

Militant

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15p

WORKERS MARCH TO SAVE JOBS

By Bob Wade

Corby will become the 'Jarrow of the 1980s' if the bosses have their way and close down the steel works, slashing 7,500 jobs and killing of a whole community.

Last week, in an event reminiscent of the Jarrow marches of the 1930s, steel workers set out on a 100 mile protest march from Corby to London.

The Corby marchers have shown their determination not to join the 18,700 steel workers who have already lost their jobs in the past 18 months.

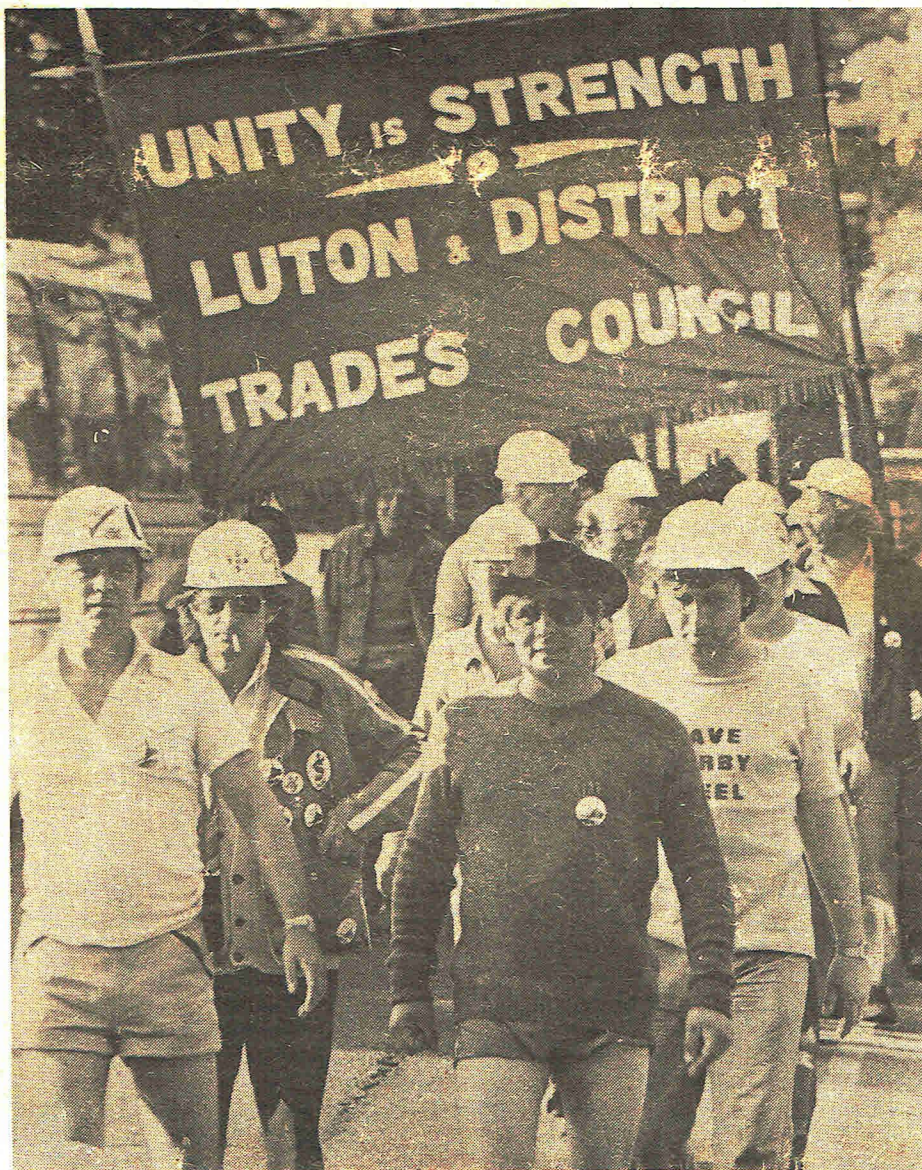
Today [Thursday] they will be joined by hundreds of trade unionists for a mass demonstration in London.

Corby is a new town built around the steel works—to close the steel mill down will put 30% of the population on the dole!

One of the Corby marchers, Frank Smythe, a steel roller, said: 'We're going to be the Jarrow of the 1980s.'

"Corby was built on steel and that's all there is there. The madness of it is there's enough iron ore there to produce steel for the next 100 years, and we all need steel."

As the Corby steel
CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

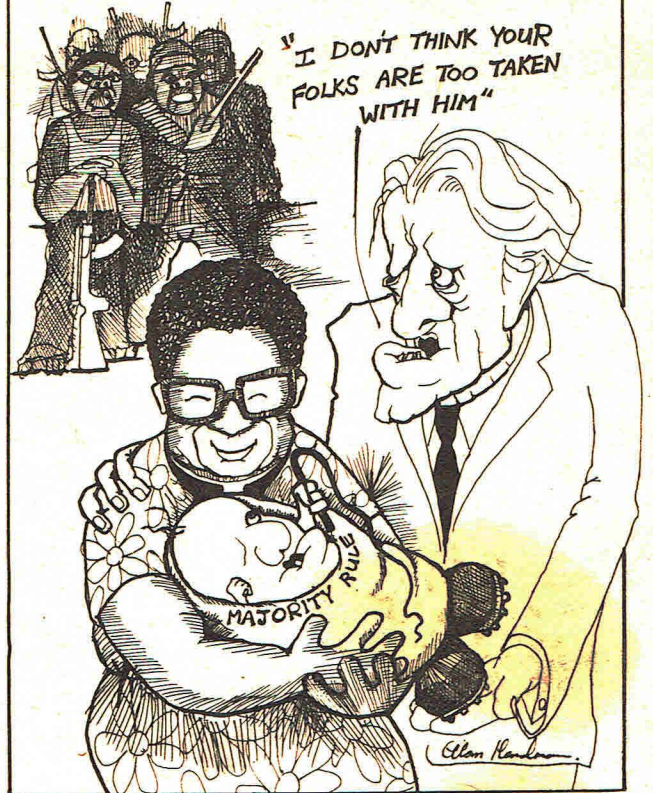


CORBY STEELWORKERS MARCH TO LONDON

Shipyard workers fight Tory sackings,
centre pages

NO RETURN TO THE 30's

RHODESIA- SMITH SLIPS UP!



The struggle for
Zimbabwe, pages 10 & 11

FIGHT WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES

Only a bold programme to defend jobs will save Corby from big business's death sentence.

The march from Corby highlights the anger and bitterness of workers. But protest marches alone, will not stem the de-industrialisation of Britain.

The whole labour movement must be drawn into the struggle to save jobs. As one Corby marcher put it: "It's no use us being soldiers in the front line without the rest of the army behind us."

★ If the BSC threaten to close any steel works, there should be an immediate national strike, so the bosses cannot play off one plant against another.

★ The shop stewards of Corby have shown they can play an effective role in the fight—links between shop stewards' committees throughout the country must be strengthened.

★ Through their delegates to local parties, steel trade unionists must ensure the Labour Party, the political wing of the TU movement, takes up their fight.

★ A vigorous campaign against the acceptance of redundancy payments, especially among the older steel workers. For a 35-hour week with no loss of pay. Retirement at 55 with pensions linked to the average

industrial wage would receive resounding support from all the steelworkers.

Saving jobs is the immediate struggle, but the crisis is rooted in the profit system. Nationalised industries are supposed to be run in the 'public interest'—yet they are really run by big business in the interests of private industry.

★ Nationalised industries like BSC must be democratically run by boards made up of one-third representatives elected by the trade unions in the industry, one third from the TUC representing the labour movement, and one third from the government.

This way the industry would be run efficiently and democratically in the interests of its workers and for the needs of society.

Obviously the nationalised industries alone could not be run as socialist island in a sea of capitalism.

★ To abolish unemployment, to secure decent working conditions, and to plan production for need not profit, the labour movement must campaign for the nationalisation under workers' control and management, of the big monopolies which control our lives.

The battle to save jobs must be linked to the wider fight for action on the fundamental socialist aims of the labour movement.

Militant

LABOUR PARTY DEMOCRACY

Re-selection and Party democracy in general are now vital issues for the Labour Party.

From the disastrous experience of the last Labour government the Party has overwhelmingly drawn the conclusion that the Labour leadership must be firmly committed to socialist policies and be made democratically accountable to the rank and file.

This is already clear from regional confer-

ences and from a flood of resolutions sent to the National Executive Committee demanding that re-selection must be discussed again at this year's annual conference.

Predictably, the capitalist press has begun to renew the attack on those calling for more Party democracy.

Recently, the 'Daily Mail' [18 June] gave lurid new publicity to the alleged "red fascist plot" supposedly discovered by Neville Sandelson in Hayes and Harlington.

By "plot" Sandelson means the decision of a

majority of his Party to replace him as MP. But for the intervention of the NEC on the eve of the general election, he would already be out. In demanding the right to stay regardless of the wishes of the Party, Sandelson and his Fleet Street friends are demanding a divine right of MPs to seats for life.

Not content with the Tory party as their direct mouthpiece, big business want to reserve the right to select, or at least veto, the parliamentary candidates of the Labour Party. This is why it is vital that we continue the battle for automatic, mandatory re-selection of MPs.

Labour Party members will also welcome the proposals recently put forward by Tony Benn and Eric Heffer for the democratisation of the Parliamentary Labour Party [PLP].

The key points of their proposals are that, within the decisions of the Party conference, the PLP should be the main authority on policy, and that the PLP

meetings should have the right to discuss all recommendations for parliamentary business. All the principal front bench spokesmen, they propose, should be elected by open ballot, and that the distribution of shadow ministerial portfolios should be subject to the approval of the PLP meeting—these arrangements also to apply under Labour governments.

These proposals, if implemented, would be an important step forward. If MPs were responsible for electing the leadership and formulating policy, they would certainly be called on to give more of an account to their parties. Many of the existing excuses used by MPs—that they have no influence, are not consulted and so on—would be undermined.

All the same, the Benn-Heffer proposals stop half way. At present, the PLP, though subject to pressure from the labour movement, is overwhelmingly right-wing in its composition.

The only real way to ensure that the leadership consistently bases itself on Party policy and is answerable to the rank and file is for the leader and the front bench to be elected by Annual conference—as is already the case in the Australian Labour Party.

Of course, measures to ensure that the Labour Party consistently reflects the interests of working people will provoke the wrath of big business. The Benn-Heffer proposals, for instance, drew a prompt attack from the 'Guardian' [22 June].

"Campaigners for Labour democracy", they said, really want "to ensure that Labour prime ministers, Labour governments and Labour MPs should be made automatically responsible to the notions of the Party's grassroots movement, regardless of other claims to their attention."

But why should this not be?

The local Labour Parties are the organisations—po-

tentially millions—of workers who can participate in selecting candidates and influencing their policy. In arguing that it is "an MP's right and duty to represent his whole constituency [through what channels?], rather than simply his local management committee", 'The Guardian', speaking for the ruling class, is trying to reduce the Labour Parties to mere election machines fit only to campaign at election times for candidates who meet with the approval of Fleet Street, etc.

Party policy decided democratically by local parties and annual conferences are contemptuously dismissed as "notions".

And what do they mean by "other claims to its attention"? Is it not clear from experience that they mean demands from big business, the City, the tops of the civil service, and the middle class professionals who have infiltrated the Labour Party in pursuit of their careers?

THE ROLE OF THE POLICE

By Roger Shrivs

Still no action has been taken by the police authorities or the government over the killing of Blair Peach in April.

A strong feeling that there is a big cover-up operation taking place has provoked loud protests from organisations in Southall, where Peach was killed after the counter-demonstration against the fascists, and aroused widespread anger in the labour movement.

The killing of Blair Peach has not only highlighted the menace of fascist groups like the National Front. It also shows the aggressive role of the Special Patrol Group in demonstrations. Their involvement in the death of Blair Peach is beyond dispute. Yet despite the questioning of SPG members, and the reported discovery of a cosh in police lockers, no significant action has been taken.

Earlier this year, 'Militant' showed the regular use of the SPG in London. Black youth in particular are continually harassed on the shallow pretext of archaic but highly oppressive 'Sus' laws. As we warned, SPG's shock tactics would not be confined to harassment of 'minority' groups—tested in London's immigrant areas, they would later be used in battles with the labour movement.

Now the justified anger of black youth at victimisation by the police is joined by that of trade unionists who are beginning to see their own members come under fire.

The SPG was set up as a 'group of uniformed officers under supervision with adequate transport, who would be useful for preventative patrolling of estates subject to hooliganism and housebreak-

ing.' This innocuous sounding description from the mid-1960s was blown sky high by the use of this group—evidently highly armed—to shoot dead two Pakistani youth with toy pistols in India House in

shields and batons increasingly in evidence on demonstrations.

Mark's successor at Scotland Yard, Sir David McNee, showed the increased reliance on the armed SPG in his statement that 2,804 crime

the police to use such force as is needed and is lawful, and not to be inhibited from doing so either by the fact that the aims of the demonstration are political or by the inevitable claim that any force used by the police is brutality".

the police, have in fact, very little chance of success. In 1978, only 206 official complaints against the police were adjudged to be justified by the investigators, just 4% of the total.

Nor are calls for the Home

demonstrator, Kevin Gately, died from a head injury during an anti-NF demonstration in Red Lion Square. The 'impartial' inquiry into this fatal incident, headed by Lord Justice Scarman, despite 'regretting' certain police actions, laid the blame not on police or fascists but on the counter demonstrators, accusing them of "a deliberate, determined and sustained attack; unexpected, unprovoked and viciously violent."

Together with supporting moves for an enquiry into Blair Peach's death, trade unionists and LP members must demand a labour movement inquiry into the role of the police; especially the activities of such special groups as the SPG.

There should also be thorough investigation of Special Branch spying within the labour and trade union movement; the oppressive use of particularly repressive laws like the 'Sus' laws and the Prevention of Terrorism Act; and the blatant manipulation especially of magistrate's courts (with the increasing denial of legal aid) to mete out savage sentences to people arrested on anti-fascist demonstrations or trade union pickets.

Trade unionists cannot afford to dismiss the activities of groups like the SPG as concerning only the black population.

Sir David McNee's recent outburst about sending 'hooligans and vandals' to hard labour camps, carried with it an attack not just on serious crime, vice and drunkenness, but on public disorder and 'general disobedience'—with talk of a society ripening for chaos and anarchy.

There is little doubt that such catch-all phrases are intended to cover trade union militancy and political action. Coupled with the Tory election promise of tougher 'law and order' policies, 'short, sharp shocks' for young criminals, and tough action on trade unions, McNee's latest speech is a warning that the labour movement must be vigilant.



Police form a wedge to break up demonstrators at the recent Nottingham Evening Post dispute

Photo: MILITANT

1973. Since then, they have been regularly seen on demonstrations and pickets like Grunwick's.

The 'Cobra', as they are known, had their 'efficiency' improved under the former Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Robert Mark, by the adoption of crowd-control techniques developed by the Royal Ulster Constabulary in Northern Ireland. The outward signs of this are the riot

arrests and 1,362 other arrests were made in 1978 (out of 65,628 stop and searches) nearly 50% up on the previous year.

All officers in the SPG have full marksman training. They are specially selected, with a 50% rejection rate, and yearly turnover of 25%.

The attitude of the police toward the SPG is shown by Sir Robert Mark who said in 1975: "It is plainly the duty of

In the case of Peach's death, local organisations in Southall have launched an appeal for an enquiry removed from the deadening hands of the police. This is to be welcomed, particularly as the suggested make-up includes representatives of local immigrant groups and trade unionists.

A police enquiry would inevitably be nothing but a cover-up. Complaints against

Secretary to instigate an 'independent' public enquiry any use.

The standard routine of appointing a committee of the 'great and the good', the high court judges, 'respectable' academics and other ruling class dignitaries, cannot possibly get to the bottom of police policy and tactics, even diluted by a few figures from the labour movement.

In 1974, an anti-fascist

SOUTHERN LP CONFERENCE

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST TORIES

Adjourned and cut to a single day because of the general election, the Labour Party Southern Region held its Annual Meeting in a sober mood on June 23rd.

It was smaller than usual, as many Labour Parties had not sent delegates. But the meeting showed delegates' resolve to fight back. Ron Hayward, speaking for the NEC, caught the mood in a call for party unity, for building up our support and for more control over elected members.

But delegates wanted to go further. The main economic debate revolved around a resolution from Wycombe CLP supporting the YCAU and calling for a £70 minimum wage, 35-hour week, nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies under workers' control, and a socialist plan of production.

The Regional Executive

asked for this to be remitted on the grounds that it was too difficult to put concrete figures into a policy. A T&GWU delegate opposed on the grounds that a Tory government obviously would not do any of these things.

But as a 'Militant' supporter pointed out, the job is to build a campaign in the labour movement, and this needs concrete demands. In spite of the REC's opposition, the resolution was carried on a show of hands.

The same happened in the debate on the NHS. A resolution from Eton & Slough called for reversal of all cuts, abolition of private practice, nationalisation of construction of NHS buildings and pharmaceuticals and full manning of all services with a £60 minimum wage.

At first, the Standing Orders Committee tried to drop this resolution. John Cantwell (LPYS National Committee) called for reference back of the SOC report on this point. Reference back was carried. In the debate, speaker after speaker support-

ted the demands of the resolution which was carried overwhelmingly.

But perhaps the most important motion was put forward as an emergency resolution by UCATT. They called for LP and TU action committees at local, regional and national level to campaign against cuts in social services. Newly-elected Executive member Betty Bell, in supporting, called for inclusion of opposition to the sale of council houses. The resolution was passed overwhelmingly.

It was obvious that delegates, having overcome the defeats in the elections, are looking for a way to fight back and demanding that the Regional Executive takes a lead in that fight back.

The elections for the new Regional Executive Committee saw a big increase in the number of 'Militant' supporters on the new EC and it will be their job to ensure that such a lead is given.

By Geoff Jones
(Regional EC, personal capacity)

LIVERPOOL EEC ELECTIONS

A VOTE AGAINST THE COMMON MARKET

Why did Labour lose Liverpool, an apparently safe seat, in the European Assembly Elections? Sections of the press and media are predictably trying to blame it on the fact that the candidate, Terry Harrison, was a Marxist and supporter of 'Militant'.

The intervention of the Social Democratic Alliance and the publicity campaign against the candidate had a negligible effect. Despite the Tory victory nationally, only a third of the population voted in the election.

The media knew there was an anti-Market feeling and from the beginning operated a low poll strategy. They knew this would be an advantage to the Tories, big business and the rich farmers. In this election it was a low turn-out for all the political parties.

The Campaign in Liverpool was probably one of the most thorough in the country. Starved of cash, stretched by the Edgehill by-election and general election, bereft of leadership nationally, a hard core of Labour Party members fought the battle.

The lost ground was made up by the intervention of the LPYS nationally.

Seven hundred young people poured into the area to carry out a detailed canvass of Labour voters from the general election. The whole approach to the campaign was not a cynical 'For or Against' canvass, but a discussion on the doorstep, with the defence of the programme presented during the campaign.

No 'prosperity'

Without the intervention of the LPYS, the turnout would have been lower than the actual 23.3% of the electorate. Liverpool registered one of the highest 'No' votes in the country in the 1975 Referendum on EEC membership.

The Labour Party in the area campaigned for a 'No' vote. This time canvassers were met with "We're against the Common Market, we're not voting".

We did our best to persuade them to vote for a workers' representative who would organise and fight against big business in Europe, and defend the interests of working people.

The electorate's reaction in Liverpool was not surprising. At the time of entry and the

referendum, we were promised full employment and prosperity. Unemployment in Merseyside today is twice the national average.

Liverpool has the greatest concentration of youth unemployment in the country. Factory closures take place virtually every other week. Many people believe that the EEC has been heavily responsible for the run-down of the area, and the docks in particular.

The people of Liverpool registered a vote against the bosses' Common Market by abstaining. 42,000 people did vote for a clear-cut socialist programme, calling for a 35-hour week, £70 minimum wage, and a socialist programme in opposition to the bosses' EEC.

To date, 70 applications for membership were received by post in response to the campaign broadsheet, and 40 for the LPYS. In addition, hundreds of additional new Labour Party members (and sales of 'Militant') were made on the doorstep. All this on the strength of the programme.

By Richard Knights



Delegates and visitors at 1978 LPYS Conference

Photo: MILITANT

LPYS CONFERENCE AND SUMMER CAMP BOOK NOW- 4 WEEKS TO GO

Hundreds of workers, school students and students will be attending the Labour Party Young Socialists' 1979 conference which starts on July 28th.

With just four weeks to go, you can't afford to delay any longer in sending your booking form. Here is a chance to join with the delegates of Britain's largest youth organisation and discuss how young people can fight back against the Tory attacks.

These are the highlights of the programme of political discussion.

- ★ July 28th/29th: Annual Conference
- ★ July 29th, 6.00 pm, 'Militant' Readers' Meeting
- ★ July 30th: 'Nationalism and Socialism', Neil Kinnock MP and LP NEC; 'Socialism and War', Stan Newens MP; 'Europe in Ferment', European Young Socialists
- ★ July 31st: 'Labour Party Democracy', Dennis Skinner MP and LP NEC

LPYS Conference and Camp 1979:

Conference Saturday July 28th, 1 pm, until Sunday 29th at 4 pm, followed immediately by the camp until Saturday August 4th. At Bracelands Campsite, Coleford, Gloucs.

Cost approx. £25, meals included [children half price, crèche organised].

Send deposits of £5 [£2 for children] to Andy Bevan, Transport House, Smith Square, London SW1P 3JA

August 1st: Irish Rally, speakers from North and South

★ August 2nd: 'Which Way for Labour?', debate Ian Wrigglesworth MP [Manifesto Group], Jo Richardson MP [Tribune] and 'Militant' speaker

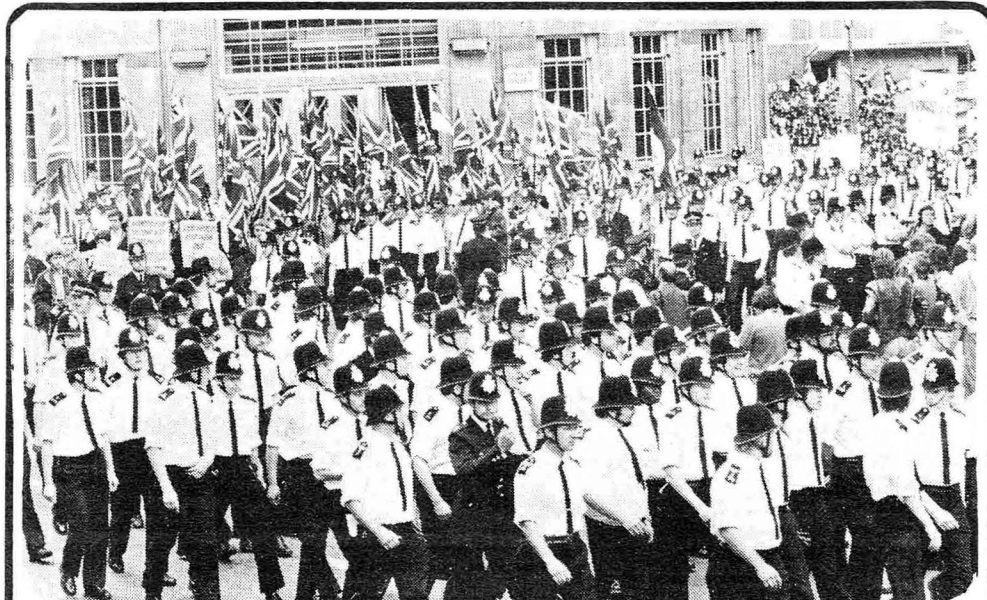
★ August 3rd: 'The Lessons of the Chilean Coup', Alex Kitson [Deputy General Secretary, T&GWU] and Andy Bevan [LPYS National Secretary]

It's no wonder that scores of young socialists will be coming over to Britain from other countries.

There is also a full programme of sports activities: canoeing, hiking, discos and a crèche.

So BOOK NOW! Get your LPYS or union branch members to come along with you. Tell them that it's only £7 for the weekend and £25 for the week, with all meals provided. All you need is a tent.

It's still not too late to get your party or union to sponsor you to go, or to cough up so that unemployed people can be subsidised.



The so-called 'Campaign to stop the boat people', i.e. the National Front, heavily outnumbered by police on last Saturday's demonstration, and guarded by Special Patrol Group vans. The fascists were making a frenzied attempt to recapture lost support.

Photo: MILITANT

LABOUR PARTY WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

A NEW FIGHTING MOOD

The Labour Party women's conference sprung to life last week when a fighting socialist resolution on unemployment was discussed.

Muriel Browning from Llanelli Women's Council, pointed out the effect of drastic cuts in public expenditure.

Report by Heather Rawling

Together with cuts in job creation schemes, and the abolition of the NEB, whatever their limitations, they will add hundreds of thousands to the 1½ million already out of work.

The resolution called for a Labour government which will end the scourge of unemployment by inaugurating a socialist plan of production based on the nationalisation under democratic workers' control and management of the top 200 or so monopolies, together with the banks and finance houses.

Before this debate, the conference had been very quiet. Probably comrades were still reeling from the shock of a Tory government and the budget last week. But the whole conference was buzzing with excitement during this debate.

Muriel Browning pointed out how the South Wales miners have started to lead the way against pit closures. "The recent miners' gala in Cardiff took on a political significance.

"Miners from the threatened lodge, Deep Duffryn,

headed the march with their banner, accompanied by women and children carrying placards in support of them.

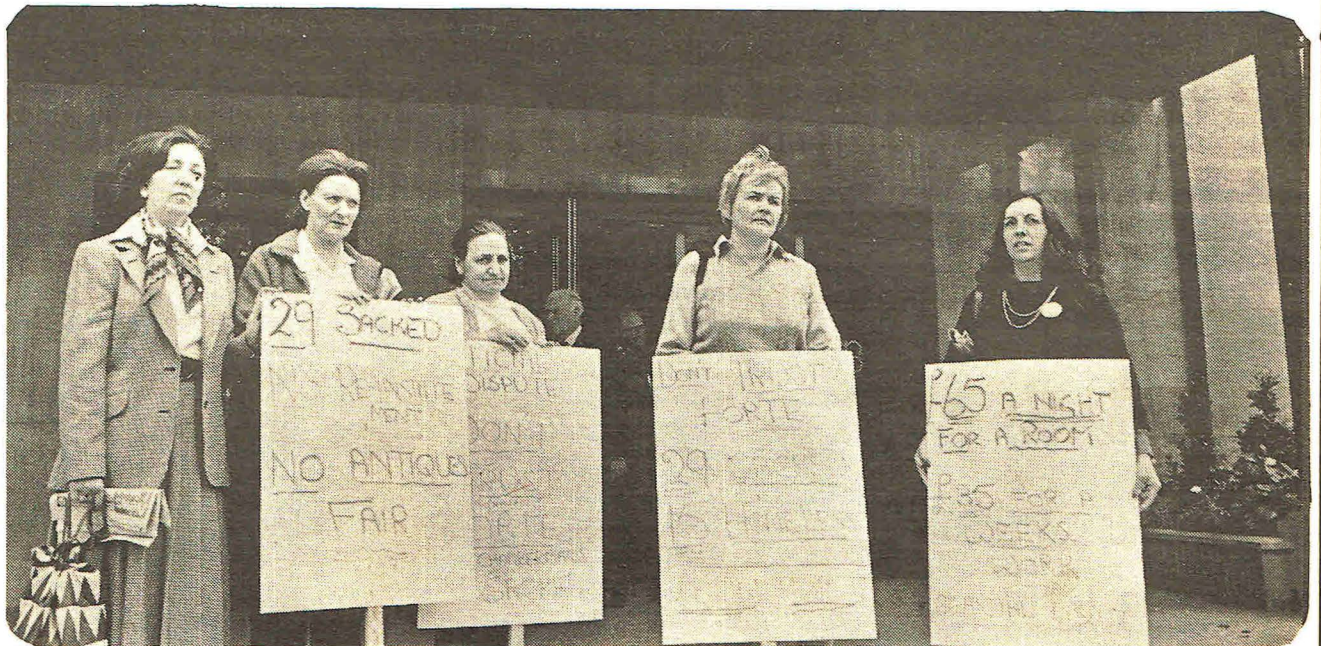
"The demands were simple. The right to work! No closures! No redundancies! It brought a lump to my throat. I thought, my God, it's starting all over again to our mining communities..."

Delegates outlined the overwhelming case for a 35-hour week with no loss of pay. "We're not going to accept the same old Hobson's choice of unemployment or wage cuts."

The rallying speeches drew support from delegates young and old alike. They could identify with the need for the socialist policies outlined in the resolution.

One delegate, who argued that we were too much concerned with the protestant work ethic, that if there was unemployment we could encourage youngsters to get involved in street theatres, was adequately answered by Tony Benn in reply to the debate.

When asked to remit this important resolution, the delegate from Llanelli quite



Women workers on strike at Grosvenor House Hotel. The Labour Party women's conference voted to support the strikers, and called for blacking of the hotel. Photo: MILITANT

rightly refused. On a card vote, the resolution was lost by only five votes. This was the first serious challenge to the platform and showed growing support for Marxist policies in the labour movement.

Speaking in the debate on housing, Betty Bell highlighted the problems faced by young people. "They are being forced to buy property at a mortgage they cannot afford. They are put in the hands of the money-lenders. We used to be always in debt to the pawn shop. Now it is the building societies."

In almost all the debates, it was the supporters of 'Militant' who, time and again, were coming to the rostrum arguing for the need to take

over the economy, for a socialist plan of production in order to tackle all the problems that working class women and their families face.

It was up to Margaret Manning from Manchester Moss Side to argue for internationalism in the debate on the EEC. To applause, she argued that the Common Market was a bosses' club that had nothing to offer the workers of this or any other country.

Workers internationally needed to get together to fight against the multi-nationals. In or out of the Common Market is not the issue anymore. We need to fight against capitalism.

The debate on Low Pay

revealed the inadequacies of the Equal Pay Act. Joan Maynard pointed out that a quarter of all hairdressers earned less than £25 per week. The relevance of the debate was shown at the social held on the Monday evening of the conference.

We discovered that the waitresses and the people working behind the bar at this social were only earning 52p an hour! On hearing this, delegates got together to put an emergency resolution to the conference.

However, resolutions on their own will not be enough. With the most vicious anti-working class Tory government since the war, set on attacking the weakest sections of the working class first,

women will be hit hard.

But a new fighting mood exists among women. This fighting spirit must be channelled into the labour movement.

Women's sections campaigning on the issues affecting women, putting the socialist case could be vital in recruiting housewives and women workers into playing an active role in the labour movement.

This year's conference showed the possibilities that exist. With more and more unions sending delegates to the women's conference, this conference must be taken seriously by the labour movement.



LPYS demonstrate against unemployment in North East in 1972. Still a burning problem

CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

Newcastle West CLP held its re-convened AGM a few weeks ago.

Last on the agenda was a motion calling for the Regional LP and TUC to mount an unemployment campaign around the basic demands of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment—an end to wage restraint, £70 for 35 hours, nationalisation of the economy, etc.

A spirited and fruitful discussion followed, bringing in many points relating to education, longer holidays,

early retirement, leisure facilities, etc.

Bob Brown MP, ex-Junior Minister for defence, himself spearheaded the opposition, accusing the YS of "sloganising", being too simplistic, and trying to tell the trade unions what to do.

He said that if "compensation based on need only" meant "confiscation", then that was Communist Party dogma and "completely undemocratic."

The mover then replied by asking how democratic were decades upon decades of confiscation and exploitation

by capitalism.

Result? Motion carried, 19 to 11. The constituency wanted the Labour Party to adopt a programme which would really solve the problems of working people. Let's hope the trend continues and some more of these policies are passed in Newcastle West!

Keith Allen

(Secretary Newcastle West LPYS and delegate to the GMC)

MARXIST IDEAS IN A TORY HAVEN

Hertford is sleepy and middle class. A commuter town, and a Tory stronghold, it boasts a very famous girls' boarding school, a castle, a disproportionate number of antique shops and among the most expensive private houses in Hertfordshire.

Despite this flavour of "old England", the ideas of Marxism are gradually gaining support even here.

Hertford has now held its first ever 'Militant' Readers' Meeting on 'Fight the Tories, socialist policies for Labour'. The speaker Peter Jarvis spelt out clearly the real anti-working-class nature of Thatcher

and Co. He put forward the solutions that must be offered by the Labour Party and the need for Labour MPs to fight strongly for a socialist programme on class lines.

The audience of ten did not reflect in numbers the influence of the ideas of 'Militant' in the area.

But a very good discussion took place; specifically raised were questions relating the national issues to the locality and problems such as transport, housing and unemployment.

A 14-year-old schoolboy, Patrick Donn, pointed out that working people still have to travel in run-down trains.

with ripped seats, that look and shake like something from the 18th century.

Yet years ago, a faster, smoother, more economical form of travel was invented. This invention—the linear motor—has only recently been utilised, showing how the bosses refuse to invest in anything to benefit ordinary people, unless it shows a quick return.

There was a collection at the end of the meeting which raised £7.11½.

Janice Clare

(Secretary, Ware and Hertford LPYS)

TORIES SQUASHED BY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Our LPYS branch recently challenged the Young Tories to a debate on the question 'Which Way Forward for Britain?'

The Young Tory called for a return of capital punishment and "glass-houses to give short, sharp doses of treatment to young offenders and repeated if necessary."

He opposed a national minimum wage of £70 since "market forces should determine how much a worker is paid," and sadly related how "in the last 20 or so years entrepreneurs had not made

enough money to re-invest in plant and machinery and so provide employment because of punitive taxation and rigid price controls."

Karen Tomlinson for the Young Socialists gave a comprehensive analysis of Britain's economic decline.

She pointed out that the problems of high unemployment and falling living standards faced workers in all the advanced industrial countries, not least so-called successful countries such as Japan and West Germany. She felt that our election

defeat could have been averted if we had explained the merits of a socialist planned economy under workers' control and management and so provided a real alternative for the Tories.

I think the debate illustrated graphically the utterly selfish and reactionary nature of the Tory "philosophy".

Their arguments can be squashed quite easily with the facts and analysis found in the 'Militant'.

Steve Grant

(Huyton LPYS)

LEFT & RIGHT

SAATCHI'S BOOM

One of the Tories' favourite firms is certainly cashing in on Thatcher's victory. Saatchi and Saatchi, the Conservative Party's advertising agency, has just announced new assignments, from Campbell's Soups, and British Rail's Family Rail Card, among others.

Clients are queuing up, apparently. And profits are up: for the half year ending 31 March, Saatchi announced a 50% increase to £1.13 million after tax.

The full year's profits are expected to be up even more dramatically: "a further boost would be the revenues from the Tories' election campaign, all of which should easily carry Saatchi well beyond the £2 million mark this time." And prospects look good—with Thatcher's crew in action, every penny in party funds won't make them palatable.

CUCKOO

"He is a proud man, one of the few socialists—he remains one at heart, despite his resignation from the party eight years ago—who lives by their principles."

Who is the principled socialist being given such a sympathetic write-up in the London magazine 'Girl about Town'? None other than Lord George Brown who failed to rake together the £15,000 he needed to stand for the Common Market elections; "one sadness of the European Parliament elections".

He may have seemed genuine enough to 'Girl about Town'. But this Labour renegade wouldn't fool any genuine socialist. He has just lost his £100 a week contract with London's commercial 'Capital Radio' because of his political bias. He was expected to repeat his favourite message, echoing Prentice, Paul Johnson and the other right-wing cuckoos who quit the Labour Party.

As the magazine puts it: 'Vote Tory—Mrs Thatcher is nearer to my brand of socialism than Jim Callaghan'.

HEAVEN'S MANDATE

The Pope may be riding high on the crest of unrest in Poland—although the Vatican's claim that the Catholic church is now the major political force there seems to be based more on faith than fact.

Polish workers wouldn't take too kindly to the Reverend Robert Cobin of Selbourne, however. Nor, for that matter, will many other trade unionists. The Reverend is calling on all Christians to take a stand.

"We are no longer prepared to be held to ransom, and even governed, by militants in the trade unions", he wrote in his parish magazine, following last winter's strikes. "What has happened to our great British tradition of fair play?...the power of evil has become very strong".

We're waiting to hear what Rev. Cobin thinks of being held to ransom by the bosses' Tory henchmen, and the evil powers that axe our jobs and bump up prices. Or would he give them God's blessing?

The alarm goes ITS TEN TO THREE IN THE MORNING

The alarm has just gone off and I'm still half asleep. I grope around and manage to turn it off before it wakes my wife and kid.

Check the time. Christ, it's only ten to three. The temptation of closing your eyes for a few more minutes has to be forgotten as you know you will sleep in. Right, drag yourself out of that comfortable bed.

I have a wash but it still doesn't make any difference and I have to be careful not to fall down the stairs.

At three in the morning you can't eat a breakfast and more often than not you do not want a cup of tea. The winter is worst, when you leave the house at 3.35 with a big heavy coat pulled tight and thick duty driving gloves on your hands.

You realise that it snowed again during the night and you can feel in the air that it could start again. A fifteen minute walk takes me to where the staff bus picks me and some of my mates up for work.

The bus departs from my stop at 3.50. If you get there at 3.51, tough. The timetable does not allow the night shift driver to wait, so you make sure you get there on time or else it's a long walk. It takes 35 minutes for the bus to pick everyone up in my area and get to the depot.

There's always new faces and a notable absence of old ones at the depot. The turnover in the workforce is high. When you arrive, drivers head for the inspectors' shed to hang their checks up.

I find my duty is 105 and at the side of my duty is the bus number. When I get, say, a 1401 model the immediate



reaction is "bloody hell."

It's usually a safe bet that the heater doesn't work and when you get a full load you need hands like the Incredible Hulk to get the bus round corners. But at least some of the lads will be smiling. They've got one of the few power-assisted steering types.

You make your way up to town to the station to get

on your bus. Apart from the bad driving conditions in the winter your hands get cold as gloves are no good when you are one-manning and taking fares. There is a lot of animosity from the public to bus drivers over late buses and drivers driving fast.

But your timetable is so tight that you have no option and both sides occasionally

lose their temper. When people start to board your bus at 6.00 it must seem our day's just started. But of course it hasn't.

By S Hawes

(Transport and General Workers Union, Rotherham)

Students face summer exploitation

For most students, exams are now out of the way and the summer break stretches ahead.

A student grant does not cover the next three months, though Supplementary Benefits will pay you about £16 a week.

When so much of the grant now has to be spent on buying books and equipment, there is very little left for clothing. £16 is scarcely enough to get by on, let alone replace essential clothes, shoes and so on.

So for the summer holidays a job must be found.

Employers are now opening their arms to this army of cheap labour coming their way. Students will find themselves washing up at the YMCA, putting toy cars into

boxes, working in shops or even perhaps delivering mini cab advertising cards, as I did 7 years ago.

Although I was not a student, I needed a part-time job. The job was with a local firm so I thought it would be a piece of cake. I couldn't have been more mistaken.

After the first day or so, I was being sent miles away, having to pay my own fares. I had to haul around thousands of these small cards and put one through the door of every house in the road.

Comrades who have just done a stint of leafletting in the elections will know just what an arduous task this can be. But I had never been leafletting then.

It was like the toughest piecework I had ever been on in my life. I had to complete all the routes I was given in a week to receive £5, and I was putting in about 7 hours or more a day, 7 days a week.

A mere 10p an hour!

I was absolutely shattered at the end of each day and the miles I walked grew beyond my estimation. My nearly new shoes needed healing in 2½ weeks.

You have to take into account not just the length of both sides of each road but the distances up and down each front path. I also hadn't thought about getting soaking wet; you can't afford to give up and go home—the sun might come out again.

I began to think that postmen should get danger money. You open a gate and it drops on your foot. 'Ow!' you think, but you shift quickly because you can see a neighbour peering through the curtains.

You get your fingers pinched in the letter box; you climb ten steps to a front door to find the letter box two inches from the ground.

Horrible-sounding dogs

hurl themselves at the front door and people tell you to clear off.

After two and a half weeks, when I realised I was only earning 10p an hour, that's exactly what I did.

Year after year this kind of gross exploitation goes on. Students are easy pickings for employers.

We have to make sure that the labour movement seriously takes up the demand for a living grant for all students. This would provide a decent income for the whole year not just three terms.

Then the bosses would be forced to pay a decent rate to all temporary workers.

By Janice Dale

Despite Tory Chancellor Geoffrey Howe's promise that health spending levels would be maintained, the NHS is faced with massive cuts even without any further reductions.

This is due to erosion of cash limits by inflation, new VAT rates and wage awards. Millions of pounds are being wiped off Health Authority spending. This means tens of thousands of jobs at risk, together with the services they provide.

Area Health Authorities talk for the first time of redundancies rather than 'natural wastage'.

Redundancies! When there is already a huge shortage of staff in the NHS, including 70,000 nurses. When we have a waiting list over half a million!

The horrors of the situation came home at last to members of the City and East London AHA(T) at their recent meeting. Before them was the stark reality of at least £10m shortfall in funds; and proposals drawn up to make savings. These have already been detailed in 'Militant' (June 1st).

Tory members on the

STICKING TO OUR GUNS

Bob Faulkes spoke to Grace Fowler, who has worked 30 years at St Matthew's Hospital, Shoreditch [see article below] and is a TGWU shop steward.

"£2m has to be found or we close and St Leonard's (half a mile away) is turned into a geriatric. They want those patients to go to Hackney Hospital, in Homerton, but that's at least two bus rides, let alone night travelling.

"It will be a real blow to the local community in Shoreditch. And we are already cut, with ambulance staff—32 crews have left Hackney station, 15-20 have left Canonbury station.

"Just look at the money they have spent on this hospital! £250,000 each on eight wards. Physical therapy £75-100,000. Something like £2½-3m in seven or eight years!

"We will not let a stick of furniture out of this place. The hospital secretary asked me about the furniture going

Authority said 'Be realistic—accept there is no more money.' Labour members, however, were beginning to get the message from hospital unions and the local community.

One member nominated by the local authority proposed that more money be demanded and that meantime the Authority maintains existing levels of service and establishments.

All Labour members spoke in support. Their point was that they had been party to enough cuts in the past, that there seemed to be no end in sight, that promised improvements had not materialised, and now was the time to take a stand.

The Chairman (Mr Cumberlege, tea broker) gave his usual lecture. Allocations were decided by the demo-

cratically elected government. If the Authority overspent it would only have to be paid next year, with even more drastic cuts, etc.

An amendment was moved to completely water down the motion, calling for yet another cap in hand delegation to the Regional Health Authority. The amendment was passed with members from Labour local authorities being outvoted.

One such member immediately resigned, stating he now had no alternative to conducting opposition outside. Unfortunately this was only a personal gesture. Other Labour members and the trade nominee remained seated to continue the charade of democracy.

This performance demonstrates our weakness on these Authorities. Members tend to

ignore their Labour Parties and trade unions, feeling they know best. A determined opposition, an ultimatum followed by a 'mass' resignation would have had a tremendous effect.

The Tory rump would have been left to carry on, with Labour completely disassociated from any further carve-up of the NHS. This would have been tremendously encouraging to hospital staff and trade unionists campaigning against cuts.

It would have restored some credibility to the Labour Party, and made it easier to convince NHS trade unionists to take up the political struggle inside the Labour Party.

Already the Tories had begun to show hesitancy. The chairman and members were unwilling too hastily to

rubber-stamp the proposals, postponing decisions and asking management to produce alternatives.

Management expressed frustration, complaining that they were told not to overspend, yet proposals for savings were not accepted.

But due to the uncertainty, staff will inevitably be tempted to seek jobs elsewhere. In this way the run-down commences. The trade unions need to adopt a much firmer position, one that will allay the fears of staff and give them confidence they can win.

Despite the shortcomings, these developments must be welcomed. The changing attitudes of some Labour councillors on the Health Authorities and the prevarication of top administrators reflect pressure building up in the

movement.

The leadership of our organisations must take note of this, and begin to mobilise the ranks of the trade unions and Labour Parties. If these leaders ignore the decisions and demands of our movement they must be replaced by those prepared to take up the challenge.

Our movement's enormous power once installed the NHS. It must now be gathered to replace the Tory government by a Labour government thoroughly committed to change in society...

The only way to combat the poverty and conditions which cause widespread bad health is by eradicating those conditions. This requires a programme to provide jobs at decent wages for all, to provide housing, schools, and decent, safe working and living conditions.

Such a programme requires a complete change of course by the next Labour government. It needs a programme for socialism.

By Ian Burge

(Secretary, Tower Hamlets District JSSC)



St Matthew's Hospital: under threat of closure

Photo: MILITANT

A RECIPE FOR DEATH

At a meeting called by Hackney Community Health Council over 500 local residents and health service workers wanted straight answers to their questions on the chaos of Hackney's health services and the further cuts being put forward.

They gave the paternalistic Sir Harry Moore, chairman of the Regional Health Authority, a rough ride.

Sir Harry is far removed from the problems of the East End. He lives in Mayfair and Buckinghamshire and is a director of merchant bankers Hill Samuel, amongst other business concerns.

Speaker after speaker out-

lined shortfalls in hospital and community services and rejected outright new proposals to remove surgical beds, theatres and casualty from St Leonard's Hospital in order to accommodate Hackney's geriatric patients there.

Only a few months ago, Hackney's old people were to have gone to St Matthew's Hospital, as part of the scheme which also involved the changes at Bethnal Green Hospital, responsible for the long, bitter campaign there.

Now Hackney's health chiefs did not want St Matthew's—Bethnal Green could still have been a general hospital!

St Matthew's would close and St Leonard's would face the future now a reality at Bethnal Green, with wards full of geriatric patients denied the back-up service offered to all other NHS patients; and trained staff departing and 'nursing' left to

temporary agency and auxiliary staff.

Shortage of money (£2m) was the reason, said the health chiefs. This is not 'planning' hammered back the audience, who would not accept 'working within cash limits'. Cash limits were the health service cuts Mrs Thatcher had said she was not going to make.

'Militant' supporters present made it clear that no reliance could be placed on these bureaucrats. The only way to defend the health service was by a campaign to mobilise the labour movement.

The AHA had lost all credibility, members of the audience pointed out—their sole concern was balancing the books instead of planning for actual community need.

Linking problems in Hackney and Tower Hamlets they outlined how hospital cuts and closures meant longer

waiting lists and extra hours spent in out-patient and casualty departments. They described the poor transport services to the remaining hospitals and how early discharge from hospital was often to sub-standard housing.

In two boroughs with high unemployment, lost hospital jobs were disastrous. Clapping, shouting and stamping of feet greeted points being made.

Labour Party Councillors on the AHA who had helped to make previous cuts 'work' against the wishes of their electorate also came in for criticism, one speaker describing them as 'fifth columnists'.

Health Service chiefs sat with expressionless faces, but the points were going home. The audience were putting out all the arguments of the health service unions over the last two years. They disapproved

a sneer by one of the platform that they were all heart and no head (though even if this were true, we were still one up on him).

Some speakers, including trade unionists, fell into the trap of accepting a need for economies, pointing to examples of 'waste' such as 'too many administration staff', too much money spent on Bart's (the teaching hospital) and so on.

Maximum unity

These mistaken views will need to be corrected during the course of any campaigns. We must put forward demands and solutions aimed at maximum unity among all sections of the health service staff, all unions, all hospitals and all Districts.

Notice of intent to fight the proposals was given. The CHC has a vital role to play and should be congratulated

in calling the meeting but we do not need a 'front'.

Hackney Trades Council speaks for all trade unionists in the borough; together with Tower Hamlets Trades Council it could give a lead to all East Enders and the rest of the country.

They have done it before and can do it again. One fight! One voice! For our hospitals—our communities—our jobs!

By Myrna Shaw

(Bethnal Green Hospital JSSC)

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PIN STRIPE BUDGET

The pretence of the Tories to be a "party of the nation" has been exposed by the Budget especially the changes in income tax.

This is a rich man's Budget. It will mean enormous increases in take-home pay for the already well off, and peanuts for ordinary workers.

For example, a Company Director on £30,000 a year has been given a cool £114 a week increase in his pay. This is a pay rise (after tax of course) of over 50%, from £227 a week to £341 a week. No 5% limits here!

What would the Tories say to workers who asked for a rise in take-home pay of 50%? Who is really holding the country to ransom?

In comparison a worker on £100 a week gross will save £3.30 a week in tax and a worker on £50 will save £1.80 a week. The worst off sections of society, who pay no tax, will gain nothing. But we will all pay for the rich to get richer by higher VAT and cuts in government spending.

Howe tried to present the changes in the higher rates of tax as of benefit to skilled workers. In fact for a married man to pay tax at even 40% before the budget he would have to gross at least £183 a week.

If he had tax relief on his mortgage, it would have to be more than that. To pay tax at 83% he would have had to earn £461 a week. How many toolmakers are in that category?

Further concessions to the rich were made in changing "investment income surcharge", though this has been less publicised. This is a tax on investment income (bank interests, company dividends, etc.) over certain amounts.

Here again Howe tried to present this as a tax levied on

By an
IRSF member

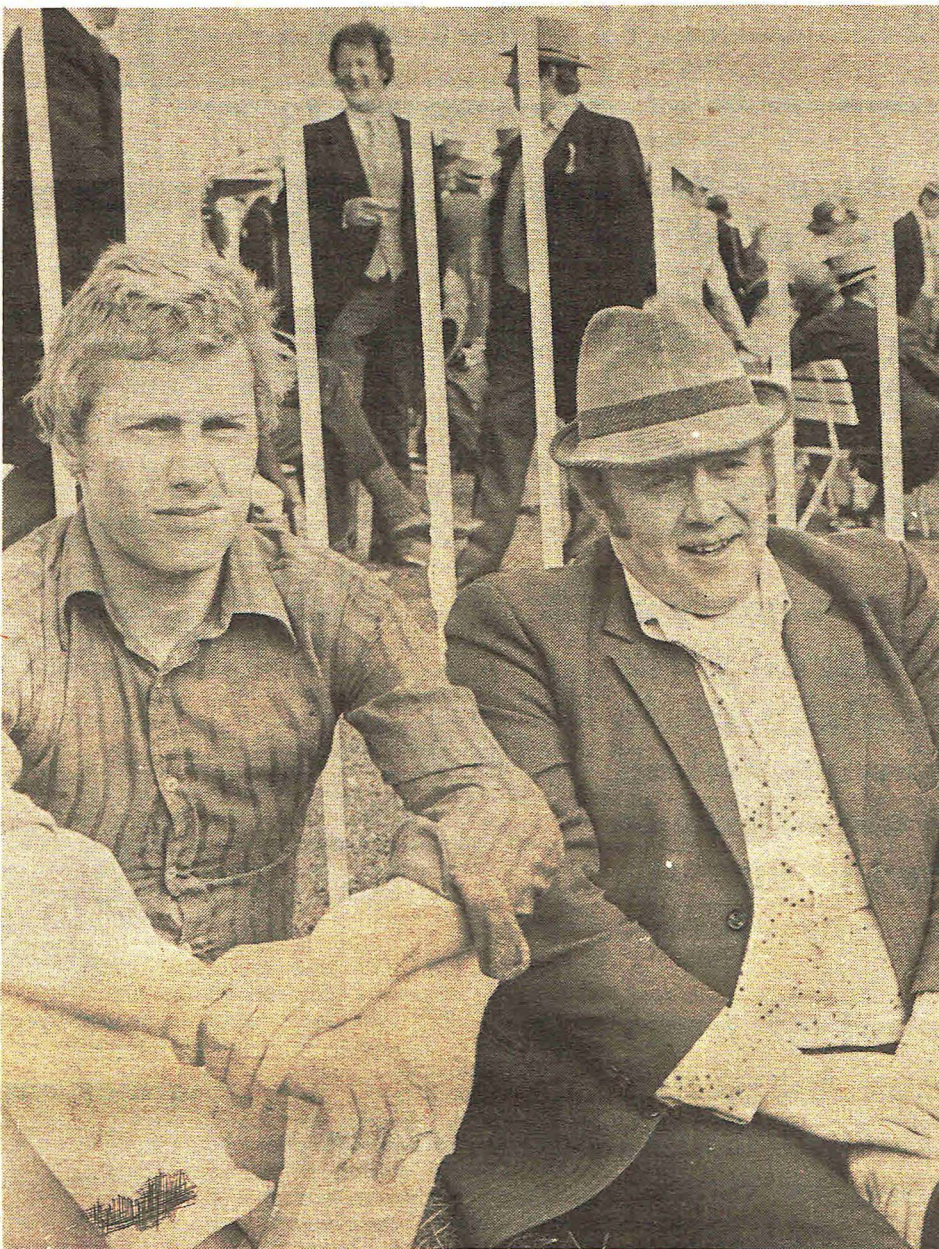
poor little old ladies. But in reality for a pensioner to pay this tax before the budget they would need income of £2,500, i.e. capital of about £25,000. How many pensioners do you know like this?

But let's take our company director on £30,000 and say he has unearned income of £5,000 as well. The budget will increase his income after tax by a further £1,617.50—or £31 a week!

More measures to help the wealthy are promised on capital transfer tax and capital gains tax. Even now GGT is only paid at 15% on gains above £1,000—hardly an extortionate rate!

Even more now the burden of tax will be borne by workers under the PAYE system, while the big firms, and the rich pay less. Any revenue worker could give many examples of fiddles by directors and the self-employed—the very people who preach about "law and order" and "respect for authority", and of course "Social Security scroungers".

One final irony is that the IRSF members who will be called on to implement these changes are now under attack through government economies, and are amongst the low-paid workers who will get least from the budget. Such is Tory justice!



LINING THEIR OWN POCKETS

Some of the beneficiaries of the Tory tax cuts are—not surprisingly—the Tories themselves. Their Party chairman, Lord Thorneycroft, is also chairman of Pye, Pirelli and Trust House Forte and will take home an estimated £92 per week more.

Obviously a reward for four arduous jobs! Though he doesn't believe in lavish rewards for everybody. The sacked chambermaids at Grosvenor House Hotel owned by THF took home £34 a week, about one third of his Lordship's increase!

Meanwhile Michael Pollock as chairman of Shell has a prize for the oil companies' superb handling of the oil crisis—an extra £405 per week.

While Norman Castle, chairman of S&W Berisford, sugar importers, has a little personal sweetener—£1,155 per week more spending money.

MONEY TAKEN FROM POOR

GIVEN TO THE RICH

WHERE WILL IT GO?

This table shows the percentage increase in income needed to maintain 1978-79 living standards in 1979-80. It is based on a married man with two children under 11, allowing for child benefit, national insurance contributions and taxes, and allowing for a 15% cost of living increase.

If you earned this before tax in 1978-79	To maintain your standard of living in 1979-80 you need	% change
½ average earnings £2,665	£3,060	+ 14.8
average earnings £5,330	£5,980	+ 12.2
2 × average earnings £10,660	£11,740	+ 10.1
5 × average earnings £26,650	£23,480	- 11.9

FOREIGN INVESTMENT

LEAVING FOR GREENER PASTURES

Howe claims his fabulous tax incentives for the rich will provide more cash for investment in industry.

Yet his budget gives British capitalists unprecedented encouragement to invest abroad.

When Barber, the Tory chancellor in the Heath government, gave big tax concessions to the country's "entrepreneurs", most of the extra cash immediately went into property speculation and other non-productive forms of profit-making.

There was no significant increase in private investment in British industry.

Under the Thatcher government, much of the even bigger sums handed to the top 5 or 10 per cent of tax payers is likely to be sunk into property and investment abroad.

"The budget", said the 'Financial Times' (16 June) "has given the UK resident an ability to move money abroad

which he not enjoyed since the second world war."

"There is virtually no restriction left on the purchase of holiday homes abroad." The banks are now allowed to provide a family with £100,000 a year at the market rate to buy property abroad as an investment or hedge against inflation.

How many families have £100,000 to spend anywhere? Clearly, this is now a means by which capitalists can move vast amounts abroad.

Sinking ship

Allowable "gifts" and "payments" to "dependers" abroad have also been increased to £10,000 a year.

"The travel allowances appear almost completely elastic," continues the FT; "The emigration allowance must now act as a constraint only on those with more than £¼ million to their name."

Capitalists eager to leave the sinking ship can now take £200,000 with them (compared to only £40,000 or £80,000 for the EEC countries before).

They could, of course, also invest £100,000 in property before leaving; and after four

years they can take the rest of their ready cash anyway.

Above the new limits mentioned, people taking money out have to pay an "investment currency premium". But last week, this premium was a mere 11.75% compared to 42% at the beginning of the year—hardly a barrier to the ever growing volume of foreign investment.

Companies, too, will be able to channel money out much more cheaply as a result of Howe's budget.

"Companies will now be able to invest official exchange—foreign currency bought at the market rate—to the value of up to £5 million per project per year.

"They will be able to choose whether and to what extent they repatriate the earnings of their overseas investment: till now they had to send two-thirds home..."

"The Treasury estimates that some 90% of all cases of UK direct investment abroad will now be financeable at the official rate if the investor so chooses." ('Financial Times' 13 June).

These measures can hardly fail to give a further push to the steady "de-industrialisation" of Britain.

Chronic under-investment by big business has meant that British industry is being steadily outstripped even in its home market. Last year, for instance, manufacturing output fell by 1%, but imports of manufactures went up by 13%.

And the further British industry falls behind, the less inclined are British capitalists to invest at home. They go abroad in search of higher profits.

In the last period, total direct investment abroad has accumulated to 13.2% of gross domestic product (1975), whereas in West Germany it is only 3.8% and in Japan 2.8%.

These glaring facts, however, do not stop the Tories blaming British workers—the coolies of Europe—for Britain's remorseless decay.

Yet while lamenting the danger of an "irreversible decline" of the British economy, the Tories are providing the capitalists with unprecedented opportunities of sending their cash out of the country in pursuit of greener profit-pastures.

Militant
The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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In the 1930s there was a world overcapacity of shipbuilding yards compared to the demand for ships. The answer of the National Tory government then was to axe jobs by the tens of thousands.

The closure of what was then one of the biggest yards in the world, Palmers in Jarrow, in 1935 triggered off a huge wave of opposition in the area, including the famous Jarrow march the year after.

The same kind of bitter struggles are now inevitable as the Tories have declared war on the workers in the shipbuilding industries, among others.

The outline of the Tory plan is to sell off the most profitable sections of British Shipbuilders — the three or four yards that have lucrative naval work in progress — while leaving the rest to sink or swim. To rub salt in, the Tories are planning to reduce the amount of money available to the industry from the various government and regional sources.

Shipyard workers must vigorously oppose the Tory plans that would present a massive threat to the livelihood of tens of thousands of workers and their families especially concentrated in certain industrial areas already suffering high unemployment.

The Tories are hoping that their friends in the City will make a quick killing from the profits of those yards that are doing well—yet it has been the decades of private ownership that have been responsible for the run-down of the industry in the first place. The bosses wrecked the industry and now, after a Labour government has bailed it out—at least partly—the same sharks want to get back into the

in Britain. Little wonder the overseas shipbuilders managed to capture more and more of the market!

Subsidised

Yet the low investment was despite massive grants and aid given to the industry long before nationalisation. Up to 1972 the massive sum of £172m had been given to keep the industry going. £51m had gone to Harland and Wolff, money had gone to Cammell Laird in return for a government stake of 50 per cent, £35m had gone to Govan shipbuilders, £12m had gone to Marathon to take over the Clydebank yard of UCS, and so on and so on.

From 1972 to 1974 a further £50m was earmarked for aid to the industry. Yet where did the money all go? The average expenditure on capital equipment came to only about a third of the total given and in many cases it was less—quite clearly the taxpayers' money was going to prop up shareholders' dividends over the years.

In 1971, for example, the government advisory group reporting on the collapse of the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders remarked that "the total injection of public funds has disappeared. No improvement in facilities, no worthwhile investment has been made." A cool £20m had "disappeared"!

The spirit of the private entrepreneur, much praised by Keith Joseph and Thatcher, turned the shipbuilding industry into a heap of scrap.

The owners were enterpris-

vicious international market. Total world shipbuilding orders in 1978 were 34 per cent on the low level of 1977 and so fierce is the competition now that governments are virtually buying ships on behalf of shipping lines in order to prevent the destruction of their own industry. The Japanese government, for example, gave credits to Pakistan to buy ships by offering 100 per cent credit over 30 years with no repayments in the first ten years and payments at 3 per cent interest thereafter.

Recent British merchant orders like the Polish and Indian ships were achieved with the help of large government credits.

British shipyard orders in the last quarter of 1978 totalled only 5 ships: 9,148 tons altogether and worth only £14m. In this situation, the Labour government was forced to hold back the plans of British Shipbuilders and to bring forward naval contracts to prevent a sudden collapse of the industry in the months before an election.

Massive government handouts to British shipyards have been used to swell shareholders' profits, not to invest in modernisation

Now that there is a Tory minister in the seat of power, it looks as though British Shipbuilders will be given full rein to close the yards that are now running out of work.

According to the Corporate Plan, 15,000 jobs will be lost by the closure of the following yards: Govan (both Govan and Scotstoun yards), Robb Caledon (Dundee and Leith), Goole, Sunderland Deptford, Sunderland Pallion, Sunderland North Sands and Smiths South Bank dock on Tees-side.

In addition it is planned that Scott-Lithgow and Swan Hunters who now have no merchant orders, will lose about 4,500 jobs. That makes a total of about 20,000 jobs—many more than the 13,000 that were projected even a year or so ago.

In the middle of a pre-election period, the Labour government was not prepared to agree to the Corporate plan, and in fact brought forward orders for ships in the public sector, like weather and fishery-protection vessels, vessels.

With the return of the Tories, the prospects are now dramatically altered. Except for the naval work, the government may well decide to trim the orders that have already been advanced and in its broad outline, the British Shipbuilders' board will be given the go-ahead for massive closures and redundan-

Taking into account supply industries, sub-contract work, service industries like shops and transport, it is estimated that for every job in shipbuilding, there are between two and three other jobs dependent on the industry

1950s, '60s and '70s, British yards had static production (with falling workforce) while all the overseas competitors increased their own production in a market that was becoming ever more fierce.

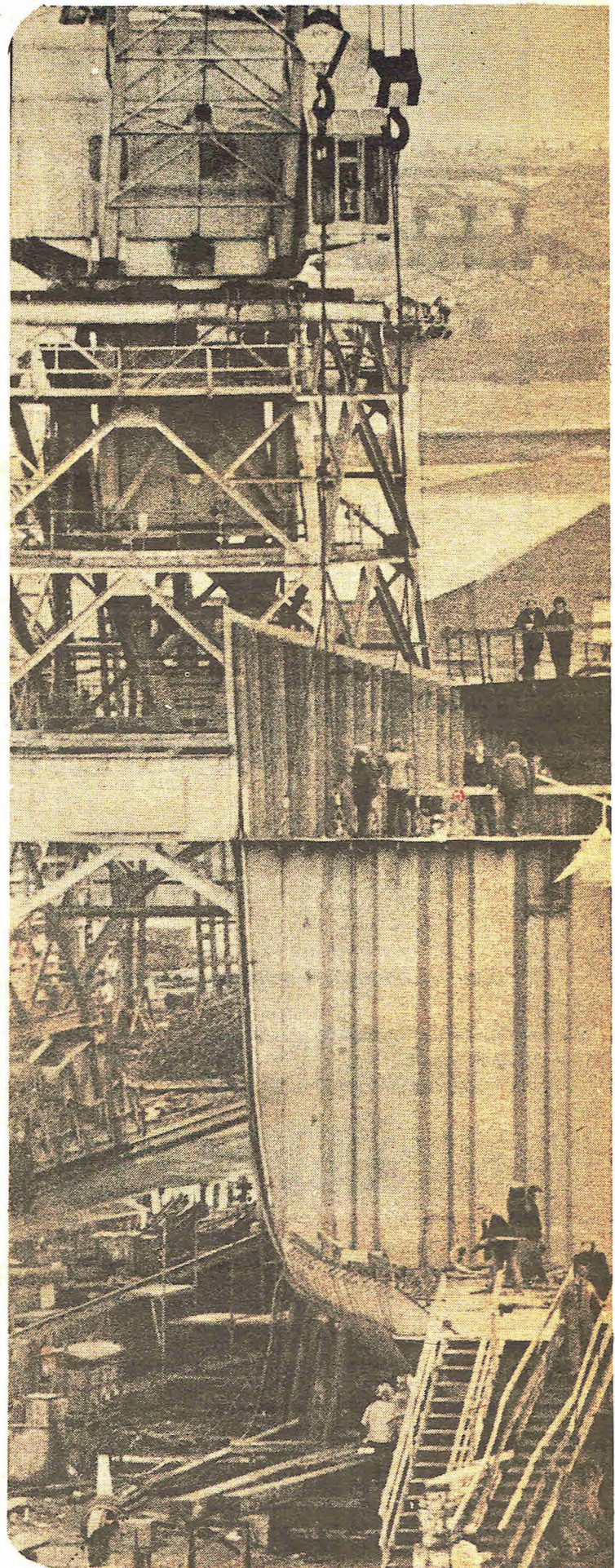
By 1970 it was clear that the British shipbuilding industry had no future whatsoever in capitalist hands. A document published jointly by the Labour Party and the Confed. (Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions) pointed to the miserably low investment in British yards: the assets per man employed in 1970 were £2,800 in Japan, £1,800 in Sweden, £1,200 in Italy, £1,000 in West Germany—and only £825

ing all right! They were enterprising enough to squeeze grant after grant out of successive governments while they continued to record profits for shareholders and while they continued to invest their own money in other industries and in other countries.

Since the middle 1970s the world shipbuilding crisis has become much worse. The falling off of trade after 1974's recession and the increase in oil prices in 1973 both dealt a hard blow to shipbuilding.

The nationalised British Shipbuilders has now begun a massive trimming of the industry. The miserable target of the BS Corporate Plan is to retain its "historic 3¼ per cent share of the world market", but even that may be hard in the increasingly

SHIPYARD MUST TORY SA



Sunderland Shipbuilders Ltd.—how many jobs will survive the Tory axe?

cies.

These huge pay-offs must be vigorously opposed by the Labour Party and the trade union movement. Voluntary redundancies must also be

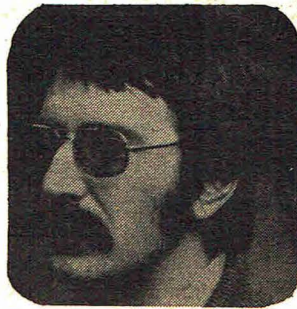
opposed within the industry.

It is obviously no easy task to fight voluntary redundancies where 46 per cent of the workforce are over 45 and 22 per cent are over 55 years

WORKERS FIGHT SACKINGS

By John
Pickard

Gateshead
Labour Party



even for a worker of 55 he is not selling his own job, but the job of his own son or that of his grandson.

If the leadership of the labour movement, and especially the unions within the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering unions really fought a campaign of propaganda and education against older workers taking the 'golden handshake', explaining what the job-loss means to the community, pointing out the impossibility of getting another job, and so on, then there could be a far more vigorous fight within the industry against redundancies.

But the labour movement must also look to the future of the industries and now be prepared through the unions and the Labour Party to put

corporate committee of lay members (shop stewards and convenors) so that it would be impossible to play off one area or one yard against another, as happened with the Polish ships order.

The unions must demand of the Labour Party that the next Labour government introduce fundamental reforms in the industry. Like other nationalised industries, shipbuilding was not only taken over with massive over-compensation (apart from all the grants mentioned earlier) but it was taken over and run in an extremely bureaucratic manner.

Labour Party policy must be for the nationalisation of all ship-repair yards, shipping lines and other related indus-

NEWCASTLE

The areas that will be especially affected by redundancies are in the east end of the town, in the three wards of Walker, Walkergate and St Anthony's where the male unemployment rate is already 15%. In these areas literally thousands of homes are directly dependent on shipyard wages and many more depend indirectly on the yards.

A study by the Newcastle Upon Tyne council has shown what the cost of redundancy will mean, in terms of lost revenue to the central and local government, and in terms of the extra payments and rebates which would follow for workers made unemployed. The cost per 1,000 redundancies is between £6m and £8.5m over five years.

This means that in the whole of the Tyne Wear area, where total redundancies may reach up to 8,000, the total bill over the five years afterwards will be a staggering £64 million!

forward and demand changes that are in the interests of the workers themselves and the community at large. The unions should demand that there be no dismantling of British Shipbuilders: any threats of hiving off must be fought with industrial action if necessary.

Despite a wide range in traditions and even in the nature of the work, the workers in the industry must move towards some form of

The Tories intend to hive off profitable parts, slash government subsidies, and sack thousands more shipyard workers

tries so that the industry can be harmoniously linked with related industries, including those, like steel, that provide the materials. So bureaucratic are the boards of nationalised industries that they are completely unconcerned about producing or making anything—so long as their balance sheets show up well in the right columns.

The British Shipbuilders management are quite happy to close a yard to save a million pounds—even if it costs the community three million afterwards in lost finance. This is the economics of the mad-house!

The industry must be run on the lines of democratic workers' control and management, and properly related and integrated with the needs and interests of the community and other industries.

If the shipbuilding industry were run on democratic lines and in a rational way, there could be enormous scope even in the midst of the world recession for work and orders. The policy of the shipbuilding unions is for a policy of "Scrap 2 and build 1" ship to reduce the surplus of ships and to modernise the fleets.

The unions have pointed out that 20 per cent of world tonnage is over 15 years old and ten per cent is over 20 years old. Many regulations are now being brought into force in relation to tankers

Unemployment in the main shipbuilding areas [Oct 1978]

	Male unemployment [%]	Total [%]
Tyneside	10.4	9.0
Liverpool	13.4	11.7
Wearside	13.7	12.4
Teesside	9.7	8.9
Greenock	10.5	10.2
Dumbarton	11.1	10.2
Glasgow	10.8	8.8

Some ratios of unemployment to vacancies in certain trades

Tyneside welders	593:1
Wearside platers	39:1
Teesside welders	479:1
Liverpool joiners	20:1
Glasgow scaffolders	42:1

Shipyard trade unions must unite around a fighting socialist programme to fight sackings

especially, but many of the world's ships are unable to meet these new safety standards. Then again, with proper management based upon the real needs of the community, there is a large scope for diversification in the industry towards the production of other engineering goods.

The shop stewards' committee of Vickers (Barrow) brought out their own pamphlet outlining their ideas on other products as an alternative to building warships.

But even where there

may not be the same amount of work available as in former years, the labour movement must demand work-sharing on full pay as an alternative to redundancies.

The 35-hour week without loss of pay must be a central demand of the Confed. unions. Alternative work must be found in the areas where shipbuilding at present is the main industry. No return to the 1930s!

★ No breaking up of British Shipbuilders! Fight any plans for hiving off!

★ Labour Party policy must be to re-nationalise any hived-off yards without compensation!

★ Fight for a national negotiating committee of lay union officials! No splits in the workforce!

★ Oppose all redundancies and closures! Share out the work on full pay!

★ Fight for the 35-hour week without loss of pay!

★ Labour Party policy must be for nationalisation of the shipping lines to plan future building programmes!

★ Take over the ship-repair and allied industries!

★ Workers' control and management of the industry!

BOOKS

Gallagher—Revolt on the Clyde . . . £2.75

Glyn—Capitalist Crisis—Tribune's 'alternative strategy' or socialist plan. . 60p

Ingham—The fight for a 35-hour week 20p

Grant—Will there be a slump? 15p

Marx—Wage, labour and capital 15p

Marx—Wagers, prices and profit 15p

Trotsky—Transitional programme . . . 25p

The Vickers shop stewards' anti-report is currently being reprinted—it will be available shortly from World Books
Place your order now!

World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace,
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Please add 10p p&p for pamphlets

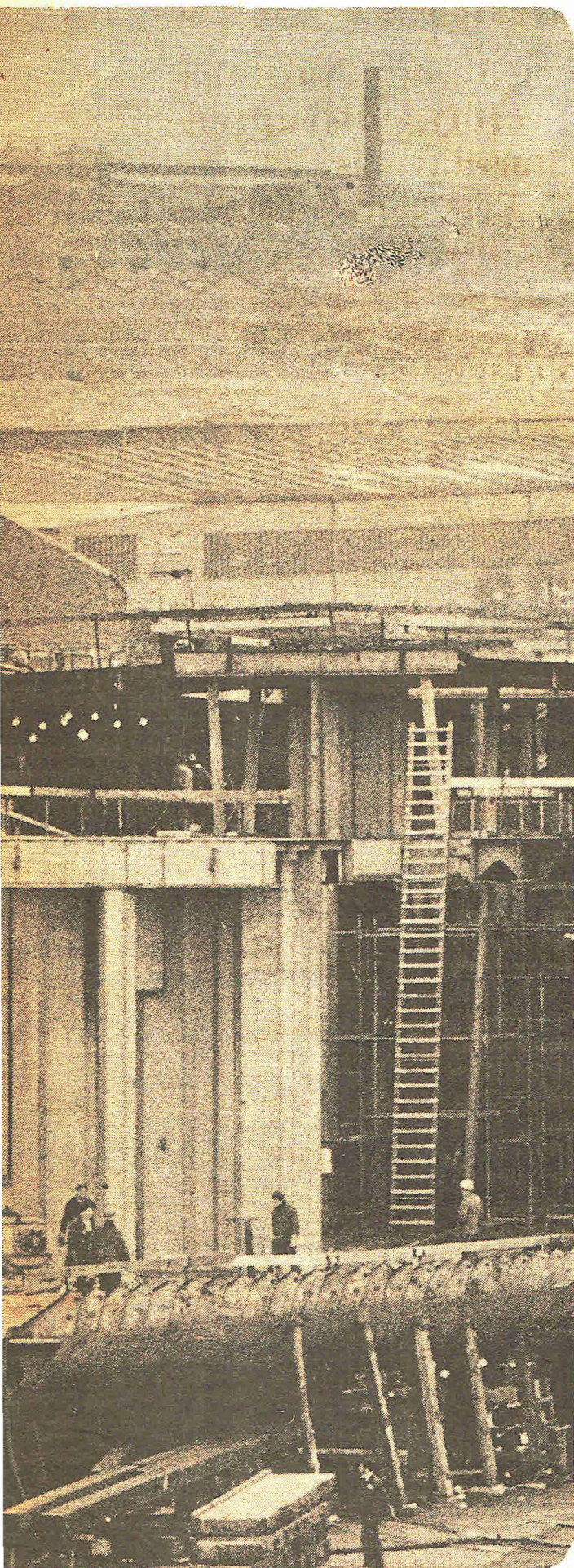


Photo: MILITANT

old (and these figures are even higher for the Tyne and the Mersey), and where £2,000 or £3,000 is a big temptation to any worker who has never had so much before and is

unlikely to ever again. But on the other hand, even £3,000 will only last a couple of years and is no substitute for the security of a job—quite apart from the fact that

Feature by
Jim Christie

THE STRUGGLE

MUZOREWA BRINGS NO CHANGES EXCEPT INCREASED REPRESSION

"Economically we are in bad shape. There is high unemployment in the country. This affects more blacks than whites.

"This worries me. Unless we can come up with something that stops the war and gives confidence to big business, we are in trouble."

That was the thinking of Rhodesia's Minister of Finance last year in the talks to arrange the internal settlement.

Nothing has changed.

The coalition government, the elections and Muzorewa government were meant to solve the problems facing the Rhodesian ruling class.

If anything, things have got worse in the last year.

The war is now costing £750,000 a day, and the budget deficit for 1979 will be £215 million. Real standards of living are on average lower now than in 1971.

The last three years have seen the economic situation worsen. In 1976 gross domestic product fell by 3.6%, in 1977 by a further 7% and unofficial figures for 1978 are higher still.

The military position for the Rhodesian ruling-class has also deteriorated. Now over 90% of the country is under martial law, and the Catholic Commission in Rhodesia estimate that guerrillas effectively control between a half and two-thirds of the countryside.

The Rhodesian armed forces are confined to search and destroy operations, or vicious attacks on refugee camps in Mozambique, Angola and Zambia. They do not even have enough manpower from local whites to fight the liberation forces.

Reservists can now be called up for service in their 50s. One-third of the army are now foreign mercenaries.

The Rhodesian racists and their international allies are desperate for a solution. Muzorewa was meant to provide a breakthrough, an opportunity for the regime to gain international recognition and increased finance.

But the Muzorewa-Smith regime cannot provide any stability to the country. If Muzorewa continues to try to maintain the present system, he will be losing support.

The African population are demanding: an end to racial discrimination, a decent standard of living, the right to land and end to unemployment.

But can capitalism provide this? The present arrangements really are no more than a black mask on white

repression. Racial discrimination will continue.

Throughout the last 90 years, Africans have been treated as a subject people, in a conquered land. They are discriminated against in all fields of life. 50% of land [the best] is in white hands.

All social expenditure is more favourable to whites, e.g. on average a white child has ten times more spent on his/her education by the state than an African child.

Cosmetic changes may come from Muzorewa, but not the dismantling of privilege and power.

Whites have 28% of seats in Parliament, although they are only 4% of the population. One quarter of Cabinet Ministers must be white for the next ten years. White capitalist Ministers and MPs will be able to block any moves to end discrimination.

The army and police will remain in white capitalist hands and outside of the government's effective control for the next ten years.

Muzorewa is a unique Prime Minister. Not only is he unable to dismiss his Army Commander; it is illegal for him to have his autobiography published in Rhodesia.

But how stable is this puppet government?

One of the greatest destabilising factors in the country is the rise in African unemployment. 75% of African families are dependent on wages to live. The Tribal Trust Lands are like labour reserves for white farmers, business and domestic employers.

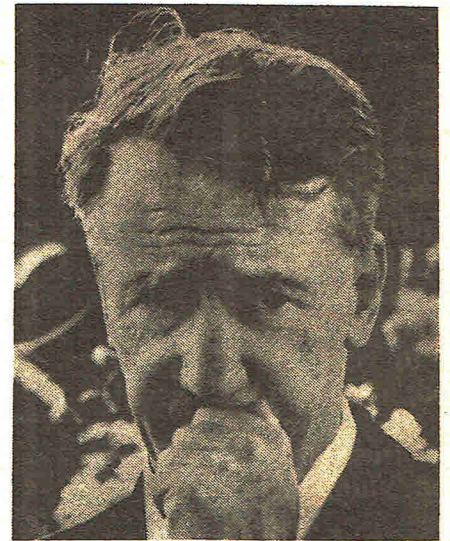
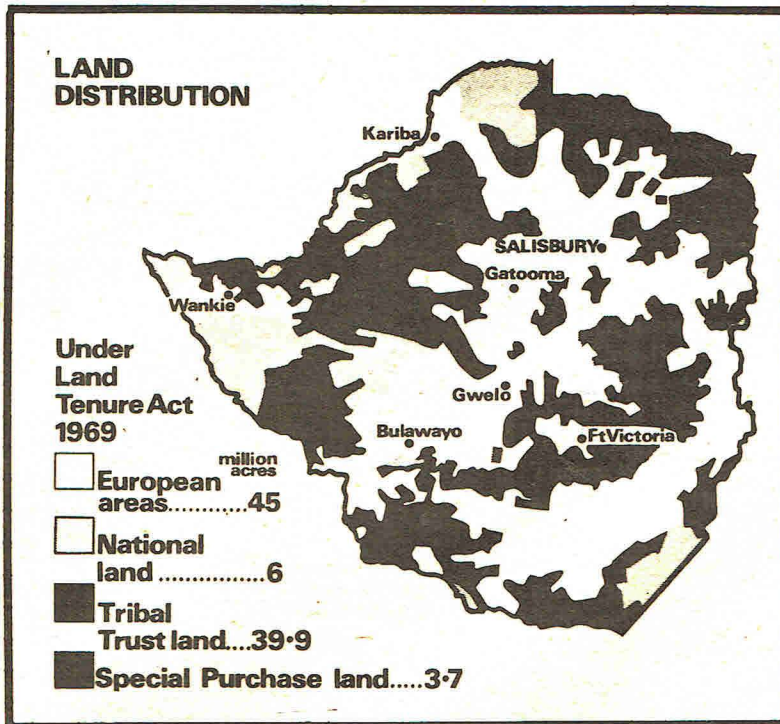
Yet the current economic crisis has seen a considerable growth in African unemployment. On present indications there will be an extra 600,000 male Africans out of work by 1985.

Impasse

Those in employment face considerable hardship. Recent surveys have shown that 80% of workers are paid below the poverty datum line; this is even worse than in South Africa. Agricultural wages have not risen in real terms since 1900.

The differential between black and white wages is of the order of 11 to 1, again worse, on average, than in South Africa.

Some Africans may still hope that a Muzorewa regime may mark a new beginning for the country. But his regime, like the new name of the State (Zimbabwe-Rhodesia) shows that he is unable



Smith's got more than his fingernails to worry about

or unwilling to decisively break with the present system.

Unable to bring real gains to the people of Zimbabwe, Muzorewa's government will come under increasing strain. Already eight of his MPs have broken away to form their own separate ethnic party, the Zimbabwe Democratic Party, under the leadership of Chikerema. Some of the would-be thieves have seen the writing on the wall. Sithole, who was unable to win many votes in the recent fraudulent elections has called for the return of nationalist leader, Nkomo.

There is little doubt that the liberation movements of ZANU and ZAPU have the overwhelming support of the vast majority of Africans in Zimbabwe.

Some sections of international capitalism want to trap



Muzorewa

these movements in compromises (see article on imperialism). But increasingly the Rhodesian, and South African ruling class together with the Tories seem prepared to gamble on an intensified military solution. Their strategy is to rely on the economic and military might of South Africa. The Botha regime has revived the idea of a southern African Common Market

with itself in the driving seat.

Privately Tories have raised the negotiating ploy that recognition will be more acceptable in Africa if Smith resigns. Then they could throw their unequivocal backing behind Muzorewa and give him support in the fight against the Patriotic Front.

But increased repression from a Muzorewa government, militarily aided by South Africa, would only intensify the struggle. There is no military solution for the Rhodesian ruling class.

Their hope for a Kenyan-style solution of transfer to African capitalists is also

utopian. The struggle against repression has pushed the liberation movements too far to the left.

Recognition by the Tories and military aid to Rhodesia will not stop the struggle. It will result in a growing class polarisation. It would result in a greater loss of life and a

ELECTIONS: FAIR OR FRAUD?

The Tories intimate they want to recognise the Muzorewa-Smith regime. The excuse they are using to justify their action is the fairness of the April elections in Rhodesia.

They have stated that 'independent' observers have reported how free and fair these elections were.

Thatcher dispatched her own independent observer, Lord Lennox-Boyd. Lennox-Boyd was a very appropriate person to send.

He is well versed in techniques of repression. As British Colonial Secretary from 1954-59 he was responsible for vicious suppression of anti-colonial movements in Kenya and Malawi. He must have felt quite at home in Rhodesia.

90% of Rhodesia is under martial law, enabling the security forces to jail or hang people without recourse to the courts. 39 people were hung in March alone.

The number of political detainees in Rhodesia is not known, but it is estimated that in the week prior to the election over 1,000 Patriotic Front supporters were arrested in the main urban areas.

Intimidation was widespread. This was noted by less pro-Smith observers. The liberal Lord Chitnis commented in his report on the elections:

"Intimidation and coercion were so widespread as to render the election results meaningless...Jubilant by the authorities about the high percentage poll is thus mere hypocrisy and the election cannot be regarded as anything other than a complete fraud."

During his two-week stay in Rhodesia Chitnis noted widespread intimidation.

The civil servant in charge of election procedure told white businessmen and farmers to take their employees to the poll. Some employers had a check-list to see who of their workers had voted. No vote, no job.

The security forces were told to escort people to the polls. People unwilling to vote often had a visit from the armed thugs of Sithole or Muzorewa (auxiliaries) to persuade them of their 'democratic duty'.

In the armed camps into which 750,000 Africans have been herded ('protected villages') the presence of security forces seemed to 'encourage' a high vote. Most people had voted by 10 o'clock on the first morning.

Prisons too had a high turnout, four reporting a 100% poll. Foreign agricultural workers (300,000) also voted. If they had refused they would have faced deportation.

At the polling stations Chitnis reported there was widespread fraud with presiding polling officers marking up votes. Some did this too enthusiastically, resulting in some districts having over a 100% poll.

Polling officials were under pressure as well. Many of them were teachers. African (and white) teachers were sent directions ordering them to serve as polling officers.

This stated: "Failure to comply with this direction will be an offence and will render you liable to a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months, or to both such fine and such imprisonment."

Chitnis is no supporter of the Patriotic Front. But he concludes that: "The recent election result in Rhodesia was nothing more than a gigantic confidence trick designed to foist on a cowed and indoctrinated black electorate a settlement and a constitution which were formulated without its consent and which are being implemented without its approval"

The black population in Rhodesia may not be as cowed and indoctrinated as Chitnis thinks. But there can be little doubt that the recent elections were fraudulent and were no more than an attempt to give a black mask to capitalist oppression in order to gain international support for the old system.

Any attempt by the Tories and imperialism to recognise and strengthen the repressive Muzorewa-Smith regime must be resisted by the international working class movement.

FOR ZIMBABWE

LIBERATION

prolonging of the struggle.

Yet there is no long-term future for capitalism in southern Africa. Its death throes may be vicious, but the southern African revolution has already begun. And a victory over capitalism and the end of white capitalist rule in Rhodesia would shake the whole foundations of oppression in the sub-continent.



Mugabe, leader of ZANU

WHO'S WHO IN ZIMBABWE

Patriotic Front

ZANU: leader Robert Mugabe; claims to be 'Marxist-Leninist', but in reality is a broad nationalist movement incorporating different class elements. Its guerrillas have borne the brunt of the fighting with limited help from China, none from international capital. In recent talks with ZAPU has tried to get military aid from USSR and Eastern Europe. ZAPU: leader Joshua Nkomo; a broad nationalist movement. Its guerrillas trained by Cuba, USSR and E Germany, as a regular army. Hardly any of its forces are committed in fighting yet. ZAPU is supported by USSR and by 'maverick' multi-national Lonrho.

Rhodesian government

UANC: leader Bishop Muzorewa; a broad nationalist movement with virtually no real guerrilla support, but with perhaps 5-8,000 paid 'auxiliaries'. Supported by South Africa and some sections of American business.

ANC: leader Rev. Sithole, who also still claims to be leader of ZANU. He has denounced elections as 'fixed' because he lost. Has possibly 3,000 armed 'auxiliaries'. Is an openly capitalist movement and has been supported by South Africa, Libya and Amin.

ZDP: leader Chikerema; recent ethnic breakaway from UANC. Same policies, just annoyed at not getting its share of the loot.

RHODESIAN FRONT: leader Ian Smith; party of Rhodesia's white ruling class, it still has control of armed forces and internal security.

Western imperialism rightly fears the growing radicalisation of the Zimbabwe liberation struggle. Middle Class leaders of the past have been shunted aside.

Sithole, former leader of ZANU, sits sulkily in his Salisbury mansion committed to the internal settlement, but unable to win any public support. Chikerema, head of the ZAPU army until 1970, is now an MP supporting the recognition of the Muzorewa-Smith regime.

The liberation movements have become more radicalised as they have had to come to grips with the nature of the enemy they were facing. The transition to armed struggle in the 1960s was a prerequisite for this change, but not the cause.

At first the strategy of armed struggle by ZANU and ZAPU in the early 1960s was to force the British government to intervene. But British imperialism did not want a military confrontation with Rhodesian and South African capitalists.

They wanted to work with them and fix up a compromise with sections of the African middle class.

The leadership of the nationalist movements wanted to rest on their support amongst the African people in Zimbabwe to do a deal with international capitalism.

But after UDI the tactic of armed struggle had to take on a new dimension. Although many of the African leaders still hoped for British intervention, they had to show that they were a serious threat to

the Smith regime. Wilson admitted that British policy was only to intervene if 'chaos' [i.e. African liberation] threatened the country.

In 1967-8 large groups of fighters were sent into the country. They did not prepare the people politically. And isolated from the people, these 'big wave' groups fought heroically but were defeated by Rhodesian and South African forces.

The debacle of this approach brought about tension and re-assessment within the liberation movements. Both inside ZANU and ZAPU ethnic rivalries surfaced in frustration at the lack of advance.

But there was also a more positive side. Some guerrilla fighters took the view that it was futile to rely on pressurising imperialist powers, and that the liberation struggle should involve the political mobilisation of the people in Zimbabwe.

This was partly reflected in the approach of ZANU after 1972. Small groups of six or seven went into the rural areas to lay the basis for the guerrilla fighters who followed.

Gradually control of the rural areas was extended, so that by this year the day-to-day life of most of the people in the countryside was under the control of the liberation movements.

Whilst that is now the current overall situation, there have been important differences between the way ZAPU and ZANU have operated in the liberated areas. ZAPU has seemed to be more in favour of closing down schools etc and making it impossible for the Smith

regime to operate, whereas ZANU has tried to rebuild and create a new kind of social structure.

It is partly because ZANU guerrillas have been forced to consider not just the society they are fighting against, but also the one they are trying to build, that they have developed stronger radical groups within them

ZAPU have also not committed their troops to the field as much as ZANU. ZAPU have assembled a more conventional army, ready to step into the breach when the Smith-Muzorewa regime disintegrates.

But neither ZANU nor ZAPU have really effectively mobilised or involved the rural or urban masses of Zimbabwe in the struggle. They have not formed local or national Peasant or Workers' Committees.

The urban areas have not been mobilised at all. It seems as if they are seen as reserve areas for the guerrilla fighters, suitable for hiding arms caches and the occasional act of sabotage. Under this strategic approach workers must wait to be liberated by the guerrilla army.

The liberation movements will undoubtedly win the struggle in Zimbabwe. But it will not result in effective power coming into the hands of the workers and peasants, unless they are involved in their own liberation and set up workers' and peasant organisations.

Zimbabwe will become another Angola or Mozambique. Here massive advances have been made on the basis of the defeat of imperialism and the expropriation of landlordism and capitalism.

IMPERIALISM

There is division within the camps of British and American imperialism on how best to stop the Zimbabwe liberation struggle.

The Americans want to entrap the liberation movements in compromise negotiations. Sections of the Tories want to help Muzorewa, Smith and South Africa fight it out with them. They have the same aim, just differ in tactics.

Carter and the last Labour government preferred the negotiations approach. The approach and details of the Anglo-American proposals of 1977-9 were an attempt to remove any socialist aspects of a future Zimbabwe.

The Tories now seem to be rejecting these tactics and edging towards recognition of the Muzorewa-Smith regime, some time after the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in August and before

the parliamentary renewal of sanctions order in November.

They are not cutting off all links with the Patriotic Front, Thatcher's special envoy to Africa, Lord Harlech, had a meeting with Patriotic Front leaders this month.

But they have changed the tactics and are clearly giving substantial backing to the South African-backed Muzorewa-Smith regime. Muzorewa made a secret visit two weeks ago to see the South African Prime Minister and ask for more military aid.

The Tories' approach has met with some tactical criticism from Labour right-wingers. When he was Foreign Secretary, David Owen warned South Africa that if it committed military personnel in Rhodesia they would be unable to stay for ever and by the time they had left they would have created "very fierce enemies" in the country (interview in 'Guardian' 18 April).

The Carter government still adopts this approach. Fearful of driving the liberation movements further to the left, worried about Cuban or East German involvement and

apprehensive about Nigerian economic retaliation, Carter has argued against lifting sanctions.

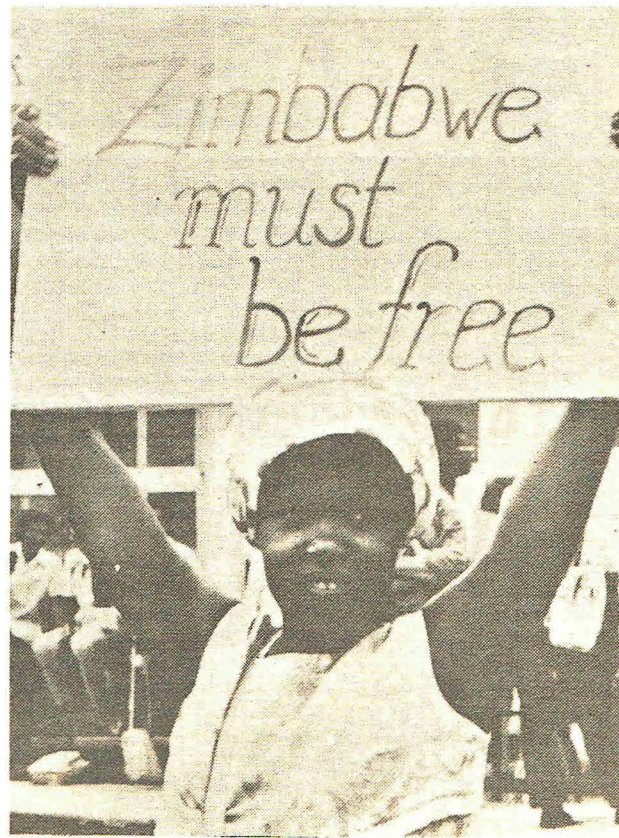
His approach is in no way one of support for the national and social liberation of Zimbabwe. Yet we find some in the labour movement who identify wholeheartedly with American imperialism's approach.

In an editorial on June 15th 'Tribune' stated:

"All praise to President Carter for resisting the demands of the Senate that sanctions should be raised in Rhodesia... Labour should force the Tories hand on this issue. Why not an official Opposition move to praise President Carter's stand and a debate in the House of Commons?"

But no trust can be put in any of the manoeuvres of the world's most important imperialist power. International capitalism has always opposed the struggle of the people of Zimbabwe for freedom.

In the 1960s Western imperialism wanted to integrate the black middle class with the State machine and give some nominal political



Major battles lie ahead to achieve this

The leaders rest upon mass support in the country, but do not allow the workers or peasants to control the state. Any independent action by workers is ruthlessly crushed.

The leadership of the liberation movements still talk of establishing a 'national democratic state' in Zimbabwe. First there will be a democratic [capitalist] revolution, later a socialist one.

This democratic revolution will apparently give the land to the tiller, place curbs on business and establish democracy. But it is an illusion that this can be done without confronting the power of big business.

The division of land into rich [white] farms and arid labour reserves for Africans is integral to Rhodesia's capitalist economy. Land to the tiller is impossible under a capitalist Rhodesia. Similar

problems would arise from attempts to curb the profitability of business. The whole idea of stages in the Rhodesian revolution is a dream.

All the problems facing the people of Zimbabwe cannot be solved by maintaining capitalism in any form in the country or in southern Africa as a whole.

To defeat the tricks of imperialism and the local capitalists, the struggle must be extended. Mobilise the population to fight the racists and capitalists. Establish workers' and peasants' committees. Extend help to the South African revolution.

In this way the Smith-Muzorewa regime can be speedily defeated and steps made to begin the establishment of workers' democracy in southern Africa.

Foreign capital

Of Rhodesia's top 15 companies: 8 are South African subsidiaries; 3 are British subsidiaries; 1 is an American subsidiary.

One of these is Rio Tinto Zinc, which is owned by RTZ [S Africa], a wholly owned subsidiary of RTZ [UK]. One of the directors of RTZ [UK] until May 1979, when he became the Tory Foreign Secretary, was Lord Carrington.

power to the Africans.

Sate men such as Banda in Malawi, Kaunda in Zambia, Khama in Botswana, Nyerere in Tanzania and Kenyatta in Kenya, Nkomo in Rhodesia filled that role.

But unfortunately for Western imperialism, state power in Rhodesia rested in local white hands. And Rhodesian white capitalists and farmers knew that their privileges rested on maintaining control of that State machine.

This is what led to Smith's declaration of UDI in 1965. Western imperialism's response to UDI shows that its differences with the Rhodesian regime were only secondary. Sanctions were gradually imposed, not to bring the regime down, but to force it to the conference table to make concessions.

It was only when the African liberation struggle intensified from 1972 onwards, that Western imperialism began to put serious

pressure on Smith to give concessions.

It is to stop that liberation struggle from succeeding that all the manoeuvres of Western imperialism are directed. They have considered assembling a UN force, based on Nigeria, to act as a 'third force' in the country. Imperialists will of course do anything except give unequivocal support to the forces of liberation.

Having come so far it is vital that the Zimbabwe liberation and international labour movement do not fall for any of the tricks of Western imperialism.

The international working class must give its support to the struggle for socialism in Zimbabwe and southern Africa. Support the fight for social and national liberation and give no encouragement or support to any of Western imperialism's plans.

Send your views and comments on the issues that affect you to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

ISLE OF WIGHT ELECTION CAMPAIGN: The real results are now showing

Dear Comrades

No one told me, when the Parliamentary candidate, the Agent and I were hammering out the general election address for the Isle of Wight, that it would have "almost magical" powers, which would enable us to win a sweeping victory.

If they had I would have replied in the kind of language I am itching to use having read Pete Willsman's letter. ['Militant', 15 June].

Because in general elections, one tends to find that national issues and trends make their tiny presence felt: we can just as realistically hope to escape them as an individual capitalist economy can hope to avoid the repercussions of international slump.

And on the Isle of Wight, about which Pete seems to know less than nothing, we had to contend with the record of the Labour government, unemployment, cuts in services, the disastrous incomes policy and to cap it all the gutless Manifesto.

On top of that, we had to face "tactical voting" from our natural supporters, many of whom voted Liberal to keep the Tory out—an understandable, if unfortunate, reaction.

Now, I am prepared to accept comradely criticism of our failure to expose the real nature of the Liberal Party, though I would point out that we have to face a rabid right-wing press down here and a wealthy Liberal election machine built on the

"nice guy" image of Stephen Ross, MP.

But Pete Willsman's criticism is not comradely at all, but a gratuitous attack on 'Militant' supporters. So let me tell him something.

In the run-up to and during the campaign, we increased our membership, our trade union affiliations, and our support amongst the young: the LPYS branch has doubled in size.

I have been a member of this CLP for nearly ten years, and in all that time I have never seen so much enthusiasm, dedication and hard work. And the credit for that must go to our candidate, Cathy Wilson, and the 'Militant' supporters who put all they had into the fight.

We have nothing to be ashamed of in this Party: the points we made hit home, and, I believe, contributed to the massive anti-Tory vote in this once-solid Tory seat—a vote which will come to us if we build on the gains we have made.

We deserve better from our comrades in the labour movement than ill-informed attacks. We are accustomed to these from the Tory press, but I don't know why Pete feels he has to sink to the same level. It is unworthy of him and the comradely traditions of the labour movement.

Yours fraternally

Robert Jones

Secretary, Isle of Wight Constituency Labour Party

Catch-22

Dear Comrades

On moving to London recently I had an argument in a council housing department. It would be amusing if it wasn't a problem faced by thousands of youth in Britain's cities.

Self: "I'd like to register on the housing list."

Housing Officer: "Have you got a permanent address?"

Self: "I'm living on the floor of my friend's council flat."

HO: "Well sir, if you are paying him rent you are an illegal tenant, and you and your friend could be evicted. If you are not paying rent, then you haven't got a permanent address, and we can't put you on the waiting list."

Self: "Then I'm homeless."

HO: "I'm sorry but we can't accept you unless you have a permanent address."

Self: "But if I've got a permanent address I won't be homeless and in need of somewhere to live."

HO: "I'm sorry but that's the way it is."

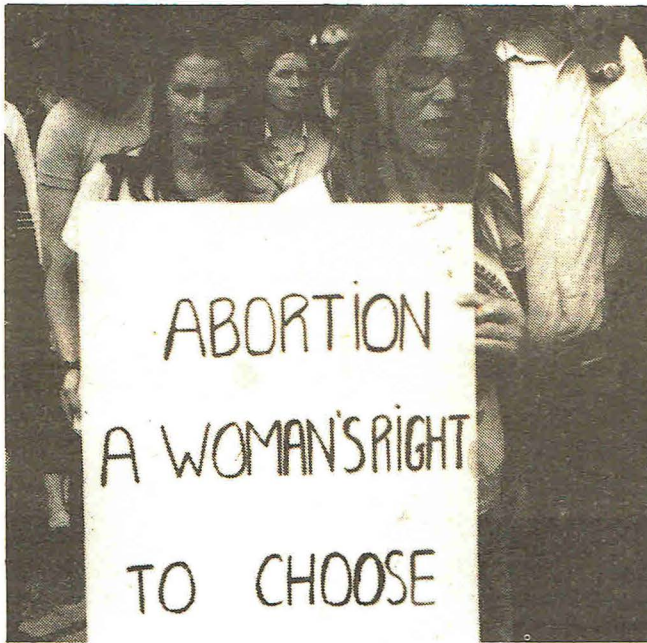
Talk about Catch-22!

After much scraping around and three days off work, I've found a grotty bedsit, like an overgrown box—£12.50 a week plus electric, £50 deposit down, £30 to the agency that "found it" for me.

Of course now I've got somewhere to live, I won't be priority for the housing list!

Yours fraternally

An LPYS member, London



Dear Comrades

I'd like to draw readers' attention to the vulnerability of the 1967 Abortion Act under the Tory government and the erosion of already woefully inadequate abortion facilities on the NHS (e.g. only 13% of abortions carried out in Birmingham are done under the NHS).

It is likely that there will soon be a private member's bill to restrict abortion rights. This fear was expressed at the recent National Abortion Campaign (NAC) conference.

It is vital that support is mobilised to counter this attack on abortion rights. Many trade unions have a positive policy on this (e.g. NUPE). The voice of these unions must be raised against the bill. Many others do not—and NALGO is threatening to

disaffiliate from NAC.

We must close ranks and make clear the misery and injustice produced by restrictive legislation: the backstreet abortionist must not be allowed to profit from the inadequacies of abortion provision.

The health and rights of working class women must be defended (those who can afford it can always turn to the private sector) and the fundamental rights of women to control their own fertility must be stressed.

NAC is campaigning to defend the 1967 Abortion Act and press for the provision of day-care (out-patient) clinics for early, safe abortions.

Yours sincerely

Helen Seymour

Leeds NAC

PSOE developments inspire socialists

Dear Comrades

The article by Roger Silverman (issue 458) on the developments within the PSOE (Spanish Socialist Party) should be an inspiration for Marxists within the British labour movement.

Despite the antics of the right wing within the PSOE, despite witch-hunts and expulsions, the voice of Marxism is still to the fore, and more relevant to the Spanish working class than ever before.

It is especially satisfying to see the 'Nuevo Claridad' playing such an important role in the fight to achieve socialism: this must be a vindication of the role and programme of the paper, whose supporters have been attacked so much by the defenders of the "mixed economy" within the PSOE.

Marxists in Britain must take heart from this victory and look to the future with renewed confidence in Spain and Britain.

The story and struggle of the Spanish workers has had a tremendous effect on one young comrade, Eddie Lowerson, of Chester-le-Street LPYS.

So much so that at his 21st party celebrations, when I asked for those invited to give a contribution towards the payment for food and music which had been provided by his parents, and to put towards a present for him, Eddie insisted that any money raised should be sent to help the Marxists of 'Nuevo Claridad' in their struggle.

He was so inspired by the developments that he felt that the best present he could receive would be such a donation.

A cheque for £26 which was raised has been sent to 'Nuevo Claridad' with best wishes for the future struggle from 'Militant' supporters and patrons of the Chester-le-Street Labour Club.

Fraternally

Gordon Bell

Profits rocket: wages dive

Dear Comrades

The UDS Group recently published their annual results for the year ended 27th January 1979. They make interesting reading for any worker in the retail trade.

The UDS group includes 'Richard Shops', 'Allders', 'Ocean Trading', 'John Myers', 'John Blundell', 'Wm Timpson', 'John Farmer' and 'Alexandra'.

The sales of the group increased from £331 million in 1978 to £395 million in 1979 (+ 20% approx.). Pre-tax profits increased from £13.2 million to £20.7 million (+ 50% approx.). The amounts attributable to ordinary stockholders increased from £16.6 million to £30.1 million!

So it seems hard to believe that many workers employed by the UDS group are on Wages Council rates, i.e. legal minimum for the trade! Workers in my own store are paid between £45 and £50 a week gross, including Saturday work for many.

Currently, the store are trying to introduce "incentive payments" as a further boost to profits. This method of 'dangling the carrot' can only divide the workforce.

Needless to say, local shop stewards will be calling on workers to reject this proposal out of hand, and fight instead for a decent living wage. USDAW national policy of £55 minimum for a 35-hour week must be a minimum demand for shopworkers this year.

Fraternally

USDAW shop steward,

Cardiff

A kidney or a house

Dear Comrades

An article in the 'News of the World' on June 10th really indicates the horrific lengths that some working people are now driven to in order to achieve the most basic needs.

A separated woman, living with her teenage daughter in a small bedsit, was advertising one of her kidneys for sale at £20,000.

Why? So that she could buy a decent house for herself and her daughter to live in.

What sort of society is it that allows huge office blocks to be built and lie idle while others are forced to such extremes as this woman in order to live decently?

We must demand that the Labour Party adopts in its programme the need to nationalise the building societies and insurance companies together with the land.

Then the resources of land, building workers and bricks can be utilised for the benefit of all in society—not just the chosen few.

Yours comradely

Carol Sewell

Swansea LPYS

The stylish Mrs T

Dear Comrades

All you avid readers of the 'Sun' had a lesson in 'style' on 12 June. Top fashion man Anthony Price explained to the masses that looking nice wasn't just a matter of wearing expensive clothes but having 'style' too—and his favourite at this was old Ma Thatcher.

"In those TV close-ups (during the election) she was always perfect—sensational make-up, great colours by her clothes. Everything about her was a perfect production," he said.

—Ah well, she's only been in power for a few weeks and the working class are already seeing through her 'perfect production' to the new witch of capitalism she really is.

But I wonder if Mr Price would be thrilled with my working attire—after all, you have to do your best when you work as a cleaner in a mental hospital.

The centrepiece of my outfit is a delightful baggy top coat in regulation blue (that is, faded and worn out from being washed so often because the Health Authority can't afford to buy any more), over which there is a polka-dot design (of grease and pigswill stains).

The outfit is completed by a pair of grubby jeans and some dainty DM hobnails for the feet; and the whole creation is set off by a memorable aroma of detergent and excrement (which is achieved by cleaning out the patients' toilets).

But what of physical beauty? In the same article model Marie Helvin, wife of photographer David Bailey, explained to the 'Sun's' working-class readers, "I think champagne every day is the secret of looking beautiful."

Well with jolly old champers at a tanner a bottle (and that's the cheap stuff) I think I'll stick to tea and coffee.

Fraternally

Bob Wade

Brentwood LPYS

Open market—closed services

Dear Comrades

"There is no oil crisis." That is the reassuring view of David Howell, Energy Minister. Just cut consumption by 5% and the free market will do the rest.

The alternative, he says, would be rationing, an unnecessary and bureaucratic measure, requiring impossible decisions as to whether farms or hospitals should get the fuel.

Put that way it seems very reasonable. The reality is rather different. The health

authority which controls all London's ambulances has had its supply cut by 30% by the Tory GLC.

It has had to go on the open market and been forced to pay up to £1.80 a gallon; the alternative would be to let ambulances stand idle in garages. This is close to happening in Merseyside where the ambulance service may have to be completely withdrawn.

When the ambulancemen struck for a living wage the Tories and their kept press

denounced them for holding the public to ransom.

Surely they will now denounce the oil companies who are clearly doing precisely that—their silence is deafening.

How long can we let ambulances compete with tourism and the millionaires' Rolls-Royces for scarce fuel? Fight for a socialist planned economy!


















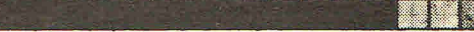

Fraternally

Gerry Hill

Coventry NUPE

BUILD OUR STRENGTH

Build

Area	Target 52 wks	Target 26 wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,700	2,350		1,322
Hants & IOW	3,100	1,550		1,097
Humberside	2,000	1,000		739
London North	9,500	4,750		2,470
London South	3,900	1,950		1,451
Manchester & Dist.	4,500	2,250		1,249
Merseyside	5,000	2,500		1,300
Midlands East	3,300	1,650		1,448
Midlands West	9,000	4,500		3,050
Northern	5,500	2,750		1,682
Scotland East	2,900	1,450		606
Scotland West	4,500	2,250		982
South East	4,500	2,250		1,642
South West	3,100	1,550		1,230
Wales East	2,600	1,300		708
Wales West	3,400	1,700		647
Yorkshire	6,800	3,500		2,021
Others	6,700	3,250		5,430
Total	85,000	42,500		29,078

Progress towards year's target  Progress towards July 7th target 

TARGET FOR THE YEAR £85,000 - TARGET FOR JULY 7th £42,500

**THIS WEEK:
£1,242**

and badges, but Jimmy Carter (Merseyside NGA) sent £11 and other NGA supporters another £26. Over £2.60 came from collections at Old Swan and Wavertree LP meetings, and a fiver from R Currey (Garston) and £4 from J Duffy (CPSA).

Midland East's £37, including £2 from pensioner F Perkins (Nottingham) and £10 council expenses means only £202 required to meet the half year target: you should go well over, comrades. Money is already on its way from Leicester, we hear, but more is still needed.

Midlands West have a target of getting another £1,450 by July 7th after the £116 received this week. Thanks to Rover meeting collection (£7.78), EEC Readers' Meeting (£36.27), 'Summer Dance' £25.25, C Mullins £5 and E Spence £1, among others.

Northern supporters are always sociable and the main contributions to the £32 sent for the fighting fund this week were from a curry evening and

a disco on Tyneside. But, still £1,068 short of their half year's target, the comrades must take advantage of typical Geordie generosity too, in the next two weeks!

Scotland East's total benefited by £61 from an Edinburgh disco but is still £844 behind the half-year target. What about discos elsewhere? Thanks to T Becker, D Wilkie, D Inglis and T Cameron of Midlothian for their donations.

Scotland West's £27 came from a Readers' Meeting in Glasgow and £7 D Williams' union expenses. £1,268 to raise in two weeks is now the "heritage" of half a year's slow fund-raising.

Southern supporters have another £608 to raise by July 7th, after £76 came in this week—the bulk of it from a jumble sale and 'stall at

Labour Party fair'.

South West need just six times the total of £55 sent in this week, nearly £23 of that from a 'Militant Readers' Meeting.

E Wales supporters, likewise, need six times the healthy £108 sent from fund-raising activities including those at the Miners' Gala.

W Wales Miners' Gala fund-raising raised £60 of the £84 week's total for that area still leaving over £1,000 to raise in two weeks! We have a 'promise' of at least £150 to show 'goodwill' and resolve to catch up by the end of the year.

Yorkshire's line needs a push of £1,479 on top of the very welcome regular contributions like the £2 a week from R Barker (Bradford LP), the £3.06 from collecting tins, the £9.60 from the

Marxist Discussion Group on the Communist Manifesto, £1.60 from selling pontoon tickets and the donation of £2 by B Narey (Bradford) and £1.02 by J Ryan of the Dyers' and Bleachers' Union. (Total this week just £39.)

Contributions that go under 'Others' have gone way beyond expectations already with amounts like £133 raised at the NALGO conference and £23 at that of the IRSF.

Thirteen and a half thousand pounds in two weeks might seem to be beyond our expectations. But it could be achieved...with an all-out push on the Eurodraw, on the 'Militant' pledge sheets, the appeals for 'fivers' and 'tenners' from readers and with fund-raising activities organised up to the last minute (12 noon July 8th).

Make sure you make your contribution—'Militant' must accumulate to communicate!

By Steve Cawley

'Militant's' aim is to communicate the ideas of Marxism to as many workers as possible in the shortest possible time.

Marx and Engels described in the Communist Manifesto how, in their continual struggle with capitalism, workers are helped in forging their fighting capacity, unity and strength by "the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry."

In 1848 this meant above all the railways and other means of transporting mail and trade unionists! Today the 'grave-diggers of capitalism' have even more rapid means of communication at their elbow—if they can afford them.

For a workers' paper like the 'Militant', rapid typesetting, plate-making, printing and distribution are essential. Capitalism has developed them. But it takes huge amounts of 'capital' to be able to use them!

'Militant' has made great strides forward and our next step is to improve the speed and quality of the camera/plate-making with a £10,000 'investment'. But, as things stand on our fighting fund, we are at least that much short of our planned income.

Readers may feel like giving up before they start! How can they find sums like that?

Nobody is expecting you to! To make it more realistic, why not concentrate on providing us with another of the more modest steps forward? 'Militant' has ordered three new telephone exchange lines for its office, where that form of communication has become intolerably congested. Cost of connection—£30 each, first quarter's rent £9.75—almost exactly the amount raised at a Discussion Group in Leeds last week on...The Communist Manifesto!

Now if you can't manage the £10,000, could you instal another telephone? (£30) Could you pay the first quarter's rental? (a 'tenner would do it) or could you promise £1 a week towards

the phone bills?

The capitalists have got the cash for jets and helicopters, telexes and computers. Our aims are modest—a good plate-maker and three more phones but we haven't even got the cash for them!

Please help. We now need £1,000 a day to reach our half-year target of £42,000. Communicate the urgency of the situation to every reader you see then communicate to us how much is on its way!

This is how the week's £1,242 leaves each area on the chart:

From **Eastern** this week came £34, mainly from Harlow, including £1 from E Carlyle—£1,028 to get in the next two weeks!

Hants/Isle of Wight area's line went along another £47 (helped by a 'fag sale'). Now £453 behind the half year mark. J Jepson and I Bristow of Bridlington gave £1 and £1.50 this week, but where are the other **Humberside** donations? Just another £261 to the target by July 7th.

London North supporters sent us £159 this week, of which £50 came from Wall End branch of Newham North East CLP, evidently in appreciation of the way we have reported events in Newham, and in the Labour Party in general. Thanks a lot, comrades.

R Allen (Southgate) sent £15 'accumulated' over several weeks. £6 came from S Jacobs (Chingford), £5 from B Dolan (Islington) and £1 from Mark Godson (Dagenham). Another £2,280 could be raised easily if other Labour Parties in North London emulated Wall End!

London South have just another £500 to the target, thanks to supporters like F and B Kidd (Wandsworth, £6), B Eastop (Bermondsey, £3.50), G Peakin Greenwich, £4.25), P Rogan (Croydon, £6) and R Bright (Peckham, £2) who helped to make up the £83 this week.

Manchester and Lancs need another £1,000 by July 7th! Only £19 came in this week, of which £15 was from a 'slim' and donations from M Prendeville (Stretford) and P Gunn (Salford).

Merseyside supporters sent over £90 this week and now need another £1,200 by July 7th. Some came from bets

ads

RATES:
CLASSIFIED: 5p per word.
Minimum ten words.
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.

NEWCASTLE Militant Readers' Meeting 'The Oil Crisis—whom is to blame?' Speaker: John Pickard. Sunday 1st July, 7.00 pm. Newcastle Trades Council Centre for the Unemployed, 9 Queen Street, off the Quayside, at the bottom of Dean Street, Newcastle.

HOUGHTON - LE - SPRING Marxist Discussion Group. 'The Communist Manifesto, parts 3 and 4'. Thursday June 28th, 7.30 pm. 13 Finchale Court, West Rainton, near Houghton-le-Spring

All advertisement copy should reach this office by **SATURDAY**.

STOCKPORT Militant Public Meeting 'Tories Out—socialist policies for Labour'. Speaker: Terry Harrison (Former Labour Euro-candidate for Liverpool). At: Committee Room 'A', Stockport College of Technology, Wellington Road South 7.30 pm. Thursday 5th July

SOUTH LONDON 'Militant' Supporters Midsummer Social Phil's Fabulous Disco and an excellent bar. Admission only 50 pence. At Goldsmith's College Students Union, Lewisham Way, London S.E.14. On Saturday June 30th, 8 pm-11.15 pm. All welcome.

SEAHAM Marxist Discussion Group. 'The Communist Manifesto parts 3 and 4'. Thursday July 5th, 7.30 pm. 6 William Johnson Street, Murrton.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE Militant Public Meeting 'Trade unions and management in nationalised industries'. Speaker: Bill Mullins (Senior steward, BL Rover Solihull). Friday 6th July, 7.00 pm. Fullerton Arms, Sheffield Road, Rotherham

DURHAM MINERS' GALA
Saturday 21st July

Northern 'Militant' supporters will provide accommodation on Saturday night for those who want to attend the gala, help sell papers etc.

Social events will be organised around the area on Saturday evening.
Contact Wilf Flynn,
3 Kennet Avenue, Jarrow,
Tyne & Wear. Tel: 0632-892731

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ALL PROCEEDS FOR FIGHTING FUND

MILITANT WEEKEND SCHOOL

Friday June 29th to Sunday July 1st
At: Goldsmith's College Students' Union,
Lewisham Way, London S.E.14.

Courses on:

- ★ Marxist Economics
- ★ Marxist Philosophy
- ★ Marxism and the Trade Unions
- ★ Ireland: History and Perspectives
- ★ Russian Revolution
- ★ The Labour Party

Friday 7.30 pm: film 'Harlan County'

Plus: Debate. 'A Socialist Programme for Labour'
Speakers from 'Militant' and 'Tribune'

Registration: £2.50—whole weekend, £1.50 for Saturday or Sunday only, 75p for Friday evening only.
To register, or for further information, write to:
Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

UNIONS CAN STOP THE NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST

"The workers united will never be defeated!" The streets echoed to these words on Saturday 16th when Nottingham saw the biggest demonstration and mass picket so far in support of the sacked journalists at the Evening Post.

NUJ, NGA, SLADE and Trades Council banners lined the march. Coaches brought about 1,500 pickets from Leeds, Liverpool, London and all over the country.

A group of local miners responded to the call put out by Nottingham Trades Council and there were members of USDAW, AUEW, G&MWU as well as Labour Party Young Socialists. What a tremendous display of solidarity!

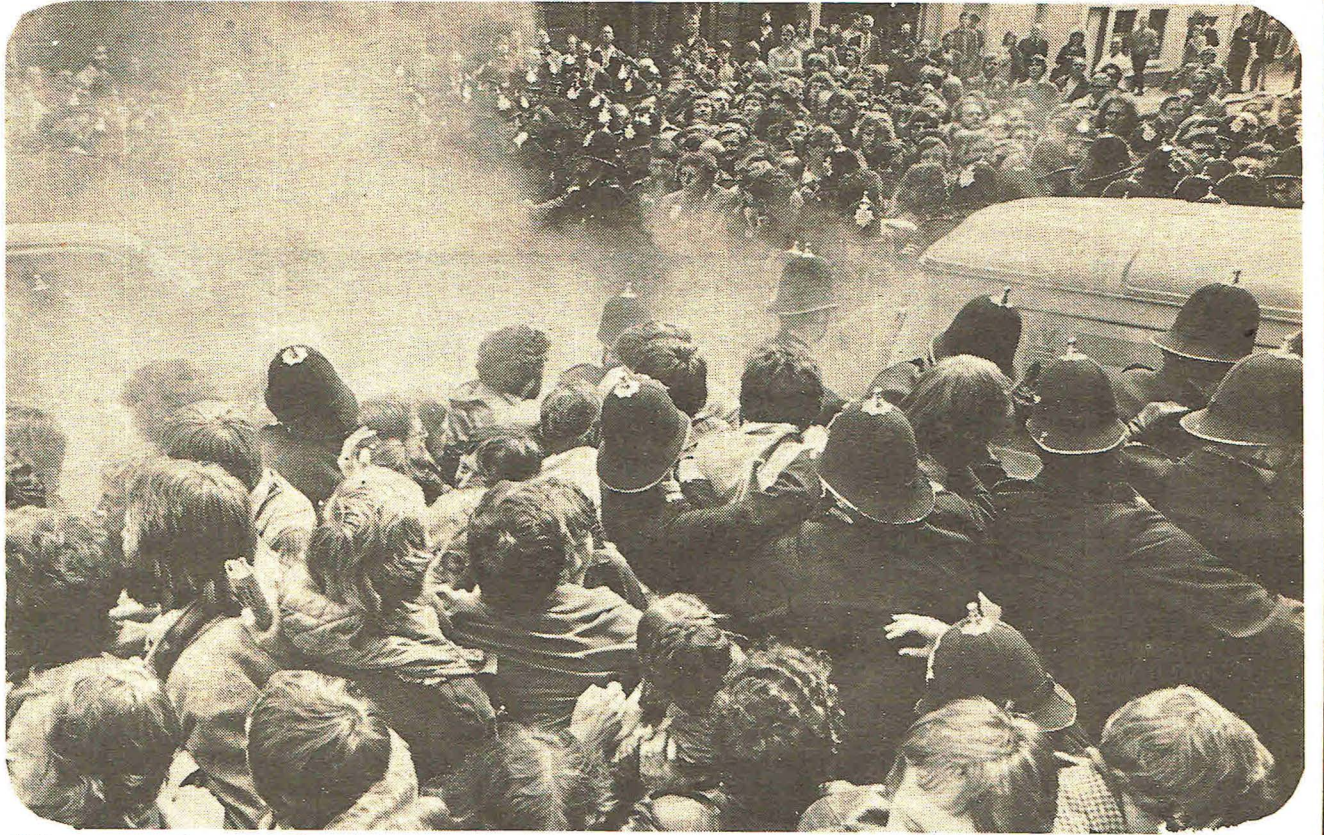
All the union speakers who

addressed the pickets stressed how vital it is to win this dispute. This was clearly spelt out by **Tony Mulhearn** [Liverpool NGA] who said this was part of a determined attack by the bosses on trade union rights, in particular the closed shop.

It must not be seen as an isolated action by the 'Post' management. Without a doubt they have the backing of other employers, secretly if not openly.

The hundreds of police drafted in to break up the picket line and let the Post vans through showed just how seriously they regard this fight. We must be just as serious.

Les Dixon [NGA Gen Sec] said we'll win if it takes six years. Yes, but we can't afford to wait that long.



Police attempt to force a way through the Post picket for a delivery van

Photo: MILITANT

The NUI dispute is now in its eighth month but the print workers' dispute goes back to 1973. A victory for these workers is long overdue.

Saturday was a partial victory. Despite police connivance at getting the vans out through a rear exit, when they returned for another delivery the pickets held them back for about half an hour.

There was a tremendous feeling that with a few more we could have held the line all

day. Many vowed to double their contingent next time. But with the next mass picket not planned till September 1st there is a danger that this determination and enthusiasm could be allowed to wane.

More mass pickets should be planned now.

As Grunwick showed two years ago, however, picketing alone will not resolve this dispute. Action must be taken to hit the Post hard. Blacking

of advertisements must again be taken up by the NGA.

Above all the unions must be prepared to cut off gas, water and electricity supplies.

These issues could be discussed at a conference of trade unions and other labour organisations which should now be called by the NUI, the print unions and Nottingham Trades Council. This would involve the supply unions in the dispute.

The fight involves all trade

unionists because it represents a challenge to trade union rights. Now is the time to answer it, to show the bosses and their spokesmen, the Tories, they can't take away our rights as they please.

By **Chris Ridge**

(Nottingham LPYS)

TASS MEMBERS CONFRONT LOEWY COMBINE

Four hundred TASS members at Davy Loewy, Sheffield, covering the full range of technical jobs, are on strike for increased wages.

The seven day a week, round-the-clock picketing has already had a marked effect at the Sheffield HQ of the Davy Loewy combine.

The claim is for a 'substantial' wage increase. Spokesmen for the pickets emphasised that this means 20% just to keep pace with the way the cost of living has risen over the past two years.

Management's offer was a derisory 9%. They have also informed the union that any 'final' settlement would be between 9-10%. This amounts in practice to a refusal to hold genuine negotiations.

The claim has gone through procedure and the dispute has been made official. For the strikers, it is make or break now.

Shop floor production has already come to a halt. The company is paralysed, with 800 shop floor workers laid off by Friday of this week.

The shop floor have given very effective assistance and support. Transport drivers immediately turned away their lorries from the picket line.

A lot of capital is now idle, and the pickets are confident of the outcome. They realise, however, that the company are backed by the overall policy of the Engineering Employers' Federation.

They know that the outcome will affect other disputes; theirs is one of the first post-budget confrontations. A successful outcome is vital, not only for the members concerned but for the trade union movement as a whole.

Jim Holton (TASS secretary) talked to **Rob Jones**

POOLE-NO LESS DETERMINED

At Loewy Robertson Engineering in Poole, Dorset—part of the Loewy combine—the 200 TASS members voted to give notice of strike action. In the Bedford plant, about 45 members came out.

On Friday 15th, members at Sheffield recommended that while all 400 of them come out, Loewy workers in Poole, Bedford and Middlesbrough should go back to work, donating two day's pay each week to the strike fund. Production is concentrated at Sheffield, so members feel this is where the company can

be hit hardest.

This was accepted by a union meeting in Poole on Monday 18th, and work started again next day. Management should not get the idea that they are any less determined though. Last year a 10% rise was only accepted when the threat of government sanctions was held over the firm's British Steel Corporation contracts.

Members were left behind last year; they're determined not to be again!

Julie Harris spoke to TASS members in Poole

FIRMINS, BIRMINGHAM FIGHTING TO SAVE OUR JOBS

"As from this moment, this strike is official" declared **Ron Wood**, National Society of Metal Mechanics' Birmingham district organiser.

The 120-strong Firmins workforce unanimously decided at a mass meeting on 22nd June to stay out until redundancies are withdrawn and a return to the status quo negotiated.

Feelings were inflamed by a threatening letter from the managing director, calling the strike "unofficial". He

went on to say "the situation is, from our point of view, both dangerous and damaging and could be from your angle too."

What can be more dangerous to a worker than taking away his livelihood through redundancy? One man was offered alternative work gas soldering, when his lungs have already collapsed.

The nub of this dispute is management's attempts to sack convenor **Chris Davies**. On Tuesday he was told that he would be made redundant as from Thursday of that

week, after 16 years' service. "Feelings in Firmins are high. We are willing to continue to take industrial action until we agree on a settlement."

"We realise that by taking up this fight not only are we fighting for our own jobs, we are securing a permanent place for workers that may follow us" commented **Flo Wardle**, when asked for her views.

Denise Morris, **Wendy Manning**, **Deborah Hemmings**, **Susan Fassinder**, **Marguerite Okey**, **Carol Morris**,

Mary Cooper, **Jack Ainsworth**, **Doris Broughton**, **Yvonne Lea** and **Jimmy Morris**, echoing the wishes of most of the other workers, call on fellow trade unionists to support their picket line at 82 Newtown Row. Financial donations should be sent to **Harry Nicholls**, Small Heath branch secretary, c/o 70 **Lionel Street**, Birmingham.

By **Brian Debus**

(Erdington Labour Party)

BRITISH ARCADY BLACKED

Workers at British Arcady in Manchester are on strike. They are fighting the threat of a £9 wage cut.

In January, a wage increase of 19.4% (including 14.4% for productivity) was agreed —to be reviewed every six

months.

Six months later management suddenly discovered that they could no longer afford to pay the increase.

British Arcady, an American-owned milling firm, have announced their determin-

ation to take on the workers in Manchester.

The workers' response was to organise an around-the-clock picket as soon as they walked out and contact other unions to get their support.

Within four hours the

Bakers', Food and Allied Workers' Union reacted by declaring a national blacking of all British Arcady goods.

By **Joe Marino**

(BF&AWU Executive, personal capacity)

WHEN IS A SKILL NOT A SKILL?

At **Cammell Laird** ship-builders in Birkenhead a dispute has come to a head. This is after more than a year of negotiations between the ladders' and joiners' ancillaries on one side and **British Ship-builders** on the other.

At the time of the flexibility agreement implemented over a year ago these men were classified as grade 'B' men (cleaners etc), even though their responsibilities were of a semi-skilled nature.

At Central conference, the firm turned down the men's claim on the grounds that they had the skills but weren't required to use them.

So the men decided not to do what they weren't paid for.

On Monday morning at 10 o'clock they were taken off pay. They, with the joiners' helpers, immediately walked out.

A levy of £1 a man was agreed at a G&MWU mass meeting on Wednesday.

Despite the fact that these men have to know what they're doing when mixing lagging etc, the firm insists their contribution is "purely physical." A classic example of bosses' thinking.

By **J Shepherd**

(G&MWU Cammel Lairds)

Goss—talks begin

Serious negotiations have started at the **Goss** plant in Preston, after six weeks of strike action by **AUEW** members.

Management have at last indicated that they are willing to discuss an offer greater than the 5% which they have up to now stuck to rigidly.

As well as requiring a satisfactory cash offer, the

union is asking for full consultation over sending work to sub-contractors. Previously management had insisted that it was entirely their prerogative to decide on this.

A measure of control over sub-contracting work would do much to increase the security of the workforce.

Gerry Lerner

New 'Militant' Pamphlet

1979 Conference Special
NALGO: The Socialist Way Forward!

Price 10p plus 10p postage and packing from **World Books**, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E.8.

UNION CONFERENCES

ISTC — action to stop steel closures

"Margaret Thatcher may have been the choice of the people, but then so was Barabas".

This was the response of Tommy Brennan, a Ravenscraig delegate to the Iron & Steel Trades Confederation annual delegate conference, to the Tory government.

Delegates listened politely enough to Sir Charles Villiers, chairman of the British Steel Corporation, although one steel worker did ask why workers in the industry should tolerate an 8% pay rise while Villiers gets a 50% increase to £42,000. His calls for 'surgery' in BSC got a decidedly cool response.

Prince Charles' stage managed appearance and his patronising pat on the back for the British workman met with more enthusiasm. Most readers, however, will find it

Report by Heather Rawling in Bournemouth

hard to believe that any union leader would invite such a speaker. It is the labour movement that will pay the price for this bolstering of illusions in royal 'neutrality'.

It was a mixed mood. In spite of the election result, the union leaders remain committed to the failed policies of the last Labour government.

Yet a Tory government must mean new pressures for closures. The executive had to support a Corby resolution which threatened industrial action if the shut-down cycle continues.

General Secretary Bill Sirs had no alternative but to accept another resolution

threatening industrial action in the event of an attempt to de-nationalise BSC. He tried to make a distinction between taking industry into politics and politics into industry.

The union's right-wing leaders had earlier echoed Jim Callaghan's call for any opposition to the Tories to be muted to a war of words in parliament. But as this conference showed, with the whole future of the industry at stake, the membership will demand that the challenge is met.

There is a mood to fight. This needs to be matched by a top table with the will, ability and programme to unite the membership behind them in a successful campaign.

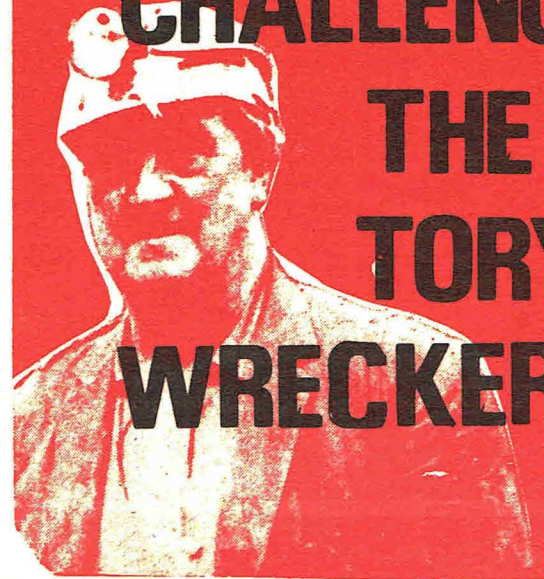
The emergence of the Liaison Committee for Constitutional Reform, which circulated delegates with a

limited programme for constitutional changes, is an indication of the changes beginning to percolate through the union.

ISTC and the other steel unions will face their most severe test in the months to come. Steel workers will be fighting for democratic reform, to create fighting unions ready to meet that test.

A socialist alternative to the mismanagement and decay in the steel industry; a commitment to replace the dictates of the profit-seekers with planning to meet social needs and workers' interests: these are the urgent requirements. Increasingly, ISTC members are looking to that alternative, as was indicated by the sale of more than 30 copies of each issue of 'Militant' and of the 'Militant' steel pamphlet.

MINERS CHALLENGE THE TORY WRECKERS



The agenda for this year's NUM conference was drawn up before the Tory government came to office. Delegates will nevertheless demand that we work out a clear programme to resist the Tory onslaught on wages, public services and jobs.

We must build on the angry anti-Tory mood that is developing in the mining areas, to halt the attacks on our whole standard of life.

The forecast of inflation rising to 20% this year brings the question of wages to the foreground at this year's conference. The resolutions all base themselves on a national claim unfettered by government restraints, but there are alternative proposals as to our approach.

The Scottish area calls for £140 a week for face workers. Yorkshire's resolution calls for an £80 basic wage for surface workers with appropriate differentials.

Group no. 2 calls for £100 and South Wales have submitted an amendment to the Yorkshire resolution calling for a £71 minimum surface basic.

The call for a basic minimum wage is the best approach in any negotiations. The Scottish resolution, by setting an improved face workers' wage as the target, would leave the way open for divisions to be sown.

Basic wage

By fighting for a basic minimum with an agreed scale of differentials, the maximum support and solidarity can be built around the claim.

This approach would cut across the criticism that the union shows a lack of concern for the low paid in our industry. But only if the figure we set realistically matches up to escalating prices! The South Wales amendment falls short of the necessary minimum for surface workers, at present only £61. The Yorkshire resolution for an £80 basic will best meet the rising cost of living in

By Ian Isaac
(Lodge Secretary,
St Johns NUM)

Britain in 1979-80.

The battle for decent wages must go hand in hand with the demand for a reduction in hours, which would create more jobs in the industry and alleviate unemployment, as well as making the job more tolerable and leaving time for more than working, sleeping and eating. The Group no. 2 resolution should be wholeheartedly supported by conference.

Looming behind every debate, however, will be a grim cloud: the NCB policy on pit closures. Throughout the coalfields, individual pits are threatened.

Fight closures

The NCB have already issued notice of closure on Deep Duffryn colliery, in the South Wales area. With Thatcher and Joseph at the helm, we can only expect worse to come.

Deep Duffryn and any other colliery facing closure needs the national support of the union. A blow to one area is a blow to every other. We cannot afford to let the NCB pick us off one by one.

A programme of closures on the scale we faced in the '60s would devastate the NUM and decimate mining communities up and down the country. To defeat the NCB's policy we must mobilise the industrial muscle of the union, with a clear alternative to this needless carnage.

More than ever before we can see the mismanagement of the industry. Pits threatened with closure, stockpiles of coal, private suppliers making £millions out of the NCB and the private coal distributors bleeding the industry daily.

The only way to end this once and for all is by taking democratic control into our own hands, planning the movement of supplies and the distribution of coal to power stations and steel works. A policy of workers' control and management of the industry, linked to other energy industries, provides the only path out of the present chaos.

[Ian Isaac writes in a personal capacity]

NALGO members oppose Budget cuts

As hundreds of thousands of local government workers heard the budget, clusters of NALGO conference delegates were gathered around the radios in Blackpool.

Some expected the worst, others were shocked at the savage blows aimed at their living standards and their very existence—their jobs.

Delegates were already discussing how to make NALGO a more effective union. They will certainly need to in face of the Tory onslaught.

While the conference seemed subdued, it would be a mistake to judge by this superficial calm. Throughout the week, delegates were soberly attempting to prepare the union for action. As one speaker said, "there are no safe jobs in local government any more."

Resolution after resolution came up on strike funds and pay, picket lines and improved and simplified strike procedure. But one resolution drawn from the pages of the Tory press, criticising workers for taking industrial action which supposedly endangered life, was rejected.

A supporter of the motion cried, "If you reject this, this won't be the NALGO I joined 40 years ago." He was greeted

with jeers and laughter.

The social workers, blooded in the recent industrial action, were a militant section of conference. In the impending battles the members' experiences will complete the transformation of NALGO from an officers' club into a fighting trade union.

This change will not be initiated by the NALGO NEC, however. They were not prepared to give a lead in a fighting strategy.

At the local government meeting, the platform stated that it would be wrong to thwart the government's policy by industrial action. But NALGO members will not lie down and die. They showed this in their massive opposition to the budget cuts.

The NEC's frequent defeats were therefore no surprise. Only some biblical conversions saved them from further embarrassment.

On the key issue of a £65 minimum wage for 35 hours, as Ronnie Stevenson from Strathclyde rose to move, the NEC shifted from opposition to support. As Ronnie said, he was already bemused by support from Tory trade unionists!

The resolution was passed overwhelmingly, reflecting strong feeling on unemployment. This was further shown in the discussion on new



Picket of Wandsworth Tory council last year in opposition to proposed cuts—a taste of what's to come

Photo: MILITANT

technology. The resolution adopted provides a programme for NALGO members, who face enormous problems on wages and jobs in the future.

NALGO also needs a leadership prepared to fight and give a positive direction to the union, rather than resting on the backwardness of some sections of the membership. This is true in industrial and in political matters, which are inseparably linked.

The massive majority of delegates were hostile to the Tories. Yet this was not built on. The Executive opposed a

motion calling for a campaign to affiliate to the Labour Party.

NALGO members, and the whole trade union movement need a clear programme around which to fight the Tories and to replace them with a Labour government. The last election proved that it must be a Labour government standing boldly on socialist policies.

NALGO and its members must play a role in the vital fight for this programme.

By Dave Griffiths in Blackpool

"There are no safe jobs in local government any more"

STRIKE BREAKERS ATTACK POST OFFICE PICKETS

Civil and Public Servants Association must step up action

In the ninth week of action by CPSA Post Office workers, management have resorted to brutal and vicious tactics. In panic and desperation, they are hiring thugs to break the solidarity of our strike.

"It doesn't matter if you are a man or a woman, we will knock you down if don't get out of our way" said one of the thugs to a 54 year-old woman on picket duty outside the PO London Bridge building. On the same evening (Friday 22nd) two of the hired scabs assisted by a

local management representative, burst through our picket line outside the PO Riverside House building in London's city centre. The pickets are refusing to allow the passage of mail in or out of the building in support of our current pay claim (see 'Militant' 453-460).

However, these bully boys, apparently working for a private car-hire firm, succeeded this time in taking out the mail. The local CPSA Post and Telecommunications (P&T) branch have photographs of this incident.

This attack was largely a complete flop, however. Pickets at other buildings successfully resisted violence and turned the thugs away empty-handed when they were 'visited'.

The situation had been saved by the strength and determination of CPSA members.

So desperate are the PO that, according to press reports last week, they were forced to borrow \$250 million from the New York commercial paper market at low interest rates.

Nevertheless the selective strike action involving 700 strategic workers is now more than two months old. Members are becoming increas-

ingly angry and impatient.

The Executive Committee (GEC) of the P&T group have not effectively stepped up the action, despite conference instructions. This is absolutely necessary if we are to achieve a prompt and reasonable settlement.

Escalated action should involve key workers in Sales Divisions (banda rooms), who authorise work for engineers and in some cases entire sales divisions. This action would have a serious effect on the City and big business, the PO's major customers.

The outcome of this week's Executive meeting—the first for five weeks—is not clear as we go to press. It is essential, however, that action is intensified on the lines sketched out above. We will win if such a decision is taken.

By Steve Higham
(CPSA P&T, Liverpool)

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Australia Mass strike against arrests

Much of Australia was severely disrupted last Thursday as 1½ million workers came out on strike.

They were protesting about the arrest of ten trade unionists who had committed the crime of addressing a meeting of more than three people without informing the police beforehand.

Transport, mining, shipping, manufacturing and commerce ground to a halt as workers protested about the use of this repressive law in West Australia.

It was the first time anyone had been arrested under this archaic law.

The Australian ruling class, like their British counterparts, have a whole gamut of ambiguous and vague laws which they can pull on the working class when they want a pretext for repressive measures. This time their action has stirred up a hornets' nest because of the charged and explosive mood which has

developed amongst the working class over the last three years of Frazer's reactionary Liberal government.

There has been an enormous wave of strikes over the last few months, but the ruling class now fear that their latest provocative move has backfired on them and will give rise to even greater struggles on the part of the workers.

The militant mining unions were threatening to continue Thursday's action indefinitely until the hated 'State Police Act' is repealed. The government has been forced to announce that their newly used act is now 'under review'.

The Australian Confederation of Trade Unions has warned that a further general strike is inevitable unless the act is scrapped.

By Ed Bober
(Hendon South Labour Party)

STEELWORKERS MARCH



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PAGE ONE

workers marched on London this week they were led by a mobile PA system which broadcast the song 'Come to Corby'—a jingle the Corby Development Corporation put out in 1971 to attract workers to this new 'wonderland' steel town.

Now it is just a bitter reminder to the workers of how they have just been used by the profit system. As the chairman of ISTC tubes division, Sammy Ramsay, put it: "I came down here because they wanted experienced tubemakers. Now they've got what they want out of me they want to throw me on the scrapheap."

"In the 1930s men walked to Corby all the way from Glasgow to find work. When they found a job and a place to live

they sent for their families. Well, they won't be so prepared to walk back."

The bosses have made no apology for closing down Corby and can only make vague suggestions of new jobs.

At a Professional Bodies Group dinner-party at Peterborough last week, former BSC chairman Sir Monty Finiston told his dinner-jacketed friends: "I hope Corby will close in part, and I hope new things will be brought in."

But as Corby Convenor Mick Skelton pointed out: "There aren't any 'new things'. Steel works, the shipyards and the manufacturing business as a whole are all folding up. Our jobs are getting scarcer all the time."

Already more than 18,000 steel jobs have been lost with the closures of the works at

Clyde, Hartlepool, East Moors, Ebbw Vale, Shotton and now Bilston.

Next on the capitalist carving plate are Corby, Shotton and Consett. All this alongside the crisis in the ship yards.

Already the economic pundits are forecasting two million on the dole by next year.

Tory axe

The threat of redundancies were real enough under the Labour government. Now, with a most reactionary Tory government, they will become a matter of course.

Sir Monty let the cat out of the bag when he said: "We have got to do this throughout the country because there are a lot worse places around than Corby."

Today, after the demonstration, the Corby

workers will be lobbying parliament, calling on Labour MPs for their support.

As Convenor Mick Skelton pointed out: "Now the Tories are in power the response from the government to our demands will be nil. Our only hope is to take a lesson from the miners in '74—that's the only way to deal with the Tories."

But didn't the Tories promise to give the British workers a better standard of life? Mrs Thatcher told the Commons [19 June]: "It is our wish that the people who work in industry, whether public or private, should make more strides in being real capital owners themselves".

If the Tories have their way, the only strides the Corby steel workers will be making are to the nearest dole queue!

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