explanation. Their "criticisms" have a comical aspect, but nothing in common with a Marxist, materialist approach.

analysis of any war or border incidents. What class interests are involved on either side? If not class interests then what bureaucratic interests?

But how can they ask these fundamental questions when they declare that in all these countries "socialism" has been established? They look at all questions from a purely "national" and not "international" point of view. They, together with the sects, have a middle class or petit-bourgeois point of view.

Bureaucratic 'Prestige'

Lenin always has the criterion of class and international interests as decisive. In this case both sides are to be condemned as standing for the interests of national bureaucratic cliques, not for "national" or international socialism. 'Militant' has not been caught by surprise as have the Stalinists and the sects.

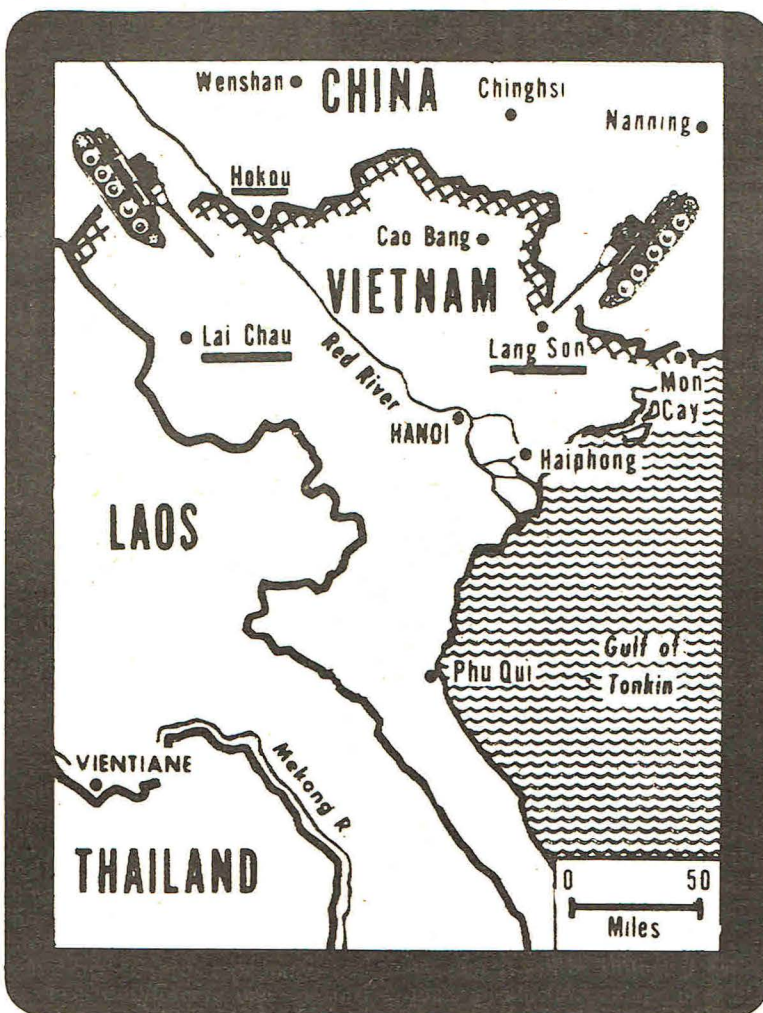
What is really monstrous is that the Chinese Stalinists, unlike the capitalists when they conduct military operations, have precisely no economic or territorial aims in view. It is purely a question of bureaucratic "prestige". They want to "teach the Vietnamese a lesson". So arrogantly do the ruling caste conduct themselves. Not accidentally, Marxism has always taken the maxim of Clausewitz, the great German strategist, that "war is the continuation of politics by other means" as an attitude towards war.

The Chinese, Vietnamese and Russian Stalinists conduct the same vile politics at home as abroad. They sit on the backs of the workers and peasants. Of course the capitalists have an interest in sensationalising these conflicts. There will not be a protracted war. The Chinese will withdraw. After the style of the Mandarin bureaucrats they are interested in recovering "face".

Identical domestic and foreign policy

But the damage will have been done, leading to cynicism on the part of politically backward and even wide layers of advanced workers. However, these events can help to educate wide layers of politically active workers. They will come to understand that political revolution is necessary in these countries in order to establish workers' democracy and to begin the genuine construction of socialism on an international basis.

The spotless banner of Marxism is the international banner of 'Militant'. This will become the banner of the trade union and labour movement on a world scale. The ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky will unite the working class of the whole world.



These events have made the various sects who claim to be Marxists ridiculous in their attitudes. They have nothing to do with scientific socialism. They bowed down before the Vietnamese and Chinese Stalinists uncritically.

The British Communist Party and their paper, 'The Morning Star', together with the Communist Parties of most of the world, have an even more ludicrous attitude. All they are concerned with is "Who is the aggressor?" They condemn the

Political revolution is necessary in these countries in order to establish workers' democracy and to begin the genuine construction of socialism on an international basis.

They claimed, at various times, that the Chinese and Vietnamese regimes were healthy workers' states. They did not understand the dual character of these peasant based (not working class) movements and states. As a consequence when the realities of the situation are revealed through armed clashes they are caught naked and without

Chinese Stalinists while supporting Vietnam. Yet they try to ignore the invasion of Cambodia by the Vietnamese Stalinists!

This was never the attitude of Marx or Lenin. It has nothing to do with the Marxist method. It is like a children's quarrel. Teacher wants to know who hit first!

Marxism begins with a class

COMINTERN / INDIA

60th Anniversary of Comintern

By Jim Chrystie

WORKERS
INTERNATIONALISM

Sixty years ago, on March 6th 1919, the Communist International [Comintern] was founded. Created after the imperialist slaughter of the First World War, the International rejected any form of national chauvinism. In its early years it truly saw itself as internationalist in word and organisation, acting on the basis of being a world Communist movement.

The failure to continue this process is highlighted by the tragedy that six decades after the founding of the Comintern two self-proclaimed 'Socialist' regimes are now at war.

The International itself degenerated with the isolation of the Russian revolution and the coming to power of Stalin and a bureaucratic clique in the Soviet Union. The Communist parties, instead of being geared towards revolution, became frontier guards for the Stalin dictatorship.

Before these developments the International considered itself as the

vanguard of the world-wide working class in battle against capital.

The discussion and manifestos of its first four Congresses are a living indictment of the bureaucratic, nationalist regimes of China, USSR, Cuba, E Europe, SE Asia and parts of Africa which claim to be 'Marxist'.

The following passages are taken from the manifesto of the founding

conference to the Workers of the World.

The manifesto began by stating that the Comintern was building upon the past Internationals and the historical struggle for socialism. It saw nationalism in the Social-Democratic and Labour Parties of the West as being a major danger for the working class.

In its introduction the manifesto stated its aim:

"Our task is to generalize the revolutionary experience of the working class, to purge the movement of the corroding admixture of opportunism and social-patriotism, to unify the efforts of all genuinely revolutionary parties of the world proletariat and thereby facilitate and hasten the victory of the Communist revolution throughout the world."

The Third International, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, recognised that it was not enough to merely proclaim internationalism. Imperialism had fed on national oppression. But the tasks of revolutionary socialists was to hold out the hand of friendship and co-operation to all peoples.

Whilst fighting for the right of self-determination, the Communist International saw the struggle as being to create the basis of a world-wide socialist republic. The USSR as such was established on the basis that other states could join the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

In its first manifesto the International pointed out that capitalism had outgrown the nation state using it as a trampoline for a new leap. But the only way this new imperialism could truly be resisted was by revolution and inter-



1st Congress of the 3rd International. The platform left to right: Klinger, Eberlein, Lenin and Platten

national socialist planning.

The manifesto stated:

"The national state which gave a mighty impulsion to capitalist development has become too narrow for the further development of productive forces. This renders all the more precarious the position of small states, hemmed in by the major powers of Europe and scattered through other sections of the world..."

"The small peoples can be assured the opportunity of free existence only by the proletarian revolution which will free the productive forces of all countries from the tentacles of the national states, unifying the peoples in closest economic collaboration on the basis of a common economic plan, and offering the weakest and smallest people an opportunity of freely and independently directing their national cultural affairs without any detriment to the unified and centralised European and world economy."

The Third International had then an internationalist approach, not by gliding over national and cultural differences, but by seeking to integrate them

in a unified struggle.

The final passage of its first manifesto are a refutation of all those whose horizons and political programmes are limited to 'socialism in one country':

"Bourgeois world order has been sufficiently lashed by Socialist criticism. The task of the International Communist Party consists in overthrowing the world order and erecting in its place the edifice of the socialist order. We summon the working men and women of all countries to unite under the Communist banner which is already the banner of great victories.

"Workers of the world—in the struggle against imperialist barbarism, against monarchy, against the privileged estates, against the bourgeois state and bourgeois property, against all kinds and forms of class or national oppression—Unite!

"Under the banner of Workers' Soviets, under the banner of revolutionary struggle for power and the dictatorship of the proletariat, under the banner of the Third International—Workers of the world unite!"

"I like everything that I've read in 'Solidarity' about the Democrats' split. I believe that we should make the split now and form our own party. I believe that our numbers are large enough that we can make great changes in the unjust parts of the present system."

Don V Edwards
Member, UAW Local 1676
Cleveland, Tenn.

FRANCE

The revolt of French steel workers against redundancies, reported in recent editions of 'Militant', continues. On 16th February in the province of Lorraine, a one-day strike closed factories, mines, shops and blocked local roads to the border.

There were sit-ins at post offices, railway stations and employment bureaus. On 23rd February, the Eiffel Tower, built of Lorraine steel, was occupied.

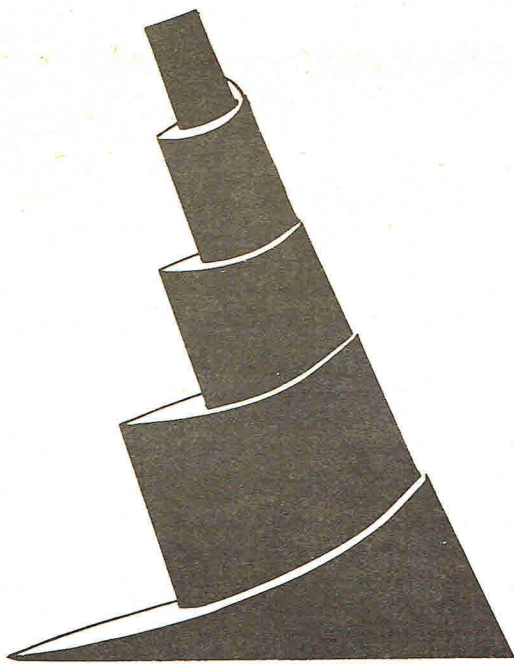
The CGT [Communist-led trade unions] have tried to stir up anti-German hostility, harking back to the Franco-German war and the two World Wars. The workers, though, have seen a different enemy. The local paper in the area received 40,000 replies when it asked for comments on the proposals to sack 28,000 steel workers. None blamed the Germans, but many blamed 'the bosses'. The workers recognise that their enemy is the Thatcher-like policy of the Giscard government. The steelworkers now plan to march on Paris from Lorraine.

INDIA:
Revolt
of the
oppressed

The oppression of the Dalit community in India was sketched out in 'Militant' of 23rd February, 1979. The Dalit people are amongst the most oppressed section of Indian society. It is vital that the socialist movement in India fights with them for change and does not leave them isolated, so that they are prey to the appeals of opportunists such as Mrs Gandhi.

Our correspondent in Bangalore has sent us the following report indicating the growing determination of the Dalit people to fight for a better life.

66 Recently there was a Dalit conference in Kolar. About 3,000 Dalits attended the conference, under the hope that the left-wing policies would free them. But the Communist Party [Marxist], the major left party in Kolar, has a leadership in all districts of middle-class, landlords and bourgeoisie. The left parties have no programme for Dalits and have forgotten their potential revolt in their political strategy. If the left parties in India fail to give any programme to Dalits, then there are chances that some Dalits could drift into the blind road of ultra-leftism or be sucked in by Congress [Indira Gandhi]. We must hope the left parties, especially the Communist Party [Marxist] will realise and recognise the growing power of the Dalits. 99



The Russian Revolution unlocked a wealth of talent, from workers and artists repressed under the old regime. Art reflected the new revolutionary directions. The above tower, Tatlin's Tower, was designed to commemorate the founding of the Communist International

International
Notes

Dissension within the American Democratic Party has revived calls for a Labour Party, independent of both capitalist parties. The United Autoworkers union recently sponsored a Conference to discuss an alternative approach to Carter. This seems to have struck a chord in the thoughts of their members.

The following are two letters in the current edition of 'Solidarity', the Autoworkers Union newspaper.

"I voted for Jimmy Carter, but am disgusted with his and the Democratic Congress' performances in office. Unless Sen. Edward Kennedy, or Jerry Brown, or someone concerned with the plight of the average American is nominated next time, I sure won't make this mistake twice.

Carter says "inflation" is our worst problem. Yet the Federal Reserve Board, whose chairman he named, continues to raise interest rates to astronomical levels. I'd like someone to tell me what is more inflationary than high interest. The bankers, the loan companies and the big companies that do a lot of

credit love it, but it's killing the average person.

Carter says he will have to back off his employment goals because of the fight on inflation. One of his spokesmen on the proposed budget cuts says when it comes down to a choice between guns or butter, it will be guns. The military will get their billions but social programmes will have to take the budget cuts. I think labour should be thinking about a new alliance outside either of the so-called major political parties."

Ted Harris
Member, UAW Local 93
Grandview, Mo.

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

LETTERS

A RIGHT OR A PRIVILEGE?

Dear Comrades

Reading Paul Crane's article in 'Militant' (443) reminded me of when I was at school studying for 'A' levels.

Like Paul I too had to take a job in a night club to carry on with my education. For working from 8 pm to 2 am I received £3 per night, slave labour by anybody's standards.

What is even more disturbing is that recently I was talking to a young lad who works there now. He is only fifteen and he still receives only £3 a night—and I gave up working there over three years ago.

Another friend of mine had to work about four or five nights a week while still in school to keep himself and his family because his parents were divorced, and many others who worked in this night club were in similar situations. Many more friends dropped out of school and tech altogether to get jobs because they couldn't afford

to continue studying.

It is absolutely scandalous that probably thousands of young people find themselves in this situation today, after years of struggle by the labour and trade union movement to secure a free education for all, rather than as the preserve of the rich few.

It is essential that all students in schools, techs, FEs and universities take up the issue of a living grant for all 16-18 year olds in the labour movement and especially inside the NUS, whose present leadership have shown themselves incapable of taking up this demand with the seriousness it deserves. We must also fight for socialist policies within the labour and trade union movement and especially within NUS, so that these demands can be secured and maintained to allow education for all.

Yours fraternally
Ken Smith
Aberystwyth LPYS

The press:

DAVID AND GOLIATH

Dear Comrades

Most readers of the 'Militant' will understand the role and nature of the capitalist press. Common decency and honesty are elements completely foreign to them, particularly when they want to increase their sales.

Take the example of 'Militant's' exclusive [issue 443] on the closure of the Port of Tyne. This material was taken along to 'The Journal' [owned by Thomson Press] together with a copy of the confidential document containing the proposals.

With perhaps a naive trust and honesty the journalist was allowed to copy sections of the document on the understanding that the source of the material, i.e. the 'Militant', was stated in the article. This the journalist promised, and from what we can gather did do.

On the Saturday 'The Journal' appeared with a front-page headline on the proposals—but with no reference to the 'Militant'. The editor had done his work for freedom and democracy.

Later that day Joe Mills, regional Secretary of the T&GWU, who is also a member on the board of the Port of Tyne, issued a denial of the story. In this denial he specifically referred to the "allegations" in the 'Militant'.

This was carried in the journalist's story, but in the 'Evening Chronicle' that night no reference appeared. The editor had been at work again.

Can the press barons and their paid lackeys really fear the 'Militant' that much that they have to censor even a mention of the name of the paper?

Fraternally
Dave Cotterill



Photo: Andrew Ward/Report (II)

On the buses—
8½-DAY WEEK

Dear Comrades

Last week I got what could be called a decent wage. My top-line was £111, but after stoppages I took home £78.

But what did I have to do to get that wage? I had to work what amounted to 8½ days' work in 7 days, i.e. 68 hours. For that I was paid for 91 hours.

This meant getting up at 4.15 am or 5.00 am and getting home at 7.30 pm, just enough time to have some dinner and get to bed early for the next day. I had no time to see my 3-year-old daughter and any chance of a social life you can forget.

And these hours are not uncommon. In my branch of the busworkers, T&GWU 5/42, the average week's work is 6½ days. The basic is so low—86p per hour for a conductor, that we have to work overtime to get a decent wage.

This shows the real need for a good basic of at least £70 a week, and a 35-hour week so that we can all spend time with our families, have a social life, and as importantly, reduce unemployment.

Fraternally
Vincenzo Infantino
Coventry Busworker

The press [2]:

TRIPPING OVER THE FACTS

Dear Comrades

Over the past few weeks the capitalist press have been attacking the health service workers almost non-stop. However Monday's 'Daily Star' contained an inquiry into the state of the NHS, and was forced to face the truth.

The report recognised the poverty wages of the workers. "The plight of the nurses and ancillary workers is particularly bad. Many nurses take home less than £40 a week."

Far from leaving people to die, as the press has made out, NUPE workers "have generally volunteered to keep essential services running."

The article also showed how the cuts have resulted in dangerously low staffing levels and enormously long waiting-lists. "There are 650,000 people in Britain this morning who are waiting to go into hospital. They are the victims of the ailing National Health Service's most crippling malady—a shortage of cash and the trained staff to care for them."

The 'Star' put the blame on the government and especially David Ennals for not putting more money into the NHS. Of course, the inquiry did not

reveal that the government has been forced to make the cuts at the dictates of big business.

All the same, the article showed that when a thorough investigation is carried out the true facts will emerge.

Yours fraternally
Clive Batty
Uxbridge LPYS

The press [3]:

LIES DON'T WASH

Dear Comrades

Like most of its sister papers I suspect, the Coventry 'Evening Telegraph' has been loath to report on the background to the present campaign of low-paid workers.

True to form, there has been extensive press coverage restricted to the effects of the industrial action and the usual crop of outraged editorials.

Last night, seven members of Lower Stoke Ward Labour Party began a follow-up canvass in an area already covered with a recruitment leaflet.

Despite the Torygraph's misrepresentation of the case

Someone told me...

Dear Comrades

Talking to one of the lorry drivers on the Isle of Wight the other day, after they had successfully won their fight for a £65 a week basic wage, he told me of an amusing but nonetheless serious incident that took place when he and his wife were out shopping.

They went into a grocers, the manager of which he knew, and noticed outside an unmarked lorry that he didn't recognise (remember the IOW is a small place and our lorry drivers know virtually every large vehicle on the roads).

While waiting to be served he overheard a remark being made to the manager by the unknown driver to the effect that he had to pay over the sum of £20 to the pickets in order to deliver groceries to the island. My friend's ears naturally pricked up.

"You'd better tell this chap over here" said the manager.

"What's up mate?" asked my friend. The driver repeated his allegation. "Who was the bloke who took the money?" my friend asked.

"Oh! the leader of the strike committee—a fellow called Tony Co... or something" replied the driver. "Coburn! Tony Coburn" suggested my friend. "That's his name" decided the driver.

My friend then offered his assistance in bringing this scoundrel to justice by, first of all, getting him thrown out of his union, out of his job and then taking him to court for the crime he'd committed.

"That's great!" said the driver. "can you really help me to do that?" "Yes" replied my friend authoritatively. "And what's your name?" asked the driver. "Tony Coburn" replied my friend "leader of the strike committee..."

Naturally Tony had a lot more to say, but as readers can imagine it was quite unprintable.

I think you'll agree that it must have been an amusing event to witness but Tony has certainly learnt the depths that those opposing workers will sink to in order to spread dissension in our ranks.

Let's be grateful we've got the 'Militant' to tell us what's really going on in the fight between labour and capital.

Forward to the daily 'Militant'.

Fraternally
Ken Wilson

THE SHOW-STOPPERS

Dear Comrades

Once upon a time there was an all-ticket show at the capitalist theatre seating 600. Mr Monopoly bought 300 of the seats and then distributed 100 of them between government officials, managing directors, armed servicemen, policemen, supervisors and TUC officials.

Mr Monopoly enjoyed spacious surroundings of empty seats protected by the armed forces and policemen. There were then only 300 seats left for 400 members of the working class.

A fierce scramble took place for the remaining seats with some trying to grab two seats for themselves. One of the government officials told the workers that a free-for-all would create a situation where more and more would be deprived of a seat.

A TUC official said, "He is right. If a man grabs one extra seat for himself he deprives a fellow worker of a seat and there are no more seats available." One of the managing directors who ran the Tory press wrote: "Barbarian trade unionists grab all the seats leaving the unemployed and pensioners without a seat. This show was spoilt by these greedy workers."

Indeed it was such a lousy show that there was a riot inside. A 'Militant' supporter proposed that the theatre should be taken over and placed under workers' control, so everyone would get a seat and better shows could be performed. The TUC official declared that such an idea was "utopian."

As things got worse, the theatre outlived its usefulness under the guidance of Mr Monopoly and the élite. Now the capitalist theatre is in danger of ending up with strippers being called in.

The moral—while bosses "steal" they "speak" out against the workers who they rob. We want the theatre!

Fraternally
Bob Young
Scarborough NU

One year since the 16 page paper.... GIVE US A BIRTHDAY PRESENT!

THIS WEEK: £778

Build Militant

Area	Target 52 wks	Target 13 wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,700	1,175		274
Hants & IOW	3,100	775		155
Humberside	2,000	500		110
London North	9,500	2,375		608
London South	3,900	975		358
Manchester & Dist.	4,500	1,125		412
Merseyside	5,000	1,250		291
Midlands East	3,300	825		664
Midlands West	9,000	2,250		629
Northern	5,500	1,375		473
Scotland East	2,900	725		133
Scotland West	4,500	1,125		142
South East	4,500	1,125		396
South West	3,100	775		320
Wales East	2,600	650		36
Wales West	3,400	850		236
Yorkshire	6,800	1,700		384
Others	6,700	1,675		91
Total	85,000	21,250		5,712

Progress towards year's target  Towards April 7th target 
TARGET FOR THE YEAR £85,000 - TARGET FOR APRIL 7th £21,250.

It is now one year since 'Militant' first produced the new 16-page paper. In that twelve months titanic events, not just in Britain, but throughout the world have shown the need for our paper.

A paper which reports events from the viewpoint, not of the capitalist money-bags who defend their ill-gotten gains with lies, but from the viewpoint of the working class. Every reader can help now in building this paper. Help by writing for the paper; help by selling it, and help with cash.

We're half-way through our first quarter of the year. That means we should have reached half of our fighting fund target of £21,250 set for April 7th. But with £5,712 sent in so far, this leaves all of £15,538 to get in 6 weeks! Although this works out at £2,500 per week, it's a lot less daunting if all our readers contribute what they can as soon as they can.

Last year during September and the first two weeks of October, in a terrific response to our appeal, readers pushed the fighting fund total up by £16,100!

With a similar revolutionary attitude on the part of our readers, we can continue to expand and develop our coverage of all the vital events—the public sector workers strike, with engineers and miners' claims to come; the result of the referendum on the Scottish and Welsh assemblies—the EEC elections in June, and behind all of these events the sickness of British capitalism and the frantic efforts of the ruling class to bind our organisations; the trade unions.

International coverage can be improved too. Over the last two to three years, 'Militant' has had a number of international scoops; one of the most memorable being the eye-witness account from Vitoria, northern Spain of the general strike and battles between the workers and the army.

Recently it's been a deliberate policy of the monopolies that run the 'free press' to ignore or play down workers' movements at home and abroad, but in this case the workers were in control of the town and no capitalist journalists could get in or get reports out.

But we had readers amongst the trade unionists there and we were able to print the reports they sent us because they trust 'Militant' as a workers' paper. Your help is vital to maintain and improve our high standards in all these spheres.

This week as well as the donations from Leicester and from the NUPE official (see box) four 'Militant' suppor-

ters from Stirling University Labour Club, G Smith, M Sanderson, C Herriot and Veronica (no surname) sent us between them the magnificent sum of £65. This should be an example to all supporters, whether or not they're students.

That's an attitude taken up by two of our subscribers this week—D Warren (Bethesda, N Wales) sent us £20, and S Lancashire (S London) in renewing his subscription gave us the change from £20!

★ Dave Smith, a NUPE official from Basildon, has donated £10 to the fighting fund. This is his day's pay for January 22nd. Our thanks to Dave, and a reminder to other public sector workers who were paid for the day of action. SUPPORT THE PAPER THAT SUPPORTS YOU.

Tenners also came from P Nelson (EETPU steward, Hull) and a Bradford student.

A first installment of £55 reached us from last week's Readers' meeting on Iran, £6.10 from AUEW supporters in Nottingham at the Alan Smith Group, and £5 from a discussion group in Uxbridge. Moss Side (Manchester) LPYS sent us £5 and nearly £4 came from a meeting on low pay organised by Rochdale LPYS. Pickets at Dunlops [Speke], in the

middle of a tremendous battle have contributed £2, and trade union officials in Hull and N London both sent us £9 expenses. Collections at Labour Clubs in Pirrie (Merseyside) and Kinsley (Scunthorpe) raised £7 and £2 respectively.

Other individual donations included fivers from A Oliver and H Toms (Brentwood), I Nunney (Bedfordshire), Neil (Grimsby), and M Wedderburn (London). J Atkinson (ASTMS Branch Sec. Hull)

contributed £4.47, and J McKenna (Rochdale) £4. M Prendiville (Manchester), T Kaye (Brentwood), and a UCATT steward from Paisley each supported us to the tune of £3, and £2.40 came from J Clark (Maidenhead) and £2 from C Todd (Scunthorpe) and J Smith (Sheffield).

Lots of socials and fund-raising events are going on, and evidently lots of fun is being had by all concerned; for example there's the 'ideologically sound' (we're as-

ured) game of Monopoly (Durham, £11) and catering for the Northern LPYS Regional Conference (£17.25)

ations totalling almost £2 and to S Swinnerton (Chester) for £1.50. Other £1s included one from N Hammond and S

★ £64.64 was collected at a meeting in Leicester for 'Militant' sellers and supporters who heard over the weekend the 'Militant' editor Peter Taaffe discussing the present situation nationally and internationally.

and the High Wycombe meal (£4.50). £4.18 came from the sale of chocolates (York) and a Swansea supporter sold a coat for £5, although we hope not the only one the comrade owned!

An excellent £20 from a social in Thanet obviously was the result of a successful evening, as was £21 from NW London. Sales of photographs of LPYS events left us over £20 better off this week—are there any other amateur photographers? You'd be surprised (or perhaps you wouldn't) how much comrades will pay for snapshots of themselves in demos, with banners or speaking at meetings etc. Send us the proceeds (with a copy for our photo-files if possible) and details of the event, and you might get your face as well as name in this column—who knows?

Thanks this week also to B Brum (N London) for don-

Crome (Scunthorpe), A Cler and K Turner (London), K Corker (Mansfield USDAW), F Perkins (Nottingham), M Middleton (High Wycombe) and R Manser (Paisley).

Comrades, you put us back on target last September—if every area responds to this appeal we'll be able to repeat the process, and improve on it this time around!

'IS INDIA ON THE BRINK?'

By Roger Silverman

Essential, up-to-date information on the developing social and political struggles in India.

New 'Militant' pamphlet 'IRANIAN REVOLUTION'

Reprints of recent articles from 'Militant'. A Marxist analysis of the developments in Iran. Price 5p (+ 5p post and packing). Bulk orders [5 or more] post free. Available from: World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

HACKNEY LPYS DISCO Saturday 3rd March, Hackney Labour and Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E.8. Admission 50p. 7.30 pm-11 pm

Roger MacKay (Ipswich Labour Party, personal capacity)

POLICE PROTECT FASCISTS

The National Front held a meeting at Ipswich Town Hall on Friday 16th February to adopt their parliamentary candidate for the Harwich and Dovercourt constituency!

The meeting was picketed by nearly 100 demonstrators from the Ipswich Labour Party, Trades Council and the Anti-Nazi League.

For the first time the Ipswich Labour Party took an official part in the demonstration, co-ordinating with

the Trades Council and the ANL, and appointing stewards. Previously, it was left to individual members to picket.

The NF arrived and left openly, with police protection. Their coach-load obviously consisted of many people not local, including Martin Webster and London fascists. Clearly, democratic adoption of parliamentary candidates has different meanings to the NF.

The NF deliberately provoked the local labour movement. A contingent of young NF went for a pre-meeting

drink (under police protection) in the pub mostly favoured by Labour Party and Trades Council members at their meetings. A spokesman from the demo wishing to inform the publican of his 'new clientele' was refused entry by the police—for his own safety!

Plainclothes police operated openly amongst the demonstrators, using radios. No doubt the police have been to school recently, with bakers, journalists and lorry drivers' pickets providing plenty of practical lessons.

The incidents surrounding this meeting should cause concern to all members of the labour movement locally and nationally. The actions of the Tories and the police in aiding and abetting the National Front, should be a reminder that the fight against racism can never be divorced from the fight against capitalism. The former is only a servant of the latter.

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

MEETINGS

SCOTTISH Labour Party Conference Militant public meeting 'Which Way Forward for Scottish Labour?' Speakers: Ron Curran (NUPE Scottish National Officer); Bob Wylie (East Kilbride Labour Party). Co-op Lesser Hall, Canal Street, Perth, Saturday 10th March, 6.00 pm

SOUTH WEST Regional Labour Party Conference Militant public meeting 'Socialist Policies for Labour'. Speaker: Robin Clapp (LP Regional Executive Committee, in personal capacity). Chairman: Peter Hammond (delegate and candidate for REC) George Hotel, High Street, Taunton, Saturday 17th March, 1-2.00pm

HARLOW Militant Public Meeting: 'Low Pay in the Public Sector—the way forward for Labour'. Speakers: Bob Ashford (Harlow CPSA); Bob Edwards (Militant supporter, Harlow Labour Party). Chairman: Danny Purton (Harlow Trades Council)

CHESTER-LE-STREET Marxist Discussion Group. Mondays starting at 8 pm. For further details contact Eddie Lowerson, Chester-le-Street 88146

NEWCASTLE Marxist Discussion Group for students and unemployed. Friday afternoons, in Newcastle University. 2 March: 'Cuba'; 9 March: 'Trade Unions on the Shop Floor'; 16 March: 'Spanish Elections'. For further details contact Roy Goodspeed, tel: 748001

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group. Meetings: 14 March: Trotsky's pamphlet 'Transitional Programme'. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365

MORRISTON Marxist Discussion Group meetings: 8 March: 'Keep Thatcher Out!'; 22 March: 'Is Russia Socialist?' Venue: Morriston Public Library, Treherne Road, Morriston. Meetings start 7.30 pm prompt. Contact Swansea 33542 for further details.

WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group. The first Wednesday of every month. Contact Wallsend 687678 for details.

CLASSIFIED

EALING Joint NUPE/Labour Party Young Socialists public meeting: 'End Low Pay Now!' Hear: Bernie Grant (NUPE area organiser) and other speakers; Phil Frampton (National Chairman, LPYS). Prince's Room, Ealing Town Hall, Ealing Broadway, Thursday 8th March, 7.30 pm

SCOTTISH Labour Party Conference LPYS Meeting 'Socialist Policies Now!' Speakers: Willie McKelvie (Prospective Parliamentary candidate, Kilmarnock); Tony Saunois (LPYS rep, Labour Party NEC). Co-op Lesser Hall, Canal Street, Perth, Friday 9th March, 6 pm

LONDON LPYS Darts Match. Saturday 10th March, 'White Swan', New Row Street, Leicester Square, W.C.2. 7.30 pm, 10p. All welcome

MILITANT Northern Camp. May 25-28 (Bank Holiday). For further details contact Richard Knights, 3 Olive Mount Villas, Mill Lane, Liverpool 15. Tel: 051-722 0928

Make June 7th a second referendum! Boycott European elections! Write BEE, 41 St Catherines Road, Norwich NR7 OXR

WEST OF SCOTLAND

On Friday 23rd February there was an almost total shutdown of government offices in the West of Scotland in support of the implementation of the Civil Service wage agreement.

At Prestwick Airport the strike was so effective that only two planes took off all day and massive delays took place.

In Glasgow the National Savings Bank had only 90 staff out of 4,000 in work. No mail went in and canteen staff, members of the T&GWU, stayed out in sympathy. Almost every Social Security and Employment office in the area remained closed, as did the Royal Ordnance factory in Bishopton, Renfrewshire.

In Glasgow, a protest consisting of a march, rally and lobby of Bruce Millan MP, Secretary of State for Scotland, was attended by over a thousand demonstrators. As the march passed the Glasgow Sheriff's Court a great roar went up. The court staff are on indefinite strike over pay.

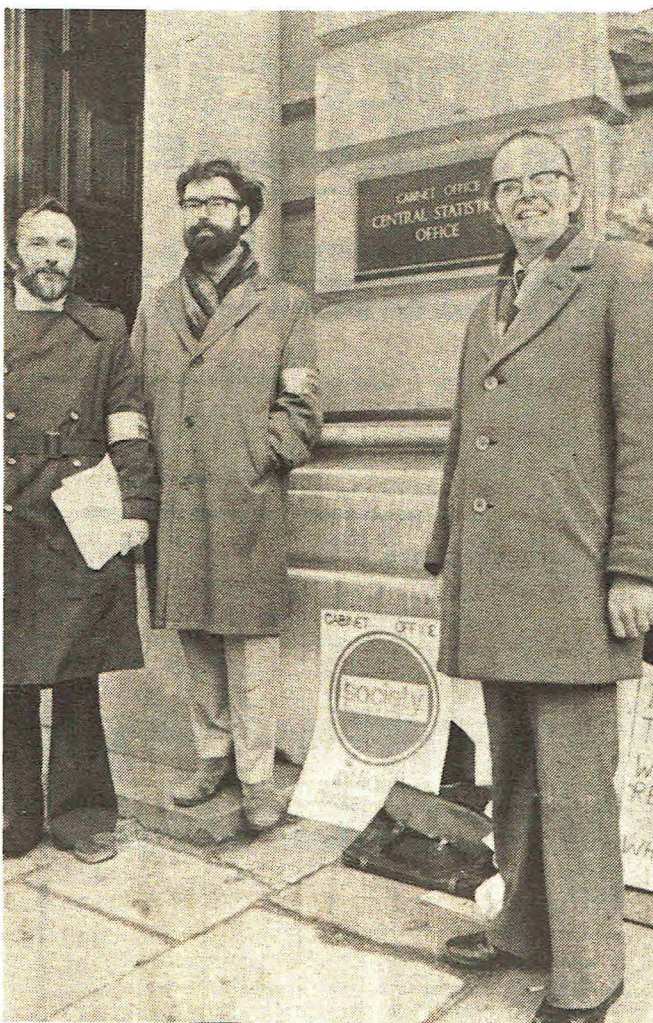
At the meeting Alex McMaster, SCPS NEC, stated that a special section of the Social Security existed to deal with Supplementary Benefit payments—a scandalous situation!

The mood of civil servants is one of grim determination. There is no way CPSA or SCPS members in the area will accept 5% and we intend to step up the action in the next week until an acceptable offer is made.

**By Eddie Phillips
(CPSA DNS BEC)
personal capacity**

CIVIL SERVANTS' STRIKE

CAMPAIGN MAY ESCALATE



SCPS pickets outside the cabinet office, London Photo: MILITANT

Picketing was good in Central London — in Whitehall, Millbank and Victoria — where many civil servants work.

What marred this mass turnout was some cabinet ministers crossing picket lines.

Dr David Owen, Foreign Secretary, strode across a picket line outside the Foreign Office and told pickets: "I have great pleasure in crossing this picket line. This is one of the most irresponsible strikes I have ever seen."

Dr Owen should be called by his local GMC to explain his actions. Many of the Labour government members are completely out of line with ordinary working people.

A meeting was held in Central Hall, Westminster, at 1.15 pm, attended by about 1,500 strikers.

Gerry Gilman, General Secretary of the SCPS and Frank Liddiard, chairman, outlined the main reasons for

the strike and its success nationally.

However, Ken Thomas, CPSA General Secretary and TUC General Council member, who recently signed the minority Prices and Incomes policy document with other 'moderate' TUC leaders, was booed.

He quoted Chambers dictionary and Shakespeare: "You might have thought we were listening to a church sermon rather than in the beginning of a strike."



Ken Thomas at Central Hall

Selective strike action by 2,000 civil servants begins next week in key sensitive areas. This may escalate into a wide-ranging campaign following a letter sent out yesterday by Mr Moseley, of the Civil Service Office.

Mr Moseley says that anyone who does not work normally will be issued with a notice warning that failure to carry out agreed duties will result in them being sent home, unpaid.

Union officials stated: "We are pursuing an official claim and any member penalised for obeying official union instructions could be deemed to have been locked out. This is a blatant threat which will not undermine our campaign."

CPSA and SCPS members selling 'Militant' and distributing a local pay leaflet during the day were well received.

'More and more, civil servants are joining in the fight for our unions to take up a clear, fighting, socialist programme.'

By Philip James CPSA DTI in a personal capacity

HARLOW: 'Efficiency needs better pay'

"It shows how bad the wages are in the DHSS, we had a 50% turnover in staff last year alone," stated an irate Phil Samuels, CPSA member.

"One nineteen-year-old girl got a job up the road, £15 a week more, and it required less qualifications.

"We've closed down all government departments in Harlow; 70% support at the DHSS, 90% at the VAT office; 70% at the DE office."

One manager who felt obliged not to come out is donating his day's pay to the union.

"Just to get some idea how low paid we are, even though the department won't give figures, we've estimated that 10% of the staff in the DHSS qualify for FIS. How ridiculous to do a full week's work and have to boost your income with a supplement."

There were large numbers of young workers on the

picket. Sue Carter spelt out how elated she was that the strike had so much support.

Many school leavers with academic qualifications were forced to take employment in the civil service, but spent time looking for alternative employment.

Bob Ashford, one of the strike organisers, said that they had lobbied Stan Newens, MP for Harlow. He was sympathetic to the civil servants' claim, but concerned about the effect on claimants.

"It's the claimants who suffer from an understaffed department—often one worker is doing two jobs. We can't give the service that we'd like under such conditions.

"Only when we get proper salary levels will there be a stable service that's required."

"Our action won't affect the unemployed or claimants; our extended action is against the government, by closing down essential computers. The government's income is going to come to a halt."



working in the union

This week Gerry Lerner, AUEW-TASS, explains the problems which forced him and other newly-organised apprentices to form a union apprentices' committee, linked to the union's factory committee, to take up the special problems of the apprentices.

If you want to comment on this or on your own trade union experiences, past or present, write to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

The technical apprentices in the Autumn 1967 intake joined DATA after one of us was sacked for failing his exams at technical college. Joining the union was a big step for us—but not so big when we realised that 90% of the technical apprentices were not members.

Soon we were all transferred from the training school to different departments in the main factory to continue our training. While in the training school our subs had been collected regularly and we were able to take up any problem we had with the union rep who came to collect subs.

When we were dispersed into the factory the union apprentices were swamped by non-union members. Those who had not developed strong loyalty to the union began to lapse back into the general mood that unions were not really needed until we were 21.

A minority tried to recruit others but it was an uphill battle, which was not helped by a training scheme which moved us from department to department every few months. Subs arrears built up as the union collector couldn't keep track of us, and only the most committed took the trouble to seek him out to pay regularly.

We proposed that a union apprentices' committee be set up, to keep in touch with the subs and see that the subs were collected. This was agreed in principle—but with only a

small minority of apprentices in the union it didn't get off the ground. This state of affairs seemed destined to continue indefinitely. But outside events ensured a sharp turn in our affairs.

In 1969 the craft apprenticeship was reduced from five to four years in a new national agreement with the manual workers' unions. This resulted in the differential between craft and technical apprentices being stood on its head.

Overnight, technical apprentices who had shown no interest in our arguments were suddenly demanding that 'their' union also negotiate a four-year apprenticeship. No one even suggested that the management 'Apprentices' Association' could do a thing for them.

In one sense the arguments and discussions we had in the past trying to persuade them to join had been a preparation for this time. The 'nons' turned to the union members for an explanation and advice. Through the adult union committee we convened an open recruitment meeting at which a good three-quarters of all the technical apprentices turned up.

All those present joined and we elected, there and then, an apprentices committee. I was elected to be apprentices' rep on the adult union committee.

**Goodyear, Drumchapel
NO TO REDUNDANCIES**

The Chairman of Goodyear Tyre Company, Westi Hanson, has led an attack on the 680 workers at the company's factory at Drumchapel, Glasgow.

The press has portrayed Hanson as the heartbroken capitalist who has made every effort to keep the plant open, while accusing workers of industrial suicide.

'Militant' talked to Eddie Duffy, T&GWU convenor, and other stewards about the threatened redundancies.

The trade unions will resist any attempts at closure. We have an agreement with the management on working a 14-hour shift system giving an average 36.5-hour week. Now management want to introduce Friday night shifts.

We are opposed to this as it would mean longer hours and jobs lost for some members.

The trade unions have put proposals to management on how to increase production without increasing the work-

ing week. Machines are often idle which could be used to increase production.

The rubber industry is in a slump—do you think the company is using this issue as an excuse to close the factory?

Yes. We believe this has been the case all along.

Nationalisation of the rubber industry is definitely the best thing for the industry. The more workers' control the better.



'Heartbroken' Westi Hanson announcing the closure

Messages of support to Dan McGuire [branch chairman], T&GWU Goodyear, Drumchapel, Glasgow.

SUSSEX

Littlehampton, Bognor and Worthing branches of the CPSA and SCPS were out in force on Friday February 23rd in support of the call for a national one-day stoppage.

Littlehampton DHSS office was closed completely and over 60% of the workforce at the other two offices either refused to cross the picket lines or didn't turn up for work.

A spokesman echoed the warnings of 'Militant' when she said: "Members are turning their frustration and anger towards Jim Callaghan. If he continues to make anti-union and anti-working class statements he will undoubtedly seal Labour's fate at the next general election."

Over 150 civil servants from the Department of Health and Social Services, Inland Revenue and other departments attended a mass meeting in Worthing during the one-day strike.

The atmosphere was serious. The members were determined to achieve their full pay entitlement. They rejected the "staging" deal which the government was offering as a means of reducing the pay award.

The two speakers at the rally were Mrs Vera Harvey, Vice President of the SCPS, and John Macreadie, Assistant Secretary of the CPSA. Vera Harvey thanked the members for attending and spelt out the case of the civil servants.

John Macreadie attacked the government for their hypocritical claim that it was the unions who were not honouring an agreement. He pointed out that if they had agreed to stand by the Pay Research Comparability agreement then there would have been no industrial action.

He referred to the comment of the 'Financial Times' that civil servants needed a 14.5% pay increase to restore their living standards and contrasted this to the £312 millions profits made by Barclays Bank in the last year.

An indication of the resolve of the members in this area was the number of questions on the strategy adopted by the unions. Members wanted to know whether—if the present strategy proved incapable of shifting the government—the unions would escalate the action to ensure a speedy victory.

FIGHT STEEL CLOSURES

-say Bilston workers

JOBS WARFARE

John Booth and Graham Howe, T&GWU; Frank Robinson, UCATT; Graham Fazey and Dennis Turner, ISTC, on the Bilston Union Liaison Committee, give their views on the closure:

If the battle here is not won it will be half-lost elsewhere. It is disgusting in this day and age that men and women should be subjected to psychological warfare.

Prince Charles' statement on the bosses could be lined up against BSC management. The Sally army is run better than BSC.

Two years have been spent destroying plant by industrial sabotage. All profitable sections moved away to Sheffield and two other areas, £¾ million spent on a press to straighten a product unique to Bilston. Now they want to sacrifice even that, although it has only just been commissioned.

£2 million spent on a new steel terminal due to open in April 1978, and now it will probably never be opened.

BSC would make a bigger profit if they made mothballs.

The industry's run by a load of Tories. The people who run it believe in denationalisation. We would like to see the removal of the present management structure.

BSC—Billy Smart's Circus.

In the Wolverhampton Borough, which includes Bilston, there are 8,700 unemployed. 1,700 are under 20 years old.

Over the last ten years, with union co-operation, 1,000 jobs have been lost at Bilston steel works.

But the era of moderate acquiescence has now passed. Bilston is the first of the non-Beswick plants to be threatened.

At Shelton, East Moors and other plants, BSC have put men outside the gate before negotiating. This will not happen at Bilston. The lessons have been learnt.

When management attempted to shut down one of the open hearth furnaces, authority passed to the workers. Even under the threat of the sack and other forms of intimidation, the men worked on it

themselves.

Counting wives and children 7,000 of Bilston's 35,000 population would be directly affected if Bilston closed.

The exploratory talks between stewards from all unions and plants in Bilston on Sunday February 25th must lay the basis for a united steelworkers' struggle against all threatened closures.

- ★ No redundancies—no closures!
- ★ For a one-day national strike and lobby of Parliament!
- ★ Build a national shop stewards' combine committee!
- ★ An all-out strike if closures are attempted!

SABOTAGE

BSC are slowly trying to choke the life out of Bilston steel works. Dennis Turner, one of the leaders of Bilston's Joint Union Liaison Committee to save the works talked to 'Militant'.

This is a classic case of industrial sabotage. There's no reason at all for closure.

The effect on Bilston, Coseley and Wolverhampton would be devastating if the works were shut.

Charles Villiers asked his management team to offer up plants for closure as part of their cost savings. 12 plants have already closed with 19,000 jobs lost. Now Bilston becomes the next sacrificial lamb.

We are calling for an independent inquiry made up of three trade union and three

management nominees, with an independent chairman. The inquiry report should be binding on both sides.

At the moment BSC will not entertain an inquiry.

BSC estimate that they would save £10 million if Bilston was shut down, but profits have been made since nationalisation.

Because BSC is the largest local employer leaving aside the local authority, £28 million would be lost to the West Midlands' economy if we were shut down.

We have a versatile plant;

even Charles Villiers said Bilston was profitable, and that the right type of product was produced, which maintained customer satisfaction.

We have two of the finest pieces of equipment, the blast furnace and the rolling mills. We produce products not achieved elsewhere, such as 350 mm jumbo rounds, which defeats the argument that the plant is obsolete.

A total halt needs to be called to all the closures. Thousands of Scottish families were drawn south to Corby. Now BSC want to replace a community with steel from Ravenscraig (Scotland).

New markets and international trade are necessary. Far more public accountability is required.



Corby steel workers—now they face a battle for their jobs too

INTERVIEWS BY BRIAN DEBUS & COLIN HOLLAND

NEXT WEEK: Corby—steel town or ghost town? Special two page feature

RAILWORKERS

A UNITED FIGHT FOR LIVING WAGE

The second hearing of the Railway Staffs National Tribunal (RSNT) took place on 13th and 14th February, to reconsider the three railway unions' and British Rail management's arguments in relation to the ASLEF claim for a 10% increase in the basic pay of all locomen on British Rail, in recognition of increased productivity and responsibility.

It is the result of the last RSNT's totally unacceptable decision, and the ensuing strike action, official and unofficial, by ASLEF members opposed to it.

Several hundred locomen crowded in to hear the

arguments put, although many quite rightly question what good a further tribunal will do, and prefer to depend on their own industrial muscle.

Ray Buckton, putting ASLEF's case, made it clear that locomen wanted their past efforts recognised, at the same time clearly stating that the Tribunal's award, giving a bonus payment on a day-by-day basis to selected locomen, was not acceptable.

Such divisive schemes would never be accepted by locomen.

Sid Weighell, for the NUR put forward a scheme of "classification" to solve the present dispute, although he does accept that locomen will never have it. He stated, with TSSA, that if locomen get any across-the-board pay rise, they would likewise demand a rise.

The Tribunal's previous

award was, in the view of the British Rail Board, "too generous". They stated that increased payments would only be in return for improved productivity. Rail unions could not justify protection of jobs which, claimed the management, were no longer required.

The BRB admitted that a total of 12,000 jobs had been lost on the railway in 1976-77, adding that "past history of productivity improvements is impressive." But still, they said, "more remains to be done."

A number of very important questions of concern to all railway workers arise from the Tribunal and this dispute.

Locomen should be most concerned at ASLEF leaders' failure, at the tribunal and elsewhere, to make any clear statement of opposition to BRB's plan to cut manning levels and conditions of service.

Despite the hostile attitude and partisan position of the NUR and TSSA leadership towards ASLEF's just claim, the ASLEF leaders who pose

the NUR as the main enemy, are also wrong.

The NUR and TSSA leadership should come alongside us and mobilise the undoubted power of their membership for the claim now.

Sid Weighell's stated opposition to further cuts in manning levels is a very welcome step in the right direction. However sceptical railway workers may be, they must now ensure that these words are transformed into action to protect every job. We ignore BR's job threats at our peril.

Now that we have gone this far, ASLEF members must ensure that our leadership is forced to lead the fight for the full claim with no strings attached.

The strike action planned by Southern Region and London Transport members from 21st February has only been suspended, pending the outcome of the Tribunal. If it is unduly delayed, or ignores our claim, the action will be back on.

In the meantime, a mass lobby of ASLEF Head Office by members from all regions and London Transport is to take place on 6th and 20th March. A maximum turnout from every branch is essential.

British Rail management are determined to slash jobs and keep pay low. The three rail unions must be united in the coming annual pay claim.

A minimum wage of £70, a substantial pay rise for all railway workers, with pro-

vision for differentials, a shorter working week, longer holidays and better enhanced rates are the demands we must fight for.

A united approach is needed against redundancies and loss of jobs.

Such a programme would open the door to the coming together of all three railway unions. That doesn't mean every worker joining one of the existing unions, or ASLEF being swallowed up into NUR.

What is needed is a genuine amalgamation of the three unions to fight for a common programme, under a leadership democratically elected from the ranks of active railworkers, a leadership prepared to listen to the membership and fight on their behalf.

Mass lobby ASLEF HQ 6th and 20th March, 10.30, Arkwright Road, Hampstead, London N.W.3.

By Martin Elvin (Stratford ASLEF)

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IRISH POST OFFICE WORKERS FIGHT LOW PAY

By Mick Corbin
 (Dublin Postal Outdoor branch committee member, personal capacity)

In Ireland, the Post Office Workers' Union has launched its first all-out strike in 50 years. Dublin's General Post Office in O'Connell Street has been closed for the first time on a working day since the Easter Rising of 1916.

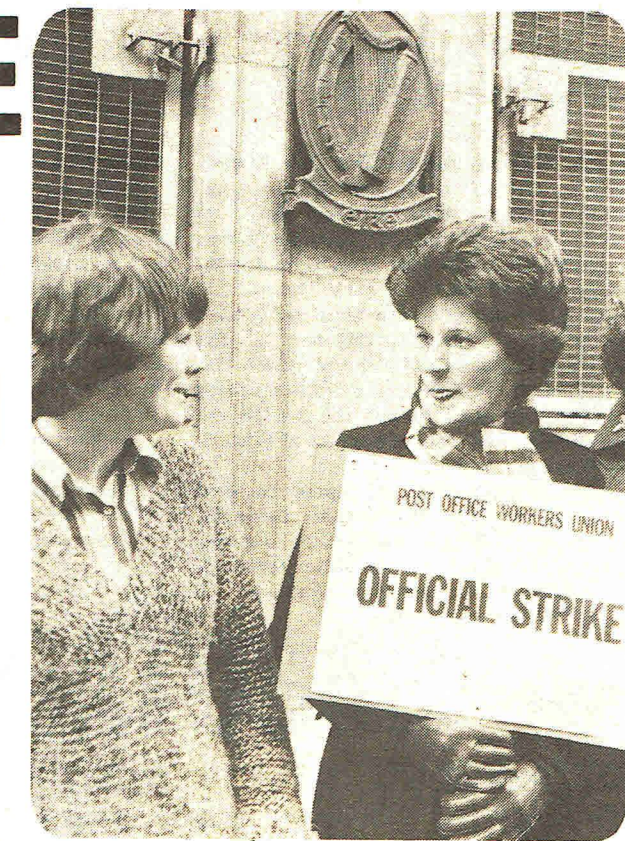
Representing 13,000 telephonists, and clerical postmen, sorters, tele-

Office, the Union began its week-long strike on 18 February.

The week's stoppage, which is to be followed by a series of two-day regional stoppages, is in pursuit of a claim for a 30-37% rise in wages.

Wages in the Post Office are low. They have fallen behind other sections over the past years of wage restraint. A postman's wages are between £35 and £50 take home, depending on age.

Due to this low pay, most are forced to work long hours of overtime to get anywhere near a decent wage. Younger workers earn even less be-



POWU telephonists picket telephone exchange
 Photo: Derek Spiers/IFL

cause of their age and are caught in the snare of Postmen have to work unsociable hours as part of overtime from the minute their normal day. Starting times are from 5 and 6 in the

morning, 3 in the afternoon or 11.30pm on the night shift.

Some work split shifts, which means a working day that starts at 6 am and does not finish till 6 pm or later. After 40 years of this, you can retire on half of your wages. Not surprisingly, many stay on after they reach retiring age.

The strike has had an immediate effect.

It has crystallised the feeling of frustration and anger among trade union members into a mood of determination to win the claim.

Facing the strike is the Fianna Fail government, which is showing itself to be one of the most anti-trade union and anti-working class governments in the history of the state. They would see a victory of the union as a major setback for their plans to cut public spending and hold down wages.

For this reason the Post Office workers must have the wholehearted support of every union in the country. A victory for these workers will be an inspiration to all other low-paid workers.



St Barts workers vote for strike action
 Photo: MILITANT

MILLIONS FOR THE RICH

continued from page one

could be sold at the Stock Exchange for £18 on Friday.

Why? Because the interest rate is well over 14%. And the rate is fixed until the stock is redeemable in 2003 or 2005.

So despite the fact that interest rates may fall—which the speculators expect—the government will be paying out a handsome 14% plus to the speculators for the next 26 years—at our expense.

No wonder the sharks who failed to buy stock before closing time were incensed! They had missed out on the sale of the century.

But in the City, no one is allowed to suffer too much. To cool boiling tempers, the banks and stockbrokers who act as buyers for the finance capitalists paid out a cool £1 million as 'compensation' to clients for whom they had been unable to buy the profitable new stock.

Big businessmen and their Tory spokesman never stop denouncing 'wasteful' public expenditure—by which they mean spending on hospitals, schools, and essential services for the workers.

But while perpetually be-

moaning the size of the national debt [the vast accumulated debts resulting from government borrowing over the years], the parasitic financial capitalists never refuse the fabulous profits that come from the government raising loans on the open money market.

This is the brutal anarchy of the capitalist market! The financing of government depends not on planning, but on the blind conflict and the capitalist's greed for profit.

For them it is like a game of roulette, with fabulously high stakes—but fixed so they can never lose. If interest rates were too low, they just don't buy the gilt edge. But when the rates go up, they make a killing.

The government is currently issuing about £5,000 millions of gilt edge a year. The interest rates are now among the highest in the industrialised world.

In the recent period, the potential profits from government loan stock has drawn in £1,000 million of investment from overseas investors who want a share of the action.

Last year, the government paid out at least £7,000

million to investors in interest payments on the total government debt. This is the equivalent of at least £10 a week for every family in Britain.

Yet we are told that the 'country' [i.e. in reality, big business] cannot afford to concede a minimum wage of £60 a week for all workers!

It is time to end this obscene madness!

The only way to achieve improvements for the working class is to break the stranglehold of big business and the financial parasites. Write off the national debt! Let the speculators sing for their unearned, undeserved income!

Nationalise the banks, finance houses, and insurance companies, with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need!

Take over the handful of big monopolies that dominate the economy, and run them under workers' control and management!

Then—and only then—would it be possible to abolish capitalist waste and open up the planned development of production in the interests of the working class and society as a whole.

PPCs QUESTION LEADERSHIP

A meeting of Prospective Parliamentary Candidates was held in London last weekend, attended by Party leaders, including Jim Callaghan and Dennis Healey.

Many Party activists are preparing for the election and demanding that policy as decided by conference be included in the Manifesto.

Unfortunately, as was made clear at this "consultative meeting", leaders of the Parliamentary Labour Party have very different ideas. Rather than seeing it as the role of Labour governments to lead the way in transforming society, Callaghan argued: "We manage the economy better than the

labour movement. The Prime Minister commented: "I don't agree that the Labour Party is the political wing of the trade

unions."

Claims were made during the meeting that during 1978 living standards had risen, and Healey warned that a "tough Budget" would be presented.


If the party is to fight on the policies decided at Annual Conference, rather than those of the Parliamentary leadership, then clearly much more pressure must be put on the NEC to fight for conference decisions to be included in the Manifesto.

By a 'Militant' reporter

Tories." Tinker with capitalism, but make no attempt to change it!

Unemployment as a burning issue to Merseyside in particular was raised by one candidate who called for a "35-hour week and more public ownership to fight redundancies." However, in one of his contributions, the Party leader said: "We must not assume that every time a factory closes down we must rush to its defence."

Jim Callaghan questioned the whole base of the Labour Party when answering one candidate who condemned "Cabinet Ministers who seem to take pleasure in crossing picket lines" and pointed to the fact that the Labour Party is the political wing of the



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