

FIGHT FOR SHIPYARD JOBS

TORY AXE THREATENS 10,000

Last Friday 2,000 workers marched from Dundee's Robb Caledon Shipyard to a rally in the city centre in protest against the proposed closure of the yard.

The Tory government has ordered British Shipbuilders to shed 6,000 jobs. Unless stopped, this will be a mortal blow to shipyard workers, and have a devastating effect in areas like Dundee.

Apart from a full turnout from the Caledon workforce, many other local workplaces were represented: Timex, Vee-der Root, Levi, the docks, Kestrel and Yarrows ship-repair yards, and others—as well as a delegation from Dundee City Labour Party.

Best of all was the support of New Zealand seamen who were due to take delivery of the Golden Bay on the day of the march. With the full backing of their union, they have refused to move the ship until the Caledon workforce tell them they can.

At the rally delegations which had been to see a Scottish Office minister in Edinburgh and to the meeting of the Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions in Newcastle reported back.

Not only had the Edinburgh delegation got no joy from Scottish Minister Alex Fletcher [he disclaimed all res-

By Bruce Wallace
(EETPU Robb Caledon)

ponsibility!], but two Tory leaders of the Dundee Council who had accompanied the delegation, supposedly to support the workers, had made it clear that they had no interest in keeping the yard alive. Their plan was to break the site up and let it to private enterprise.

Political struggle

The meeting unanimously accepted the 22-point programme for fighting the cuts drawn up at the Confed meeting. This programme contained all the Caledon workers' main demands.

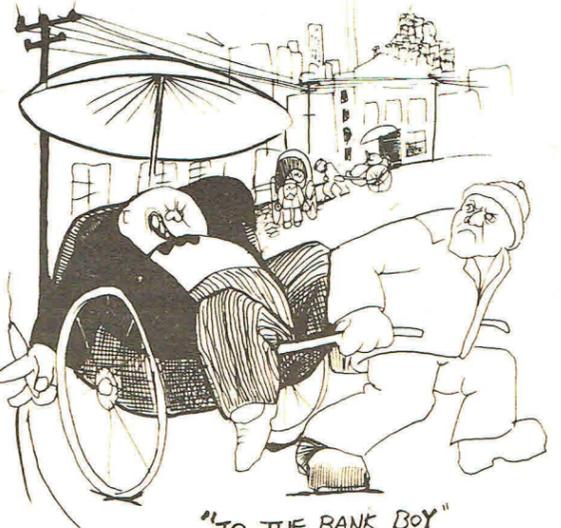
Nationalist MP Gordon Wilson was asked where he now stood on nationalisation [readers will recall that nationalist MPs publicly tore up telegrams from shipyard workers asking them to vote for nationalisation]. He replied equivocally

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'HONG KONG STYLE PROSPERITY'

The latest alluring 'plan' of the Tories for areas like Merseyside, Glasgow, and London's dockland. According to proposals floated by Sir Geoffrey Howe ['Guardian', 27 August 1979], businessmen and would-be entrepreneurs would be enticed to these areas by the chance to make money unhindered by high taxation or "red tape". This means, in reality, there would be virtually no tax, and legislation designed to protect workers—

safety, restriction on night work for women, etc—would be cut to a minimum. With this desperate solution for saving British capitalism, the Tories, it seems are determined officially to turn the British workers into the 'coolies of Europe'!



LABOUR IN LIVERPOOL DRAWS UP SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN TO STOP TORY CUTS

By Councillor Derek Hatton, Chairman Liverpool District Labour Party Cuts Committee

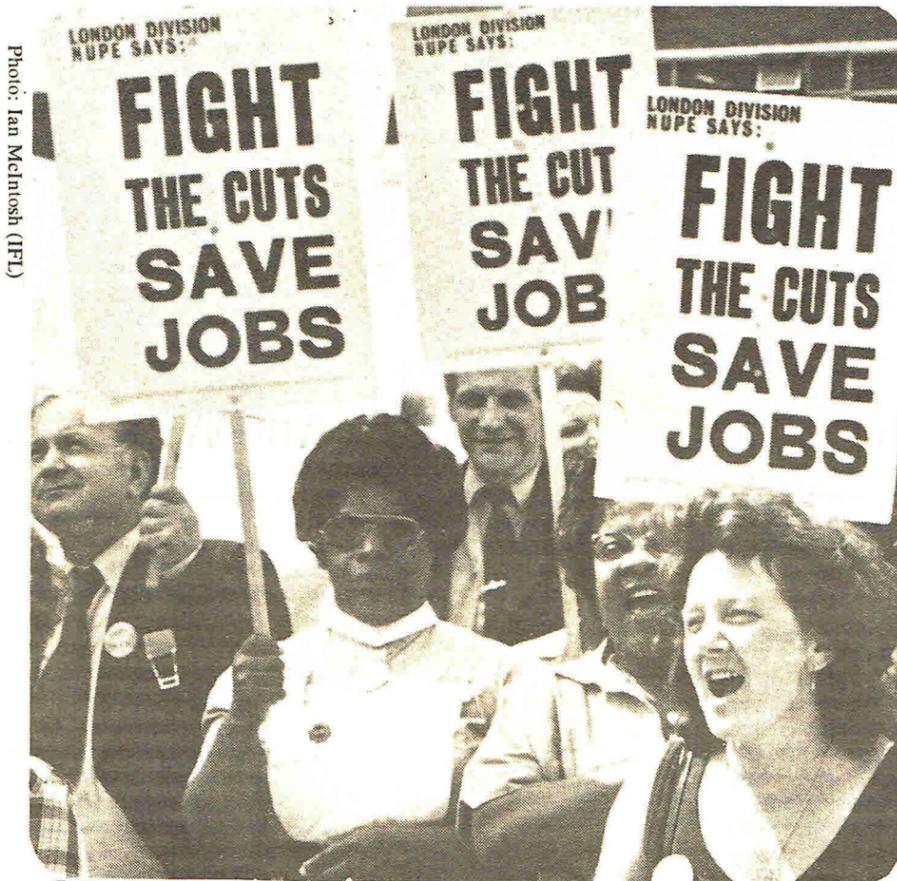


Photo: Ian McIntosh (IFL)

Demonstration against closure of St Leonard's Hospital casualty unit, Hackney

The labour movement on Merseyside have given notice to this vicious Tory government. We will fight all cuts in services and jobs. These words should be echoed by workers throughout the country.

At a meeting held under the auspices of the Liverpool District Labour Party, over 60 delegates representing 13 unions in the public sector, Labour

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FIGHT THE BOSSES' GOVERNMENT

Militant

TERRORISM NO WAY OUT

The ranks of the labour movement will strongly condemn the assassination of Lord Mountbatten and three others at Mullaghmore and the killing on the same day of eighteen soldiers in an ambush at Warrenpoint.

Mountbatten was a member of the royal family and in the past a prominent representative of the ruling class. But in selecting the 79-year-old man as a target, and killing with him two innocent boys and an old woman, the Provisional IRA have provoked a wave of horror and revulsion.

Any idea that the assassination of a single representative of the state—and a retired, octogenarian one at that—will hasten Britain's departure from Ireland is infantile.

The labour movement must not be allowed to ignore the systematic military-police repression that daily accompanies the continued oppression of Northern Ireland by British capitalism. No one can credibly deny that torture and inhuman treatment is meted out in the H-Blocks and the RUC's interrogation centres. Every week, the army is responsible for brutal house searches and shootings on the streets.

But far from drawing attention to these brutal policies in Northern Ireland, the Provos' terrorist killings actually divert attention from the real issues. Their bombings and shootings provide the state with what it needs to justify its policies in Northern Ireland and to build up a massive repressive apparatus—which will be directed against the labour movement throughout Britain in the future.

The Provisional IRA's so-called military campaign, which they are clearly trying to step up, will not advance the interests of the working class of Ireland one bit.

The only way forward in Ireland lies through the unity of the working class, the basis for which exists within the trade unions, and the mobilisation of a mass movement on the basis of socialist objectives.

The aims and methods of

the Provisional IRA are fundamentally incompatible with such an advance.

The Provos' fundamental aim is to bomb and gun the North into a united Ireland against the will of two-thirds of the population. There is no possibility whatsoever of the Provos reconciling a majority of workers to the unification of Ireland on a capitalist basis.

In the united Ireland envisaged by the Provos—if it could be achieved—the workers of the Protestant areas of the six counties would become an oppressed minority in a thirty-two county republic. Simply bringing down the border would not in itself bring any material improvement for the workers of the Catholic ghettos.

The terrorist tactics of the Provos flow from their reactionary, utopian aims. They have completely lost the elements of mass support they may have had when the troubles started.

A small handful of activists can undoubtedly sustain a military campaign almost indefinitely. But a small handful of conspirators will never defeat British imperialism: on the contrary, they only strengthen the repressive arm of the state.

At the same time, the Provos' tactics, with an inevitable spiral of retaliation by the ultra-reactionary, Loyalist para-military groups, only helps to inflame sectarian divisions which stand in the way of working class unity.

The problems of Northern Ireland will only be solved through the unification of the working class behind socialist aims. Recent industrial battles in the North have clearly demonstrated the class unity and fighting capacity of the workers at a trade union level. A Party of Labour based on the unions would mean an enormous step forward.

The movement of the workers in the South, moreover, with the development of a clear Marxist alternative in the ranks of Irish Labour Party, will have a positive effect on the movement in the North.

While sharply opposing the tactics of individual terror, the British labour movement has a duty to oppose the continued domination of Ireland by British capitalism—and to support the struggles of the workers in Ireland for class unity and a socialist programme.

FOR A NATIONAL FIGHT AGAINST THE CUTS

In Humberside, 1,000 school canteen workers, cleaners and groundsmen are threatened with the sack. In Cheshire, seven council homes for children and old people are to close. Sixth-formers in a Gloucestershire school are being asked to pay for their own books.

The London Borough of Lambeth is discussing a £400,000 cut in spending on housing maintenance, a £300,000 cut in road maintenance, reductions in the house building programme, the closure of four children's homes and one old people's home. Every local authority in Britain faces similar decisions. Education, housing, transport and all the social services will be slashed.

Everything which goes some way to making life bearable in the inner-city areas will be cut back or destroyed.

The cuts, totalling £2,500 million by April, combined with a reduction in the rate support grant (in this financial year alone of some £355 million) will mean a massive onslaught on the public services. This is the reality of life in Tory Britain.

The Labour movement cannot stand by and watch every service won over by decades of struggle dismantled by Thatcher and her government. It must be made clear now through the trade unions, tenants' associations and Labour Parties, that workers will not tolerate a return to Victorian conditions.

The fight against the cuts must involve the mobilisation of the entire Labour movement. A clear lead must be given by the Labour Party NEC and TUC General Council. Mass rallies, pickets and where necessary, co-ordinated industrial action must be called to oppose Thatcher. The big Battalions of the Labour Movement must give a pledge of support to any Labour authority which refuses to implement the cuts.

Labour controlled councils and authorities have a clear responsibility to give a lead to all sections of the labour movement. At the recent local elections, Labour won a clear majority on many local authorities. These positions must now be used as a platform from which to mobilise against this Tory Government.

Councils must begin a campaign, issuing leaflets to tenants and trade unions, honestly explaining what the Tory dictates mean. Public meetings should be organised on estates and in schools, to make it clear that there is no easy way out, but that with

workers' backing, the councils can defeat the cuts.

IT SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED NOW THAT NO LABOUR AUTHORITY WILL IMPLEMENT CUTS IN PUBLIC EXPENDITURE: LABOUR COUNCILS WILL NOT BE USED AS THE GOVERNMENT'S EXECUTIONER!

Rate increases, however are no alternative to fighting the

cuts in public spending, councils would have to increase rates by an average of £2 a week—and by much more in some areas. In Tower Hamlets, rates would be doubled. Camden rate-payers would have to pay 40% more.

Already, local councils who have agreed to implement the cuts are planning rate increases. With inflation soaring rates are being pushed up even while spending is being cut. Bumping up rates would place an intolerable burden on workers. Is this what Labour councils are going to demand? The Tory controlled Association of Metropolitan Authorities has estimated that if council workers receive a 20% rise (while the government's cash limits provide for 10%) than even with a 4% cut in overall spending, rates would have to increase by an average of 36%.

The issue of fighting the

This government can be forced to retreat if it is confronted with the massed ranks of Labour. Labour councils, particularly in the major cities, can initiate a national fight against the government if they prepared to fight.

It was Lansbury, leading the Poplar council in 1921, who showed how a council can be used to mobilise the workers and win some concessions from the government. By refusing to cut the unemployment relief, increase rates or pay £270,000 precepts owed to the London County Council they won the workers' support.

When summoned to court, the council led a mass demonstration under the banner, 'Poplar Borough council marching to the High Court and possibly to prison'. With a campaign, and showing they were prepared to fight, the support of the workers was won.

When asked by the judge: 'What would happen if all Borough Councils did this', Lansbury replied, 'Why then we should get the necessary reforms'.

When imprisoned, a mass demonstration of 20,000 marched on Downing Street. Seeing the stand taken in Poplar and the possibility of other councils following the government eventually conceded an extra £300,000 support to Poplar.

This sort of stand against the government is vital if their attempt to cut vital services is to be defeated.

Such a campaign would inevitably bring the pressure from the finance markets where local authorities are forced to look to raise money. Camden Council raises £400 million to £500m a year from the money markets. After making a favourable settlement with the local authority workers in February its interest charges were increased by ¼% in retaliation.

Lambeth raises £750 million from the financiers. After the recent resignation of the Area Health Authority in protest against cut backs, for nearly one and a half weeks no money could be raised.

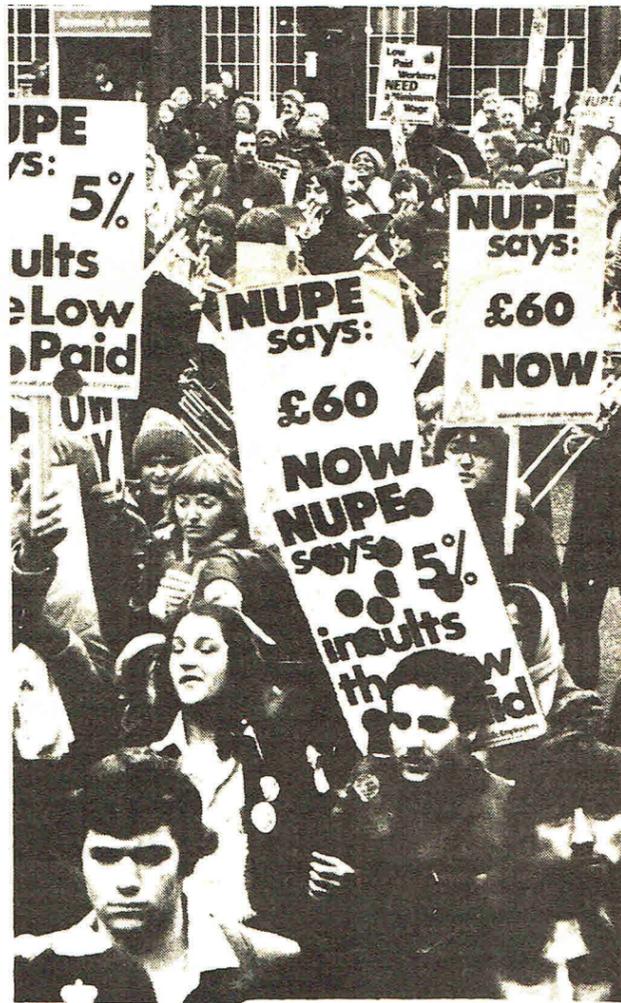
The money would be shut off by the banks if any council made a stand. This could only be countered with the mass mobilisation of the Labour movement.

Such a battle raises the question of breaking the stranglehold of the financiers over local councils. It poses clearly the need for the nationalisation of banking and insurance firms by a future Labour government to ensure the crippling interest charges are lifted.

This campaign and battle against the Tories needs also to be directed towards the Labour Party. For any future Labour government to enact a socialist plan of production, the introduction of Clause IV, part 4 of the Party constitution is the only real way to provide the services and facilities which are so desperately needed.

By Tony Saunois

(LPYS representative on Labour Party NEC)



Last winter, the battle was on for public sector wages and hours. Now the fight goes on for jobs and services. Photo: MILITANT

cuts in services. For workers and the middle class increasing rates would have the same effect as a wage cut—it would mean a lower standard of living. That is no alternative to offering working people.

Already, the level of rates paid by council tenants and owner occupiers are crippling. The average rate paid per year by council tenants in Tower Hamlets is £116, in Islington £205 and in Camden £250. Faced with soaring inflation workers cannot afford to pay more rates.

The London Labour Party estimated that if local charges were to compensate for the

cuts, opposing rate increases, and explaining the stranglehold that the banks and finance companies have over local government spending must be explained.

Labour councils should make a stand and mobilise the mass organisations of workers to fight the government. The last Tory government was forced to back down on its wages policy when faced with the miners. The Industrial Relations Act was rendered useless by the mobilisation of the trade union movement and they abandoned their 'lame duck' policy when faced with the opposition of workers at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders.

MILITANT IRISH MONTHLY

Price 10p. September issue now out
Articles on the Irish economy, South Africa,
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CHAOS IN THE HEALTH SERVICE

Workers' control and management within the Health Service is not, as some of the right wing in the movement say, a goal for the dim and distant future. It is an absolute necessity in running a health service for the benefit of ordinary working people.

A small sample of what the hierarchical structure and isolated management can do was shown at a recent meeting between the sector joint shop stewards' committee and management.

The first item was on crèche facilities. These should be provided for the whole

Area Health Authority in a hospital which is to be closed down, and is due to move to another hospital later this year. Not only is it very expensive, it is completely unsubsidised.

It is just not feasible for workers in other hospitals to take their children there. Obviously free crèche facilities are a right at each site with a large number of women workers. We can't even get them to agree there is a need!

The next discussion was about hospital accommodation. Rents for hospital houses are supposed to equal local authority rents, but even delapidated, pre-war houses without a damp course, or decent heating are now over £70 per month. None of this money is spent on improvements or maintenance, but

used to support the area's underfunding!

Any money for staff housing comes from the general maintenance budget, which gives priority for patient areas. One row of houses at a hospital in Burford (an area of housing shortage) was condemned as unfit for human habitation after 20-30 years of neglect. Families had to go on living in squalor for years before the local council would rehouse them.

The situation with hostel accommodation is almost as bad. Tiny rooms about nine feet square cost anything up to £45 a month with no decent facilities, one kitchen for 30 people and perhaps a battered washing machine.

Next was a superb example of the chaos of hospital planning. Due to bad wages and cutbacks in maintenance

and direct labour, many jobs previously done by health service workers are now given to outside contractors.

Contractors had been employed to decorate a whole building at a cost of £7,000. Their contract was so loose that they had a field day. There was no consultation with the staff who worked in the area, and the paint company unloaded all its cheap paint which it couldn't sell on the open market.

The result? An incredibly bad job with wallpaper peeling off after two weeks and most of the windows and doors unable to shut. In order to shut them, the paint had to be removed again. Meanwhile, the cork floor had to be replaced because management couldn't afford the correct polish so the tiles had curled up at the edges and

become a safety hazard.

It then cost £900 for some cheap soft material which the young lad who came to put it down (from the flooring company) said was totally unsuitable for a hospital because it marked so easily and took a lot of looking after.

In the process the walls were damaged and had to be repainted. To add to all this, various alterations were being done and part of the building had to be decorated again! With planning all this could have been avoided and the work done properly at a fraction of the cost.

The final item was about the introduction of a new bonus scheme for four hospitals in the area. Area management had come up with proposals for a reduction of 30-40% in the number of

hours worked. Management admitted that the system was unworkable, and ended up the meeting arguing amongst themselves about who had dreamed up the plan. The meeting rejected the ideas and negotiations have to start again.

It became painfully obvious during the meeting who really should be organising day to day running of the hospital and what madness the present system is. The Joint Shop Stewards' Committee continually raises in my mind the question of workers' control within the NHS. When the management of a hospital is in the hands of elected representatives of NHS and other trade unionists, then sensible planning will be possible.

By Peter Haworth
(Secretary, Oxfordshire AHA Psychiatric sector JSSC, personal capacity)

NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL

Last weekend's Notting Hill Carnival was a great success. Without the provocation of massive police harassment, the whole event had a festive flavour.

The PNP Youth sold large numbers of the latest edition of their paper 'Forward'. 'Militant' also had healthy sales.

Photo (right) by J McKittrick (Militant)



SUPPORT 'MILITANT' DEFENCE FUND

Despite the Summer holiday 'lull', 'Militant' has already received some magnificent indications of support from the labour movement for its efforts to fight the legal action initiated by John Golding MP.

As reported recently, John Golding has taken out a high court writ for libel damages over 'Militant's' report of the January meeting of the Labour Party's National Executive Committee.

This action, if not successfully fought, could land the 'Militant' with potentially crippling legal costs and damages.

A number of regular readers and supporters

have already realised the urgency of the situation, and responded accordingly. Thirteen members of the National Graphical Association in Liverpool, for example, raised a magnificent £58 as a result of an appeal to fellow workers.

Delegates and visitors to the recent Conference and Camp of the Labour Party Young Socialists contributed over £230, and the LPYS Conference itself passed the following emergency resolution:

"This conference notes with concern John Golding's high court action for damages against the 'Militant'. We consider it deplorable that a Labour MP and member of the National Executive Committee should take legal action against a socialist newspaper. Political battles should be fought according to the democratic traditions of the labour movement, not through the courts."

Above all, 'Militant' has been encouraged by support from members of the Post Office Engineering Union, which sponsors John Golding as an MP.

At least two branches of the POEU have already sent resolutions to their Executive deploring the fact that Union funds—now confirmed by a POEU Executive letter to Branches—are being used to back John Golding's action.

A letter from one London branch says that it finds it hard to understand how Union funds could be used for a libel action against a grass-roots Trade Union

Labour paper, and asks for an assurance that the Union's funds will not be used in this way.

Similar moves, we have been told, are likely in many other POEU branches.

The attitude of many rank and file members of the labour movement is undoubtedly summed up in a letter from the vice-chairman of Chorley CLP, Kevin Broxton:

"Dear Comrades, Please find £1 enclosed for the Defence Fund to fight the libel writ served on you by 'comrade' John Golding, someone who obviously believes in fraternal discussion to resolve our differences! It would have been more, but I am on strike, and money is very scarce at the moment."

In Southampton, the Labour Party's general management committee passed a resolution "noting with alarm" John Golding's action, saying that "this kind of action goes against the traditions of the labour movement of open and democratic debate and discussion." The

GMC donated £5 to the defence campaign.

Commenting on John Golding's action H Williams, a Southampton dockworker who told us of the resolution, said: "He could not render his members a greater disservice, at a time when unity and solidarity should be a priority, by attacking the enthusiastically read working-class paper 'Militant' with expensive law suits."

Other donations so far received by the Militant Defence Fund include:

- ★ A collection of £62 (less expenses) at a Leicester Militant Readers' Meeting called to discuss the AUEW claim, at which the speakers were Roy Bennett (AUEW Convenor) and Nick Ramsell (AUEW Shop Steward GEC)
- ★ £32.50 sent to us by readers in Hampshire/Isle of Wight
- ★ £16.58 sent to us by a Coventry Discussion Group
- ★ £10 from Swansea Labour Party Young Socialists
- ★ £10 from Nottingham readers G Freeman and D Woodward (COSA)
- ★ £1s from a large number of supporters, and from people who, like Kevin Brox-

ton, just don't like to see the courts being used to settle debate in the labour movement.

The supporters and organisations mentioned here clearly appreciate the seriousness of the financial threat now facing the 'Militant' and have taken urgent action to defend the paper.

Now the holiday period is over, we are sure that we will get similar support from every area of the country and sections of the labour movement.

Rush your donations and messages of support to: Militant Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8.

TROTSKY CENTENARY BADGES

20p plus P&P. Available from Anne Mulkeen, Flat 1, 133 Victoria Way, Charlton, London SE7. 10 or mere 15p each plus Post & Packing.

FIGHTING REPRESSION IN SRI LANKA

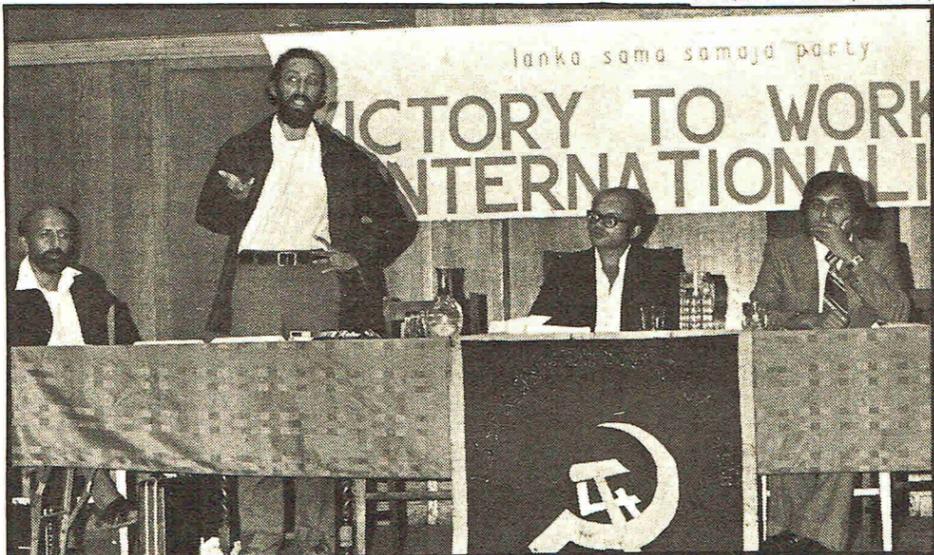
Photos: J Waulfe (Militant)

An appeal for international solidarity with the workers and peasants of Sri Lanka in their fight against repression, was made by comrades Vickramabahu Karunarathne and Vasudeva Nanayakkara at a meeting called by the London branch of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party [LSSP] on 17 August.

Since the 1977 general election, the UNP government has intensified ten-fold the repression begun by its predecessor, Mrs Bandaranaike's coalition government. Most obviously directed against the Tamil national minority, this repression has in fact been an attack on all workers, peasants and unemployed in Sri Lanka.

The UNP was elected on a programme of 'socialism and democracy' and 'against corruption', but very quickly revealed its real character as a right-wing capitalist party aiming at the return of Sri Lanka to a 'free market economy'.

This had meant ending state ownership, breaking



Vasudeva Nannayakkara, President of the United Federation of Labour speaking at the 17th August meeting

state control of imports and exports, devaluation (the value of the rupee halved), and removal of state contributions to health, education and welfare. The result has been heavy dependence on foreign 'aid' (and the conditions attached to such 'aid'), massive inflation and an enormous reduction in living standards.

Opposition to government policies has been met by systematic repression. First of all, reactionary legislation—for instance trade union and labour laws—was intended to restrict organised opposition. When this sparked off further struggles, the government in turn resorted to more direct attacks.

In particular, attempts to stir up racialism were made, not just by propaganda, but by terrorist attacks on Tamil communities by the army and police. Whole areas of the north and east are now in a permanent state of siege. Protests by students have been put down with tanks.

'Public security' measures have taken away fundamental democratic rights by banning demonstrations, restricting meetings and imposing complete censorship on publications. People distributing leaflets have received severe beatings—up to a year in prison.

A new system of 'work study' has classified workers as 'efficient' or 'inefficient' at their jobs, for the purpose of

determining wage rates: but the classification has depended solely on the workers' support or otherwise for the government.

The labour and trade union movement is the key to the struggle against the repression. The LSSP (NL) the mass workers' party, has been at the forefront of this struggle since its new marxist leadership was elected at the end of 1977.

The Party has also been at the forefront when it has come to experiencing this repression, its members being beaten up by gangs of thugs supporting the UNP, imprisoned—often without charge—and, in one case, framed with a murder charge.

Political victimisation at

work has been systematic, over 15,000 people (including comrade Bahu) having lost their jobs for their opposition to the government. Both comrade Vasu, former MP and now President of the United Federation of Labour, and comrade Bahu, general secretary of the LSSP (NL) have been imprisoned, beaten up and narrowly escaped assassination, during the past two years.

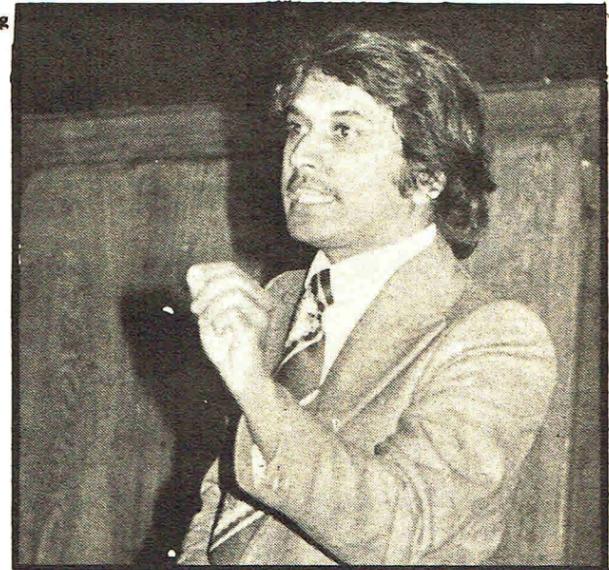
Nevertheless, despite conditions of work which we in Britain must find hard to fully appreciate, the LSSP (NL) has made enormous gains in terms of the proportion of the organised working class which now supports the programme of nationalisation, agrarian

reform, self-determination for the Tamils and a general strike against the government.

The number, size and frequency of its publications has also grown, thanks to the very real sacrifices made by the comrades. When Bob Edwards called for the meeting to make a collection 'for the comrades that would make the ruling class "choke on their tea bags", we were able to demonstrate in a small way our support for the LSSP (NL) in its heroic struggle and our solidarity in the tasks ahead.

The meeting raised £379.

By
Vivien Seal



The General Secretary of the LSSP, Vickramabahu Karunarathne addresses the meeting

EDINBURGH: PARTY CALL ANTI-CUTS DEMO

One of the first protests in Scotland against the Tory cuts will take place on Saturday 22 September. On that day Edinburgh District Labour Party, with support from the Scottish Trade Union Congress, is organising a major march and rally, to spearhead opposition to the cuts in the East of Scotland.

The march will assemble at Waverley Bridge, Edinburgh, at 10.30 am, and pass along Princes Street to a rally at the Caley Cinema, which will be

addressed by national Labour and Trade Union speakers.

The march has been planned both as a protest against the impact of Tory policies, and also in support of Labour councils which decide not to implement cuts in their services.

Further details: Joe Hill, Organiser, Edinburgh District Labour Party [Tel: 031-556 5158]

CAMBRIDGE: 'FOSTER A GRANNY'

There is a rumour going round that Tory Central Office scour the pages of the 'Militant' every week to see how their lads are getting on, then if one area is not in, they write to them to ask what they are doing wrong.

Well I wouldn't like Tory Central Office to think that the Cambridgeshire Tories are falling down on the job. They have started a pilot scheme in March (the town not the month). Under the slogan of 'foster a granny' they are asking local families to give a home to the old

ladies and gentlemen who at present live in the old folks' homes.

Most of them are old ladies of course, as women live longer. All this sounds highly commendable; it's not very nice for old people to live in cold and unfriendly institutions, they'd be a lot happier in a friendly home atmosphere.

But, did you ever hear of a kind Tory? There has to be a catch, and there is. You see it costs £60 a week to keep old people in old people's homes, and only £45 to billet them out.

When you consider that

these people are by and large incapable of helping themselves dress, are incontinent and cannot look after themselves in any way, it is fairly obvious where the £15 is being saved.

Wages of trained staff will be a large part, but also lifts, special toilets etc will also be part of the saving. So the Tories will make trained nurses redundant and force old people to climb stairs, while at the same time expecting ordinary people to try and cope with no real training.

The worst thing is that this cut is necessary because the

old people's homes are overcrowded. They are overcrowded because hospitals have stopped taking old people in for long term care unless they are actually ill. The whole scheme is highly devious and shows how mean and cheap the Tories really are.

By
Pete Lee

(Cambridge LPYS)

UNIONS FIGHT CHESTER TORIES

Cries of "You have no authority to trample down the ordinary working people of Chester" and "You are attacking the weakest in our society" rained down on the heads of the Tory councillors at a Policy and Resources Committee discussion in Chester last month.

Chairman of the committee, Tory councillor Alan Richardson was only minutes into his remarks when virtually everyone in the public gallery rose to shout him down, and the discussion was brought to a temporary halt.

The meeting had been preceded by a gathering of several hundred local government workers (members of NUPE, G&MWU, NALGO). These workers were there to protest at proposed cuts. And no wonder!

Already the council wants to slash the education budget by £4,933,000, social services

by £590,000, highways by £460,000, and the fire brigade by £164,000. This will inevitably mean that standards in these services will fall considerably and that jobs will be lost. Council has said that jobs are not threatened yet.

Jobs will apparently be cut by natural wastage first. But what guarantee is that? And besides this sort of policy can only mean less vacancies for school leavers and those presently on the dole.

The Tory government has said that local authorities must cut services by 3%. Cheshire county has decided to save £8.5 million from this year's expenditure. We already have a foretaste of what the axe will bring.

In a manner proving he is a million miles from reality the education chairman, councillor Maynard (Tory) made a plea to teachers and head teachers to make the cuts

work. Standards could be maintained with their co-operation! The swinging cuts proposed mean only one thing—standards will rocket downwards.

The Tories in Chester have dropped a bombshell in the city and surrounding area. Already the local authority

union are shaping up for a fight, and if this latest protest is a harbinger of what is to come then those on the receiving end are in for a rough time.

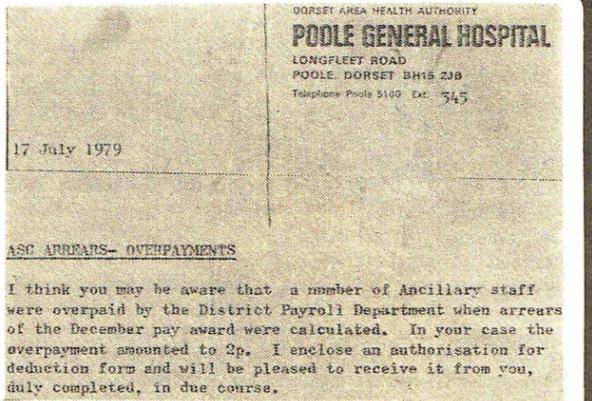
By S Palmer

'CUTTING THE WELFARE STATE: WHO PROFITS?'

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Over 50 of such demands have been issued to staff at the Poole General Hospital in Dorset. The repayments demanded have all been for small or relatively small amounts. It's reckoned that each demand cost £6 in administration costs. None of the repayments have reached half of that figure.

By Marcel Pike
(NUPE Convenor, Pool General Hospital)

LEFT & RIGHT

PRESS SUPPORTS SCABS

As trade unionists filed into the Digbeth Hall at the end of the massive demonstration by engineers in Birmingham last week, they met a torrent of screaming abuse from a small group who didn't want to strike. The trade unionists shrugged them off as scabs, but the Tory press saw fit to give this motley pro-secret ballot mob a whole mass of coverage.

'The Sun' [August 21] quoted one of the leaders, Pauline Moorfield, as saying, "Most people are totally against the way the [engineers'] strike has been called." There were more than 2,000 engineers on the march—the counter-demonstration raised a mere 50. Where were the 'most people'?

But the counter-demonstrators did hear one voice giving support. The 'Daily Mail' on the same day reported, "The women's demand for a secret ballot was echoed by Mr Anthony Frodsham, director general of the Engineering Employers' Federation." Well, fancy that.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

Members of the Dyers and Bleachers locked out during a bitter dispute in 1964 at Denby's, the textile firm, were out of work for five years. The union is still blacking Denby's, provoking hysterical denunciations in the Tory press.

It wasn't much of a surprise, therefore, to find a Tory MP at the ceremonial opening of the firm's new plant. Trade union members who pay a political levy to maintain their link with the Labour Party, want to know what the Labour MP Joel Barnett was doing at the ceremony however. Was it just a social visit and a free drink? No—our Labour representative was there as a paid employee of this anti-union set-up.

Barnett is a non-executive director of Bodycote International, the conglomerate owners of Denby's, among others. Clearly he's much too busy with all his part-time jobs [he's also a chartered accountant by trade] to dwell for too long on how union members are faring. It would probably help to concentrate his mind if he had to face regular reselection by the Party members and trade unionists who got him elected. Unless, of course, the part-time MPs decide that concentrating on their other jobs is more rewarding.

JOHN McLEAN - ACCUSER OF CAPITALISM

This year, 24th August sees the 100th anniversary of the birth of the great revolutionary socialist John McLean. Eddie Phillips [Provan CLP] reviews his life and the legacy he left behind for all trade unionists and socialists.

All serious socialists should study and learn from John McLean.

During his life he spread the ideas of Marxism to thousands of workers in Clydeside and elsewhere. He took part in many outstanding struggles, led bold campaigns against the first world war, and was imprisoned five times for his beliefs.

When he died on the 30th November 1923, thousands of working people attended his funeral. He was held in such high esteem as a fighter for his class and an internationalist, that he, along with Lenin, Trotsky, Liebknecht, Adler and Spiridonova, was elected as Honorary President of the First All Russian Congress of Soviets. Later he was to be appointed as Russian Consul by Lenin.

Theory

In 1903 McLean joined the Social Democratic Federation one of the founding sections of the Labour Party. Its emphasis on Marxist education taught him the necessity for every class fighter to thoroughly ground themselves in socialist theory and how to put those theories into practice.

Tested by the developing social and political tensions, splits occurred within the SDF and McLean became a member of the British Socialist Party.

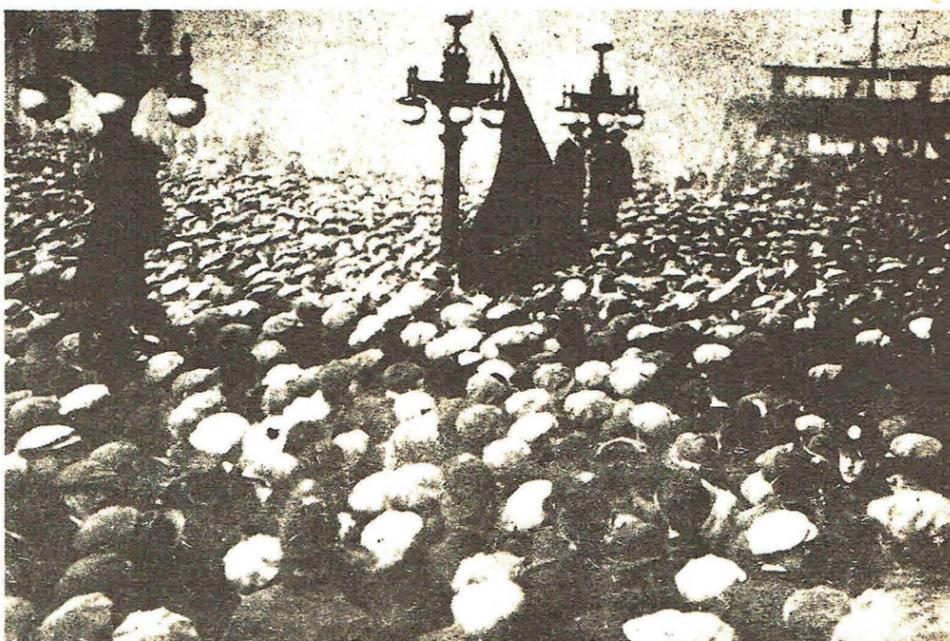
He organised open air meetings in the south of Glasgow. These expanded until hundreds regularly came to hear him explain socialist economics, dialectics and other cornerstones of Marxism.

Through his lectures, combined with his involvement in many of the workers' major battles, he built a solid base of respect and support amongst the industrial working class in general, and the miners in particular, up and down the Clyde Valley.

Workers' struggles

The first World War and the betrayals by Europe's Social Democratic parties, who threw past pledges to the wind and rushed to the support of their individual governments, opened up a crisis in the labour movement.

Many of the trade union leaders supported the war, denouncing industrial action of any kind as a hindrance to Britain's war effort. The rank and file were left to provide their own leadership in the



Glasgow workers in 1919. McLean's solid base of support was on 'Red Clydeside'.

struggle for better wages and conditions.

This, and the bitter struggle of the Clyde engineers over the demand for a 2d per hour rise in February 1915, gave birth to the shop stewards movement. It was then that the famous Clyde Workers' Committee was formed. In October 1915, rent strikes were organised on the Clyde. Munitions workers who had flooded into the area at the beginning of the war, were being subjected to large-scale exploitation because of a shortage of housing.

On 17 November nineteen tenants, including a shipyard worker, were brought to court for rent arrears. Workers in the shipyards downed tools; 10,000 marched on the Glasgow Sheriff's Court. On their way the workers collected McLean, who was then a teacher, from his schoolroom—his last day in that profession.

The workers surrounded the court building. McLean addressed the crowd and a telegram was sent to Prime Minister Asquith, stating that a general strike would be declared on November 22nd, unless the rent increases were frozen and the plaintiffs released.

As a result, the government was forced to introduce the Rent Restriction Act freezing rents throughout the war.

Russian Revolution

McLean and his supporters fought on the Clyde Workers' Committee for the adoption of a political programme to meet the problems facing working people. They pointed out that trade union militancy and struggles to extract reforms from the employers had to be linked to a socialist programme to end the anarchy of capitalism, if a permanent answer was ever to be found.

For his fight against the war, he was jailed in 1916 under the Defence of the Realm Act. On his release, he worked furiously for the socialist cause.

The overthrow of the Tsar, and the coming to power of the Russian workers, filled

everyone with great hope for the future. In his book 'Revolt on the Clyde', Willie Gallagher wrote: "The work done by McLean during this winter of 1917-18 has never been equalled by anyone."

"His educational work would have been sufficient for half-a-dozen ordinary men, but on top of this, he was carrying on a truly terrific propaganda and agitational campaign. Every minute of his time was devoted to revolutionary struggle, every ounce of his energy was thrown into the fight."

On 15th April 1918, whilst Russian Consul, he was again arrested and charged with sedition. Summing up in his own defence, McLean said he was present not as the accused; "I am here as the accuser of capitalism, dripping with blood from head to foot."

He spoke for 75 minutes and in this time predicted what future capitalism, if it survived, could expect. He even foretold the inevitable coming of a second world war, with astonishing accuracy.

The speech was reprinted as a pamphlet, 'Condemned From the Dock' sold many thousands of copies.

Revolutionary programme

McLean was jailed for five years, but due to massive pressure from the trade union movement, was released after only seven months.

He had been selected (but not nationally endorsed) by Gorbals Labour Party as Parliamentary Candidate for the forthcoming general election.

He was to replace renegade Labour MP George Barnes who had refused to resign from Lloyd George's cabinet, despite a Party Conference decision.

McLean's release was celebrated by a massive demonstration through Glasgow City Centre, where, waving a huge red flag from an open horse-drawn carriage, he hailed the forthcoming German revolution. "This was a week

before the 1919 'Coupon Election'. His campaign was fought on a full-blooded revolutionary programme, and although he did not win, he gained 7,436 votes.

Battle of George Square

Early in 1920 the struggle to establish a national 40-hour week began. McLean campaigned throughout the length and breadth of the country. On the Clyde a general strike began, and the government, fearing a socialist insurrection, arrested its leaders.

On Friday 31st January 1920, 'Bloody Friday', troops poured into Glasgow from all over Britain. The police launched an unprovoked attack on the strikers, in what became known as the Battle of George Square. There were many casualties on both sides.

Scottish workers' republic

Glasgow became a city of military occupation. As the militant workers' movement ebbed, McLean, disappointed at the lack of response from the rest of the country, began to look towards a Scottish Workers' Republic as a step to achieving socialism. To some extent, this was a diversion from the real task, but for a man exhausted by non-stop struggle, imprisoned several times and saddened by the turn of events in Germany and Russia, it seemed a more immediately realisable goal.

There is no doubt that McLean was indeed a great revolutionary, an enthusiast, who placed his full confidence in the power of the working class. His pamphlet 'The War after the War', is a brilliant illustration of his down-to-earth style of explaining Marxism.

His influence on the labour movement, past and present, is substantial. Had his contemporaries been armed with his political understanding, the forging of a Marxist leadership—the cutting edge to the mass struggles of the British working class—would have sealed the fate of capitalism.

TEN YEARS ON . . .

BATTLE FOR MERSEYSIDE - 'A PROGRAMME TO WIN THE WAR'

Ted Mooney was a shop steward at GEEC, and played a leading role in the 1969 struggle. He was also author of 'GEEC workers take action', produced by 'Militant' in 1969

On Wednesday 13 August 1969, ten years ago, the battle against redundancies and closures on Merseyside began.

On that day 10,000 workers employed by the recently formed General English Electric Company (forerunner of today's GEC) managed by the notorious Arnold Weinstock, downed tools. 3,000 of them marched through the streets of Liverpool to the local boxing stadium to hold a mass protest meeting.

The meeting was addressed by shop stewards and local trade union officials. Almost unanimously it called for a ban on overtime working, halting the movement of machinery in and out of the factories, a national strike throughout the combine and the nationalisation under workers' control of the Weinstock empire.

A few weeks prior to this meeting Weinstock had announced that two of the three Merseyside factories were to close and the third was to lose more than 300 men; in all some 3,500 jobs were to go.

This was to be the first battle in a war waged by the bosses against the Merseyside working class, aimed at wiping Merseyside from the map so far as employment was concerned.

Take-over

This, the first battle in the war, was to end in defeat for the GEEC workers. The story of this battle has been told elsewhere and it is sufficient to relate only the broad outline here.

The shop stewards had been empowered by the August 13th meeting to fight the closures by any means necessary. The workers' leaders opted for a 'workers' take-over', something not tried previously in this country.

Things ended in disarray—but no demoralisation. One or two Tories took the initiative, with the full backing of the enemy, the GEEC management.

Ultimately the two factories closed and the redundancies went through without further opposition.

All was not lost for Merseyside, however. Following the GEEC workers' defeat, other local employers attempted to follow suit—but without the same success.

Many more far-sighted shop stewards had learnt from the GEEC experience and were better prepared when the next battle began. The best example was the

Fisher Bendix workers' take-over. This factory in Kirkby, only a few thousand yards from the ill-fated GEEC plants, was part of the Thorn empire and threatened with closure.

Acknowledging the experience of the GEEC workers, a highly successful sit-in was staged and resulted in victory. Bigger battles lay ahead, however. In recent weeks the factory, now known as KME, has finally gone under.

In the ten years since the GEEC battle, dozens of similar struggles have taken place. Every major employer on Merseyside has declared mass redundancies and closures. Most of these battles have been reported in detail in the pages of 'Militant'.

Plessey, British Leyland, Dunlop, Cammel Laird, Vauxhall, and Thorn Electrical have formed the shock troops of the employing class in a war against organised labour.

Measured in pure economic terms of course, the employers are winning. In 1969 at the time of the GEEC closures unemployment stood at 4.1% on Merseyside, with about 30,000 workers on the dole. Today that figure has almost trebled, with something like 88,000 registered unemployed.

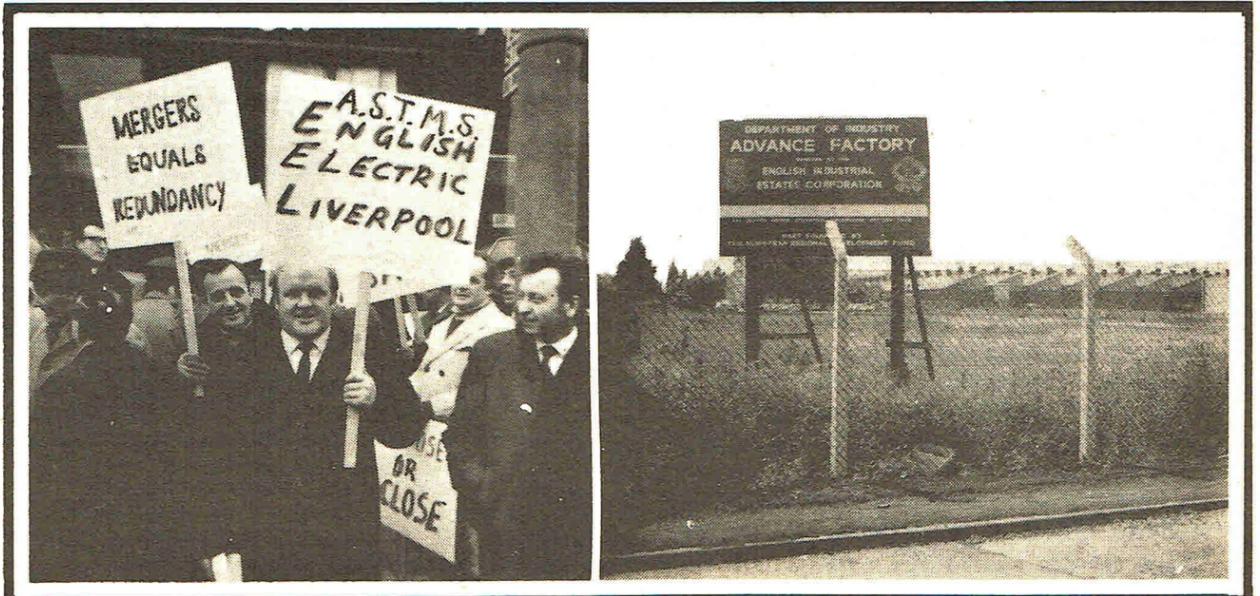
Each day brings with it news of further threatened closures and redundancies. But still the war continues. There is no sign of demoralisation amongst the Merseyside workers, only a dogged determination to win.

This is not blind optimism, for determination is not enough. Rather, workers recognise that it is essential to win this war, for otherwise Merseyside will be left ravaged and desolated.

Merseyside workers understand that they can win; they have the programme upon which the war can be won. That fighting programme was contained in the resolution passed by the 3,000 workers in the Liverpool Stadium on the 13 August 1969.

This called for mass co-ordinated action throughout the trade union movement, hitting the employers where it hurts most—in their pocket books—with all out strikes. Most importantly, the resolution called for the public ownership under workers' control of the GEEC empire. Finally, it demanded the involvement of the trade union and Labour leaders in every stage of the struggle.

For even with the correct strategy and programme, leadership is crucial. From the first battle ten years ago, leadership has been a vital



In 1969 10,000 workers came out over redundancies—but despite their fight the workers were defeated, and now empty fields are all that remain of this closed GEEC plant

issue. At the time of the GEEC battle not one national trade union leader associated himself with the struggle. It was left to the relatively inexperienced shop stewards and local officials, who lacked the authority to call into action the mass battalions of the workers throughout Weinstock's combine.

Every single battle against closure and redundancies fought on Merseyside since the war, let alone the last ten years, has been left to the

workers themselves. The trade union and Labour leaders who should have been rallying and directing our forces, at best watched from the sidelines.

Occasionally a sympathetic voice was raised but never were the unions mobilised systematically on a nationwide basis as a key tactic in defeating the employers.

At Dunlop Speke this year the T&GWU leaders gave their members a free hand, with 'plenary powers' to take whatever action they thought

necessary. But local initiatives need the backing of the necessary muscle. Otherwise the trade union leaders are simply abdicating their responsibilities.

The future for Merseyside lies in the return to that day ten years ago when 3,000 workers understood what had to be done.

They had to wage a serious fight with their employers which would involve industrial action on a nation-wide basis; co-ordinated by the official leaders of the movement with

the aim not of winning an inch or two of ground but of winning the war.

The demand for nationalisation under workers' control was not merely another clause in a lengthy resolution. It is central to ultimate victory.

By
Ted Mooney

For a more detailed account of the GEEC struggle, see also, Trade Union Register 1970.

SAS ACQUITTED ON BOYLE KILLING

By Dennis Tourish
Belfast Branch, Labour
& Trade Union Group)

In July 1978, 16 year-old John Boyle was searching through a grave-yard in Co. Antrim for the headstone of an ancestor. Instead, he found a cache of arms, which he reported to his father, who in turn reported the find to the police.

A few days later John returned to check whether the police had removed the arms. Unfortunately for him a unit of the British Army Special Air Services was lying in wait. John Boyle was shot three times, once in the head, and died instantly.

The Army tried to represent the incident as an unfortunate mistake. Yet look at their own statements.

One of the accused SAS men said in a statement to the police at the time: "I thought the young fair haired man who entered the grave-yard was a terrorist. I had seen his photograph. I can tell you his name if you like; he is an explosives expert."

The Army subsequently admitted that John Boyle had

no connection with any paramilitary organisation. At best, this statement reveals a very casual attitude. Because, he allegedly bore a passing resemblance to a photograph on an Army file his fate was sealed.

The central Army defence was that John Boyle picked up a rifle and pointed it at them. Believing their lives were in danger the SAS opened fire.

This story was unmasked at and trial. The deputy state pathologist for Northern Ireland testified that John Boyle had been shot from behind. This was disputed: the SAS argued that he was shot through the head, and then twice in the back as he fell forward in what would have been a highly convenient display of acrobatics!

The clearest condemnation of the SAS men came from the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Robert Lowry, in the same breath with which he acquitted them. The prosecution case was dismissed with a brazen technicality.

The Judge remarked: "Once the medical evidence has been discounted how can one be sure the deceased was shot from the back?" The feeble defence rejoinder to the medical evidence was elevated out of all proportions to the

other evidence.

The Judge was forced to say though, that "...the patrol gravely mishandled the operation...They either knew, or ought to have known, that the deceased was unaccompanied."

"They ought to have found out that the rifle (which John Boyle allegedly pointed at them—DT) was unloaded... Nothing would have been easier than for the two SAS men to have captured John Boyle alive **always assuming that was their primary objective.**" (our emphasis).

For such cases, hearings by Jury have been abolished in Northern Ireland. That is why, despite the weight of the evidence, the two SAS men were acquitted. Another innocent victim has been claimed by the Army's policy of repression.

Many more will suffer, given the proven ruthlessness of these specialised sections and their immunity from successful prosecution. No policeman or soldier has ever been convicted and gaoled for offences against the civilian population.

This case shows, in particular, that the SAS last year adopted a policy of summary execution—of shooting on sight people they suspected of

paramilitary activity. It is not a question of a few 'bad apples' but of deliberate policy.

This concerns the labour and trade union movement throughout these islands. Today a policy of repression is being carried out in Northern Ireland, while legal constraints are worthless bits of paper. The SAS unit responsible for John Boyle's death was only brought to trial in an attempt to defuse the mood of outrage caused by his murder.

If they get away with such measures here, then similar tactics will be turned on the workers' own organisations in the future. Nor, as the John Boyle case again shows, can the judiciary be relied on to uphold the interests of the working class.

The Army and judiciary are all part of the same state apparatus, which, in turn, is directly linked to the rich and privileged in society.

A trade union based inquiry into the role of the 'security forces' in Northern Ireland is long overdue. This must take place, alongside a campaign for the withdrawal of the Army from Northern Ireland and the creation of a Trade Union Defence Force to defend working people from violence from all quarters.

NF ROWS - TOO MANY FUEHRERS

After the hammering the National Front received in the general election and their hopeless efforts to find a venue for their national conference, the fascist party has been reduced to squabbling amongst itself.

Tyndall has recently been challenged for power as chairman of the NF by his deputy Andrew Fountaine an aristocratic landowner.

Fountaine has whined to the Tory press that he is upset by Tyndall's dictatorial control of the NF and wants the party to lose its 'very nasty image' (Daily Telegraph 20 July). Tyndall retaliated by suspending Fountaine and removing him from office.

But this is not the first row that has split the NF mob—their whole history is full of coups and expulsions, and it is worth noting that Tyndall has always come out on top.

The National Front was formed in 1966 as an amalgamation of Nazi, neo-Nazi and racist groups in the wave of press hysteria about immigration—the ruling class no longer has a shortage of labour so the immigrant workers were singled out for attack, being blamed for all of capitalism's ills, in an attempt to split the labour movement.

The NF was the brain child of AK Chesterton, then head of the jingoistic reactionary pressure group, the League of Empire Loyalists. He saw the growth in 1966 of various independent racist groups,

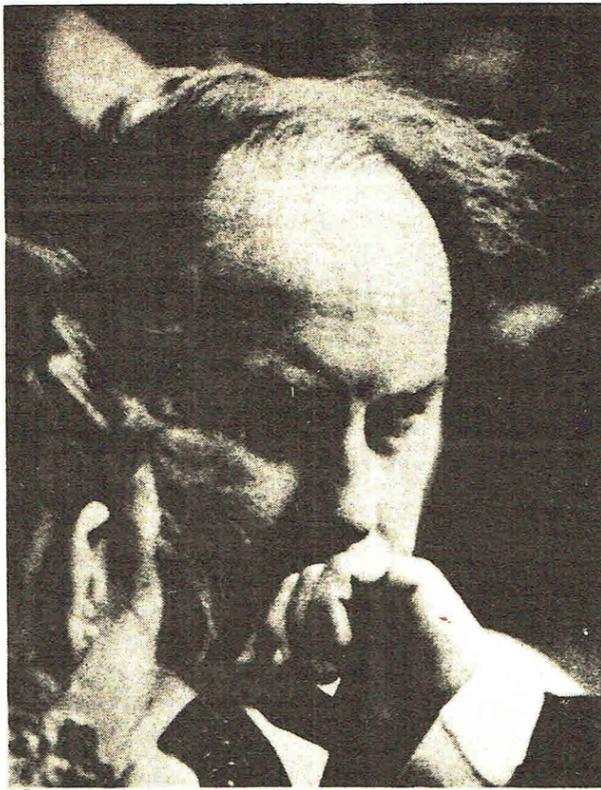
such as the Southall Residents Association the Racial Preservation Society and various Campaigns to Stop Immigration, and welded them together as the NF.

Tyndall, then a member of the Nazi Greater Britain Movement along with Webster, saw this as his chance to build a mass fascist party under the guise of the Union Jack, knowing that an open fascist party would stimulate nothing but seething hatred from the masses after the lessons in Europe of the '30s and '40s.

Tyndall and his side-kick Webster both joined up and they soon made it clear they were in command, stamping out any opposition to their aims at what form the NF should take—being an amalgamation of so many reactionary groups, each with their own tin-pot Hitler at the lead, it was inevitable political and personal clashes would prevail.

But now after 13 years Tyndall has remained firmly at the top.

Tyndall's first victory was over the infamous Nazi Colin Jordan. In 1966 Jordan and his National Socialist Movement had tried to join the NF



Tyndall—still in charge

but Tyndall didn't want his new party to be tainted with the swastika (not openly anyway) so he told Jordan he would be 'stamped upon' if he or his members tried to join.

The next coup came in 1970 when the former leader Chesterton was booted out. Tyndall had cleverly allowed other elements to do the dirty

work, and even came out on Chesterton's side, but dumped him at the final moment. Chesterton's old loyalist ideas had become a drag on the new fascist party of the '70s that Tyndall was building.

The next coup came in 1974 when Tyndall was able to force the 'populists' to split. He had been

successful in hiding the NF's fascist aims and so attracted many right-wing reactionaries, centred around former Tory councillor John Bean. But when they saw the true make up of the NF they attempted to turn it into a party to the right of the Tories, but failed because of Tyndall and were forced to split, forming the extreme right-wing National Party. (With the swings to the right of the Tory Party they have paled into insignificance.)

The latest row has been described in the Tory press as a clash of personalities, mainly over Webster. Webster is certainly not popular with a large section of the NF—he is well known for going into fits of rage and coming out with sarcastic comments, such as when approached by an NF member who proudly proclaimed his branch were running the coach outings for white pensioners, he said, "We are running a political party—not a burial service."

Webster is no friend of Tyndall—last year NF supporters smashed up a gay pub in London which Webster was seen to use. It was not just another NF attack on a minority section of society but a warning to Webster to keep his homosexual tendencies out of public view.

But Tyndall is now sticking up for Webster as he controls the thug element of the NF which Tyndall wants to keep

in favour, similar to the relationship between Hitler and Rohm's SD in Nazi Germany.

The recent clash is more than this. It seems Fountaine wants to tone down the NF to curry favour with his own kind, the aristocratic ruling class.

Reaction

Tyndall realises that to build a fascist party it must be built on the middle classes, who will move towards reaction in a revolutionary situation if no lead is offered from the workers' movements; and not on the ruling classes who will only use the fascists to protect themselves if they are threatened by the labour movement—the ruling class have their own party, the Tories.

The fight against the fascists must not let up. The very existence of Tyndall's NF and Colin Jordan's now re-vitalised British Movement is a threat to the labour movement and must be crushed by mass action.

But it's not just a question of fighting the fascists now and having the revolution later, which is the basis of thought of the popular frontism of the Anti-Nazi League.

The battle against the fascists must go arm in arm with the fight against the decrepit profit system which breeds fascism.

'LATCH-KEY' KIDS- NO ANSWER UNDER CAPITALISM

As a mother who works I was sickened to hear the patronising drivel which came out of our local radio recently during an item on 'latch key kids'—children who are left on their own while their parents go out to work.

The woman being interviewed (a so-called 'expert' on this question) said that it is very dangerous to leave young children on their own, safety-wise. She also said that it was up to the mums to find a helpful relative to provide, as she put it, an 'alternative' to leaving children on their own.

Important issues

This question raises many important issues, and one that the interviewer brought up was that in most cases a woman has to go out to work to make ends meet. The woman said that children should be put before money, and that money isn't everything, and made remarks like "children must be looked after".

Pious remarks like that are all very well, but faced with rising prices what is a working class person supposed to do? Children have to be clothed and fed, and the home kept together and if the wage coming in isn't enough to live on, then it must be supplemented from somewhere.

The fact that children are sometimes left on their own

By

Chris Kelly

(Southampton Labour Party)

all day, shows a blatant need for vastly increased and improved state financed child minders, and day nursery facilities—state financed because when you look at the reasons why a person goes out to work (i.e. to bring in or to supplement the wage) then the fees demanded by child minders and day nurseries doesn't make it economically viable to take on extra work. In fact, you're caught in a kind of poverty trap.

Given the fact that the Tories are to cut public spending, then there isn't likely to be an increase in the provision of existing state nurseries or crèche facilities, they are more likely to be reduced, rather than increased or improved.

Bearing this in mind, the interviewee blithely went on to say that the 'latch key kids issue' cuts right across class, and isn't a class issue at all! I certainly haven't heard of any cases of the brats of the ruling class being left to fend for themselves, while mummy and daddy go galavanting off around the world on a winter cruise.

Until there is a more equal society, i.e. a socialist society, the working class family will be forced by higher prices,

increased VAT, and rising inflation to supplement its incomes where it can, and whilst not condoning children being left on their own, then there's not a lot of choice; you're caught in a vicious circle.

A woman's place

In fact, conscious Tory policies of cuts in school meals, and the Health service, which are justified by the Tories with comments like 'Working mums can't be bothered to cook their kids a decent a meal, so we'll see them up a bit by cutting or in some cases stopping meals.' With policies like this, the working mother is going to be hit very hard indeed.

Women have been used as a source of cheap labour to mop up unemployment, like a tap to be turned on and off at will. When unemployment is low, women can work, but when unemployment rises, then there is pressure on the working mum to stay home 'where she belongs', as one Tory put it.

Whilst campaigning in the May elections, I found a number of people who said that a £70 minimum wage was a necessity. After the first 100 days of the Thatcher government the engineering unions are rightly calling for £80 a week.

With the attacks that the Tories are making on the

working class, via spending cuts, and trade union 'ref-orms', then the labour movement has a tremendous task ahead of it. We must mobilise to oppose public spending cuts. We must vigorously fight attacks on the basic rights of trade unionists, and indeed strengthen them. Above all, we must campaign for socialist ideas, both within the Labour Party and in the trade union movement.

Society should be changed from one based on capitalism that forces men and women to take on extra jobs to make ends meet, to a socialist society where the people who make the wealth, the working class, derive full benefit from it, and we have the say in what's done with the profit which we have made.

Instead of lining the bosses' pockets, it should be used for the good of society rather than the good of the bosses. And if the leaders of the labour movement won't take up these issues, then the working class must put people in their place who are prepared to fight and campaign for socialist ideas and a socialist society.

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BILL DONNELLY

During the holiday period, Bill Donnelly, a dedicated Marxist, passed away after a long illness.

In spite of not being able to walk without the aid of two walking sticks, he turned up regularly to Militant Readers Meetings at Scarborough.

Bill, in search for socialism, tried various parties, such as the Independent Labour Party, the Revolutionary Communist Party, and the CP, and finally, after the USSR invaded Hungary, he quit the CP and joined the Labour Party.

Up to the end of his life he placed his faith in the LPYS and often attended their weekend schools to listen with great pleasure to the high levels of political discussions.

Bill was well known for his strong principles that even cost him his job—during Atlee's McCarthyite type witch-hunt against Marxists, when the Special Branch carried out 'positive vetting', he was sacked from his work at a government

radio station.

He eventually retired from work as a railway clerk at the age of 43 due to ill health which resulted from RAF combat in World War II.

Bill's courage played a large part in his last 12 years. Earlier this year he suffered a heart attack and was determined to get back out of hospital to have another go at the Tories in the letter column of the local newspaper as he often did.

"The Tories haven't seen the last of me yet," was his motto at a Marxist Discussion Group meeting straight after he left hospital.

The Militant readers offer our condolences to his wife Betty and daughters Lynn and June. Farewell to a great comrade and may his good work carry on through us so his efforts will not have been in vain.

By Bob Young
(Scarborough Labour Party)

1979 TRADES UNIONS

CONGRESS MUST GIVE A LEAD IN ORGANISING DECISIVE ACTION AGAINST THE TORIES

Mass unemployment, vicious cuts in government spending, mounting inflation and threatened attacks on trade union rights—these are the central issues facing the 11th Annual Trades Union Congress.

The attacks launched against the working class by the Tory government can be resisted: but it is up to the Congress to ensure this by giving a bold, unequivocal lead to the labour movement.

Some union leaders have suggested that the TUC should act gingerly, not galvanising the energies of the trade union movement against the government. Instead, they argue, the TUC should merely work to convince workers of the dangers of Tory policies.

But urgency is vital if further misery and suffering at the hands of the Tories and big business is to be avoided. The fight back need not await exposure of Tory policies. The lying election propaganda of the Tory party has already been laid bare by the Tory government itself. The honeymoon period of popular support for the Thatcher government must be the briefest ever for a government in Britain!

The task of Congress is to show the way forward by organising decisive action linked to economic and political policies which offer a viable alternative to the 1,400,000 workers languishing on the dole, especially when there is every prospect of this figure rising to two million during this year.

Thousands of young people are leaving school condemned to an indefinite future of enforced idleness. At the same time, in every part of the economy, job opportunities are being wantonly

savaged. Steel, shipbuilding and other heavy industries face mutilation, and there is nowhere else but the dole queue for the workers in these industries.

The spectre of the 1930s is returning.

The fight for the 35-hour week is vital

Clearly, the General Council is going to be under enormous pressure to give effective leadership on this crucial issue. If it fails to do so then it is likely that demands will be heard increasingly for the public sector unions themselves to once again unite in common action against this common threat of government spending cuts.

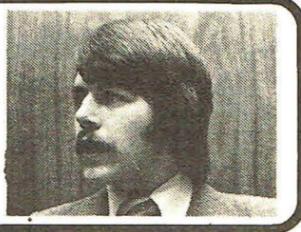
The fight for the 35-hour week is central to the fight against the cuts and against mass unemployment. At least 17 different resolutions on the agenda contain demands for either shorter working week or specifically for the 35-hour week.

The ISTC resolution "regrets that the TUC did not vigorously pursue the commitment made at last year's Congress to wage a general campaign for a 35-hour week." It then concludes: "Congress rededicates itself to an enthusiastic and immediate campaign to achieve a 35-hour week within 3 years".

This campaign is now an urgent priority. For most union members a three-year perspective for victory will be too pessimistic. This will certainly be the case for unemployed workers looking to the trade unions to use their strength to force employers to create new jobs.

As the 'Militant' pamphlet on the 35-hour week explains: "If the trade union movement takes steps to ensure the full conversion into jobs of the working hours involved in the implementation of the 35-hour week then no less than 1,800,000 new jobs could be

By
Brian Ingham



created. This one measure could thereby wipe out unemployment."

It is particularly in relation to the threat of new technology that the demand for the shorter working week has arisen. Thousands of jobs, above all the jobs of typists and clerks, are under imminent danger as a result of new technology.

The potential danger to the labour movement itself which can arise from the use of new technology is shown by the resolution from the National Union of Journalists which "notes with concern the fact that in both the 'Nottingham Evening News' and 'The Times' the introduction of new technology has been used, or is being used, as an instrument with which to break union organisation."

The Society of Civil and Public Servants outlines briefly guidelines which the trade union movement should adopt when confronted with attempts of management to introduce new technology: "...To this end Congress... recognises that the trade union movement's most effective bargaining weapon, both at national and local level is to withhold or reconsider co-operation with the introduction of new technology until firm agreements are reached with the government and employers with particular emphasis on the following conditions:

"[a] a guarantee of no job loss, either by redundancy or by natural wastage; [b] specific agreements on a reduction in the working week; [c] a guarantee of no deterioration in working conditions; and... further agrees that the General Council should actively support affiliated unions taking action to ensure that these conditions are met."

A further resolution from the ISTC on unemployment, referring specifically to the threatened closure at Corby, "regards (this closure)...as an act of industrial vandalism which would further erode our manufacturing base, contract our ability to compete still more and bring social destruction to a one-industry town."

Once again, Congress is called upon to give active assistance, this time to aid

"the steel unions in their fight to retain an adequate steel-making capacity in the UK."

Within the wider problems of unemployment and cuts in government expenditure comes the acute crisis in the National Health Service.

Trade unions must defend the NHS

COHSE has a resolution on the agenda on this issue which "supports those NHS staff who have affirmed their commitment to providing their services on the basis of the needs of the patients, rather than on the ability to pay and believes that staff should have the right, on conscience grounds, not to participate in providing private care."

The resolution further "supports the phased and balanced reduction of NHS pay beds and the principle of common waiting lists but calls for stronger controls on the development of the private sector outside the NHS to prevent the draining of vital and already restricted resources in manpower and training."

The debate on the NHS, of which this resolution will be the pivot, is likely to be the scene of stormy controversy following the outrageous decision of the EETPU to negotiate private medical insurance for its members in the building construction industry.

"Indeed COHSE has amended its own resolution to add: "Congress calls upon all affiliated unions not to negotiate agreements providing access to private health care either within or outside the NHS...Congress calls upon the General Council to consider, as a last resort, the use of the strongest possible disciplinary action against affiliated unions which negotiate such agreements."

The explosion of anger and indignation of the labour movement against the measures of the Tory government radiates throughout the agenda, with demands for action to defend the reforms of the past appearing on almost every page.

There are also demands for further reforms. COHSE calls for a minimum wage of £80 for a 35-hour week and there are demands from several unions for further improvements in relation to health and safety at work.

The National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers "recommends that discussions be initiated with the Health and Safety Commission with a view to extending the protection at present afforded to women on night work and shift work to men and to those categories of women at present without such protective legislation."

The cuts in government expenditure, in particular, will add significantly to the onrush of unemployment. Countless schools, hospitals and social services already enjoy only a very precarious existence.

Yet with callous indifference to the problems of those in most need, the Tories have left in with almost impatient haste to announce all-round 3% cuts in government spending...as a start. They plan a further £4,000 million of cuts for this Autumn.

The combined might of the organised labour movement, once it is mobilised, could stop the Tories in their tracks, prevent the destruction and the Health and social services, and, at the same time, strike a blow against unemployment.

Link up public-sector against cuts

The resolutions on the agenda for Congress reflect the determination of the members of the trade unions to defend the interests of the working class and repel the attacks of the Tories.

For instance, the following resolution from the CPSEA could provide the basis of a bold motion committing the TUC to resolute action to reverse the cuts in public spending.

"Congress condemns totally the attempts of the government to solve the problems of the economy at the expense of the living standards of working people, the health and social services and the jobs of workers in the public services and industry at large. Congress pledges itself to a thorough campaign of opposition to each and every attack by the government on the interests of working people.

"Congress resolves to give full support to constituent

unions in their fight to protect jobs and services by opposing cuts in public expenditure and cash limits.

"This support to include a co-ordinated campaign of action by the TUC around the following programme:

"(a) reverse the cuts; (b) no hiving off; (b) re-nationalisation without compensation of de-nationalised industries or functions; (d) a 35-hour week; (e) no redundancies; (f) one person one job; and (g) and end to unemployment."

That resolution is complemented by resolutions from most of the public-sector trade unions.

NUPE's resolution "instructs the General Council to develop a campaign which will co-ordinate the activities of all TUC affiliates to express opposition."

The NALGO resolution says the cuts are "an unacceptable return to a society with private affluence for the fortunate and public squalor for the majority."

It goes on: "Congress... pledges the whole strength of the trade union movement to affiliated unions forced to take action in defence of their members' interests."

The rank and file of the trade union movement will want these resolutions translated into action immediately. Hesitation or a half-hearted commitment from the TUC could have devastating repercussions on the services of the working class and on the jobs of public service workers.

The National Union of Teachers, pointing to the impending catastrophe in the field of education, again calls upon the General Council to lead a fight on the cuts:

"Congress registers its concern at education policies which propose spending large sums of money on places for a small minority of children at the expense of the least privileged and most vulnerable children in our society..."

"Congress is concerned that the quality of education should be maintained and improved. It is implacably opposed to cut backs in educational provision and believes that the decline in school population should be used as an opportunity to improve the education service..."

"Congress instructs the General Council to mount a vigorous campaign against Government cut backs in public spending and the damage which they inflict upon the children of the country."

And, on the vital question of pensions, an amendment from the Engineering Section

ON CONGRESS 1979

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report) (II)



Delegates at July's Transport and General Workers' Union Conference vote overwhelmingly for maximum necessary action against Tory anti-trade union laws

of the AUEW improves significantly the existing policy of the TUC by calling for "retirement at 60 with a pension of not less than 70% of gross earnings for a married couple and 50% of average earnings for a single person."

But the Tories, and big business view all the demands of the labour movement as outrageously extravagant. Rather than granting further reforms, they are snatching back all that they can of the reforms that they have previously been forced to concede.

Back fight for Labour Party democracy

Capitalism is in acute crisis internationally and can no longer afford the reforms painfully won in the past by the labour movement. This is especially the case in Britain where there has been a particularly slothful attitude to re-investment in industry. Vicious counter-reforms are inevitable, which ever government is in power, so long as the government of the day

seeks to operate within the framework of capitalism. That has been the lesson of successive Labour governments.

Following the experiences of the last Labour government, the struggle for democracy in the Labour Party has intensified, and ASLEF seeks to add the considerable weight of the TUC to this battle so far as the Labour Party Conference decisions are concerned. It urges the Labour Party to take steps to ensure that the next Labour government carries out the policies of the Labour Party as determined by Labour Party Conference."

Unfortunately, despite its calls for action, the agenda remains fundamentally weak when it comes to economic alternatives to the policies of the Tories.

There is not one resolution clearly spelling out the bankruptcy of the capitalist system and pointing the way forward for the labour movement, by explaining the need to link the day-to-day economic struggles with the fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies based upon the nationalisation of the major monopolies, and

the inauguration of a democratically controlled plan of production.

Instead, the resolutions all attempt to put forward ideas for tinkering with the capitalist system to make it function more 'fairly'. The General Council has submitted its own 'alternative' economic approach. But this resolution merely contains a list of exhortations, such as pleas for "balanced growth", "planned development", "recognition of the massive social tasks which have to be undertaken by the public authorities", and "recognition of the increasingly vital role of public enterprise and public investment."

Fight back must be on bold socialist policies

This resolution shows that the leaders of the TUC still have the utopian notion that capitalism can be gradually tamed and made to work in the interests of working people. They imagine that by surreptitious reforms and stealthy use of the National

Enterprise Board that they will extract the teeth of the capitalist shark, and wrap him in a velvet blanket.

But rather than meekly abdicating their power and privileges, the capitalist class are engaged in a frantic bid for survival, in which, not only are they bent on dragging down the living standards of the working class and wrecking the Health and Social Services, but they are also attempting to introduce anti-trade union legislation designed to weaken the ability of the labour movement to fight back on behalf of the working class.

These laws are dictated by the logic of the parlous situation of British capitalism and the fact that capitalism can only be saved at the expense of the working class.

A powerful trade union movement in Britain, built up in over 200 years of struggle stands in the way of the ruling class. Under the last Tory government headlong attacks were made to crush the unions through the Industrial Relations Act, but these moves viciously recoiled on the Tories.

This time they hoping to advance inch by inch, making

further and further inroads into the effectiveness of the trade union movement. **They will find however that it will be impossible to take away through Acts of Parliament the trade union rights which the labour movement has won in decades of struggle.**

Anti-union laws must be stopped

Resolutions from UCATT and the Bakers, in particular, gave expression to the attitude of absolutely intransigent opposition throughout the trade union movement to the anti-trade union policies of the Tories.

However, all the resolutions on this issue have now already—in advance of many delegation meetings—either been dropped or consumed by on solitary composite. The composite "calls upon all affiliated unions to unite against (the) threat to the laws enacted by the Labour government" and to "vigorously resist fundamental attacks on trade union rights by a campaign mobilising the resources and membership of the entire trade union movement..."

But it is clear that the opposition envisaged by those who drafted the the composite is one almost entirely based upon propaganda and verbal persuasion.

There is a promise to "provide advice and assistance to affiliated unions about the practical implications of the Conservative's proposals" and to offer support to unions subject to "pernicious judicial interpretations of current legislation." There will now be no debate, however, on the clear commitment included in an amendment to the resolution from the Bakers submitted by the CPSA for "affiliated unions to support any union defending shop stewards and other members or officials in difficulty as a result of Tory legislation."

UCATT had originally demanded that the TUC "withdraw from all discussions with the government based on their proposals as published". This idea has also been dropped.

Dreams of avoiding confrontation

But every single member of the labour movement should be clear that it was not polite conversation with the Tories that crushed the Heath government's Industrial Relations Act, it was the organised might of the trade unions. That lesson holds good today.

The only language that will persuade the Tories to retreat is the language of struggle, a language that will have to be spoken loud and repeatedly in the year that lies ahead.

The leaders of the trade unions are still permeated with the dangerously mistaken notion that it is possible, through gentlemanly discussions, to reconcile the irreconcilable conflict between labour and capital. Their resolution against the attacks on the trade unions dreams of avoiding "confrontation policies" at precisely the moment when—given the state of British capitalism—confrontation has now become inevitable.

The Tories are defending the interests of the bosses. If the leaders of the labour movement are hesitant in defending the interests of the working class, then the initiative will come from below: moves will take place to by-pass the leaders. The working class will not lightly let go of the economic, social and political rights that it has won.

In fighting to defeat the attacks of the Tories and big business, however, workers will increasingly come to realise that the official alternative economic and political policies of the union leaders offer no way out.

Victory for all the separate and individual battles depends on connecting the power of the labour movement indissolubly to the programme of socialism.

That is the conclusion which will increasingly be drawn by the active members of the labour and trade union movement.

OILGATE MULTI-NATIONALS DICTATE TO GOVERNMENTS

The story of how oil sanctions were broken tells us far more about who has real political power in Britain than numerous academic treaties. For once a journalist has managed to piece together how important multi-national companies operated on a major policy question.

In 1965 the oil giants saw their interests lay in trying to help the Smith regime. The story of how they introduced complicated arrangements to bypass sanctions has been told before. But what has not been shown in such detail until Bailey's recent book ['Oilgate'] has been how the oil companies worked with the civil servants and politicians to cover up their arrangements for supplying Rhodesia with oil.

The companies involved, Shell and BP, are Britain's largest. The foreign policy issue, Rhodesia, was one of the most important to be tackled in the last twenty years.

The interests of the oil giants were clear. They wanted to conserve their interests in southern Africa and they dictated the terms to the civil servants and the government. Whilst many of the local oil executives in southern Africa backed the Smith regime, the concern of their headquarters was not the colour of the regime, but the size of the profits.

In South Africa, BP's advertising slogan was: "No matter who you are—we like to keep you moving." When the FRELIMO liberation movement took power in Mozambique they were greeted by billboards proclaiming: "On all the roads of the revolution—Shell goes with you".

Prevent instability

Oil was Rhodesia's Achilles heel. As the country produced no oil itself, an effective blockade could have brought the economy to a standstill. But that was never Western capitalism's intentions. Sanctions were introduced to make Smith 'see sense', make preparations for handing over to 'moderate' African leaders, not bring the regime down. So oil supplies had to be maintained.

The British government preferred not to know the precise details of how the supplies arrived. They were concerned that southern Africa did not become 'unstable'. All their moves had this goal in mind.

They made a great propaganda display of the Royal Navy blockade of the port of Beira in Mozambique to prevent oil from directly entering Rhodesia through the Beira pipeline. But Wilson admitted in his memoirs in 'The Labour Government 1964-70' (p 289) what his administration's motives were:

If the Beira patrol had not been introduced 'Eastern-bloc countries (would have) joined the struggle on the ground'. Oil for Rhodesia was delivered down the coast of Mozambique at Lourenco Marques or at South African ports. But the Royal Navy stayed off the Mozambique coasts at an overall cost of £100m, for if they were withdrawn the Soviet fleet might replace them.

Civil Servants

The British government was told as early as 1966 that British oil companies were breaking sanctions, but took no action. When political pressure on the issue grew in 1968 the oil companies worked out with civil servants and ministers how to defuse 'the problem'.

Before a meeting with the Foreign Office the oil giants discussed the matter with civil servants at the (then) Ministry

Shell and BP Marketing Services (Pvt) Ltd.
 thank most sincerely
 all those people involved
 in fighting the recent
 fire at the Salisbury
 Depot, as well as those
 who offered their
 assistance and support.

**Meanwhile, we are
 in business as usual.**



The above advert appeared in the Rhodesian Daily Mail only 8 months ago, on 31st December, 1978. It refers to an attack made by liberation movements on fuel storage tanks in Salisbury.

of Power. Shell's Regional Co-ordinator for Africa (now its President) noted that "the Ministry of Power would try to be represented at the meeting in order to add their views to ours."

The links between the oil companies and the tops of the civil service are extensive. One of the civil servants at the above meeting is now Chairman of a North Sea contracting firm. Lord Greenhill, the Permanent Secretary of the Foreign Office left his post in 1973 to become a Director of BP. Gregory, the Assistant Secretary of the Petroleum Division [Ministry of Power] 1968-70 is now Chairman of BP Trading.

It was Gregory who 'discouraged' Shell from trying to find out too much of how its South African subsidiary was supplying oil to Rhodesia at a meeting in

May 1968.

This meeting also showed the real channels of power in Britain today. Gregory asked the permission of Shell's Co-Ordinator for Africa to show certain information to the Head of the Rhodesian Economic Department at the Foreign Office "on a purely personal basis (so that) if there were any further signs of Ministers wishing to sound off on this subject the appropriate discouraging noises could be made."

They need not have worried. The Ministers involved were only concerned that the mud on sanctions-breaking didn't stick on British companies. George Thompson, at the Commonwealth Office, approved the complicated swap arrangements that BP and Shell had made to supply Smith so that he was

Jim Christie reviews

"Oilgate: the Sanctions Scandal"

By Martin Bailey
 published by Coronet,
 £1.50

able to say that no British oil was reaching Rhodesia!

A year before, George Brown, then Foreign Secretary, had explained to the oil company's that the government's aims were "to keep control of the Rhodesia situation to avoid either pressure for enforcement measures against South Africa and Portugal or action by oil-producing states to deny the oil companies the right to export oil to Southern Africa." (January 12th 1967)

Shell was able to be the sole supplier of oil to Rhodesia's armed forces, and organised the arrangements for a secret visit to London of the former Rhodesian Army Commander. In 1968 it lobbied for a resumption of arms sales to South Africa, which was only prevented by a massive protest from the labour movement.

White racist capitalism had much to thank the Labour government for.

Last year the 'Rhodesia Herald' declared: "Perhaps it would be stretching things a bit to suggest that Sir Harold (Wilson) was in fact our man in Whitehall. But if things do get hot for him at Westminster should we not let bygones be bygones and offer him political asylum." (quoted in 'Times' 25.10.78)

Despite the sarcasm the indictment stands. International capitalism dictated the overall policy on Rhodesia and Labour Ministers carried out their master's blessing. The hierarchy of the civil service were linked to the capitalist class and made sure that their interests were essentially followed.

Marxists have always argued that it is unrealistic for Labour governments to talk of fundamental change unless they are prepared to take on those who wield economic power in this society and totally recreate a new democratic state machinery in the interests of working people.

Bailey's book, although primarily concerned with the one issue of 'Oilgate', throws light on these wider issues. As such it is a must for all socialists concerned to understand who wields power in Britain today.

INTERNATIONAL NOTES

India: Italy of the East

After only 24 days the Indian government of Charan Singh fell last week. His coalition collapsed before it was defeated in Parliament. Singh who had made a deal with Mrs Gandhi to become Prime Minister, refused to drop the court cases against her.

If he had done so he would have faced an open revolt from within his newly-formed Janata [Secular] Party.

All the bourgeois parties in India have been thrown into crisis by the growing revolt in the country.

Singh's rival, Jagjivan Ram who heads the Janata Party would not be able to form a stable government. Half his Parliamentary strength comes from the extreme right-wing Hindu party, the Jan Sangh.

Possible coalition parties stated that they could not work with Janata if Jan Singh got any Cabinet posts.

Elections, not due in India until 1982, have now been called for November. With the long before then. With the absence of a clear socialist alternative to any wing of the bourgeoisie from the Communist Parties in India, the election could see an increase in support for Mrs Gandhi.

The 'Guardian' now talks of India as "the Italy of the East". But the crisis of government in Italy is unlikely to be as prolonged in India. The social tensions have grown too great.

Palestine

The sacking of Andrew Young, shows what a shambles America's policy on the Middle East is in. American imperialism has been desperately trying to bring the Palestinian leadership into their Middle East deal.

American capitalism wants to safeguard its oil supplies and prevent another war in the Middle East. But its difficulties were expressed in an editorial in the 'Daily Telegraph' on 21st August, which stated that America's muddle arose because of "America's extreme dependence on Arab oil and her lack of sufficient military strength to protect her interests in the region."

The US knows that the present proposals for a 'palestinian presence' on the West

Bank neither satisfy the Israeli leadership or the Palestinian people. They know it would lead to instability.

Secretly American imperialism had opened up links with the PLO leadership. Young's 'crime' was to do it off his own bat and be found out. He had to be sacrificed, because of the uproar from the Israeli government. But the basic approach will continue.

The Sadat-Begin treaty cannot provide peace. The West Bank scheme is a non-starter. But the new angling of the Americans towards the PLO leadership will bring no solution either. Western imperialism is desperate for a way out of the present impasse.

WESTERN BOSSES' HYPOCRISY ON 3RD WORLD STEEL PRODUCTION

The Third World steel industry has become a favourite whipping boy in the West. The advanced Western capitalist nations plus Japan watch with horror and dread the establishment of new industries in their former colonies.

The OECD, which groups the rich industrialised countries against the poor capitalist countries, bleats mournfully about the new additions to steelmaking capacity.

Abu Dhabi has the impudence to set up a small steelworks. There is a pipe-making plant in Kuwait. Iraq's new direct reduction plants will be able to make more than a million tonnes of steel.

The 1975 conference of UNCTAD at Lima predicted that 30% of world steel output would be from Third World countries by 1980. And by 1977 these states had actually doubled their 1967 output to make 69 million tonnes.

For decades the West has been used to buying iron ore cheap from the colonies and former colonies. With coking coal this raw material was sold back to these same countries as high price steel. The emergence of Third World steelmaking is a double threat to the ageing capitalism of the West: it robs it of a captive market in Africa, Asia and Latin America; at a later stage it opens up the possibility of increased competition.

Free Trade

In the nineteenth century Karx Marx talked of the Cobden school of free traders as the most progressive capitalists of all, eager to sweep away any obstacle to the free movement of commodities. But the ideology of Cobden, Bright and Gladstone, and their seeming radicalism was the political expression of Britain's position as the 'workshop of the world'. Since British capitalism could out-manufacture and out-sell all its competitors—indeed it could destroy their industry—it obviously favoured a free exchange of goods across frontiers.

Consider the position today. There is not one major steelmaker in the West which is not inextricably stuck in a protectionist swamp. And one of the most favoured excuses is the impact of cheap steel from developing countries. Like a football team which has just conceded its eighth goal, imperialism wants to change the rules!

But business is business. There is no solidarity in the West. Each major steelmaker greedily covets the growing market arising from Third World industrialisation. In the West stagnation is king; the only hopeful signs are in

the south and the east, hence the unseemly spectacle of the Third World's former exploiters trampling each other in a mad stampede.

'Excess capacity'

Demand for steel arises when industry invests, but investment on this scale is not taking place in the West today. So capitalism seeks to offset the recession at home by selling abroad.

As plant after plant comes on stream in Mexico, Brazil and Korea a more and more insistent chant of 'excess capacity' goes up. The deplorable lack of socialist thought within the labour leadership dooms them to repeat this.

But the same complaints were made in the thirties

TABLE 1
3rd World Countries
% of world steel production and consumption, 1976
production: 5.5%
consumption: 11.2%

during the last great slump. The only difference between then and now is scale, with steel-making no longer confined to a few countries, and



Steel plants and industrialisation do not bring stability. Toppling of the Shah [above]

than any since the thirties: some countries, like Britain, have not recovered yet, and are not likely to!

And how absurd it is to talk of excess capacity. In Britain there is 'excess' only because the industrialists in the steel-buying industries don't invest, and because capitalism is attacking the living standards of the workers.

But in developing countries, even the most elementary needs have not been met.

It is not the so called surplus of steel which worries the producers, it is the amount of it they can sell at a profit. Quite clearly new steel on the market threatens price levels, especially when the West is having a job to sell even its own steels. All the protectionist measures brought in are designed to maximise profit per tonne

the existence of a genuine world market.

The truth however is that the dependence of the Third World on Western steel stands if anything to increase. The Chase Manhattan study, whose free enterprise credentials are impeccable, predicted that Third World demand would continue vastly to outweigh output up to the year 2,000 and beyond.

And in any case, the steel industry always moves from excess to shortage in cycles. That is because of the unplanned chaos of capitalism. Now, even this predictable chaos is gone. The recent recession was longer

How can there be excess, when many of these countries lack roads, houses, hospitals and basic industry?

No, it is not the so-called surplus of steel which worries the producers, it is the amount of it they can sell at a profit. Quite clearly new steel on the market threatens price levels, especially when the West is having a job to sell even its own steels. All the protectionist measures brought in, (the 'Trigger Price Mechanism' in the USA, the 'Davignon Plan' in the EEC) are designed to maximise profit per ton.

Finally, what of the Third World countries themselves?

It is wrong to treat them as a bloc. Those with oil money, temporarily after the price changes of recent years, find themselves in the forefront of industrialisation. Marxism does not support Western imperialism in denying them the right to do this, but it does point out the consequences. These will be profound.

No smooth transition

More than seventy years ago Leon Trotsky showed the turmoil which resulted from a feudal country trying to industrialise in the modern world. Even in a 'stable' Britain the transition was bloody. In today's cut-throat conditions, developing countries stagger from crisis to crisis. There will be no 'smooth' industrialisation for them.

Those that have oil money can begin to industrialise. But if you build a steel plant, you need a power station. To run a power station you need a domestic source of energy.

At each stage industrialisation sets up new demands which make it impossible for these countries to make themselves independent of the West. The countries without oil don't even get that far.

And every new plant set down helps bring into being a new working class, a class that under Third World conditions can develop rapidly towards a revolutionary position.

Engines of Revolution

The Iranian revolution brilliantly lit the trail. The decisive factor in transfor-

ming it from a peasant revolt to a successful revolution was the general strike of the oil workers. The nearby Arab countries, also starting to

TABLE 2
Of the top 30 steel companies in 1977, only one, the Steel Authority of India, [SAIL], was in a developing country.

industrialise are appalled as their future unfolds before their eyes.

If Iran could not do it, what chance is there for Pakistan or Taiwan? A steelworks may be a shiny toy for the local sheikh but it is a mockery in the face of brutal starvation and near-slavery.

Against the intentions of their rulers, the steelmills will be engines of revolution in the Third World. They will not

meet their targets. The grandiose plans will come to nothing.

But this does not mean that the western capitalists can rest easy.

Further convulsions in the middle east and elsewhere means the loss of markets. Steel-making capacity may be an index of economic power, but under present and future conditions it will be made more and more difficult to sell.

Planning, linked to world nationalisation, is the only hope for the industry. The new steel mills of Arabia and India show the potential. But it will take socialist planning not free-booting capitalism to fulfil it.

By

Michael Unwin



'CHINA'—'Militant' Pamphlet
By Peter Taafe

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LETTERS

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

ABORTION—A RIGHT WE MUST DEMAND

Dear Editor

On Friday (August 3rd) I attended the NAC meeting at Conway Hall concerning the Corrie anti-abortion Bill.

This is something I feel strongly about. This bill, or its implications is the most retrograde step imaginable in the campaign for equal rights for women.

I do not claim to be a sexist, or a Communist, socialist or Tory, but I do believe in common sense.

Until that wonderful day (joke) when no unwanted pregnancies occur, abortion must be available on demand to all women, free. Even if you wish to debate the ethics of the living foetus, like the anti-abortionists, it is still a fact that any normal pregnancy carries a far greater risk to the potential mother than a termination, at least within the first 14 weeks.

The aims of the Corrie Bill seem to be to deprive about 80% of women of the right to an abortion they would have had under the 1967 Act, and to make it much more expensive for the 20% or so

who will be able.

What worried me about the meeting, was that so many various groups/organisations were busily arguing the toss over women's rights, socialist or Communist principles etc. Little seemed to be seen of what must be the first objective of any person who feels strongly that women are human beings, with basic as well as political or democratic rights: that is to kill the bill.

Lobby MPs, support the TUC rally on October 28th. Write to your MP, but remember—all efforts must culminate in February time, when the third reading is. Yes, this bill has survived two readings and is in committee.

All women are relying on this Bill being stopped, and remember, even if you're an MCP, if they take away, or further distort one right of a woman, surely they'll even the score and take away one of ours! Like working an extra 5 years to earn a pension we are statistically less likely to draw than women!

Yours

Mr SW Korbey SRN

Bosses get away with murder—unless we organise

Dear Comrades

Janice Dale's article on the exploitation of students (Militant 462) illustrates one of the ugliest consequences of capitalism.

As a student I've done lots of jobs: greengrocer, barman, porter, cleaner, warehouse work and factory work. Without exception all have been badly paid and certain of them have been dangerous.

Most students can only get jobs with small firms where the full-time workers aren't unionised. This isn't because they don't want to join unions.

I've often explained when discussing with workers the atrocious pay, poor conditions, stupid foremen etc, that it's only if workers organise collectively that they can improve their conditions, and they readily agree, but it's quite hard when there's only two or three full-timers and nine or ten temps. However if full-time union organisers would only bother to get out to these places and encourage blokes to join they could unionise them at the drop of a hat.

If these full-time organisers got the same wage as their members and were elected subject to recall perhaps they might start doing a better job.

Where I'm working a bloke was nearly killed when a heavy door fell off its hinges—which had rusted because of the chemicals in the atmosphere. This incident occurred just after a visit from a Factory Inspector.

My experience has shown me that it's only the organised power of the working class which can end the exploitation of students and workers alike.

Yours fraternally

Con O'Brien

(Ruislip-Northwood LPYS)

Dear Comrades

On the way back from the picket lines of the first one-day strike by AUEW members, a comrade and myself stopped off at a cafe. Whilst ordering the tea I saw a notice stuck on the till which said "We are sorry for the increase in prices" and gave amongst the reasons: "Large annual pay increases for the staff".

Knowing that the workers in the catering trade are paid appalling wages, I asked the girl making the tea what her wage increase had been.

"I haven't had any wage increase" she told me. "I'm

paid £26 for a 40-hour week. Last week after paying my mum for board and lodging and buying some shoes I was left with £2.50 in the bank".

So who received the wage increase? Probably the bosses awarded themselves a nice fat rise. What a cheek putting a notice like that on the till.

It just shows that the bosses get away with murder in non-union places. The best way to help this girl would be for the organised labour movement to transform society along socialist lines.

Yours fraternally

Nicholas John

(North West Surrey CLP)

Socialism in Britain—before the French Revolution

Dear Comrade

Whilst I must agree with Jim Chrystie's contention, in 'Militant' July 13th, that socialists should remember the French Revolution for the contribution made to our movement by Gracchus Babeuf and others, he too seems to fall into the trap of accepting the judgement of bourgeois history without question.

Comrade Chrystie says that that before this all socialists had been "enlightened representatives of the ruling class". He appears to accept without question the widespread myth that there never were any English communists prior to Babeuf and, therefore, that Communism and socialism are foreign to this country, introduced by emigrés in the nineteenth century.

While accepting that many of the earliest socialists were of the upper classes in their respective countries, there was an English predecessor of

the Conspiracy of Equals.

In the early part of 1649, as the truth of their position dawned upon former supporters of the Parliamentary forces in the Civil War, communist ideas began to flourish. In the Putney debates Cromwell's son-in-law, Ireton, had already condemned those of 'levelling principles' and made it clear that the new regime would be one which favoured the owners of property and disregarded those who had none.

In the same year at St George's Hill near London, the first Digger settlement was set up. It professed very much the same ideals as Babeuf was to profess over one hundred and forty years later: equality of land and labour.

Its theorist was Gerard Winstanley, an artisan who could hardly be described as an "enlightened representative of the ruling class". According to Christopher

Dear Comrades

Whilst travelling back from holiday, my friend and I arrived at Dieppe harbour in France ready for the crossing to Newhaven.

We noticed confusion amongst the passengers once we were actually on board the ship. This was the result of a twenty-four hour strike, just ending, by SNCP Sealink crew members.

We spoke to some of the strikers (although there were language difficulties!) who explained the cause of their grievances.

They were striking over bad conditions during the ferry crossing, particularly with regard to meals. The one-day stoppage was called because

of the general dissatisfaction felt over the prices paid by the crew for their meals during trips, and the poor quality of the food. They have to pay high prices for mere snacks; they would rather receive the money in their pay packets and do without the meals.

The strike had obviously been effective, with two loads of passengers on one ship, and complaints being made to the management. The crew seem confident following the short, sharp and solid stoppage that the management will concede victory to the strikers.

Fraternally

Yvonne Hay, Edgbaston

LPYS & Ruth Hargreaves

Handsworth LPYS

PRIVATE MEDICINE —PROFIT VULTURES!

Dear Comrade

Birmingham has one of the worst records in the country for care of kidney machine patients. Lack of facilities over the last few years has led to many unnecessary deaths.

Now, surprise surprise, an enterprising American firm is planning to build a £6m hospital for kidney transplants in Birmingham.

According to spokesman Ken Westall, of American Medicals [Europe] Ltd, within 2 years patients needing kidney transplants need spend no time on a waiting list—just £4,000 for an operation.

We are answered that the operations will be performed by "local surgeons"! What happens, meanwhile, to their NHS patients?

No doubt Thatcher & Co will support this kind of enterprise in the name of 'freedom of choice'. I know one thing—if this condition affected one of my family we would have no choice!

Vultures—that's all these sort of firms can be called, exploiting the sick for profits!

Fraternally

Louise Birch

Selly Oak CLP

HOLIDAY NEWS

Ring of truth about it

Dear Brothers and Sisters

Having recently bought a diamond ring, I was pleased to hear from the sales assistant that the ring was insured.

Later, when reading the clauses of the insurance policy, my earlier pleasure was dashed.

The ring, it appears, is only insured in times such as the present—the age of capitalism.

In times such as 'national dramas', the ring is not insured.

What, we may ask, are 'national dramas'? Well the policy went on to outline them. They include civil war, revolution and nationalisation! In other words a socialist society.

Never having read such truth straight from the horse's mouth, I became more convinced to fight for a system where insurance companies were nationalised.

Though my ring were not insured, I'd be far happier for it.

Comradely

Peter Whittaker

Chairman NUPE No 1 Division

NCCL Southall appeal

Militant

Readers who were involved as participants or witnesses in the Southall protest on 23rd April 1979 against the NF meeting held that day are invited to give evidence before an independent enquiry conducted by the NCCL.

Anybody wishing to give evidence—in particular friends of Martin Craxton—please contact Milan Dulovic, NCCL 186 Kings Cross Road, WCL. Tel: 01-278 4575. ext.56

British workers from supporting left movements.

If, as Comrade Chrystie says, we should celebrate the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille in order to remember Babeuf and the Conspiracy of Equals, then we should also remember the raising of the Digger or True Leveller settlement at St George's Hill on April 1st 1649. As Hill has shown, this was not just a one off event; it represented an attempt by a minority of 'militants' within the Leveller movement to carry out the principles they believed in.

Yours fraternally

Geoff Ludden

Langley, Middleton

Hill, in 'The World Turned Upside Down' Winstanley built his community upon theories of 'natural right'; theories which were later to play a major part in the French Revolution via Paine's 'Rights of Man'.

These could be traced back through the Anabaptists to the Elizabethan societies, the 'Family of the Mount' and the 'Family of Love'. Digger colonies were set up in various southern and midland counties of England in 1649, but like the later movement in France it was soon crushed under the weight of growing bourgeois power.

Throughout recent history there has been a reluctance on the part of all save a few Marxist historians like Hill and EP Thompson, to admit that the civil war was similar in its basic arguments and outcome to the later French Revolution. This period, with the final triumph of the new bourgeois interests in 1688,

paved the way for the generation of the full-blown capitalism of the nineteenth century.

In both these societies prior to their respective 'revolution' there was an autocratic monarchy which in some way prevented the wealthy landed class from developing its power. This angered the artisans and peasants enough to create brief class collaboration for long enough to topple the monarchy and leave the way clear for the establishment of bourgeois power.

To admit this, is of course to admit that England is no different from the rest of the world.

Once it is admitted that English Diggers were in fact agrarian communists, albeit of the utopian variety, it is hard to continue to believe the 'communism is a foreign alien ideology' myth which is used by the media and the establishment to frighten off

TAX YOUR RESOURCES FOR US

You may resent paying a third of your wages to the government. Especially when the bosses contribute next to nothing to the 'public purse' only take from it, and the services are being run down anyway. But it's doubtful whether you are seriously contemplating fleeing to a tax haven, especially now that Jersey is clamping down on the number of tax exiles living on the island! And if you think Maggie Thatcher's budget rebates will help, look at your mounting commitments and you'll see they're hardly a drop in the ocean.

Militant's programme is the only way out, so why haven't you donated your tax rebate to build the best workers' paper in the country?

If you have...there's always the October one to follow up with! If you haven't, then follow one of these examples:—

A Stevenage reader and a Southampton reader each donated £20 from rebates last week. Two Swansea activists gave £25 between them. B Mullins (Rover Solihull T&G Steward), R Dawson and P Gerrard of Huddersfield, £10 each. J&M McMurdo (also of Huddersfield) found £7.15 spare from their tax rebates and P McNally (Birmingham), P Westmore (Vice-Chairman IOW Labour Party) and a Cardiff Militant supporters' sent fivers from theirs.

Large or small, send us your donation. Better still, go round everyone you know and ask them to club in with you to assure Militant a vigorous future in the fight for socialism.

Bracknell Militant supporters raised an excellent £101.50 one way and another in the last two weeks. Southend supporters £33.37, Derby £32.65, Sheffield £28, in Gwent £20 and Hartlepool £20.

These donations and many more, some not even listed below have helped us to a total for two weeks (since the last issue) of £2,247.03. Though we need even more than this per week to get on target, supporters everywhere have begun to pull out the stops.

At the Labour Party Young Socialists' Camp, Geordie supporters cooked up fish, sausages and a raffle for a TV set to raise over £70. In fact during the last two weeks, while there's been something of a lull in the 'normal' activities of the labour movement, Militant readers have been selling anything they could lay their hands on to make sure there was no 'lull' in the paper's finances.

Most impressive of all was the 'Marathon Jumble sale' in Coventry which has raised nearly £300 so far with another £56 on its way! Elsewhere, comrades have been selling bags of potatoes, peaches and other 'home produce', food at socials, 'suppers', teas and sandwiches, carpets, Sunday papers, 'scrap', songbooks, posters, records, badges and tickets—pontoon tickets,

bingo tickets, raffle tickets (on 3 different coaches to Tolpuddle), football tickets and '50 Club' tickets.

Other efforts for the Militant include a one-man sponsored swim (S London £30), a chess match victory in Newcastle (£12), photos at YS camp (£27), 'job' (Peterborough £10), 5-a-side football (£2.50 in Blyth), saving coppers in Merseyside (£6), 'vaulting a parking meter' in W London (£1), 'Lucky Gate' (vaulting again? £1 London), guessing baby's weight (Walshs', Stevenage £4.35), betting in Caerphilly (£2.03) and collecting 'saved fares', 'pints for the paper' all over the place—literally in the case of a comrade in Sussex: "This £22 for the fighting fund has been made up in many ways; from spare coppers for Militant, to loan of a car for Militant, and even a dispute with a Tory where a comrade had been thrown over him and instead of an apology extracted £2 for Militant's fighting fund".

The most enterprising (and lucrative) fund raising event has revived an old tradition in Driffield. A dance there raised the magnificent sum of £95 for the fighting fund.

In spite of the holidays, the more 'traditional' ways of raising cash for Militant have brought us considerable sums: from collections at public meetings in Hull, Llanelli, Gloucester and Garston and discussion groups in Leeds, Rotherham, Wigan and Childwall (Merseyside).

The following donations were received from LP Young Socialists:—Oxford and Llanelli £25, Feltham (social) £23.25, YS Summer School £18.60, Bracknell £12, Hendon £3, Waltham Forest £2 and Toxteth £1.24.

TGWU members working at T Lucas, Bristol, gave a total of £12.60 to help build the Militant. Workers at Duttons Ltd, Liverpool gave £3.50, CPSA members at the DHSS Central Office in Newcastle collected £10, Liverpool NGA members £6.33, W Yorks NALGO members £3.50, Wavertree Labour Party members £3.77, Toxteth LP

members £1.28 and Knowsley £1.50.

A bumper collection amongst CPSA members in London raised £44 'real' money and £55 in IOUs. Well done, but let's see those promises fulfilled so that Militant can fulfill its promises too!

Don't forget in the next month we have to raise £20,000 in real money and

Ford (Erdington LPYS), S Stone (Birmingham), LP raffle prize winner in Stevenage, S Donnelly (Leyton), J Pattinson (Sec. Jarrow LPYS) and J Burke (Birmingham, 'overtime').

K Walsh (Swansea CPSA) and D Pearson (Merseyside ACTSS) each contributed £4 and £3.18 was given by B McCaffrey (Birkenhead TG

proving it twice over by working for the government and Anselo Ltd!). I appreciate the good work done by 'Militant' to further the working class cause".

Other pounds reached us from the workers at Rover (TGWU 5/826): D Stern, G Gordon and P Petrouse; from Humberstone thanks to G Taylor, B Owen, R Glover (all Hull), D Mitchell, J Woolliss (both Cleethorpes LPYS), J Harding (Bridlington NUPE) and T Robinson (Grimsby); from London, C Friend, P Ryan, D Lefwich and S Sinclair. More pounds from S Voyce (ASTMS, Bristol), A Horne (Loughborough), E Graham (Alnwick), D Moss (Torbay LP), a student from Bracknell, a small businessman from West Yorkshire and a pensioner A Auld of Tyneside.

The final pound is also the first of a regular donation from G Hollylead (Nottingham UPW). This is as welcome as any larger 'lump sum'. In one year it means £52! Just as welcome is the

fact that J Kelly of the Wirral TGWU is prepared to pay £1 for his copy of Militant and that school student S Kaplan of Rotherham gives up 65p of his pocket money to see the Militant grow.

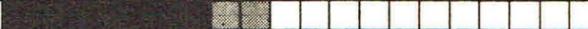
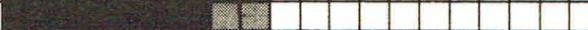
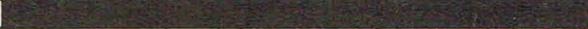
Forget your dreams of a tax haven in the Channel Isles or even a holiday there! Things can only get worse with the Tories—subsidies or no subsidies. Steel, shipbuilding and other nationalised industries will go the wall—and the workers with them—unless we fight to build the socialist alternative NOW.

Send us as much as you can now and help Militant weather the storms of legal action, rent rises, telephone bills... the lot. Your donation can get us back on course. Without the programme of Marxism, the movement goes unarmed into battle.

Tax your resources and build the fighting weapon of the labour movement!

Send donations to 'Militant Fighting Fund, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Build Militant

| Area | Target 52 wks | Target 39 wks | Proportion of target received | Received |
|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---|---------------|
| Eastern | 4,700 | 3,525 |  | 2,035 |
| Hants & IOW | 3,100 | 2,325 |  | 1,774 |
| Humberside | 2,000 | 1,500 |  | 1,114 |
| London North | 9,500 | 7,125 |  | 4,212 |
| London South | 3,900 | 2,925 |  | 2,326 |
| Manchester & Dist. | 4,500 | 3,375 |  | 1,654 |
| Merseyside | 5,000 | 3,750 |  | 1,990 |
| Midlands East | 3,300 | 2,475 |  | 1,839 |
| Midlands West | 9,000 | 6,750 |  | 4,626 |
| Northern | 5,500 | 4,125 |  | 2,441 |
| Scotland East | 2,900 | 2,175 |  | 965 |
| Scotland West | 4,500 | 3,375 |  | 1,497 |
| South East | 4,500 | 3,375 |  | 2,648 |
| South West | 3,100 | 2,325 |  | 1,713 |
| Wales East | 2,600 | 1,950 |  | 992 |
| Wales West | 3,400 | 2,550 |  | 1,044 |
| Yorkshire | 6,800 | 5,100 |  | 2,751 |
| Others | 6,700 | 5,025 |  | 8,298 |
| Total | 85,000 | 63,750 |  | 43,920 |

Progress towards year's target  Progress towards October 6th target 

TARGET FOR THE YEAR - £85,000 TARGET FOR OCT. 6th - £63,750

**THIS WEEK
£2,247**

**GOOD BUT WE NEED
MORE
EVERY WEEK!**

end-of-quarter promises (use the special 1979 appeal sheets to help) and it can only be done if every Militant reader is asked to make a sacrifice and give as big an individual donation as they can possibly manage. The examples from the last two weeks augur well in terms of lump sums, tax rebates and regular weekly donations but there must be more...many more.

Many thanks to every contributor, especially:—

C Lawson of Edinburgh ASLEF who donated 'back to the movement' union expenses for YS conference of £50; T Crowe of Southampton who gave £25; P&G Sammels (Harlow CPSA) and a student in Bracknell for their £20; M Harrison (Liverpool) £17, T Marshall (Exeter YS) £15 and B Fleetwood (Hull Cllr), K Allen (Tyneside) and an OAP in Kilburn for their 'tenners'.

'Fivers' came from K Lynch (Strathclyde ULC), M Wedderburn (London, CPSA), J

WU). £3s were sent from C Onions (Bootle IRSF), A Mackie (Cleethorpes LPYS) and S Mitchell (Bristol SE LPYS), with £2.50 from L O'Grady (Manchester GM WU) and R Carrell (Hayes) £2.30.

Two pounds came from D Cozens (Coventry NUJ), D Johnson (Stratford ASLEF), M Bowe (Hillingdon AUEW, EMI), M Hill (Plymouth Sutton LPYS) and F McLeod (Torbay LPYS). Donations of over £1 were contributed by F Perkins (Nottingham North CLP) £1.85, R Leggett (Louth CLP), M Zamorski (Oxon) and S Martinez (AUEW, Scarborough)—£1.50, S Sansom (TGWU, Gloucester)—£1.35, C Smith (Nottingham) £1.31 and E Meredith (TG WU, Schweppes, Bristol) £1.05.

£1 was sent by Chris Till (Walsall CPSA);

"Please find enclosed a small donation towards your 'Build Militant' Campaign. As a working class girl [and

ads

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

All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

MEETINGS

WIGAN Discussion Groups. August 30th—Marxism and the Trade Unions; September 6th—Eastern Europe. Meetings start at 8 pm. Venue: 19 Concorde Avenue, Worsley Mesnes, Wigan.

SOUTHWARK LPYS Public Meeting. 'The Fight Against the Health Cuts'. Monday 3rd September 8pm. 41 Camberwell Grove, SE5

CLASSIFIED

SOCIALIST SONGBOOK (New printing). Only 40p Single copies post paid 50p. Bulk orders for 30p each plus postage. From Bryan Beckingham 62 Haverstock Rd Bristol

SHOULD NURSES GO ON STRIKE? Militant NHS pamphlet, 3p Obtainable from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN

FIGHT THE SHIPYARD WRECKERS - NO TO ALL REDUNDANCIES!

The 10,000 jobs that are to be lost in the shipbuilding industry are only the beginning as far as BS axe-men are concerned. The BS workforce on merchant ships has already fallen from 38,000 to 28,000 in the last two years and no-one should be under any illusion that these present redundancies are the last.

In addition to these 10,000 jobs in shipbuilding, there will almost certainly be massive cuts to come in the shiprepair section of BS and in marine engineering.

The threatened closures and redundancies will turn some areas of Britain into virtual wastelands. The unemployment figures for Merseyside, Clydeside, Wearside and Dundee are already about the highest in Britain. There is 14% male unemployment in Sunderland, for example.

But the response of the workers concerned has set BS management back on their heels. Every one of the Scottish yards and the Sunderland shipbuilders yards on the Wear came out in a 24-hour strike last week and an overtime ban was set into operation. The official conference of the Confed. merely backed up what the workers themselves had already begun.

But the ban on overtime, on launches and on completions must not be left to those yards which are facing closure. The bans must be made national, throughout British Shipbuilders, so that the threatened yards are not left to fight alone. The overtime ban has already spread to Yarrow's on the Clyde which is not yet threatened itself.

Tory test-case

The battle has begun for tens of thousands of jobs! But the significance of the fight extends far beyond the shipyards themselves. Every Tory Minister will be watching at

By John Pickard
(Gateshead
Labour Party)

the moment to see how the shipyards react to the announced closures, no doubt hoping for a quick 'kill' that would open the door to a massive de-industrialisation in many other sectors of the British economy, especially in the public sector: in British Steel, in the Post Office; on the railways and so on.

Lessons of UCS

Like their counterparts in Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in 1971, the shipyard workers are now fighting for all workers in Britain.

The key element in the fight is leadership, both at local and national level. Many doubtful or hesitant workers can be won to a fighting position if their own yard committees and local union branches campaign.

In Austin and Pickersgill, for example, the yard committees are producing a constant stream of leaflets with the aims of dispelling the illusion that many workers have in the promise of a 'golden handshake'. Their leaflets also point out that workers seeking jobs will probably have to go abroad to get them: "If you take your redundancy, don't forget to get your passport!"

Campaign now

A survey by North Tyneside Trades Council shows even further the real value of the brass handshake. They found that from a survey of Wallsend Drydock and slipway that over 50% of workers would get less than £1,000, and that would include everyone under 40. Match that against the guarantee of years and years on the dole!

But at national level, also, the fight needs to be clearly led. John Chalmers was quoted in the newspapers as saying that "the unions were offended at the way that British Shipbuilders had handled the situation." What can

shipyard workers assume from that? Does that imply that if BS handles the situation differently then all would be forgiven?

There must be an absolutely clear and unequivocal call to oppose all redundancies, forced and voluntary.

A national combine must be built representing all the yards. The present unofficial combine is based largely on Clydeside and until recently many yards were not represented or even invited. This combine, at its next meeting next month could become a vital part of the machinery for fighting the BS plans.

It must be said that there is still some bitterness in the North-East over the transfer of Polish ship orders to Clydeside, but all these divisions must now be pushed to one side. BS management must not be allowed to play off one yard or one river against another.

The mood of the overwhelming majority of workers would respond to a call for a fully-representative shop-stewards' combine to fight for the industry.

The fight that has started must become a national campaign. The workers must

begin to lay down plans for the occupation of yards at a later date if that is necessary.

A massive campaign of mass meetings and demonstrations would gather overwhelming support from the majority of the trade union movement. Only the strength of the trade union movement in the last analysis, will deflect the BS management from their path of destroying the industry.

★ For a national 24-hour strike in the whole industry, with mass meetings and demonstrations involving the trade union movement.

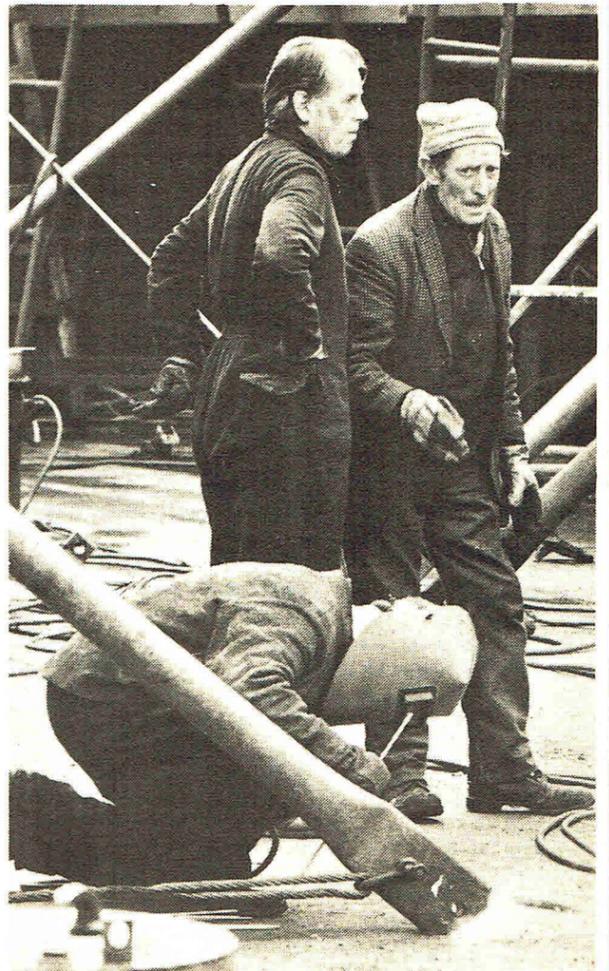
★ For a shop-stewards' combine committee representing all shipbuilding, ship-repair and marine engineering!

★ No redundancies! Share out the work on full pay!

★ For nationalisation of shipping lines and the integration of the two industries in order to plan future orders! future orders!

Workers at Caledon shipyards—
fighting for their future

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report) II



CLYDESIDE: 'NOT A SHIP WILL BE LAUNCHED'

"Not a ship will be launched on the Clyde until these proposals are withdrawn," pledged Govan Shipbuilders' shop stewards' convenor, Sammy Gilmore, following British Shipbuilders' announcement of their plan to savagely destroy the shipbuilding industry in whole areas of the country.

Sammy Gilmore was expressing the anger and fury which has once again erupted on Clydeside.

5,300 workers in Govan and Scotstoun immediately walked out on a half-day strike in response to the announcement and voted virtually unanimously to place a complete ban on overtime. This example has been followed by yards in other shipbuilding areas such as the Lower Clyde, Tayside and Tyneside.

The enormous strength of feeling which exists on the Clyde was illustrated by the tremendous show of solidarity demonstrated by the decision of the 4,500 strong workforce of the profitable Yarrow's naval yard to support an immediate ban on overtime despite the fact that the jobs in this particular yard are secure for the time being.

The Clydeside area, which has traditionally been the major focal point of resistance to unemployment and contraction of the industry, is bearing the brunt of the latest attacks. If implemented, the proposals will mean the closure of four yards in Scotland alone with the immediate loss of at least 4,000 jobs and many more to follow.

This would have a devastating effect, not just on those families who depend directly on the shipyards for their incomes, but on thousands of others. Because of the nature of shipbuilding, most of the work on a ship comes from outside the yard. For every worker inside the yard there are about another three or four workers employed in

related industries.

Apparently, however, the Tories have forgotten the lessons of the magnificent struggles of the UCS workers in 1971-72 when the Heath government was forced to retreat from its 'lame duck' policy, battered and beaten by the labour movement and fearful of the possibility of—in the words of one of Heath's advisers—"mass unemployment and riots in the streets of Glasgow."

Once again the Tories are on a collision course with the Scottish working class.

By Alan McCombes

(Glasgow Craigton LP)

CPSA POST OFFICE DISPUTE ENDS

"By an overall vote of 19,195 in favour to 6,980 against, the Group Executive Committee's recommendation to accept the proposed settlement in relation to our 1979 pay campaign has been endorsed by the membership." [PTG 95/79]

In his latest all-members circular, this was how the Civil and Public Services Association Post and Telecommunications senior

group secretary, John Raywood, greeted the failure of the Group Executive to lead us in the fight for our full claim.

After thirteen weeks of tremendous solidarity demonstrated by the members in walk-outs, rallies and marches the GEC decided to recommend an almost unbelievable offer. It includes a 9% increase on present rates, 2¼% compensation for a change in pay review dates and 5¼% for moving CPSA grades on to a new common pay structure or 'spine'.

When the offer was put to members earlier this month,

'Militant' supporters campaigned for a 'no' vote. The 9% increase came nowhere near our claim for 21%.

In view of the Tory attacks on members' living standards, with prices and inflation soaring, we argued that it was necessary for CPSA to escalate and intensify the action to settle the dispute quickly and successfully.

The other percentage increases, we argued, were based on a CPSA commitment to potentially disastrous conditions such as co-operation with management on new technology, 're-grading'—or in practice down-grading, and increases in efficiency.

Unfortunately, however, during this long drawn out dispute, there were few efforts to involve and report to members, and combined with the disgraceful role of the leadership, this undermined determination and confidence. The offer was accepted by the Group's 37,000 members.

Only 26,175 members took part in the voting. Such was the demoralisation with the conducting of this struggle, even in those handful of branches actively involved in the selective strike action, that some 10,000 (nearly a third of the membership) didn't bother to vote at all.

These abstentions represent dissatisfaction, however, negative, with the recommendation. Added to those who voted no, it means that **only just over one in two members supported the offer.**

Coming of age

This dispute nevertheless marks the coming of age of the P&T group. Whatever hopes they once had, the Post Office now know that our members will not be walked over.

The strike has raised trade union awareness among large

sections of the membership. Many branch committee members (shop stewards) who were formerly barely active, have emerged from the action angry and militant, particularly regarding the role of the Executive Committee.

This growing maturity in our ranks will be reflected in the increased competition for executive seats at the 1980 conference. This is certain to be the most heated in the P&T group's history.

By Steve Higham

(CPSA P&T Liverpool)

RECALL AUEW NATIONAL COMMITTEE- ALL OUT ACTION FOR CONFED

Support for the Confed national wage claim has gathered momentum during the three one-day stoppages. An estimated 2 million workers came out on 13th and 20th August, in a tremendous display of national unity and trade unionism. The employers have had their answer—they cannot intimidate us.

So engineering and other Confed workers were shocked to hear that their leaders were holding talks with ACAS. The Engineering Employers' Federation refused to participate, contemptuously declaring: "We would not want to sit just looking at the union side over cups of tea."

The EEF, their hand strengthened by a Tory government and the weak and hesitant leadership of the AUEW, are resisting the full claim. They see this as an opportunity to humiliate and defeat the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering unions on a national scale, although they recognise that the strength of our shop-floor organisation rules out the possibility of a rout and victimisation.

Industrial Tories

The EEF see themselves as the industrial wing of Toryism in Britain. They aim to hold firm to assist the Tories in their plan for settling accounts with the trade unions. Mr Anthony Frodsham, director general of the EEF, said "our determination will affect many other attitudes in the coming winter."

This is becoming an openly political fight. What is AUEW general secretary Terry Duffy's response?

In an article written for the Labour and Trade Union press service, he has launched an attack on the left in the Labour Party.

In the middle of a fight with our reactionary employers, for a trade union leader to make such scurrilous statements attacking the Labour Party's elected executive, makes union members wonder who Duffy is trying to appeal to. Is he proclaiming to the EEF the virtues of moderation?

He attacks the Labour left as "wreckers in our midst". Yet the strategy of two-day stoppages adopted by the Confed leaders as the next stage in our action could have precisely this wrecking effect on our claim.

This stop-start policy is not supported by the membership. It will eventually dent the morale and fighting spirit.

If it had been left to the right-wing, there would not have been a struggle. It was only the narrow Broad Left majority on the union's national committee that ensured there was a claim worth fighting for. But now they have allowed control of the strike to slip from their

CLAIM

hands into those of the right-wing executive.

The AUEW engineering section resolution carried at the Confed executive on 25th June had the following loosely-worded final paragraph:

"In the event of no progress being made, the Confed executive committee should consider stepping up the campaign for a satisfactory settlement."

The employers are threatening lay-offs and lock-outs if the 2-day stoppages go ahead. In some of the higher-paid areas members are already expressing their disenchantment with this policy.

On-off tactics

Only a national strike can cut across this and win the claim. A fundamental break must be made with the present on-off strike tactics.

The Broad Left must regain control of the struggle and channel the mood of the shop floor in a campaign that utilises our full strength. They must demand that the AUEW national committee is reconvened to change this disastrous policy.

The national shop stewards movement must reassemble to sound out feelings up and down the country. We must ensure that delegates are present from every workplace.

A properly convened executive must be elected for this body, to exert full pressure on our union leadership. The longer the action drags on, the harder it is to maintain the maximum unity required to win.

Total stoppage

The Bradford and Huddersfield Confed is calling for a total stoppage to win the claim. Impatience with the lack of a national lead, however, means members are being driven to consider district-wide strikes.

The Broad Left and the shop stewards' movement must act now to co-ordinate this anger on a national basis. We must not be forced into a repeat of the 1972 guerrilla strike debacle, when the districts were left in isolation.

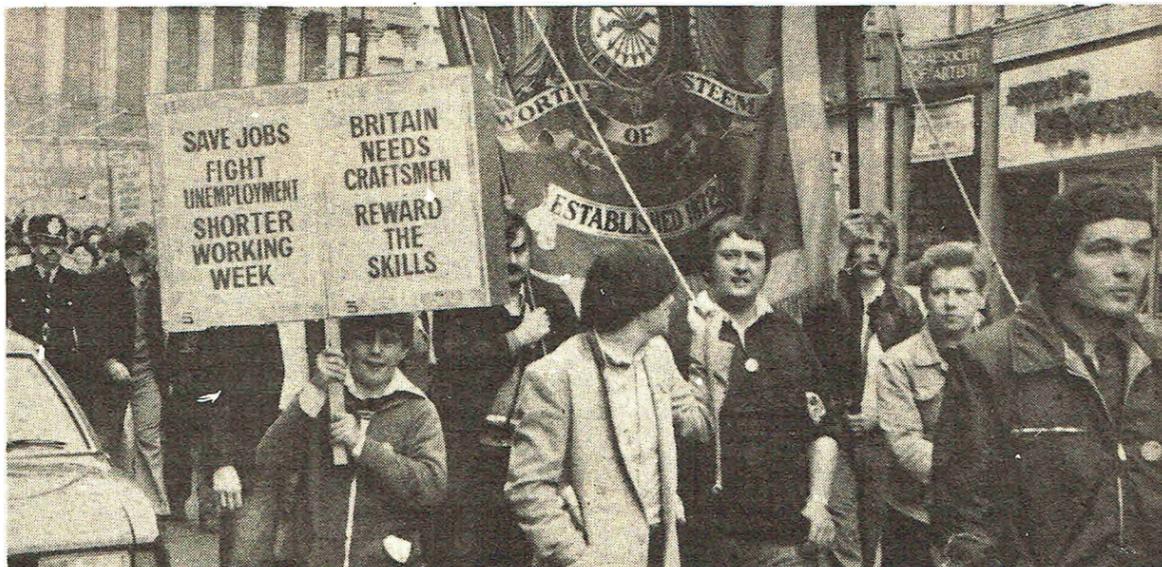
★ Recall the AUEW national committee to check the right wing leadership.

★ Recall the national shop stewards —put on the pressure for national action.

★ No to stop-start tactics—for a full strike to win the full claim.

By Steve Davison

(AUEW Convenor
Anderston International
Bradford)



Engineering workers march through Birmingham on 20th August—see report below

Photo: DJ Swingler

SUPPORT GROWS

SHEFFIELD

On 20 August over 500 engineers and steel workers marched through Sheffield in support of their national claim.

The demonstration, coinciding with the third one-day national stoppage, was Sheffield's first chance to counter the lies of the employers and the cynics, that there was no support for the claim. For the majority of Sheffield Confed workers, this was the first day back after the two-week annual shut-down.

At the rally, George Caborn informed the marchers that district 28 of the Confed (Sheffield and Rotherham) had sent a resolution to the Confed leaders demanding that any further action was called on a national basis. We have learnt the mistakes of 1972, he said.

Alex Ferris, Confed general secretary, pointed out that it was a credit to the rank and file that a national claim was being waged. It was their pressure that had forced the national leaders to take action.

BIRMINGHAM

"My bus fare's up from 15p to 20p—a 33% increase. We buy the same bread as Maggie Thatcher, and the MPs had a large rise."

This contribution by an AUEW member from Newman Tonks, Birmingham, gave vent to the shop-floor support for the Confed claim, at the packed rally in Digbeth Civic Hall. It followed a

2,000-strong demonstration—the largest turn-out of engineering workers through the city centre since the marches against Heath's Industrial Relations Act.

During the meeting, several speakers pointed out that the claim was moderate, and had to be won not just for the economic benefits but as an example to the rest of the working class in their coming struggles.

There was much support for the call for "a short, sharp, all-out strike" to win the claim. If this was taken up, GEC and the other miserly wage payers would be brought into line and thousands of workers on the present £48 and £60 minimum time rates would get something like a decent wage.

Bill Mullins
(TGWU Senior Steward
Rover Solihull)

LONDON

Engineering workers at the Driver Southall engineering company (part of the Avery Group) were out picketing their factory in South Ruislip, on Monday 20th.

As at nearby EMI, these workers have been involved in action for a local pay claim, as well as the national one. Les Tyler AUEW shop steward explained:

"After prolonged negotiations industrial action in the form of short sharp walk-outs took place over a four week period, and a satisfactory solution was finally reached.

"The minimum earnings rate has now gone up from £74 to £86 including a guaranteed minimum bonus.

"So far as the national claim is concerned we have a proper picket rota organised and there is 100% support for the strikes including the few non-union members we have, who have even turned out for picket duty.

"Nobody has broken the picket line. The GPO haven't even bothered to turn up this time.

"In our opinion the action should be an all-out indefinite strike, not this one-day business. Long drawn out action like this tends to wear the members down."

Another picket pointed out, "if they called out all the engineers in the country it would affect factories, the airports, transport, the lot. We would paralyse the economy; it would not last more than a week".

Tim Church, Tim Miles and Martin Elvin [Ruislip-Northwood LPYS] spoke to Les Tyler [AUEW shop steward at Driver Southall]

Charlton

The workers at Associated Perforators & Weavers Ltd [Charlton] have been behind the national dispute 100%, despite skilled workers earning a weekly wage of £80 plus. The men at APW Ltd. can see the need for a rise in the

minimum wage for workers at other factories, and an obvious need for a reduction of the working week to 35 hours before unemployment gets too bad.

"Nobody likes to go on strike but other workers need to live" one colleague said to me.

The workers at APW Ltd. are not just willing to lose one day's pay per week. They will fully support a two-day a week strike, or come out if an all-out strike is called.

The EEF are obviously crumbling—as indicated by 100 bosses paying up. But it is still important for the workers at these 100 places to support the rest. Solidarity is the key.

By an AUEW MEMBER
Greenwich
SCOTLAND

A magnificent 2,000 engineering workers turned out on Monday at a mass rally in the Caird Hall Dundee, easily the biggest in Scotland. The main speaker was Gavin Laird, AUEW Executive Councillor.

A rally of 200 in the Caley Cinema, Edinburgh, passed a resolution which expressed concern at the limited action authorised so far by the Confed Executive, and called for all-out action. The resolution, which will now go to the Executive, also expressed solidarity with the resistance to closures being mounted by British Shipbuilding workers.

By Pat Craven
[Dundee Labour Party]

LOCKOUT AT PLESSEY

650 members of ASTMS at Plessey, Liverpool, working at the Edge Lane, Huyton and Gilmoss factories, have now been locked out for five weeks.

The company have offered a wage rise of 10% plus the creation of another tier on the present grading structure for a few top engineers.

After the Tory budget, 10% is no use to us. There is

no need for a second tier—the need is for more pay for the existing structure, to bring our wages in line with similar jobs throughout the country.

In pursuit of our claim for 20%, ASTMS technical members withdrew from selective areas and levied all members to pay the strikers' wages. Then out of the blue the company threatened the whole technical branch with

lockout if they didn't return to normal working.

Solid in their resolve the branch didn't back down and have been locked out since 9 am on 24 July. The NEC have made the dispute official and strike pay will be given.

Plessey called a meeting in London and told the union that they could not put more money on the table because of their economic situation. . . .

A mass meeting a few days later overwhelmingly resolved to maintain our stand of no to 10%. Last year Plessey profits increased to £46m.

By Mike Smith
[ASTMS technical branch
Plessey, Liverpool]

NOTTINGHAM EVENING POST- UNION SOLIDARITY TO BEAT BOSSES

Photo: MILITANT



The 'Nottingham Evening Post' uses some of the most technically advanced printing equipment in Europe.

Technology has systematically been used to undermine the print unions. Since 1973 the number of print workers on the paper has been cut from 150 to just 40.

By Chris Newis
(Birmingham NGA Branch Committee, personal capacity)

This is the kind of massacre the newspaper bosses are itching for, if they can undercut the power of our unions. New technology gives them a lever for confronting the unions.

For the Nottingham Evening Post to succeed in resisting trade union organisation is a precedent the rest

At a previous mass protest, pickets showed the strength of the labour movement despite mass mobilisation by the police

of the labour movement cannot afford. Traditionally, print workers are amongst the most well-organised.

The blacking of adverts by the NGA and SLADE was an effective weapon against the Post. Despite legal intimidation, if the union leaders had stood firm, other trade unionists would have rallied to

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SHIPYARD JOBS

Continued from page 1

that he was not now in favour of de-nationalisation as this would cause too much disruption and that party politics should be kept out of the fight anyway.

Labour MP Ernie Ross gave the full backing of Dundee Labour Party to the Caledon workers. Commenting on the Scottish Secretary of State's suggestion that shipyard workers should all set themselves up in business, he asked whether 1,100 separate entries of "Shipbuilder" in the Dundee Yellow Pages was a feasible solution.

Ernie Ross emphasised that the struggle is a political one for the labour movement. He questioned the Nationalists' silence since the closures were announced and asked whether they supported the Confed programme.

The Caledon workers have won one victory already. Management have agreed to take on the 32 apprentices. A meeting of Dundee shop stewards will take place in the near future to plan city-wide action in support of the Caledon workers by the labour movement.

support our stand.

Where would our movement be today if its founders had not defied the class-biased judges?

The blacking tactic should not be abandoned. Any action taken against the leaders of the NGA and SLADE would be answered by an explosion of anger from the unions' ranks.

Campaign

The mass pickets have shown the level of support for the Post workers' stand. If extended to draw in other trade unionists by explaining that this dispute is a forerunner in the battle to protect trade union rights, future pickets would rally a massive show of strength.

Pickets alone are not enough, however. Nottingham Trades Council are calling for a conference of local unions to organise the cutting off of services and supplies.

The TUC should back this call, and organise a campaign throughout the movement to bring the Evening Post to heel

Once the power of organised labour is mobilised, characters like Pole-Carew and his ilk can be swept aside like irritating flies.

A victory for the print unions at the Evening Post would strengthen the whole movement and act as a warning to the ever-watchful news tycoons in Fleet Street and elsewhere.

SOCIALIST CAMPAIGN

Party and Labour Party Young Socialist branches, the Liverpool Labour Group, and certain tenants organisations gave unanimous support to the following resolution:

★ Complete opposition to cuts in local authority expenditure, services and jobs.

★ We call for the restoration and expansion of all local authority services to include a programme of useful public works and the expansion of the Direct Works and municipal enterprises.

★ In calling for the maintenance and expansion of local authority services we believe that the full burden should not be placed on the shoulders of the local rate payers. We call on the next Labour government to commit itself to the nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and finance houses under democratic workers' control and management. A future Labour government should wipe out all existing loans and interest charges to the money

lenders and introduce a system of low-interest loans to local authorities.

★ We call for a city-wide campaign of factory-gate meetings to explain and gain support for the programme of the Joint Action Committee and this section of the campaign be highlighted by a mass picket and protest demonstration to be held on the day of a Council meeting.

★ That we seek links with similar campaigns nationally to the extent of organising a national conference in particular we attempt to gain joint action on these issues through the TUC and Labour Party nationally.

The third point of this resolution was amplified by Tony Mulhearn, vice-president of the Liverpool District Labour Party, who explained that simply to pose an increase in rates as an alternative to a loss of jobs was illogical. He argued that this would mean people paying even more from their pockets for the privilege of having a government in office which is out to milk the

Continued from page one

working class in order to line the pockets of their rich financial backers.

Tony Mulhearn went on to explain that Labour Local Authorities need to refuse to pay back the interest charges to the money lenders, who have already been paid back many times over. The money should then be used to expand services and increase employment, and a campaign needs to be organised by the Labour and Trade Union movement to give backing to the Labour councils taking this stand.

The meeting then went on to agree to a day conference on Sunday, 4th November, which will be open to bonafide delegates from the Labour and Trade Union movement, a mass demonstration and lobby of the Liverpool City Council on 7th November, and also the publication of a broadsheet with the initiation of a fighting fund.

As a result of the suggestion from Alex Doswell, Secretary of Liverpool Trade Council, all these proposals will

now go to a joint delegates meeting with the Liverpool Trades Council when the objective will be to form a Merseyside Liaison/Action Committee which can give backing to the Labour Groups in their total opposition to any government directions which will mean a loss of jobs or reduction in services.

Although Labour are the largest party on Liverpool Council, an unholy alliance of Tories and Liberals has the majority. This group's cuts, even before the Tories came to power nationally have been horrifying. There is certainly plenty to fight against. Labour group must not lessen when we regain control. The resolution should form the basis of Labour policy in opposition and in power.

It was also strongly felt by delegates at the meeting that the 'cuts' campaign could not only be directed at local government cuts, but should also concern itself with the Health Service, shipbuilding and other industries already affected by this government's reactionary and inhumane policies.

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