

**DEFEND
MILITANT**

see page 2

DEFEND ALL LEYLAND JOBS

**25,000
BRITISH
LEYLAND
WORKERS
FACE THE
TORY AXE**

Coventry, the town built upon the motor industry, faces catastrophe

"Canley workers must be in the forefront of the fight to defeat the lunatic plans of Michael Edwardes!"

This was the immediate reaction to the intended carve-up of Leyland from Canley worker, Pete Skerrett, Chairman of Coventry AUEW youth committee.

Peter spelt out: "The youth of Coventry are looking to us. Nearly 4,000 people in this town are already on the dole. My brother has just been made redundant by the council due to the cuts in government spending. Before that he had been on the dole for a long time after being made redundant by a printing firm."

"This is the story for workers throughout Coventry."

"An air of doom is descending on the town. It is up to the trade unions at Leyland to offer a way forward for the whole of Coventry by taking a resolute stand and uniting the whole area in a battle to stop this sabotage of our

we say...

- No redundancies!
- No plant closures!
- No transfer of work!
- Recall the combine shop stewards!
- A one-day strike throughout Leyland!
- Prepare to occupy threatened plants!
- A united company-wide fight to save Leyland!

By Brian Ingham

industry, of our living standards and our jobs."

The two biggest landmarks on the Canley housing estate are the BL plant and the crematorium. Statistics have shown that when the BL Speke plant in Liverpool closed, the death rate in the area rose enormously. Peter told us that the grim suggestion is being

made by some workers that the only jobs that will soon be available to them will be as gravediggers, burying their old work mates!

Over 9,000 workers stand to lose their jobs at Canley, but for every job lost inside Leyland another five will vanish outside in components factories.

Unless these plans are resisted, Coventry, the town built upon the motor industry, faces catastrophe.

Edwardes, the whizz-
CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

CHILE 1973...



WHY WE MUST REACH OUR TARGET

'Militant's' three-quarter year Fighting Fund target must be reached!

We now need £17,500 in just four weeks.

The report on page 13 shows how! The two biggest contributions to this week's £1,300 were the £264 'profit' on Militant's educational camp in South Wales and £135 from an appeal made by the Editor, Peter Taaffe, at a social in Brighton.

The two best labour movement donations were the £10 official donation from East Edinburgh Constituency Labour Party and the one from Littlehampton LP Young Socialists who wrote: "At a

recent fête we raised £110+ and at a subsequent meeting a £50 donation to Militant was moved. Then an amendment was accepted and here is the £75—a true indication of the belief YS members here have in the paper!"

Under attack

Follow that example, adopt the same spirit and 'Militant's' income will quadruple! That's just what's needed to meet the target now and the rising costs of running and improving the paper.

We are threatened, for example, with a quad-

rupling of the rent for our premises and equipment; bottlenecks are caused by shortages of new staff and techniques needed in every department; the 'missing week' and the bills for necessary purchases seem to be going up by 10% every time we get one!

The price of the 'Militant' is staying the same, but building its resources always demands a sacrifice. Dig deep and help with the huge efforts needed in the next four weeks.

The 'Militant' is under attack from the right wing in the movement; don't let it be endangered by the sincere socialists who don't "get round" to giving the 'Militant' the support it needs!

NO REDUNDANCIES

Militant

Last week's Trades Union Congress reflected the bitter mood of anger and opposition of working people to the measures which have been threatened, or already introduced, by the Thatcher government.

This was shown outside the Congress by the lobbies and delegations of steel and shipyard workers, engineers, building workers and many others who were pressing the General Council to give a fighting lead on jobs, conditions and wages. This pressure was also reflected, albeit partially and hesitantly, in the speeches and resolutions within the Congress itself.

The TUC called for massive opposition to Tory minister Prior's attacks on picketing, the closed shop, and other trade union rights. This message of Congress has been underlined by Prior's statement at the weekend when he admitted that his proposals could result in recalcitrant shop stewards being sent to jail!

Many graphic examples were also given of the devastating effects of the Tory cuts in education, housing, social services, etc. One speaker correctly pointed out that rickets had re-appeared amongst the poorest sections of the working class. Spokesmen for the teacher,

civil servants, and health workers' unions called for organised opposition to be co-ordinated by the TUC.

The fear of the working class and the labour movement on the prospect of two million unemployed was shown in the speeches of David Basnett from the GMWU and Moss Evans for the Transport Workers. Moss Evans demanded, not just the passing of resolutions on the 35-hour week, but for the power of the unions to be used to achieve this goal and a "four day working week". David Basnett warned that with long-term unemployment growing "the TUC must not be a talking-shop but mean business".

However, the intransigence of the capitalists to the shorter working week is clearly shown by the engineering bosses. They have angrily and hysterically denounced the call for an immediate one-hour cut in the working week as a step towards the 35-hour week in 1982!

Only mass action can break the resistance of the capitalists. The magnificent national strike action by two million engineering workers has shown the way forward.

This is the lesson which the unions which supported the Furniture Trade Union [FTAT] amendment to the General Council's resolution were seeking to hammer home.

FTAT called on Congress to ensure that "the entire

membership of its affiliates unite and resist by all means within their power, including the calling of mass demonstrations in various parts of the country". In another resolution, the General Council had called for a "day of action" to oppose the cuts. Len Murray declared that the amendment neither added nor subtracted from the General Council's resolution.

However, Len Murray and other from the General Council made ferocious efforts, first to have it withdrawn and then defeated when it came up for debate. It is clear that the supporters of the FTAT resolution were demanding that the TUC be committed to more than merely verbal and token opposition to the Tory Government.

be exerted on the General Council in the coming period to campaign to stop the Tory government wrecking the social services and cutting living standards. For the first time for a long time the Congress made a direct call for action. This in turn resulted in hysterical attacks in the press, TV and radio, both before, during and after the Congress.

Not so long ago, General Council members were lauded as 'statesmen'. Now they are vilified as 'mediocrities' as 'having failed' ['Guardian'] or 'living in dreamland' ['Financial Times']. This is because they are beginning to echo the discontent of the membership of the unions.

The abuse levelled at them is also designed to compel the leadership to put

child! The Labour Party is the creation of the trade unions.

It is true that there are unions with a total membership of five million in the TUC who are not affiliated to the Labour Party. But one of the most striking things about the Congress was the way some of these unions took up a clear political stand against the Tory government. The Civil and Public Services Association, for instance, moved a successful motion calling for the re-nationalisation without compensation of all firms de-nationalised by the Tories. Could there be any motion at this Congress more directly political than this?

Moreover, the drift of speakers from unions not directly affiliated was ov-

assistance possible to the campaigns within NALGO, CPSA, etc, for affiliation to the Labour Party.

Thatcher launched this offensive, not because of some quirk, but because of the terrible crisis of British capitalism, which we have detailed in the 'Militant' and in the recent issue of 'Militant International Review'.

It can only be defeated if the TUC combines the struggle on the shop floor and against the cuts with the rearming of the labour movement with a programme for the socialist transformation of Britain. The weight of the unions must be thrown into democratising the Labour Party and ensuring that it adopts such a socialist programme.

The 'Financial Times', in relation to the Congress sneeringly remarked that the unions are 'not invincible'. On the contrary, the trade union and labour movement in Britain, with a programme and leadership equal to its immense power, would be invincible.

The growth in trade union membership reported at the Congress is both an answer to the press campaign about the 'unpopularity' of the unions and also an indication of this enormous potential power. In the 1970s 3¼ million workers have joined the unions, giving a total membership now of over 12 million.

In the last ten years, the number of women in unions has doubled, and now stands at 1.6 million.

If the mighty force of the unions were thrown into the battle, this Tory government and its plans for cuts in public expenditure would be in ruins. Even Sydney Weighell, who does not stand on the left of the movement, remarked that he could see the government brought down next year if it continues on its present course!

In reality, it would not even last that long if the TUC led a determined campaign on a fighting socialist programme. This is the most important lesson of the TUC:

LESSONS OF THE TUC

The action of the engineering workers was foremost in the minds of delegates. Only the mobilisation of the mass membership in strike action has any chance of compelling the hard-nosed bosses to concede the demands of the workers. It was this clear call for action which the General Council opposed.

If the General Council believes that sweet reason will compel Thatcher to retreat, they are in for a rude awakening. The vote on the amendment, however, shows that within the ranks of the union no such illusions exist.

The decision of the AU-EW delegation, despite the protests and denunciations of Terry Duffy, to vote for the amendment resulted in a groundswell of support within other delegations. The amendment was only defeated by 61,000 votes, with some unions like the miners voting against, without the delegation having had an opportunity to meet and decide how to vote!

Despite the defeat of the FTAT amendment the Congress decisions show the colossal pressure which will

be exerted on the General Council in the coming period to campaign to stop the Tory government wrecking the social services and cutting living standards. For the first time for a long time the Congress made a direct call for action. This in turn resulted in hysterical attacks in the press, TV and radio, both before, during and after the Congress.

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The abuse levelled at them is also designed to compel the leadership to put

erly political, against the Tories, and for a government which looked to, or rested on the unions, i.e. a Labour government.

This stand of the General Council flies in the face of the day-to-day reality facing union members. The state, the government—particularly this Tory government—is a tool of the monopolies. When workers go on strike for increased wages and other improvements they increasingly confront not just the employer but, standing behind them, the government.

Even Terry Duffy, the avowed proponent of the TUC's 'non-political' stance, was forced to conclude after the latest rebuff from the engineering employers that they were being supported by the CBI and the Tories. It is an absurdity for the General Council to profess a 'non-political' opposition to the vicious offensive of the capitalists and their political arm, the Tory government.

The TUC should be campaigning on a clear political programme—at the same time should give every

DEFENCE CAMPAIGN-GOLDING ACTION ANGERS WORKERS

At last week's TUC many delegates expressed surprise and indignation that John Golding, sponsored by the POEU as an MP, should be taking a high court libel action against a socialist paper like 'Militant'. Undoubtedly, many will be raising it in their own organisations.

One particularly heartening indication of support is from a POEU branch in Tunbridge Wells, Kent. They inform us that they have sent the following letter to the POEU's general secretary:

"Dear Bryan,
Mr John Golding MP
[Letter to Branches 555]
At our branch meeting held last evening (3 Sep-

tember) the following proposition was carried:

"That this branch rejects the decision to give financial support for John Golding's high court libel action against the 'Militant' newspaper from union funds and urges them to reverse the same. The secretary to be instructed to write to the general secretary and request that he put this before the NEC."

Yours faithfully,
B A R Cockett."

Bryan Stanley,
General Secretary of the POEU, studies the Militant Defence Fund bulletin at the TUC.



The sum of £47.20 was collected by CPSA members in Glasgow's National Savings Branch. Their letter wishes us every

success and says: "As you will know our union fought a court battle several years ago when President Kate Losinska

took her own union to Court. Like you, we firmly believe that the only forums where members of the labour and trade union

movement will receive full justice is in the democratic conferences of the movement itself."

We've also had news of resolutions passed by Merseyside trade unions, and protests by POEU branches as far apart as Swansea and Tunbridge Wells.

Labour Parties where collections have been held include S Gloucestershire, Liverpool District Labour Party, Hammersmith North and Chorley [again].

A reader in Hampshire sent us part of a legacy [£25] which is the largest individual donation this week

Please send donations urgently to MILITANT DEFENCE FUND, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE 8.

LAMBETH - ONLY MASS ACTION CAN STOP THE CUTS

By

Vivien Seal

(Lambeth Central LP)

"Cuts in a deprived inner city area like Lambeth would have dire consequences for local residents and would be stabbing in the back those who elected us to office," said Ted Knight, leader of Lambeth's left wing Labour council.

That was last year, when faced with the problem of implementing the council's wide-ranging programme of essential reforms with less money from—at that time—the Labour government than they had expected.

Ted Knight and other Lambeth councillors had already received publicity for their opposition to the Labour government's own cuts.

Now there is a Tory government in power, and it aims to cut public spending by £4,000m. Local authorities' Rate Support Grants have already come under the Tories' axe. Lambeth faces a cut of £3m this year and maybe twice as much next year.

At the moment whether or not Lambeth Council will implement the cuts that Thatcher and Co. are trying to force on it is in the balance.

At the end of July, a conference of general management committee delegates from Lambeth's four constituencies came out against cuts, against rate rises, and in favour of a campaign of resistance to the Tory cuts throughout the labour movement. It also came out for the implementation of Clause 4.

The Labour Group and the council itself, however, has yet to make a final decision. So far many of the leading left wing councillors have argued that they have no choice but to cut expenditure this year, thus giving themselves a breathing space in which to mobilise support against next years cuts.

Other councillors have argued that a rate rise would be a 'less retrogressive' step since cuts would hit hardest at the worst off, whereas rate rises would also hit commercial rate payers like the owners of the Shell building.

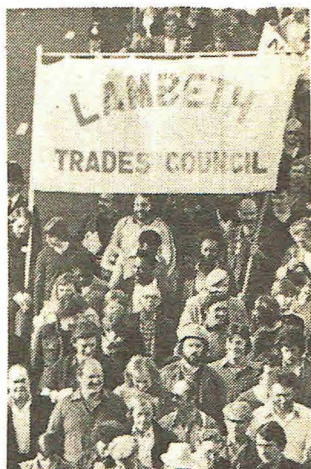
Rate rises are no more acceptable than cuts. Already rates are becoming as high as rents. Rate-rises are like wage cuts—both mean a lower standard of living. The Shell building may be a large source of revenue, but an unequal burden of rates still falls on domestic ratepayers in general, and the less well-off in particular.

A tenant in a council flat in Brixton can be paying more in rates for less space than the owner-occupier of a house.

The main argument of those who talk of the 'inevitability of cuts' concerns the likelihood of their winning support. Many councillors lack confidence in their ability to mobilise the labour movement on a massive scale.

'Lambeth council cannot stand alone against the Tory Govt. or we will surely be defeated,' we were told, and 'forty-odd councillors cannot substitute themselves for the mass of the working class'.

True enough. But these councillors underestimate the strength of opposition to the Tory cuts. Local authority workers, civil servants, health service workers, workers in education, in nationalised industries, and in every other sphere where hard-won reforms are under threat from the Tories, are all impatient to move.



The Lambeth Trades Council banner on the recent march

Last week over 1,000 Lambeth council workers came out on a demonstration organised at very short notice. More systematic organisation with explanation and alternative policies, and section meetings to spell out the need for a campaign, could easily multiply this support for action several times over.

Every day there are reports of strikes, demonstrations, occupations and other actions directly or indirectly against the government, for example by health service, shipyard and steel workers as well as manual and clerical workers in local authorities.

What is needed is a clear programme and leadership to



Last week over 1,000 Lambeth council workers demonstrated against the proposed cuts

LABOUR COUNCILLORS MUST GIVE A LEAD

unite these separate actions into a national campaign against the Tory government. Already, the London Labour Party has called a re-call conference for 22nd Sept. to organise and co-ordinate a campaign throughout London.

One thing is certain: implementing the cuts now, even if accompanied by a propaganda campaign against Tory policies, will not provide 'a breathing space' in which to prepare for a real campaign next time. Cuts, or another massive rate increase, would produce mass disillusionment and could only work against an effective campaign against the cuts in the labour movement.

Councillors have also argued that they may face surcharges, fines, and possibly imprisonment. But if they take action, it must be as part of a mass movement by the trade unions and the Labour Party. Bold, mass action is the best insurance against the victimisation of councillors.

In the face of a mass campaign, the Tory government will find it difficult even to take the more likely step of suspending the council and moving in its own commissioners to run the council business. Even if they managed to do this temporarily, in one or two cases, there would be no mistake about where the real responsibility for the cuts lay—and the movement against the Tories would be immeasurably strengthened.

But 'Lambeth can't go it alone' argue some. No, but Lambeth is in a better position than many Labour councils to head a movement against implementing Tory cuts. Determined socialist action would meet with an enormous response in other Labour controlled cities and towns.

Councillors are not a substitute for a mass movement: but as elected representatives they have a unique opportunity, as well as a duty, to give a lead, to organise and to act as a focal point for a campaign against the government.

The councillors are also in an ideal position to take the offensive, by pointing out to every resident of the Borough

the extent to which we are held to ransom by the money-lenders and by big business, and by demonstrating the absolute necessity of nationalising the banks, insurance companies and monopolies.

Mass mobilisation of the workers is the one sure way of making the Tories retreat. The last Tory government

backed down several times when faced with determined opposition from the labour movement. The 'lame ducks' policy was abandoned in the face of sit-ins and workers' co-operatives (e.g. UCS). The wages policy and eventually the government itself was thrown out by the miners.

The Industrial Relations

Act was judiciously ignored, on frequent occasions, rather than provoke a head-on clash with trade unions, especially after the massive strike and demonstration that brought the Pentonville 5 out of prison.

Workers are already looking to Lambeth Council in particular for a lead of this sort, knowing its reputation as a left-wing council prepared to defend our interests. They must not let us down!

YOUTH TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF TORY ATTACKS

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS National Chairman)

Sixteen-year-old schoolgirls in Wolverhampton are being forced into prostitution because they can't find jobs. This was recently revealed in the 'Daily Mirror', and is undoubtedly happening in many other areas.

Increasing suicides, mental breakdowns, and family break-ups, these are all part of the price that crisis-ridden British capitalism is exacting from working class youth.

In their first few months, the Tory government has introduced Draconian cuts: £48 million slashed from the Youth Opportunities Programme, many civil service departments have been ordered to stop all new recruitment; massive cuts in the NHS; and £400 million off the Education budget.

This will mean unemployment soaring to 1½ or

2 million this winter.

This summer 270,000 school leavers have been through the indignity of 'signing-on' as their first act after leaving school. Tory cuts imposed on local authorities will also mean youth clubs, swimming pools, and other leisure facilities being closed down.

But one thing is rapidly becoming clear! Whatever the intentions of the Tories, youth won't just passively accept those attacks.

Already, Kensington Tories in London have met their match! Three hundred and fifty black youth occupied the Metro youth club in Notting Hill, after they heard that the council wanted to close it. This is just one example of the kind of battles that will now be opening up.

In every town young workers, school students, and unemployed youth will be drawn into struggles against the effects of the Tory government.

With our bold socialist programme, the Labour Party Young Socialists can offer them a clear alternative to the Thatcher-Joseph axe of the Tories.

In every area now, branches are organising 'Days of Act-

ion', with leaflets, placards, petitions, and loudhailers. Street corner 'soap-box' meetings in the tradition of the 1930s have had an enthusiastic response from passers-by. Every kind of public activity is bringing in new recruits to branches as support for the Tory government plummets.

Preparations are being laid in the various areas of the country for regional conferences and demonstrations against the Tories. To follow from these, the LPYS National Committee is planning a National Demonstration and Rally on the Theme 'Youth Against the Tories', to be held in London on Saturday, 2 February 1980.

Plans are being laid for the march to be through Poplar, in the East End, where in 1921 George Lansbury led the council to jail for refusing to implement 'cuts in unemployment relief, and increasing rates. The Poplar Council set a great example of how to fight Tory attacks!

Today, youth are among the hardest hit by the attacks. Make sure that the banner and the socialist programme of the Labour Party Young Socialists are at the forefront of the fightback against the 1979 Tories.

FURTHER EDUCATION- CAMPAIGN FOR A BETTER DEAL

The cuts in education spending introduced by the Tory government will hit the Further Education colleges very hard. Already, these colleges face the worst conditions and facilities.

The cuts will condemn thousands of students to remaining in overcrowded class rooms, without proper equipment or facilities. The commitment of the Tories to education for 16-18 year olds can be seen from the 1977 Tory Campaign guide—30 pages, with no mention of them!

The cuts will hit evening classes particularly hard. In Humberside, for example, adult evening classes have been suspended for seven months. Up to 20,000 students will be hit.

In Hertfordshire, tuition fees are to go up by 20%, and Hampshire will close all 'non-vocational' classes between December and February.

Evening classes were first started in the nineteenth century, through the influence of workers on the early School Boards. Now the Tories turn the clock back a century by taking them away!

Over three million people study in Further Education. Yet FE still gets 12% of the education spending, compared to the 11% which goes to the 280,000 university students. NUS must fight for an end to the 'binary' system, and for a fully comprehensive post-school education system.

Manchester University, for example, has 2.8 million books for 10,000 students! Compare that to the average FE or Technical college. Every student must have the best available conditions to study.

The education of thousands of FE students suffers through them having to take evening jobs in order to stay at college. Thousands of others are forced to drop out of college altogether.

NUS must seriously take up the demand for mandatory grants for all FE full time students. A grant of £20 per week—as given on the Youth Opportunities Programme—for all 16-18 year olds in full-time education, must be fought for now.

Last year, the government

postponed their scheme to introduce grants for these students in some areas, because the Treasury said the economy couldn't afford it. Thus, the education of today's youth is sacrificed to the profits of big business.

The question of fighting for a living grant is linked to the

fight for a Labour government committed to socialist policies—to break the grip of big business over society.

In student accommodation, the bias against FE students is clearly shown. In the universities, 45% of students are in halls of residence; in the Polys: 10%; in FE

colleges, less than 1%. This again forces students to rely on their parents.

Faced with these conditions, and put off by the prospect of years of hardship to get qualifications which still cannot guarantee them a job, it's not surprising that the majority of youth finish

with education at 16.

The leadership of NUS have a sad record of neglect of FE students. In the past, these students have organised demonstrations at NUS conference to try to get some attention for their problems.

Yet, this is where most working class students have their one chance to study. NUS must launch a mass campaign, seeking the support of the labour and trade union movement, for a better deal for FE students.

By Douglas Miller
(East Kilbride LPYS)

SCHOOL STUDENTS : TURN TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT!

At a time when school students are facing the biggest ever attacks on their education and becoming increasingly militant, the National Union of School Students is in complete chaos, and threatened with bankruptcy.

The July conference of NUSS brought to an end the Young Communist League's bureaucratic domination of the leadership, and various left-wing sects were elected into the leadership.

However, the NUSS is financed heavily by the National Union of Students who have reacted to the political change by threatening to cut the purse strings. The NUS is led by the so-called 'Broad Left' alliance of Communist Party members and sympathisers and the National Organisation of Labour Students.

Through organisational manoeuvres they have demonstrated the real character of their support for the school students' struggle. They cannot tol-

erate any other political idea gaining control of the NUSS and would appear to prefer to have no NUSS rather than lose control.

Manoeuvres

The Broad Left previously promised to give aid to NUSS whatever the composition of the National Committee, but now we see the preachers of 'unity' in action.

At a meeting on 8 August, a surprise package of blatant manoeuvres was revealed to the NUSS officers. (1) There would be no rent-free offices at the new NUS offices in Endsleigh Street. (2) NUSS would have to pay rent for any accommodation they found. (3) The subsidising of phone bills would end. (4) The debt to NUS of £7,000 would have to be paid.

If any of these proposals are to be implemented NUSS faces collapse. Labour students and LPYS members everywhere should demand that the NOLS National Committee call on the NOLS members of the NUS Executive to oppose these tactics. Political battles should be

fought in democratic debate!

They should ask how a debt of £7,000 was built up when NUSS has been reduced to a shell. Over the past year paper membership has halved to a mere 5,000 with only 70 delegates attending the last conference. Yet 1978 saw the most militant school students' action since the 1960s.

School student strikes, marches and occupations were given massive publicity in the press. But the leadership of NUSS were incapable of turning to meet the needs of working class school students.

Their paper BLOT was aptly named. Heavily punctuated with vulgarity, it was more concerned with sorting out school students' sex lives than the problems of fighting for decent facilities and grants.

Fight the cuts

So, when school students need organising to fight off the Tory threat, NUSS have no army. The Tories have declared massive cuts in education spending which will make school a nightmare for many working-class school

students. They are already burdened with overcrowded classrooms, shortages of materials, lack of facilities and the systems of petty rules.

Now the few sixth formers who get grants to help them stay on at school will lose them. The Tories want to introduce vouchers for students' dinners and by the back door push prices of meals up still further. Recently, a Tory councillor in Jarrow came forward with his new menu for dinner at the comprehensives—bread and cheese.

Learning from their brothers and parents at work, school students will begin to take action against these class attacks. But is the new leadership of NUSS capable of giving a lead? Well over two months since they were elected they have still to bring forward any campaign proposals.

The full timer's response to the financial crisis was to cancel the August National Committee meeting because, "there is no money to pay people's fares." Instead, they sent the National Committee members some Associate Member cards saying they should use these to raise money.

It is clear that if school students are to have serious

representation then the Labour Party Young Socialists must make a dynamic intervention at the start of this new term. Local branches must not be allowed to collapse because of the paralysis of the leadership. They should be encouraged to organise their recruitment drives.

If they turn to the labour movement school students will find a wealth of sympathy. If the issues are explained they will not be turned away but be given the financial, organisational and political help they need. The trades councils and Labour Parties should be approached by the LPYS branches. It must be explained how school students must be organised to help defend the educational gains which the working class have fought for over decades.

School students are the workers of tomorrow. The labour movement has the strength to defend them and draw the school students into the fight for socialism.

By

Dale Ackroyd

(NUSS National Committee)

FASCISTS GO ON THE RAMPAGE

A wave of vicious attacks has taken place in Bristol on LPYS and trade union members by the National Front and their supporters.

The two most recent were the attacks that took place on Sunday August 5th, within an hour of each other. One of those attacked was Rob Cadwgan of the Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee.

Rob narrowly missed serious injury when a car load of thugs pulled up behind him on the Lockleaze Estate in Bristol, at 11.30 pm. Two of them jumped out declaring their intention to kill Rob.

One of them, a well known fascist, began to kick him in the head and stomach while he was held to the ground. Fortunately, just as they were dragging him off into the bushes to inflict more damage he was saved by a friend who was passing by.

An hour before, a Chilean socialist had been set upon by another car load of fascists. Earlier in the year, another LPYS member was severely beaten up by the NF after a union meeting.

These attacks show the nature of the NF strategy. Having been defeated openly on the streets, they now turn to cowardly attacks on isolated workers.

If the fascist menace is to be eradicated, then the drive to push back racism and fascism must be stepped up by the labour and trade union leaders. The police have consistently failed to take serious action against the fascists and instead have been used to defend their meetings.

The labour movement must make it clear that it is prepared to use its strength to defend activities and meetings of its members and the immigrant community.

By Beverly Dunsford

(Bristol North East LPYS)



The 'Militant' Readers' Meeting at the TUC was a great success. Nearly a hundred people attended, and an excellent collection raised £462. Fraternal greetings were given by Oswin Fernando, a member of the LSSP [new Leadership], a Sri Lankan trade union leader.

LEFT & RIGHT

Maggie wants a bigger boot

Margaret Thatcher, who delights in 'saving' money by cutting down on school meals and hospitals, has ordered two new Daimler Sovereigns to replace the Rover 3500s of the Prime Minister's office, although they cost several thousand pounds more.

Why? Because the Daimlers have bigger boots, and Maggie's dresses can be laid out flat, and not get creased. Said Maggie, "There is nothing worse than a woman turning up to an important function in a creased and not properly hung dress."

People who think that the reappearance of rickets, and deaths through health cuts, are worse than creases on a rich woman's expensive wardrobe are, of course, just old-fashioned socialists trying to revive the class war.

Where is Liddle Towers?

The new council block in Newcastle, built beside the police station where Liddle Towers was taken before his death, may have a mundane official name. But to residents and local people it is known only as 'Liddle Towers'. That is also how letters to the housing department refer to it.

Policemen in Newcastle are beginning to show signs of paranoia at strangers' queries as to the whereabouts of 'Liddle Towers'.

Alien creatures

All you workers who have been spreading wicked rumours that the honourable men of the House of Lords do nothing but doze all day, waking briefly to utter the occasional 'hyah, hyah', just hold on.

According to the 'Daily Express', a party of 20 peers of the realm led by the Earl of Clancarty have formed a study group to investigate the burning issue of—UFOs! Currently they are looking into reports that the US government are hiding 30 extra-terrestrials who died in a UFO crash (!)—no doubt of essential importance in rescuing British industry from its chronic state.

"We have sightings all the time", the Earl said. "I hope you are not going to make fun of it." Wouldn't dream of it old chap. It would be a waste of time for these relics of centuries gone by to investigate the real problems that face the working class. After all, the real world; the misery of low wages, the despair of the dole queues or the slow lingering deaths hundreds of pensioners face every winter, would seem quite alien to the pampered few of the upper chamber.

'USING THE MEDIA'

For all trade unionists, the new publication 'Using the Media' is a must.

Written by journalist and trade union activist Denis McShane, former president of the National Union of Journalists, the book warns activists not to shun the media as part and parcel of the capitalist system. He attempts to show how we can best use it to the advantage of the labour movement.

He covers all aspects of the media—national and local press, radio and television—explaining their organisational make-up and everyday running. He points out that the bosses employ an estimated 10,000 public relations officers to get their case across—and tries to provide us with some of the information they use every day.

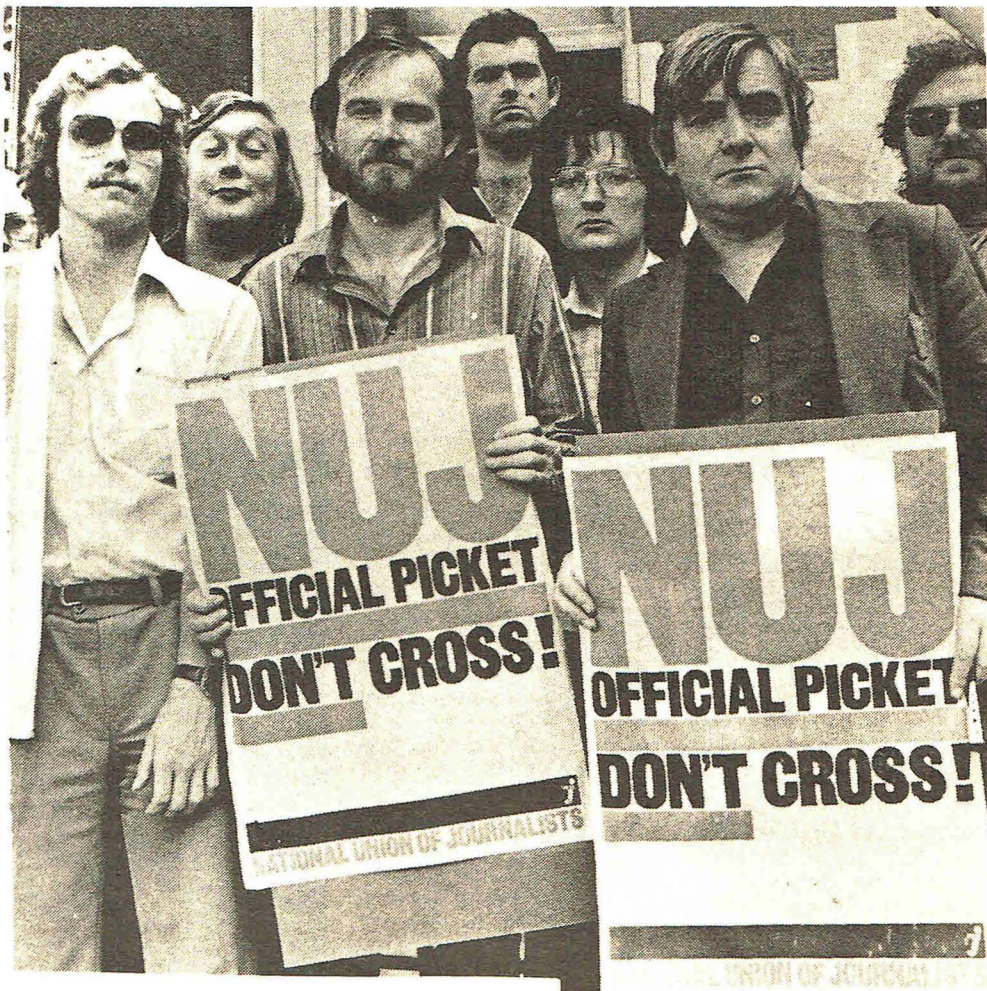
Although the book gives a brief glimpse into the multi-nationals' grip on the media—quoting the example of the S Pearson and Son empire which besides a bank, a US corporation, a ceramics company, the 'Financial Times', 'Economist', Penguin Books, Longman Holdings and Ladybird, controls 83 local weekly papers, one morning and ten evening papers, and holds shares in Metro (Newcastle) Radio—it is not an exposé of the millionaires who control the press.

While recognising that the bias of the media cannot be ended without a change in ownership and control, its aim is to show how trade unionists and labour movement activists can use the press, and to warn how the media may try to manipulate and use them.

In a television interview, a trade unionist is asked by a tele-journalist, "What are the next steps you plan?" The reply, "It's difficult to say. We shall have to look at the situation when the committee meets tomorrow and decide where to go from there."

But when the film is cut and prepared for broadcasting, the interviewer may re-film himself asking the question, "Wouldn't it be true to say that you haven't the faintest idea what to do next?" The implication—that the union spokesman hasn't got a clue what he's doing.

Another example is TV cameramen filming pickets



during the lorry drivers' strike, making sure the sun was behind them so they appeared on the television screen as dark and shadowy figures. The book is full of such examples, warning activists how to spot them.

One chapter which will be of great interest to LPYS branches and Labour Parties is how to use the local press. It explains the best way to present press releases and gives tips on what sort of activities the press would be interested in photographing—not just blatant stunts but ideas such as teachers on a picket line using a blackboard to put over their case.

As the book explains, you shouldn't just wait until your organisation does something outstanding or sensational before you contact the press. Send in regular news items—short reports of meetings or elections of officials.

If a paper is in need of a short article in a hurry and the small report from your LPYS branch is the only one the editor has, it may be used, no matter how Tory the paper

is.

Another section advises activists on dealing with television and radio interviews—what you should and shouldn't do, how to deal with pointed questions and how to make sure the people or organisation you represent come off in the best light.

Do not skip this section thinking only top labour movement leaders appear on TV and radio. Remember, at the beginning of the Grunwick dispute, the shop stewards, ordinary working people, had no idea that they would be the focus of national and international news coverage.

Don't strike-break!

The book deals with many other aspects of the media; the unions involved, press agencies, how to sue for libel and so on.

McShane also warns that activists should check with media unions that a dispute is not taking place when they

contact a radio station or newspaper to give them a story. It wouldn't be the first time a trade unionist congratulated himself for getting coverage in the local rag, only to have an irate NUJ official on the phone asking what the hell he was doing breaking a strike!

McShane's book is directed at trade union and Labour activists and has a wealth of information that they should have at their fingertips. But as he says, don't forget the left-wing press, i.e. the 'Militant'.

"Workers and other activists should always send press releases or write their own stories for the left press." We certainly agree to that—keep those reports coming in!

'Using the Media'
by Denis McShane—
Pluto Press, £2.50

**Reviewed by
Bob Wade**
(SW Essex NUJ)

THE HOLLYWOOD DEALERS

If you ever wondered how that terrible reel of Hollywood 'pap' got onto your cinema screen, a recent report in the 'Guardian' will enlighten you.

Apparently, most films reach the screen through 'deal-making'.

Lawrence Gordon, who produced 'Hooper' and 'Driver', commented: "They should give you an Academy Award just for getting a picture made."

The process is as follows: Deals are made as in stud-poker.

It's called the "step-deal": so much for the option on the book, so much for the first draft of the script, so much for the "polished" second draft, when the film goes into production, when it's released etc. Every time the cards go round the table, you pay to stay in the game.

Once the deal has been made, the film will often be produced regardless of quality.

'Moment by Moment' is a film due to open soon in Britain, starring John Travolta. One of Travolta's aides commented: "Very soon after we started shooting, we all knew we were making a flop."

However, the deal had been made, shooting went ahead at a cost of 8 million dollars, the critics slammed it, and it was shown briefly to empty cinemas in the USA.

Some deals are made for convenience. Every year at about this time, large numbers of German doctors and dentists become film investors.

They look ahead to the end of the year, check their tax liability and decide to lessen it. They throw their money into film-making syndicates organised to take advantage of the Bonn government's tax shelter law.

In June last year 6 million

dollars were released for the film 'Bloodline'. By September a script had been completed, Gore Vidal had polished it, and Audrey Hepburn was being filmed.

Why the haste? Producer David Picker explained: "Under German tax laws, the money had to be spent by the end of the year. No spend, no tax break."

'Bloodline' was the perfect 'deal'. Even if the film flops, nobody loses.

Some Hollywood deals are made to fall through.

Producer Jeffrey Sneller is suing Warner Brothers for 20 million dollars. Sneller was to produce a film for Warners called 'The Cowboy and the Cossack'.

He paid Warners 100,000 dollars which empowered him to seek a director and two stars from a list approved by the film company. None of those listed was interested, however, so Sneller made deals with Robert Aldrich to direct for 500,000 dollars,

James Cahn to play the cowboy for 1 million dollars and Franco Nero to play the Cossack for 350,000 dollars.

Warners rejected these names. Under the terms of the deal Warners were back at square one, 100,000 dollars richer.

Walter Matthau, the star film actor, said recently, "You want to know who's the biggest force in casting movies? The banks."

The movie industry shows in a particularly chronic way how big business manipulates our culture. Maybe that explains why such a lot of garbage comes out of Hollywood.

Freed from the grasp of the money-grabbing monopolies, film-making would flower in yet uncharted areas as a means of communication and entertainment. Only a socialist society can end the enslavement of culture to the dictates of the profiteers.

By Richard Knights

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE AGENDA

CLEAR DEMANDS FOR SOCIALISM

This year's Labour Party Conference will be the most crucial, and probably the stormiest, for many years.

Anyone seeking support for Labour's right wing, and hoping to preserve the Party's leadership as a 'moderate' 'second eleven' to replace the Tory government at the next election, will look in vain among the 389 resolutions tabled for debate.

The Final Agenda, published last week, clearly reflects rank and file demands for a firm commitment to socialist policies, democratic control over the leadership, and a campaign to build a mass membership.

The battle on all these issues has been sharpened since the general election, which marked a devastating defeat for the right-wing policies of the last Labour government.

Re-nationalisation —no compensation

With the threat of the Tories to de-nationalise key industries and the determination of the labour movement to fight them, this single issue has prompted more resolutions than any other: sixty-three motions plus amendments.

The demand is loud and clear: re-nationalisation without any further compensation. Shipley CLP, along with 52 others, is demanding that "the next Labour government re-nationalise with no compensation."

Some, like the POEU's, avoid any mention of compensation, which will undoubtedly give rise to two composites. Speaking for the right wing, the leader of the party, both at NECs and elsewhere, as argued that "no compensation" is unrealistic.

This will be one of the major policy debates at the conference, and it is crucial that all delegations are committed to support demands for no further compensation to be paid to those who buy public assets under this Tory government.

Party democracy

Nevertheless, it is the crucial issue of Party democracy which will dominate the conference.

Who draws up the Manifesto? The election of the Party leader; re-selection—the resolutions make it clear that LP members are far from regarding these questions as a "diversion".

Sixty-one resolutions and constitutional amendments have been submitted on the question of re-selection of Labour MPs. Not one opposes it! Seven, including the television technicians' union, ACTT, call for conference decisions to be binding on or more closely adhered to by the Parliamentary Labour Party.

Thirteen demand that either national conference or

an electoral college should elect the party leader.

Twenty-nine motions and constitutional amendments back the NEC in its proposal to give itself the final responsibility in drafting election Manifestoes, "after consultation" with the PLP.

These demands from the party membership for more control over the leadership amount to about a third of all resolutions on the agenda. Among them is the virtual lone voice of the right wing from Chippenham CLP to allow the capitalist to influence the NEC elections by having a postal ballot of all Party members!

Of those demanding mandatory re-selection, two clear positions are being argued for. Those like Coventry South West simply call for mandatory re-selection, while those like Wavertree and Shipley CLPs support mandatory re-selection—but also call for CLPs to retain the right to remove their MP as candidate at any time.

Both, if implemented, would mark a big step forward. The Shipley amendment, however, would ensure that a permanent check was kept over the actions of Labour MPs, and should therefore be supported.

Similarly, with regard to the Party leader, while no resolution defends the present undemocratic procedure, there are two alternatives presented. One, outlined by North Fylde CLP, supports the establishment of an electoral college consisting of trade unions, CLPs and MPs, together with all Prospective Parliamentary Candidates. The other, put forward by Birmingham Ladywood CLP, calls for the leader to be elected by annual conference.

While both would take the election of the Leader out of the exclusive hands of the PLP, by far and away the most democratic procedure would undoubtedly be election by the annual conference.

The proposed electoral college procedure, which attempts to "balance the different interests in the party", would give an unwarranted influence to MPs and Prospective Parliamentary candidates (opening the way to demands for direct representation at Conference as well) and, at the same time, less of a say to the trade unions.

Some on the left of the Party have supported this on the grounds that it gets around the "undemocratic" block vote of the unions. But while the block vote has undoubtedly been abused by union leaders in the past, the decisive influence of the unions is crucial for the Labour Party.

The key to democracy is ensuring that union delegations are democratically elected and follow union policy. With the transformation of the trade unions which will take place in the next period, the industrial rank and file of the unions

By Tony Saunois
(LPYS representative on Labour Party National Executive)



1979 Labour Party Conference—a rough ride for Jim?

will play a vital part in the socialist development of the Labour Party.

For a mass socialist Labour Party

Reflecting the demand of Party members for more socialist policies and a mass membership, many CLPs have submitted resolutions under the section "future policy and Party development".

Those who are opposed to

The Final Agenda clearly reflects rank and file demands for a firm commitment to socialist policies, democratic control over the leadership, and a campaign to build a mass membership

public ownership and the Party becoming a mass fighting organisation of working people will find little comfort in this section. Shirley Williams' old constituency, Hertford and Stevenage, has tabled a motion recognising that "the four main tasks facing the Labour Party are:

"(a) to build a mass party firmly based on industry and the community;

"(b) to re-affirm the Party's commitment to socialism as outlined in Clause IV part 4;

"(c) to ensure the rank and file have full control over the Parliamentary leadership through re-selection and the election of the Party leader at national conference;

"(d) to lead a fight against the anti-working class programme of the Tory government."

Brighton Kempton, in an amendment to another motion, details this and calls for "a mass recruitment campaign, a campaign directed towards workers and their families, the campaign to concentrate on the important question of unemployment, incomes policy, low pay and

public expenditure..."

From this section there is no doubt what CLP members are demanding: A lead from the NEC to recruit to the Party, together with a firm commitment that this campaign will be based on Party policy and Clause IV part 4 of the constitution.

The lessons of the election defeat have been clearly learnt by many Party mem-

them.

However, only Blackpool North, together with amendments from Heywood and Royton, and Wokingham, spell out a clear programme of action to combat them.

Heywood and Royton state that "Conference declares that part of this opposition must be a refusal by Labour councils to implement any cuts in public expenditure or increase rates." They then go on to support industrial action against the cuts and point to the need to raise the demand for the nationalisation of the banks to end the crippling interest charges against local councils.

While other motions, like the G&MWU, correctly call "upon the whole labour movement to give backing to a Trades Union Congress political and educational campaign in defence of public services and in favour of the positive use of public spending, and the extension of the public sector..." and (like Edinburgh South) "...supports all local authorities and health boards which have refused to implement the Tory cuts...", they fail to explain clearly that rate increases are no alternative and that public ownership is essential to finance local authorities.

Fight for a 35-hour week

Under Unemployment, the main demand raised by both trade unions and CLPs is the demand for a 35-hour week. Undoubtedly this compares very favourably with last year when the undemocratic three-year rule was used to prevent this issue being discussed.

Some, like Hayes and Harlington CLP, not only call for a 35-hour week but also instruct the NEC to "initiate a national campaign against unemployment with the organising of both regional and national rallies in conjunction with the trade unions. The main theme of the campaign should be for the introduction of a 35-hour maximum working week with no loss of pay."

While many of the motions on unemployment contain demands for reforms, there are also two very clear opinions expressed.

The AUEW (Engineering Section) calls for the reflation of the economy as a means of creating jobs. The resolution fails to recognise the point made by Stafford and Stone CLP that "Conference also notes that within the stranglehold of the capitalist mixed-economy the last Labour government was unable to reduce unemployment below 1¼ million and recognises that unemployment will only be fully eradicated within a socialist planned economy..."

The resolutions submitted before the conference this year show the anger which many Party members feel about the return of the Tories to power. But anger is not enough: the rank and file wants a Party which is capable of fighting the Tories. Many of the resolutions show the way this can be achieved: a bold socialist policy, democratic control over the Party leadership, and the building of a mass membership. These are the key issues to be thrashed out at the 1979 Conference.

bers. Chislehurst CLP, in its criticism of the last Labour government, asks Conference to "insist that its leaders in Parliament shall cease to speak of socialism as something we cannot afford until we do not need it (and that Conservative policies must be followed in the meantime)."

It is worth asking, however, why four similar motions from Blyth, Brighton Kempton, Wavertree, and Walton have been separated from "Future Policy and Development" and put in a section of their own.

Is it because these resolutions call for socialist policies, but go on to spell out what Clause 4 part 4 must mean in practice under the conditions of monopoly capitalism which exist today: the nationalisation of the top 200 companies, banks and finance houses? They also include calls for a £70 minimum wage, a 30- to 35-hour week, and a programme of useful public works—essential demands to win mass support for socialist policies.

Surely, such a programme is the key to "Future Policy and Development"?

Fight the cuts

The question of public expenditure cut-backs also features prominently in the Agenda, with 28 resolutions and amendments submitted.

All oppose the cuts and support a campaign against

RAILWAYS -

By Bob Wade

CRAZY PLANNING PUTS JOBS IN DANGER

British Rail is already stretched to its limits—workers forced by low wages to work excessive overtime to cover for staff shortages, antiquated locomotives and rolling stock, and massive shortages of equipment.

Yet now the bosses, as revealed in the 'Militant' exclusively [July 27] want to wreck British Rail even further by axing 35,000 jobs and implementing massive cutbacks.

The plan to vandalise the train service, and by doing so make it more susceptible to denationalisation, can be found in the pages of Rail Business Review, a confidential report currently circulating the boardrooms of British Rail and the Department of Transport (and now publicised for the labour movement thanks to 'Militant')

The July 27 issue covered the scandalous proposals of cutting 35,000 jobs through redundancies and natural wastage, and the general rundown of the service, so this article concentrates on certain areas of the cutbacks, in particular the freight service which is probably the worst hit section.

The bosses' onslaught against the freight service has already begun. The management board of BR switched freight from the Eastern Region to Midland Region after a tunnel disaster last year in which two rail workers were killed, under the pretext that it would be returned when an alternative line was constructed.

However, although the new route was constructed this year two months ahead of schedule, management refused to transfer the freight back. They only did so when the railway unions threatened industrial action, but now

negotiations are taking place between the union and management over the transfer of freight back to the Midlands—it is clear that management are determined to have their plans carried out.

Freight is going to be their main target of attack as shown by the Rail Business Review (RBR). The table shows their target for slashing the freight service by 1989.

This just shows the absolute seriousness of the bosses in curtailing the rail service—152 marshalling yards shut down; nearly 1,000 freight terminals closed and more than 10,000 jobs lost in an ever decreasing field of employment!

What chaos this will bring to any semblance of industrial planning. In an industrial society like Britain, a comprehensive freight railway network is essential—yet looking at the Manchester Waith Line, the bosses' attitude to logic can be seen. The Waith Line is the only freight railway link with Manchester, one of the country's most heavily industrialised areas—yet the Waith line is already going through the procedure of shutting down.

The management board certainly do not believe there is no call for rail freight—otherwise why would they increase their efforts to push for more company 'block trains', where private companies hire a whole train and let their own staff carry out the loading and unloading? And of course the private companies can get a government grant to help pay for building their own railway sidings. This means less jobs within British Rail itself, and is another example (alongside the electrification contracts, the selling off of the



shipping lines and BR hotels) of the bosses' determination to denationalise British Rail.

On the question of freight cutbacks, however, rank and file railway workers will be interested in one quote from the 'Rail Business Review': "The Board have succeeded as part of the 1979 wage settlement, in gaining the unions' agreement to give priority to discussions of productivity proposals, specifically including changes in freight activities." Railway workers should pressurise their union leaders to find out what exactly they have agreed to with the Board.

Another cutback is the reduction in locomotives. British Rail is already desperately short of efficient engines, most of the service relying on antiquated machinery—in areas such as Stratford and Newcastle 1920 shunt engines are still used! And in many areas much of the rolling stock is 40 years old.

The shortage of locomotives is seriously affecting training schemes. At the Stratford depot in East London, for example, one engine is supposed to be in the sheds available to trainees at any time so they can familiarise themselves with the engine. But as one trainee driver told me, "There's never any loco there when you want it, and you usually have to wait for up to an hour and a half before one is eventually found. They are so short of locos here they can't afford to spare just one for a short while."

An on the issue of locomotive shortages we find the most bizarre piece of planning on behalf of the management board. The RBR states, "The shortage of resources,

particularly of locomotives, is the main reason why the freight business profit in 1979 will be lower than forecast in this year's budget."

What lunacy! Having admitted that the reason why freight traffic was falling behind is because of the dire shortage of locos, the board then calmly announce they are going to reduce their number by nearly 1,000 in 1989.

But then this is the crazy world where resources are based on the rate of profit and not the logical basis of need. A fine example of this was when BR shipped off engine

potential for rail transport by up to 40 percent."

We must assume from this that the press barons have been on to the board explaining their intentions of decentralising the newspaper industry, at the expense of hundreds of printers' jobs.

But it is not just British Rail's direct workforce which will suffer—fare increases and line closures will affect the whole population.

At present fares, even at the high levels they are today, only cover 60 per cent of the total costs of the passenger service. The remaining 40 per cent is covered by government

The RBR estimates that the closure of 40 lines will be necessary. One area certain for the chop will be the Isle of Wight service which is barely managing to survive, trying to run a service for thousands of tourists in the summer with antiquated rolling stock, designed for London's underground in 1926!

As usual, as the RBR outlines, these 40 lines will be supplemented with a bus service run by BR. This scheme has been used before—in rural areas BR maintain a bus service for a period of two years hoping in that time a bus company will take over. But of course the bus companies are not interested because of the low rate of profitability, so the area is left without any form of public transport whatsoever. And now the board want to sentence another 40 areas to this same fate.

But the seriousness of the board to carry out these massive cutbacks can be seen by the issue of the 40 line closures. The RBR says, "The closures would, however, cut the freight profit by about £2m in 1989, because they would require the abandonment of some freight traffic."

They are quite prepared to sacrifice quite lucrative sections of British Rail, which will no doubt be scooped up by big business who will see the chance to make a fast buck, in order that the overall strategy of reducing the service can be achieved.

Railworkers must resist every closure, every redundancy and every locomotive threatened with the scrapyard if jobs are to be saved and an already depleted rail network to be protected from the bosses' axe.

	1979 present numbers	1989 target numbers
Marshalling Yards	181	
Marshalling Yards	181	49
Train and other operating staff	24,682	14,173
Terminals	2,288	1,371
BR wagons	135,000	41,000
Locomotives	2,259	1,647

parts to Rumania, where they were assembled and shipped back, despite the fact that BR has its own skilled engineers' section, the BRELI Under the profit system it was more profitable to ship components over 3,000 miles and then have the finished product shipped back again, rather than use the skilled workforce it has in its own backyard.

Another aspect of the freight service cutback will be of interest to all printworkers, especially those in Fleet Street. The RBR states, that at present it carries 90 per cent of the newspaper market, but this will lessen not only because of road competition, but also because "dispersal of newspaper printing could reduce the

subsidies. But as RBR shows, the proposed cash limits on subsidies for passenger travel, which will no doubt be strictly enforced by the Tories, will remain constant at £483m from 1981 to 1989.

This is despite the fact that costs for the passenger service will inevitably increase, and that by 1989, even with the massive cut backs and savings, the passenger service will need a grant of £633m. The only way the service could break even in this situation is by, as the RBR put it, a 'tougher real fares policy'.

This would mean yet more price increases for the already hard hit commuters, and the RBR says one of the areas for increases would be London and the South East.

EEC - BRITAIN THE POOR RELATION

A special article in the latest issue of the Central Statistical Office's 'Economic Trends' confirms that the UK is now well and truly the EEC's poor relation.

Only Italy and Ireland are worse off, although even Ireland has been improving its position while the UK has declined.

Wealth per head of population fell markedly in the UK compared with the EEC as a whole between 1962 and

1977.

At purchasing power parities [which try to eliminate false comparisons due to distortions of the exchange rate] the UK gross domestic product per head fell from 8.3% above the EEC average to 8.2% below it.

The only other country to decline was Luxembourg, but its per capita GDP is still 10% higher than the EEC average. Ireland has improved its relative position but its per capita GDP

remains 33.7% below the EEC average.

The biggest gains were experienced by Belgium [12.3% increase] and France [11.7% increase].

The differences in levels of GDP per head between the regions of the UK, however, were much smaller [in 1975] than in most other EEC countries.

The poorest region in the UK produced 73% per head of that produced by the richest. In France, the com-

parable figure was 44% and in Germany 57%.

This greater homogeneity in the UK largely reflects the high degree of industrialisation: the poorer regions of France and Italy still have agriculturally based economies with much larger living standards.

The richest EEC region [at purchasing power parities] was the Ile-de-France round Paris, with GDP per head 95% above the EEC average.

The richest UK region,

however, the South East, has a GDP per head only 5% above the EEC average, and this came behind every region of Germany except three mainly rural areas.

Table II
GDP per head at CPPP [EEC nine = 100]

	UK	France
1962	108.3	101.6
1967	105.1	106.0
1972	95.8	110.1
1977	91.8	113.5

Table I

GDP per head at current purchasing power parities, 1977 [EEC nine = 100]

UK	91.8
Germany	118.5
France	113.5
Italy	72.2
Holland	107.7
Belgium	108.9
Luxembourg	110.1
Ireland	62.3
Denmark	118.8

MERSEYSIDE : TIME

Merseyside faces some of the worst problems of any area in Britain. At present over 12% of the workforce are unemployed, and an epidemic of closures threatens to make the figure higher still.

Ted Mooney of Walton Labour Party looks at this and other problems faced by Merseyside workers.

Some years ago a young man from the south of England stepped off a train at Liverpool's Lime Street station. He had come to enrol as a student at the university.

Leaving the station he stopped the first person he met and asked. "Excuse me, but how do I get to the university?" Without hesitation the Liverpudlian replied. "Well; you need five 'O' levels and two 'A' levels.

Merseyside is famous not only for its comedians. Names like 'The Beatles' and Merseyside's two major football teams: one internationally famous, and another that used to be, have kept Liverpool in the public eye.

The glossy brochures produced by the Merseyside County Council would also point to some famous buildings like St George's hall and Liverpool's two cathedrals.

The traditional Gothic style of the Anglican cathedral—only recently completed—clashes sharply with the ultra-modern concrete building, and they are within a few hundred yards of one another.

Rundown of industry

They would go further and boast of Ancestral homes and country parks, of pleasant countryside and coastline, and of course, it would all be true.

However, beneath this veneer there is another Merseyside which rarely raises its head in official publications. It exist none-the-less.

This other Merseyside is one of slum housing, high unemployment, poverty, urban decay and of social deprivation beyond imagination. This Merseyside is the real Merseyside.

It has been devastated by decades of neglect and exploitation; by closures of factories and mass redundancies; by migration of the population to

outlying areas and new towns, and by political vandalism carried out by local and national politicians and bureaucrats.

Partly, of course, Merseyside's predicament can be explained in terms of the general decline of the British and world economy. The particular severity of the local problem can be accounted for in various ways, none of which have been tackled by subsequent governments.

The boom period which opened up in the aftermath of the second world war, had but a marginal effect on Merseyside.

In 1963 almost 5% of the work force were unemployed which was double the figure for the North West region. 1966 was perhaps Merseyside's best year for employment, the figure fell to about 2¼%—but this year was still more than double the national average in Merseyside. In 1976 it was 11% and today at 88,000 it over 12% with no sign of improvement. In the last five years alone unemployment has doubled.

Those without jobs are largely men and a high proportion of them are unskilled. Merseyside unemployed have on average been out of work longer than unemployed people in any other part of the country. Many of them are young. Indeed Merseyside County has the largest concentration of youth unemployment in Britain. **In June 1978 Merseyside had as many young people unemployed as Greater London—which has 4½ times its population.**

Such a devastating picture has been brought about by first of all the decline in the port. The Mersey provided historically the bulk of employment for Merseyside.

Docks, warehousing, transport and services were the largest sector—the majority

In June this year, there were 171,519 registered unemployed in the North West region. Over 30,000 of these jobless were in the inner city area of Liverpool, nearly 60% of them out of work for over six months.

The Liverpool area as a whole accounted for over 60,000, and the Merseyside Special Development Area has 91,659 on the dole queues. These figures are over double the national average of 6.1%.

of which, incidentally, is unskilled work.

There was a small skilled workforce arising from shipbuilding and repair. But this was always small and never really constituted a major part of the labour force.

It has moreover declined rapidly. After the war Merseyside employed about 12,000 shipbuilding and repair men, at the moment it employs less than 2,000.

Again in the aftermath of the war there were some 20,000 to 25,000 dockers on the Mersey; at the present time there are only 6,000 such workers. So the port's decline has contributed in great measure to the rot, but this problem is further complicated by closures that have taken place in other industries.

The post-war boom brought with it a number of new industries; the car industry and one or two engineering

concerns.

However, the past few years has seen massive closures: Plesseys; GEEC; Dunlop; British Leyland and a series of other firms have simply pulled out leaving a huge vacuum.

Slums—old and new

The problem of unemployment is compounded by other factors. The war devastated large areas of Liverpool and hardly a single family on Merseyside did not experience the destruction of their homes during the war-time period.

Many families were 'bombed out' two or three times and a large proportion of the homes left standing were seriously undermined with their foundations destroyed.

The period after the war therefore witnessed a massive programme of slum clearance. Whole areas of the

Merseyside disappeared during the 1950s and 1960s—but very few were ever replaced. Those that were replaced became modern slums.

High rise tower blocks and three-storey walk-up flats took their place. People detested them for a variety of reasons but mainly because they were impersonal and sub-standard. Mothers with children on the fifteenth storey were 'at their wits' end for fear of accidents.

Apart from this they rarely saw their neighbours and the community spirit which had sustained the area through years of poverty and misery began to break down.

Many families had no choice and were evicted to the outskirts of the city to live on modern estates which lacked any social facilities whatever. Apart from this, those fortunate enough to have jobs, found themselves with added expense by having to travel back to the city for work.

Some of these new areas were designed with maximum economy in mind. The idea was 'get as many dwellings per acre as possible'.

A classic example of this is the Netherley estate in the Childwall Valley, more popularly known as 'Valium Valley'—because most of the women have the drug prescribed for them by their doctors to try to alleviate the strain of living in the area.

On this estate residents have to walk up four or five flights of stairs to get to their own landing; having got there, they then have to go down a flight to reach their front door.

Having opened the door they then have to climb another flight to reach their living room. The Architect responsible received a design award for his pains!

The whole development—typical of Merseyside—went hand in hand with the construction of the New Towns. Merseyside has its own: Skelmersdale, Runcorn and Winsford. But it made no impression at all on the problem.

A recent report argues that Merseyside has no real shortage of housing accommodation; it points out that with some 560,000 dwellings available there are only 540,000



Slums in Birkenhead

Photo: MILITANT

TO HALT THE DECLINE



Can prosperity return to Merseyside?

Photo: Jini Rawlings

Only a programme of socialist reconstruction can solve the problems of Merseyside

the other hand the City of Liverpool has for many years since the war been dominated by the Tories. Labour has had its period of office in the fifties and sixties but never for a really consistent period.

A recent development has been the emergence of the Liberals. They actually controlled the Council in Liverpool a few short years ago. In short, politically Merseyside shows a confused picture.

In part this can be explained by religious prejudices that have their origin in the Irish immigration that has taken place since the early 19th century and continues to this day.

The media exploited this cultural difference for many years as a means of dividing the working class—until 1974 there was a Protestant Party

during the fifties and sixties. They failed to offer a class lead to show the way out of the morass facing the Merseyside working class.

They failed completely to tackle the problems of working people and show a socialist alternative. Many workers could see no difference between Labour and other parties and hence fell for Tory and Liberal gimmicks.

Fortunately this is beginning to change, as a new breed of Labour Party activists emerges—small as yet—but which understands the policies needed to solve the problems of the working class.

At a recent Liverpool City Council meeting, the 'Liverpool Echo' reported, in horrified tones that some of the new young councillors were actually calling for the nationalisation under workers' control of the banks and insurance companies.

'What relevance has this to Liverpool's problems?' was the question asked by that newspaper. With 80pence in every pound collected in rent by the City of Liverpool going to the money lenders, it has every relevance!

The future for Merseyside is therefore not necessarily bleak. On the contrary there is every reason for optimism, provided that consistent and audacious work is carried out by the Labour Party and trade unions. A programme of socialist reconstruction taken to the working class will solve the problems of Merseyside.

High on the list of priorities in such a programme would be the public ownership of any company threatening redundancies or closures. Local authority initiated public works of housing and recreational facilities as well as roads, sewage works, etc., will not only create jobs but greatly improve the amenities of the region.

Free local transport is also a priority—after all, at present, the main function of local transport is to get workers and consumers to and from other places of employment and exploitation.

The money for such a programme could only come from the public ownership of the banks and insurance companies with the provision of interest-free loans to local authorities, and from the public ownership of private industry. A national campaign for such a policy is vital.

The job of the labour movement on Merseyside is to further develop such a fighting programme to the specific needs of the area and ensure that an audacious campaign around the programme is launched throughout Merseyside.

Total employment in Liverpool has declined by 14.5% between 1971 and 1976, and manufacturing employment by 21.1%. Manufacturing now accounts for only 24% of jobs in the city!

families in the area.

The main need therefore is to improve the existing stock. The report goes on to argue that at the beginning of 1978 Merseyside had 94,000 unsatisfactory privately owned houses and flats. It continues, "their unsatisfactory state represents years of underspending on maintenance."

The answer to this, the report maintains, is to clear some 10,400 dwellings per year. However, it recognises that local authority spending can only accommodate a target of half this level. In short it would mean a twenty year programme to begin to resolve the problem.

Socialist programme

When an area like Merseyside declines it does so on every front. Transport is an example. Since 1960 the number of passengers on public transport has halved from 516 million to 265 million.

The number of passenger miles has dropped from 58.5 million to 40.4 million and at the same time costs have more than doubled from 6p per passenger to 14p.

And what about leisure activity? By standards laid

down by the Sports Council, Merseyside lacks 16 indoor sports centres. It is by the same standards short of 8 modern swimming pools.

The report referred to earlier states that Merseyside is short of parks and open spaces precisely in the areas most in need—i.e. in the main areas where the unemployed live. Existing parks and playgrounds are in an unsatisfactory state. Shortage of money, it concludes, is at the root of the problem.

The population of Merseyside is declining at a rate of more than 1% per year—in some years it reached as high as 2½%, during the last ten years.

This trend is largely the result of migration by people in search of work, the bulk of the emigrants being young and skilled.

The result of this (as in many inner-city areas) is a higher burden placed on the backs of the aged and unskilled resulting in a further impoverishment of the Merseyside populace. This is illustrated by the high level of rates payable in the area. (Liverpool is considering issuing a supplementary rate increase to remain in the black).

This is the picture of

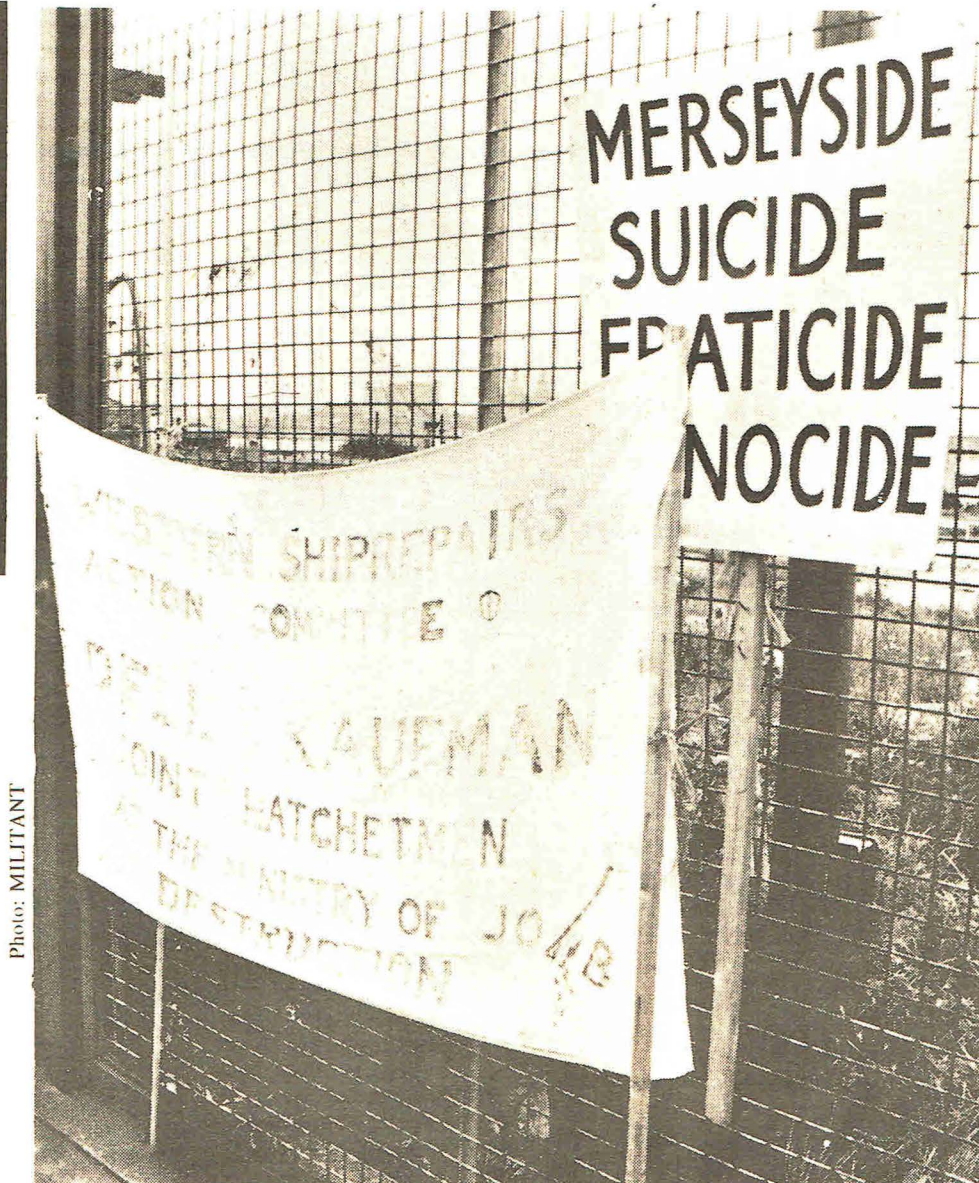


Photo: MILITANT

Western Shiprepairers workers have been fighting to save some of the few skilled jobs left in Merseyside

Merseyside that is rarely seen in print but which is none the less embedded into the consciousness of the Merseyside working class.

It is something we have lived with for generations and it has torped the local character to an extent that is unmistakable.

A solid working class area; its political structure is complex. The strongest side of the working class organisations is unmistakably the trade unions. Locally workers are

well organised, with even the smallest pockets of non-unionism almost unknown. Traditions of militancy are strong and consciousness high.

On the other hand, politically, a contradiction exists. Partly because of cultural peculiarities the political colour of Merseyside is distorted.

True many areas like Birkenhead, Bootle and St Helens and Kirkby are bastions of the Labour Party. On

TOMORROW THE DICTATORSHIP WILL BE OVERTHROWN

Dear Brothers,

The fact that I am so far away from my country and apart from my comrades and life-long friends makes it difficult for me to tell you about what has been part of my own life—the coal mines and the Chilean workers.

I have two reasons for doing so.

Firstly to answer questions asked me by my Scottish friends and fellow-workers; I feel it is an obligation to you have so generously and kindly opened your doors to us Chileans at this the worst moment in our history when we are facing a temporary defeat. You have shared with us the freedom and peace of your country, things which the treacherous generals, servants of international capital, and the Chilean ruling class have denied us.

Secondly, to denounce the super-exploitation which my brothers the Chilean coal miners are suffering together with the rest of my people.

The Chilean coal industry has 14,500 workers, who with their dependents and others, make a total population of 180,000 persons. Most of these live in the towns of Lota, Coronel and Curanilahue.

The coal seams of the Lota and Schwager mines are 1,640 to 2,624 feet deep and in some places they go more than five miles under the Pacific Ocean; both the geographical situation and the working conditions are similar to those in the Seafield Colliery in Fife.

We cannot speak of Chilean miners without mentioning their fights. They were the first to struggle for the rights of the working people in Chile. Their struggle is an important part of the history of our trade union movement. Many comrades and their families have suffered hunger, repression, imprison-

ment and have also given their lives in order to achieve better living conditions for their fellow-workers.

As an example of the hardship they have suffered, let's go back to 1946, when Gonzalez Videla, an ambitious and opportunist politician was elected President of the Republic by the votes of the workers and the poor. Our parents used to tell us that during his campaign he visited the region and when he talked to the workers his eyes were filled with tears. What the workers did not know was that his emotion was due to what he intended to do to them once he was elected.

Strikes of 1947 and 1960

In October 1947, because of low pay and poor living conditions, the miners went on strike. President Gonzalez Videla answered by sending troops to the mines. The soldiers started a real man-hunt against the miners, which is remembered as one of the worst repressions ever known in that region. The workers were forced inside the mines, others were put in cargo boats like cattle and sent to a concentration camp in Pisagua in the north of the country, miles away from their homes. Many of those loaded never reached their destination, as each night when they were off-shore, groups of two or three were taken out of the dungeons where they were kept and thrown into the sea.

In 1960, again the miners went on strike. There was no physical repression, but the measures taken by the government were just as inhuman.

For the 96 days that the strike went on, the government forbade the circulation of lorries loaded with food which had been sent as an act of solidarity by the other trade unions of the country. Owing to the lack of food, outbreaks of illness spread rapidly, mainly among the children.

Fleets of buses, chiefly



Demonstration on missing political prisoners

Photo: L Sparham (IFL)

from Santiago and Valpar-delegations appointed by the strike committee, and we went out, at least twice a week, to the rural areas to ask for food.

The peasants gave us potatoes, wheat and other cereals, which were cooked in community kitchens for all

volunteers with their trade only come with the purpose of showing their ability in representing and threatening the people. They indiscriminately arrested hundreds of workers, many of them waiting for the buses to go to work. Those who were arrested were taken to the police headquarters

tools, went to the police headquarters to demand the immediate release of all the detainees.

But the coal miners were not the only ones who suffered the Christian Democrat government's repression—the teachers suffered the consequences of one of the longest strikes in their history; the copper miners at 'El Salvador' mine were violently attacked during a demonstration of solidarity with other workers and six people were shot, a pregnant woman among them.

November and was called ENACAR (National Coal Board). The workers participated actively in the running of the industry as an old trade union leaders became its general manager. This popular government gave great hope to the majority of the people. But on September 1973 this government was overthrown by a bloody coup, organised by foreign capital, the CIA, and the Chilean reactionaries whose interests had been endangered.

The most cruel and terrorist military dictatorship known in the Latin American continent took hold of the government. Since then about 40,000 have been murdered, among the several coal miners' leaders.

During these last six years the whole world has witnessed the atrocities perpetrated by the fascist military junta. All basic human rights have been abolished and its economic policies have driven thousands of workers into poverty and hunger.

Torture, executions and the disappearance of political prisoners are considered normal. Unemployment has struck the coal miners especially severely; in the Schwager mine 800 workers have been sacked and 3,000 will soon be out of a job (as the mine is gradually closed).

Nevertheless, the great national and multi-national companies consider the present Chile as a 'Golden Paradise'. A high executive of the American company Diamond Shamrock said to a newspaper in Santiago: "This country is unique in the world in the wide possibilities that it offers for the development of our activities. Here free trade reigns supreme and full guarantees are given to private investment. A particular economic model has been implanted by the authorities and compared with others in the rest of the world it has produced the best results."

Recent history is showing us that the oppressive dictatorships are being overthrown—in Asia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Tomorrow it shall be those on the Latin American continent!

On the 6th anniversary of Pinochet's bloody coup a Chilean miner recalls the heroic tradition of the Chilean miners

also, arrived to take the miners' children to a safer place where they could look after by other workers' families while the strike lasted. Those of us who were lucky enough to remain with our own parents helped the

unions to go and fight for Cuba if this was necessary, thus showing a generous internationalist attitude.

On one summer day in 1968, a special police branch appeared in the area; it was an anti-riot squad. They had



Shantytown outside Santiago

the strikers and those who remained in the town.

At the beginning of the sixties, during the Caribbean crisis when the USA threatened to invade Cuba, which had just been liberated by Castro from one of the most shameful and repressive dictatorships in Latin America, more than 500 miners registered as

where we could experience the ferocity of the so-called 'Revolution in Freedom' promised to the country by Eduardo Frei's Christian Democratic government.

As soon as the arrests were known, hundreds of workers and their families, led by the union officials and armed with shovels, picks and other

1970 was election year. In the election Salvador Allende was elected President and under his government the main national resources and raw materials were nationalised. The coal industry was one of the first to become part of the 'social ownership' in

A THEORY OF MADMEN

Bob Halderman, Nixon's Chief of Staff, recalled how Nixon explained his theory for Indo-China: "Nixon said the threat was the key: 'I call it the Madman Theory, Bob. I want the North Vietnamese to believe I've reached

the point where I might do anything to stop the war.' "...We'll just slip the word to them that 'for God's sake, you know Nixon is obsessed about Communism. We can't restrain him when he's angry—and he has his

hand on the nuclear button'—and Ho Chi Minh will be in Paris in two days begging for peace."

In his book 'Sideshow' [review p11], author William Shawcross comments that: "a problem

with this theory is that reputations for irrationality have to be established, and that can only be done by irrational actions."

Demonstrate against the Chilean Dictatorship on the 6th Anniversary of the Coup Sunday 16 September 1979 Assemble Clerkenwell Green 1pm March to rally at Trafalgar Square

The Cambodian "Sideshow"

The American Freedom of Information Act is an amazing piece of legislation. Under it anyone may demand copies of memoranda and cables from any government department. If anything is denied, the applicant can appeal. If the appeal is refused, he or she can take legal action.

The need for such an Act is clear. 'Open the Books' is a vital demand for workers. But why should the American ruling class allow access, at least for the time being, to its closest secrets?

Sometimes the bosses' representatives strain at the reins and attempt to keep their masters in the dark.

Past American Presidents have frequently tried to play Emperor, but have been checked by Congress, which gives the ruling class another means of determining or vetoing policy.

Over the last 30 years, however, Congress has not proved too effective. Mostly this makes little difference—the capitalist class controls the whole state machinery.

But what if the President and the gang around him make use of their power to ignore or mislead many members of the CIA, Pentagon and State Department? This is what Nixon and Kissinger did in relation to



Nixon and Kissinger

"It was not a mistake, it was a crime"

Cambodia. Anyone looking for a good reason why American capitalists allowed the Freedom of Information Act, could do no better than read William Shawcross's new book on US intervention in Cambodia.

Creating devastation

Ironically entitled 'Sideshow', from Nixon's cynical view of this 'peripheral' war, Shawcross gives a detailed and horrific account of the 1969-1975 Cambodian conflict.

Shawcross uses access to thousands of memoranda, the classification of which ranged from 'Confidential' to 'Top-Secret-Sensitive-Eyes of Addressee Only-No Forn' (no foreigners). Under the Freedom of Information Act he prised these from the CIA, State Department, Defence Department, the National Security Council, and the Agency for International Development.

The story he has pieced together is horrific.

Nixon and Kissinger were determined to mount air-raids into Cambodia, with or

without Congress's blessing, and fiddled the records so that even the Pentagon official computer showed that the raids took place in Vietnam. Only a handful knew the truth. In this 'Sideshow', which began with the American invasion in 1970, US imperialism dropped on a population of 7 million three times the total tonnage of bombs dropped on Japan during the whole of the Second World War.

The consequences for the Cambodian people were horrendous. In 1969, the last full year before war, nearly 4

million tons of rice were produced. By 1974 it was down to a sixth, 655,000 tons. Starvation was rampant and people desperately moved into the cities and towns to find food.

Silent press

The capitalist press has seized on the terrible plight of the boat people (ethnic Chinese fleeing from Vietnam and exiles from the new Cambodian regime) as sensational material for anti-Communist propaganda. The Stalinist regimes have certainly played into their hands. But when Cambodia was being devastated by US bombing, the press was silent—and even now the Fleet street reviewers have criticised Shawcross's account as too polemical and biased.

'Sideshow' is undoubtedly a total indictment of American imperialism. But it also gives some background to the current conflict between Vietnam, Cambodian (Kamuchea) and Chinese 'Communist' Parties, culminating this year in the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia and the Chinese invasion of Vietnam.

Both the Vietnamese and Cambodian Communist Parties (Khmer Rouge) were strongly nationalistic. In the mid-1970s in their negotiations with American imperialism, the Vietnamese tried to curb the struggle of the Khmer Rouge and starve them of arms. The Chinese

maintained supplies and in 1975 the American puppet regime was toppled.

But the bureaucratic conflict of national interests remained. In a desperate attempt to totally establish their authority and run a new economy, the Khmer Rouge introduced a regime of almost unparalleled severity. The towns were emptied and people herded into work camps to increase rice production. Those who disagreed with the new regime were destroyed.

Peasant army

The new rulers through their peasant army abolished capitalism in Cambodia but their regime was a grim mockery of socialist democracy.

Shawcross's book does not deal in great detail with this post-1975 period. But as an expose of the Cambodian war 1969-75 it is a stunning account of how American imperialism's representatives in the White House operated.

'Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia'
By William Shawcross
Deutsch £6.95

Reviewed by
Jim Chrystie

ROTTERDAM

COURT ACTION SPARKED GENERAL DOCK STRIKE

Last week, we carried a brief report on the Rotterdam docks strike. Sparked off by court action against tugboatmen, the strike which has paralysed the port is a good indication of what will happen here if the Tory government attempts legal measures against strikers.

FRANS HOFFMAN, of the PvdA [Dutch Labour Party], explains the background to the strike.

On Monday the 27 August 16 striking tug-boat men were ordered back to work by a Rotterdam court. They were the first of a group of over 500 tug-boat people who went on strike the week before to be sued by their bosses.

The tug-boat people are demanding a wage increase of 50 guilders (about £10) a week. Their claim is a just one if compared to wages elsewhere. A worker on the tug-boats can get approximately 1600 guilders a month (£375) if he works 26 weekends and 26 night-shifts a year. The rest of the time he is on 'normal' day shift. The average pay of Dutch workers is some 400 guilders on top of that.

This situation has existed for quite a long time. Earlier this year the tug boat workers, together with the other dockworkers, put in a claim for 30 guilders a week extra, retirement at 60, a 35-hour week and extra holidays. The unions returned with a compromise that was merely a pittance—an increase of less than 5 guilders a week gross.

Nevertheless, this insulting offer of management got accepted in a referendum in the spring. Questions were later raised about this referendum

(some workers claimed that they never got their ballot papers, for instance). Of some 280 union members there was a majority of 14 in favour.

But the dockers themselves rejected the offer and subsequently no agreement was reached. Management refused to renegotiate and the union did not want to mobilise.

Profit increase

In the past few weeks the financial results of the big companies in the docks have been published and workers see an increase of profits which by far surpasses their wage increases. And when at the end of August, workers in the food industry managed to renegotiate a collective wage agreement (CAO) the tug boat people decided that they might have another try as well.

Since the unions rejected their proposals to fight for new demands they organised a 'wild cat' strike. Immediately trade union officials rushed to the support of the employers and made statements about the 'irresponsible' and 'unwarranted' behaviour of the strikers.

Their support for management was so pathetic that the prime minister Van Agt (Christian Democrat Party) expressed his appreciation for the 'courage' of these workers, 'leaders'. Management's confidence grew enormously and they decided to sue some of

the strikers. And of course they got their way.

The courts ruled, as usual, in favour of the capitalists. Each worker is to pay his boss £500 for every day he stays on strike. The workers now also have to pay the costs of the trial (£1800). But the tug-boat people were not intimidated. They stayed on strike.

Within hours of the verdict the dockers in Rotterdam came out on strike in sympathy. But the second day of their strike, which paralysed the Rotterdam docks, wage demands were put forward. The same demands as earlier this year (the 35-hour week, this time only for people working shifts).

On 29th August the Amsterdam dockers came out on strike as well for their own wage demands. A self-appointed CP dominated action committee was cast aside and replaced by a leadership elected at the mass meeting of the people on strike.

TU leadership

Ultimatums were put to both management and the unions. But it is very unlikely that the TU leadership will support the strikes. They claim that the 'national interest' will be damaged. They even claim that things like the 35-hour week (with full wage) will put employment nationally in danger.

Of course, they are quoted in a hysterical way in the media. The Dutch have not often heard so much slander, half-truths etc about a strike.

There are still some indus-

tries where a CAO is missing (like in the very important chemical industry) and in most other industries the active workers are still angry about the way things went during the wage negotiations earlier this year. The civil servants and public employees for instance, were forced to accept wage moderation by act of parliament.

In June the FNV (main trade union federation) had to organise a day of action against the government. This resulted in a national strike of the public employees. Some 50,000 people went to a demonstration in Utrecht. One of the official slogans (of the civil servants/public employees) was: 'Down with the government!'

The situation in the Netherlands could now lead to a series of strike actions. In 1970 a similar strike wave developed (also originating in the Rotterdam docks) which led to a wage increase of £400 for everybody.

The workers are already drawing the lessons from these events. Union democracy, the right of recall of TU officials, putting them at the same pay as the people they represent, are being widely discussed.

This will mean another step on the way to higher consciousness for the Dutch working class which until recently was fairly dormant. A process of radicalisation is beginning that will undoubtedly lead to a revival of the fighting traditions of the Dutch workers.

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

LETTERS

PULLING THE GRAVY TRAIN

Dear Comrades

This year's Labour Party annual conference at Brighton will be the most crucial since the war. It is an opportunity for the rank and file of the Labour Party to express their opinions on why the Tories are in power after five years of a Labour government.

The Tories have broadcast their view on the reasons for all to hear through their lackeys in Fleet Street. All supporters of a fighting socialist policy will have a chance to express theirs at the conference.

One of the main reasons for the defeat of the Labour government was their inability to cope with the capitalist crisis, instead compromising with the system, e.g. 5% wage policy, cuts in public spending, etc.

During the election many Party members (except for LPYS and 'Militant' supporters) had little zest for the campaign. Many fought to keep the Tories out and not for the right-wing policies of the leadership.

This is not surprising, when the Constituency Labour Parties, the backbone of the Party, have little or no say in constructing the Manifesto. Decisions of the annual conference are regularly completely ignored by our Parliamentary representatives.

Are we as Party workers and members the human workhorse pulling the gravy train for members of the PLP? We know of many ex-ministers who have left the Party for what they think are greener (and bluer!) pastures.

The Party must have control over its MPs and the democratic right to choose the Party leader. In October it must be the duty of delegates to conference to vote for democratic change within the Labour Party, or else conference will be reduced to a meaningless talking shop, a debating society with no real power to influence the PLP.

Fraternally
Barry Lewis
Thanet West CLP
Political Education Officer

DEFEND JOBS say Leith shipyard workers

Dear Editor

'Militant's' front page report in last week's edition [468] emphasised the struggle taking place in shipbuilding, particularly from the Robb-Caledon point of view in Dundee. It is quite clear that shipbuilding workers are on the offensive in that city to defend their jobs and yard.

Because of this, I think it is important to point out that the Robb-Caledon workers in my part of the country held a mass meeting in Leith Town Hall to express their feelings about the Tories' proposals for closures.

As one of the speakers invited to the meeting, I made it clear that this was only the first round and obviously the Tories would press ahead with other attacks on the working class if they were successful against shipbuilding workers in Dundee and elsewhere. And this could mean closure of the Leith yard.

I said that solidarity was not just a word but a commitment required of all sections of the trade union movement to defeat this government and to return the Labour Party to power [not simply to office] with a mandate to carry out socialist policies.

If these comments received tremendous support, I also wish to mention that the immediate tactical questions have not been missed. A deputation of Dundee shipbuilding shop stewards will be meeting their Leith counterparts to discuss a common strategy to oppose the Tories and British Shipbuilders' senior management.

Yours fraternally
Ron Brown
MP for Leith

Croydon— Labour's record

Dear Comrades

With reference to John Bulaitis' comments on my recent letter (see 'Militant' 465), I must point out that I did not say that the Croydon Central result was particularly disastrous, rather that, given the enormously powerful claims that are made on behalf of the electoral advantages of the 'Militant' programme, there should have been some indication of this, however small, at Croydon.

Neither do I agree with John that the Tribunitis were a "failure". In fact, many left-wing candidates did relatively very well, for example Bob Cryer, Arthur Latham and Ted Knight.

The fact that left-wing candidates obtained both relatively good and relatively bad results, suggests that the relative merits of the programme on which a particular candidate fights is not the decisive factor in the result is an election which is basically fought on the record of the retiring government.

In these circumstances it seems simply preposterous to suggest that Labour's credibility could have been rescued through the adoption of a 'Militant'-inspired manifesto, and that the Labour electorate would have overlooked the anti-working class record of the Labour government.

Finally, John draws what to me is an illogical distinction between 'electoral advantages' and politics. Is he suggesting perhaps that electoral battles have no political significance, and are therefore irrelevant in the struggle for political power?

Such a position would seem to be extremely close to that held by the German Communist Party during the 'Third Period', where the winning of a few extra members, and the "strengthening of the Party" was considered to be much more important than the winning of elections or strikes.

Yours fraternally
Pete Willsman

Making a killing

Dear Comrades

Looking round Boots I was amazed at the VAT rises on essential goods.

I was interested to know whether special foods for diabetics [which are really expensive anyway] had been affected by VAT increases.

No, the assistant assured me, they had not gone up with VAT.

Then why had the prices risen? Low calorie drinks, previously 22p, are now 27p. Obviously the firms producing these goods had coincidentally found it necessary to increase their prices!

Fraternally
Louise Birch
Selly Oak LP

Right-wing join Churchill's 'caucus' scare

Dear Comrade

I wonder how many comrades saw the article in the 'News of the World', entitled 'Why I Say Callaghan Must Beat Benn & Co', by shadow defence minister William Rodgers.

Rodgers refers to the disastrous results of the general election and European elections, but says nothing about the cause of the disasters. Readers of the 'Militant' are well aware of the cause; the disastrous record of the Labour government, culminating in the strikes last winter which were provoked by the government's adherence to its 5% pay policy, in defiance of TUC and Labour Party conference decisions.

Rodgers tells us what the

people want: a reasonable and rising standard of living, a home they can call their own, good schools for their children and a chance for them to make their way in the world, attention when they are sick, and a dignified old age.

Very good! Though I don't like the bit about 'making their way in the world'; it savours too much of the rat-race. But Rodgers ignores the fact that the Labour government halted the advance towards these desirable goals and went into retreat, thus paving the way for the Tory government's policies.

Rodgers says that the people believe in 'democracy'; yet he opposes the struggle to make the Labour Party more democratic, to make MPs

more accountable to those who elect them, to make them adhere to the principles of the Party in whose name they stand for election.

These measures, he says, would lead to the dictatorship of a 'party caucus'. He then has the cheek to tell us that Clem Atlee sent Party Chairman Harold Laski away with a flea in his ear when he tried to dictate what policy should be.

Does he think that we all suffer from loss of memory? It was Churchill, the arch-enemy of Labour, who started the scare about the 'Laski caucus'!

The renegades Prentice and Stonehouse both ranted about 'caucuses' in their constituency parties. Prentice, of course, was backed by Wil-

son, Callaghan and Co. when he first fell out with his local party.

The media are making strenuous efforts to represent the present struggle in the Labour Party as one of "Benn versus Callaghan", just as in the past it was "Bevan versus Gaitskell", according to them. In other words, "Bennism" is to become the "official" left wing of the Party just as "Bevanism" was.

If this happens I forecast that "Bennism" will end in futility, just as "Bevanism" did. I have had my differences with 'Militant' supporters, but I wish 'Militant' more power to its elbow.

Yours fraternally
Jim Parkes
Walsall

LABOUR PARTY DEMOCRACY—DO WE NEED AN ENQUIRY?

To the editor,
Militant.

On Party Democracy
Ian Gray's letter in last week's edition criticises 'Militant' for being trivial and inaccurate in describing the demands for an enquiry into the Labour Party's organisation as 'right wing'.

In repudiating this charge I would make it clear that as a supporter of the paper I am in favour of every attempt to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Party.

There is absolutely no question that a Party which can reflect the wishes and aspirations of the working class and act decisively in its interests will be necessary to bring about the defeat of the Tories and lead the working people of this country to socialism. But the demand for an enquiry into Party organisation is being made in the main to head off the growing mood for greater democracy

in the Labour Party and to spike the proposals of the National Executive Committee, who are reflecting that growing desire for more rank and file participation in formulating policy.

The proposals for the election of Party leader; to end the leader's prerogative to veto conference proposals for the election manifesto—plus of course the issue of mandatory re-selection—if implemented will clearly increase the involvement of the rank and file in decision-making. What need is there for an enquiry on such fundamental issues of democracy?

Those in favour of an enquiry are calling for the NEC proposals to be deferred in order that a committee can examine in depth the organisation of the Party and bring any proposals arising to the 1980 Party conference. I am

sure Ian Gray would agree that the behind-the-scenes manoeuvres during the course of such an enquiry would result in a totally watered-down version of the present NEC proposals being presented.

The right wing are mortally afraid of the continuing process of democratisation. Right wing spokesmen have already hinted that many MPs will stand as independents (anti-Labour) if the proposals are carried by conference.

David Basnett has questioned the composition of the NEC—this was never raised when the right wing were in control. Terry Duffy of the AUEW has launched an hysterical attack on the NEC, couched in language reminiscent of a wild editorial in the 'Daily Express'. In his Labour and Trade Union Press Service article Duffy impli-

citly threatens the NEC with withdrawing funds, and calls them a left-wing clique.

We might ask who Brother Duffy is representing. He was defeated by his own delegation at last year's Labour Party conference when he attempted to oppose the re-selection motion.

Duffy's outburst is an indication of the kind of pressure from the right wing which, with the full assistance of the Tory press, would be put on members of the committee carrying out any enquiry.

Allegiance

The right wing in the Party seek to lay the blame for Labour's defeat in the general election on organisation.

'Militant' does not and has never underestimated the importance of organisation.

The major reason for the defeat and declining membership of the Party, however, was the last and previous governments' failure to carry through a programme which would capture the loyalty of the working class and demonstrate to the middle class the complete incapacity of capitalism to solve the crises of society.

Any enquiry should demand to know where the allegiance of the Labour leadership lies—with Party conference and the rank and file or with the forces of big business whose interests are reflected through the extreme right wing in the ranks of the labour movement?

I believe that Ian Gray's letter is a genuine attempt to say that the left in the Party is not afraid of an enquiry. The question we have to pose is what sort of an enquiry? Conducted by whom and for

what purpose?

The left in the Party have nothing to fear from a frank and open discussion at branch, constituency and conference level on the issues of policy, the nature of the constitution and organisation.

What we must oppose is so-called enquiries by groups accountable to no-one and interested only in turning the Party back to the period of the fifties when the right-wing dominated all the leading bodies. That road spells disaster for Labour and catastrophe for the British working class.

Fraternally
Tony Mulhearn
Vice-President, Liverpool
District Labour Party and
ex-Parliamentary
Candidate for Crosby
Merseyside

'BUYING THE REVOLUTION?'

A full page 'rave' review of a book called 'The Enemies of Democracy' by Paul McCormick was given last week by 'The News of the World'.

COMBATING 'THE LIES OF THE WORLD'

The name of the author might be familiar. He, of course, was the 'arch-democrat' who, along with a fellow 'bed-sit infiltrator', tried to use the capitalist courts when a democratic decision of Newham NE Labour Party members didn't go the way he wanted.

By Clare Doyle

For only £7.50 Paul McCormick offers his explanation of the moves to the left in the Labour Party and the success of the Marxists. Referring to their vast, 'mysterious' funds he warns. "They are buying the revolution!"

This homely Sunday paper of the people is touchingly concerned for the health of the Labour Party and forever grateful to McCormick for his extensive dossier on the "Sinister army of Marxist activists" and "Elite corps of wreckers"! (Without such stuff this parasitic rag could not, of course, make its millions.)

There is nothing "mysterious" about the £46,241 received so far for the Militant Fighting Fund this year. Every week we publish lists like those below to show the growing support we have in the labour movement.

Littlehampton Labour Party Young Socialists gave £75; East Edinburgh CLP don-
















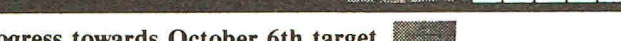



ation £10; SOGAT members, Glasgow, £3; Weirs, Cathcart AUEW members, £2; A Smith, Nottingham, AUEW members, £7; Islington LPYS £2.50; Dagenham LPYS £1.74; Feltham & Heston GMC (collection) £7.84; Marxist Discussion Group in Hillingdon £15; trade unionist's expenses (Peterborough) £14.40; Stevenage £3; South London £13.

Then there are the donations from individual readers. Few socialists are in a position to give large donations. But when they do, they are extremely welcome. N Hargreaves of Feltham Labour Party Young Socialists, for example gave an excellent £50, as did an Old Age Pensioner in North London. Someone in Hampshire gave half that—£25 and D McVittie of Acton and a Glasgow reader each gave £20. Many thanks.

Other donations included: from H Lewis of High Wycombe a tax rebate of £13. 'Tenners' came from N Meinke of Coventry (also a tax rebate), A Huyton of Sussex, S Jeffreys of York and G Evers of London. A CPSA member from Glasgow, A Thompson, donated £9.

M Boyd of Brighton Labour Party gave a 'fiver', A Gwilt of Wandsworth NALGO £4.50

Build Militant

Area	Target 52 wks	Target 39 wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	4,700	3,525		2,121
Hants & IOW	3,100	2,325		1,932
Humberside	2,000	1,500		1,117
London North	9,500	7,125		4,646
London South	3,900	2,925		2,512
Manchester & Dist.	4,500	3,375		1,716
Merseyside	5,000	3,750		2,028
Midlands East	3,300	2,475		1,868
Midlands West	9,000	6,750		4,799
Northern	5,500	4,125		2,487
Scotland East	2,900	2,175		980
Scotland West	4,500	3,375		1,571
South East	4,500	3,375		2,921
South West	3,100	2,325		1,778
Wales East	2,600	1,950		992
Wales West	3,400	2,550		1,619
Yorkshire	6,800	5,100		2,850
Others	6,700	5,025		8,304
Total	85,000	63,750		46,241

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

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

and Mrs Cawley of Bridgend £3.25.

£2.60 was sent by M Young, another Glasgow CP-SA member, and £2 came from C Onions (Bootle LPYS), B Dolan (GMWU Ross Foods), R Barker (Bradford S CLP), M Brown (Hounslow LPYS), F Lapping (E London AUEW) and R Williams (Merseyside NGA). We received £1.70 from H and J Saunders of N London and £1.50 from R Worth (Newton Abbot LPYS & EEPTU), K McKay (Barrhead CPSA), and D Moss (Brixham LP). £1.40 came from S & J England of Blackpool and £1.30 from both J Giles (Nottingham) and S Jacobs (London).

A large number of readers sent a pound this week including Mr Hopkins (Hawwell), J Butler (MOC NAT-SOPA Clerical, 'Evening Standard'), M Bare (AUEW Hayes), T Miles (Ruislip), A

Wynne (Cheshire), G Hill (NUT), D Love (Paisley AUEW), B McKay (Brighton TGWU), J Apps (Brighton LP), F Curtis (W London), B Keyes (NUPE Wirral), L Haley (Leyton CLP), B Narey (Bradford N CLP), T Fields (FBU Nat. Exec.), K Mullen (N London), and G Britton (a Northolt senior citizen).

But Militant is ambitious! The target for its Fighting Fund is £85,000 in one year on top of the thousands of pounds we must raise to fight against the libel writ served on our paper (see page 3). Here is another example of the capitalist courts being used by our enemies as a substitute for the democratic debate of political differences.

The right wing in the movement are afraid that their days are numbered but we must appeal to every reader of Militant to prove it by making strenuous efforts to raise cash.

If you have little or nothing to spare but want to contribute, take up some of the ideas that have brought results this week:—

Socials: £135 Brighton (plus another £30 promised); £10 Hertfordshire; £264 Swansea Camp and more to come; £15.65 Swansea social; and £31.90 homebrew social Bradford.

Ice cream £8 Shanklin, leas etc. £1.80 Newport; Beach party £8.70 Thanet.

Scrap metal £10 Peterborough; £4.40 Paisley. Copper collections £5.29 (N London); "catalogue" (N London) £3.76; "pool table" £2 (N London); tote win £10 (N London). Badges (all over!) £31.22 and £2.40 posters (Torbay).

£15.16 jumble sale (NE London); £2.50 fares saved (S London); "pint for Militant" (Brighton) £2; Merseyside £2.05. £1.55 'empties' (Derbyshire), £3 domino cards

(Blyth); £10 Quatermass disco (Paisley).

Whatever you do, help us terrify our political enemies by achieving astronomical sums of money and spreading the kind of ideas they cannot answer. Even £85,000 is a pittance compared with the millions of pounds from big business that back papers like 'The News of the World' through advertising and outright subsidies; yet they rant and rave over our successes!

Help 'Militant' fight back by aiming for the full £63,750 by October 6th (promises included) and at least £20,000 for the Legal Defence Fund.

Contributions for each week's fighting fund have to reach the 'Militant' offices by first post on Saturday for inclusion in the following week's paper. Make cheques and POs payable to 'Militant'. Quadruple 'Militant's' income to keep up its fighting strength!

ads

CLASSIFIED 5p per word, minimum ten words. SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres. All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

RHONDDA Militant Public Meeting 'A Socialist Programme for Labour'. Speaker: Tony Saunois (Labour Party NEC member, personal capacity). Star Hotel pub, Ystrad. 7.15 pm, Thursday 20th September.

NORTH WEST LONDON LPYS Day School. Sunday September 16th. 10 am-5 pm. Speakers include Tribune MPs and leading LPYS speakers. Morning: Youth Unemployment. Afternoon: What Programme for Labour? Brent Trades Hall, The High Road, Willesden.

BRIDGEND Trade Union Discussion Group. Thursday September 27th. 'Lessons of the General Strike'. Time: 7.30 pm Venue: Ship Hotel, Duncraven Place, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan. For further details contact Alun Morgan, Bridgend 63284

BRISTOL Militant Public Meeting 'Which Way for Labour?' Speaker: Terry Burns. Place: Room 2, Central Hall, Old Market, Bristol. Thursday October 4th at 7.30 pm.

LAMBETH Militant Public Meeting 'Fight the Cuts'. Speakers: Dennis English (GMWU Shop Steward, Wandsworth Council, personal capacity); Tony Saunois (Vauxhall Labour Party and Young Socialists' Representative on Labour Party NEC). Venue: Room 121, Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton, S.W.2. Date and time: Monday 17 September 1979, at 7.30 pm. Plenty of time for questions and discussion.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE Militant Readers' Meeting. 'A Socialist Programme for Labour'. Hear: Terry Fields (Fire Brigades Union EC, personal capacity); Ray Apps (Brighton Kempdown CLP and NEC candidate); Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board, Chairman: Tony Saunois (Labour Party NEC, personal capacity).

6.30 pm, Tuesday 2nd October, at Christchurch Hall, Bedford Place (off Western Road), Brighton.

CAERPHILLY Militant Readers' Meeting. 'Which Way for Labour?' Speaker: Peter Taaffe Wednesday September 19th, 7.30 pm. Railway Hotel, Caerphilly (next to main bus and railway depot).

Applications are invited for the position of Secretary/Agent to Portsmouth Labour Party. Grade 2 agency, starting salary £4,670. Well equipped office. Clerical assistance provided. Application forms may be obtained from Tom Cook, 84 Kingston Crescent, North End, Portsmouth, to which they should be returned by 19th October 1979.

Greet Labour's Conference

We invite you to place fraternal greetings to delegates attending the 1979 Labour Party Conference in 'Militant'.

This year's conference will be one of the most important ever. Make sure your trade union branch, shop stewards' committee, Labour Party or LPYS branch sends its greetings through our paper, which gets very wide circulation at Conference.

The closing date for copy is Tuesday 18 September.

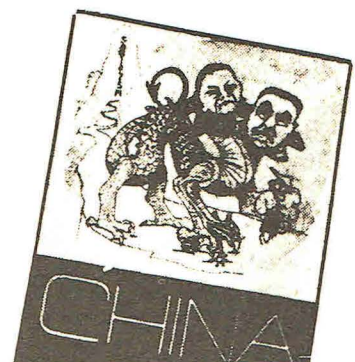
Rates for greetings: Semi-display: £4 for 6 column centimetres [maximum 25 words]; £2 for 3 column centimetres [maximum 15 words].

Display: £7 one-sixteenth of a page; £14 one-eighth of a page.

CHINA

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By Peter Taaffe

Reprinted from the recent articles in 'Militant'. Indispensable Marxist analysis of developments in China.



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SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY MUST NOT DIE

Blackpool agreement offers no solution

By Alex Allen

(Finishing trades convenor Robb Caledon personal capacity)

"Dundee Yard to Fight Alone" was the headline in 'The Scotsman' the day after the conference of shipbuilding Delegates in Blackpool.

The Dundee Yard is certainly fighting. But 'alone'? No! We are not just fighting for one yard and 1,100 jobs, important though that is. We are fighting for the future of our industry and our city!

A mass meeting of the whole workforce reaffirmed unanimously the programme of action agreed before the Blackpool conference. The agreement reached with British Shipbuilders, and endorsed by delegates from other shipyards, is no better than the previous proposals which every yard threw out.

The main "concession" is to make the 6,000 redundancies in the industry "voluntary" rather than compulsory. It's as though the hangman generously offered to spare you the rope—if you were prepared to slit your own throat!

What is the use of "voluntary" redundancy in areas like Tayside, Clydeside and Wearside where the chances of finding similar work are nil. It is a betrayal of future generations of workers to let these jobs go. Doing it voluntarily only makes it



Dundee workers lobby TUC conference. What future for the city if Caledon goes?

Photo: MILITANT

worse.

The same is true of the proposal to put threatened yards on a "care and maintenance basis". The strongest weapon we have is a united workforce; only the kind of action we in Caledon are taking can save shipbuilding jobs.

Once a yard is closed and the workforce dispersed, how

can the trade unions force the management to bring work back to that yard?

All along BS have declared that they intend making permanent reductions in their labour force. With the crisis in the world trade, there is no prospect of old yards being reopened.

On the contrary, if the management get away with

this round of closures, they will immediately start planning the next round!

The proposal for a "working party" to examine the possibility of introducing shiprepair and offshore oil related work is pure window dressing. If there is shiprepair work to be found, why have they not re-opened Western Shiprepairers in Birkenhead?

The proposals for subcontracting and sharing out work on naval vessels are no solution either. BS had already announced 4,000 new jobs in defence work, partly to offset the 10,000 jobs being lost in merchant shipbuilding.

At best these new plans will honour that pledge to find 4,000 new jobs but will give no more work for the other

6,000. We want employment for every worker in the yard, and for generations of workers to come.

In a society where production was geared to social needs, there would be plenty of work for men as skilled as those in the Caledon. Only a society where profit is king would throw such workers on the scrapheap.

We, the workers of Robb Caledon Dundee, appeal to all shipbuilding workers and the wider labour and trade union movement to give us moral and financial support.

But the best support of all would be for every shipyard to adopt our programme, throw out the Blackpool agreement, and join us in a united campaign to save shipbuilding:

No closures! No redundancies! Keep the overtime ban! No launches or sea trials! A scrap and build programme! Modernisation of the yards! Nationalisation of the shipping lines! 35-hour week!

Please rush messages of support and donations to: Stuart Petrie, Secretary, Robb Caledon Workers Combine Committee, Robb Caledon Shipyard, Stannergate, Dundee.

Daystrom — TASS MEMBERS FIGHT FOR RECOGNITION

For over seven weeks eight members of AUEW [TASS] have been out on official strike for union recognition at Daystrom Ltd. a small Gloucester company which manufactures X-ray gauges for the steel industry.

Alan Gribble, TASS steward at Daystrom spoke to John Ewers [Gloucester Labour Party and TASS].

What is the main reason for the dispute?

'One reason-recognition. We joined the union in January and negotiations started in February. Formal recognition was refused point blank. They did concede informal recognition-management will talk to us but won't sign any agreements, nor agree to procedure.

On the Wednesday before we went out, myself and another office committee member attended an informal meeting on the annual salary review. Management intimated that they would be offering about 12%, but this had to be confirmed by head office in Paris.

We asked what progress was being made with reference to our claim for formal recognition.

The Managing Director then stated that the company wasn't going to recognise the union. This was reported to the members, and at a meeting with the TASS Divisional Organiser the next

day, it was agreed to strike on the Friday.

TASS members at the British Steel Corporation, Llanwern, have written to their management reminding them that they should deal only with companies who recognise bona fide trade unions.

We are contacting other TASS stewards in the BSC in Wales. Also we are expecting support from other TASS members in the area. Postmen and most haulage drivers have refused to cross our picket.

In addition we've received a message of support and cash from Gloucester Labour Party Young Socialists.

Messages of support, and finance, which is urgently needed should be sent to: Mr. A.J. Gribble, 12 Goodmoor Crescent, Churchdown, Gloucester.

Cheques should be made payable to: "Daystrom Ltd. AUEW TASS Fund".

Stop Press: Since this interview took place, a member of management attacked one of the pickets injuring his hand during a sit-down on the picket line to prevent management and non-unionists entering the plant.

Pickets also turned away the only applicant who turned up to job interviews held by the company at a local hotel.

ROBERTSON'S GOLDEN SHRED

'It's time we made a stand'

Over 600 TGWU members at the 'Golden Shred' works of James Robertson & Sons Ltd in Bristol supported their stewards' call for a one day strike last Wednesday.

The strike was in protest at the sacking of 3 workers in the despatch department, who had refused (on union instructions) to continue work when the agreed manning level had been reduced without negotiations.

"This goes beyond the 3 men in despatch," however, Steve Wood told me. It is a question of the credibility of the union".

"In the past, management have just ignored the union, laughed at us in wage negotiations and even questioned our right to be represented"

"It's time we made a stand and showed we're not prepared to be pushed around". Shop steward Roger Jefferies explained that management by breaking a written agreement, had forced his members to take action. "We aren't militant; our last dispute was over equal pay a few years back. We've had 99.9% support for this strike and all the delivery lorries

have turned back. It is up to management now to change their attitude".

The dispute has come at a crucial time, when the Christmas orders are coming in for all the main lines-mince, fruit juices and jam. Robertsons must want the despatch department working flat out to ensure orders are met.

Conditions at Robertsons are "about average for this kind of business", which means low wages £53 take home pay for working a split shift. Investment is badly needed for new machinery. "They ought to let us see

where all the money goes to; it's not coming to us!"

With redundancies being threatened everywhere as the economic crisis deepens, and mass unemployment used to try and frighten off demands for better conditions, more and more workers like those at Robertsons will be forced to make a stand against companies who think they have a divine right to hire and fire at whim and break agreements whenever they like.

EMI - International fight against redundancies

Workers at the EMI group of factories in Hayes are once again facing an uncertain future.

Over the last decade the workforce has declined from 14,000 to 7,000. Now there are threats of redundancy in the record section and elsewhere.

This giant company is claiming financial difficulties, although it is generally believed that the giant insurance companies own large stakes.

EMI have sold off millions of pounds worth of assets recently; nobody is quite sure why. At the same time there is the possible threat to jobs posed by micro electronics.

These problems face workers internationally however, and the EMI trade unions are determined to fight back.

Ginger Evans, T&GWU 1 690 [EMI] branch secretary explained to 'Militant': "Shop stewards from Marconi [France], part of the EMI

empire, paid a surprise visit to Hayes recently. They met branch officers of the TGWU covering the EMI group of factories in Hayes.

"They were seeking support from British workers because 200 of them, who work in the manufacture of recorded cassettes, are facing redundancy.

"In France there is no legislation for the payment of redundancy money. Here, although there is redundancy payments, the result is the same, there is a job loss.

"The TGWU officers and stewards agreed that it is imperative that there should be close liaison between the workers of the whole EMI group of companies employed in Europe. It was agreed that we should issue a declaration of intent, and aim to hold a conference in Paris in October.

"The agenda will include a discussion on the implemen-

tation of micro-electronics and its effects on unemployment. The officers also agreed to attempt to get the conclusions drawn from the recently organised TUC conference on

the introduction of micro-electronics in industry."

Martin Elvin & Ed Bober spoke to Ginger Evans, Branch Secretary T&GWU 1/690 EMI

BDH- STRIKE CONTINUES

At British Drug Houses Ltd. [BDH], Poole, Dorset, about 480 production staff members of the TGWU are out on strike.

When a shop steward on picket duty outside one of the BDH factories in Poole had an epileptic fit, the company nurse was told by management that she could not attend to the man.

The workers pointed out that this should be contrasted to their own action. The only products they are allowing out of the gates are medical supplies bound for hospitals.

As the strike enters its fourth week, the company has announced that members of the smaller unions who are not involved in the dispute, will be laid off.

The wage claims of up to 43% submitted by the Transport and General Workers to the Chemical Industries Association [employers' side] have produced absolutely no response from management.

By Andrew Dinkenor (Bournemouth LPYS)

CONFED... CONFED... CONFED CLAIM... CONFED... CONFED

'MORE WORKERS OUT THAN EVER BEFORE'

Following the breakdown of last week's negotiations between the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Confed unions, in which the EEF refused to give a commitment on the unions' claim for a reduction of one hour in the 40-hour working week as a precondition for negotiations, strike action is to continue.

After the meeting Terry Duffy said: "We have not discarded our claim for 35 hours, but we have tried not to project the negotiations beyond this year." Such a statement does not reflect the feelings and mood expressed amongst the membership in West London.

John Bracher (President AUEW, Southall District, and convenor Magnatex), felt that the question of the 35-hour week and the extra holidays was the fundamental demand for most of the workers in this area.

He told us that in his district, "action has been solid and a greater number of workers have been out than ever before."

Faced with this solidarity, some local EEF employers have already been forced to settle. Bro Bracher made the point, however, that the role of the press has been significant in prolonging the dispute both in supporting the management and in causing confusion among some of the workforce.

The strike tactics of the union, he felt, had added to this confusion and led to some "shuffling of the feet" but the feeling of unity and solidarity had remained.

Another vital point, said Bro Bracher, was that this dispute is going to set the tone for forthcoming class battles. The EEF, backed up by the Tory government, are already well aware of this.

For this reason the engineering workers see themselves in the forefront of the battle for a shorter working week and in the fight facing all workers against the hard line of the employers and reactionary Thatcher government.

Bro Bracher felt that there should have been more information coming from the

union leadership. A circular relating to this week's action had only arrived the previous Friday.

The failure at national level to provide a lead with mass demonstrations, broadsheets and so on has led in some factories to a demand for a fuller explanation of the claim and a strike plan capable of winning the claim quickly.

Bro Bracher said that an all-out strike was necessary to end the confusion and that the employers in this area were already close to collapse — such action would lead to a rapid and conclusive victory.

The union leadership must respond to this in standing firm on the demand for a 35-hour week and longer holidays and in calling for all-out strike action.

Mike Lee and Steve Clare of Uxbridge LPYS interviewed Johnny Bracher President of Southall District of AUEW and convenor of Magnatex (W London)



Pickets at Britton's in Birmingham

Photo: Militant

35 HOUR WEEK ESSENTIAL

Trico's Windscreen Wiper producing factory in Brentford (West London) came to the attention of the labour movement during their successful 21-week strike for equal pay for women in 1976.

Now, alongside engineering workers all over the country, they are fighting for the Confed Claim. As the Convenor John Imwood (AUEW) explained:

"The strike here has been solid, both for the one-day stoppages and the two-day strikes as well.

"The only question now being asked by the members is whether or not the strikes are on next week so that we can take part.

"I feel that in conducting the action it would have been far better to have called an indefinite strike right from the beginning.

"For instance when we had our own strike (for equal pay), we came out indefinitely right from the start. We

then had no real problems; the attitude was very good and it hardened as the dispute went on."

On the claim itself, Brother Imwood pointed out that the £80 minimum time rate was important because there are employers who are paying less, even in London.

It was obvious though from the reports of negotiations with the EEF that the union officials had played down the 35-hour week and holiday parts of the claim in order to get a settlement.

But they had been forced to go back to the employers and raise them again due to the pressure of the membership, who have never changed in their attitude.

As Brother Imwood pointed out, if the 35-hour week could mean another ¼ million jobs, then failure to implement it now must lead to higher unemployment.

ANDOVER

Three hundred trade unionists employed at AMF Legg's at Andover in Hampshire have been out on official strike since 26th July.

Most of the men are members of the AUEW, but also involved are members of the T&GWU, Sheet metal workers, Boilermakers and the EETPU. The firm makes machines for the tobacco industry, and is a subsidiary of a large American company.

Legg's are part of the Engineering Employers' Federation but this dispute concerns their local agreement, not the national claim.

The men are claiming a wage of £100 per week. The employers have only offered a basic rise of 10%, which

would give them £85 per week with more if the unions give up certain rights and conditions regarding such things as timekeeping and tea-breaks.

Even then their offer only amounts to a maximum of £91 per week. And if for example an employee were to be only one minute late, he would immediately lose £2.75 out of the £91.

With inflation going the way it is, a 10% rise amounts to a wage cut.

Support for the strike is solid. Large pickets are maintained on a rota basis, and production is at a standstill.

By Nick Brooks

EMI- CLEAR LEAD NEEDED

Despite the complications caused partly by a local claim being fought for simultaneously with the engineers' national claim, workers in the Confed unions at the parent plant of EMI in Hayes, have fully backed the national strike calls.

The Joint Works Council have now correctly postponed the ban on co-operation and the blacking of contractors in pursuit of the claim for a £10 cost-of-living rise.

This is in order to concentrate on the national action, and avoid a fight on two fronts at once.

This action was only called off for the time being. EMI

have capitulated in the face of local strike action and agreed to reinstate several workers who had been suspended for taking part in the co-operation ban and blacking action.

At a mass meeting last Friday Arthur Gibbard, of No. 8 District of the CSEU outlined the claim, and drew out the lessons of the past; the fight for concessions such as paid holidays, the 40-hour week and an end to Saturday working in the engineering industry.

He pointed out how EMI workers had led a breakthrough in the fight for better conditions in the engineering

industry in 1950s. These fighting traditions have ensured the continuation of the strike action at EMI.

It is now crucial that the JWC at EMI give firm leadership. Proper strong pickets need to be organised to involve workers fully in the strike.

The comments of Bro. Bajura (TGWU District Officer) about the "rights of people to cross picket lines" when the majority of workers are on strike, flies in the face of basic trade union principles.

Clear leadership now from the JWC via the parent plant, could undoubtedly draw back

those EMI plants that have unfortunately wavered.

Local initiatives, leafletting, organising demonstrations etc. could be taken at local plant level. The District leadership of the powerful engineering unions could organise action to bring the many factories in the area closer together.

But obviously pressure must continue to be exerted upon the Confed national leadership to increase the action and bring this dispute to a speedy and successful conclusion.

By Mick Bowe
(TGWU 1/690 branch, EMI)

FERRANTI- SIX FACTORIES ON ALL OUT STRIKE

During the engineering workers' one- and two-day strikes, the 2,500 workers at the six Ferranti factories in Edinburgh have been on all-out strike.

Although it concerns a separate local claim, this dispute is closely connected to the national Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' claim. It is a test-case for the whole of the Engineering Employers' Federation.

The strike has already lasted for four weeks. Management have refused any talks, even with ACAS.

"We see ourselves with a long haul ahead", Dougie Rooney, the Convenor of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee told me. The unions AUEW, EETPU, GMWU and four others are willing to talk to management, he assured me.

He feels that the EEF are putting pressure on manage-

ment behind the scenes to resist any concessions. Management for their part are hiding behind the EEF.

The claim is for a 25% increase for all 12 grades, plus the consolidation of productivity scheme earnings and the basic rate. This would bring the present labourers' rates up from £48.29 to £61. At present the skilled rate is £67.69, higher than the present Confed minimum of £60.

Management have offered only 13% and refused consolidation. The rates they are offering would be less than those in the current national Confed claim for an £80 a week minimum.

The unions' claim is based on comparability with other workers and the effects of inflation. The employers' reply is that inflation is a social problem to be met by politicians, not the company! "Inflation affects us as

well" they claim! Well that's certainly true of their profits: last year they reached £9 million.

All the factories have been picketed, in five hour stints. There have been problems with the police however. On the pretext of preventing traffic congestion, they have been waving cars through the pickets lines.

Suspicion of collusion between police and management is not lessened by the fact that the latest security supervisor is an ex-police inspector, and the chief supervisor is an ex-Major!

Three quarters of production is for military purposes, mainly navigational systems. As a result of a financial crisis a few years ago, half the company's shares are owned by the National Enterprise Board. Dougie Rooney told me that the workers want to see this changed; the NEB should own 100%.

The AUEW is in the process of making the strike official, and the other unions are expected to follow. Meanwhile financial support from other workers, notably from the miners, postal workers, the Trades Council and other engineering factories, has been very good. Donations are still required urgently however, and other workers, especially those involved in the confed claim, have every interest in seeing a successful outcome to this strike; it could spell the end of the EEF's resistance.

Money and messages of support should be rushed to: Mrs E Cummings, Treasurer, Ferranti JSSC, Ruskin House 15 Windsor Street, EDINBURGH.

E/LONDON NHS WORKERS -

Photo: Ian McIntosh (IFL)



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

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BATTLE AGAINST HEALTH CUTS BEGINS

The battle against public sector cuts has started in earnest. With the summer holidays over, hospital workers are facing the grim reality of the Tory onslaught

The health authorities are now hell-bent on the destruction of the NHS as

we have known it. The labour and trade union movement protested

By Ian Burge

(Chairman, Tower Hamlets Joint Shop Stewards Committee)

in horror when the last Labour government, under pressure from big business, allowed the NHS to go to the dogs. But at least the labour leaders had to defend the

principle of the NHS, assuring us that once the economy was 'put right', NHS spending would be restored.

But the Tories are ideologically opposed to the NHS and the 'welfare state'. They would like to open up health to exploitation by private interests, forcing workers to pay through insurance, if they were young and fit and go

organisation also needs further strengthening.

But indications are that this will be the biggest protest of its kind in East London.

Gone is the disunity seen on former occasions, when some sections of staff felt they were not affected by cuts and were hesitant at taking action and losing money. All feel threatened now. An irate radiogra-

pher recently came up to me in the canteen, complaining that we were not allowing the non-ASTMS staff to join in the half-day strike [not true, actually].

NUPE is already involved in lightning strike actions against arbitrary management re-organisation of staff in the catering section. New sections of ASTMS have been set up in laboratories faced with cut-backs in on-call allowances.

Another important test will be how many of those clocking off do actually attend the demonstration. It is a point that has been raised by those who have been fully committed on past occasions. Better leadership and organisation should ensure maximum participation.

The enormously increased prices and fares, together with management attempts to push through staffing 'economies' without consultation, are making their impression. But there is also a feeling now of knowing who the enemy is—the Tory Government.

Trades Councils, Labour Parties, and Labour controlled councils have been dragging their feet up to now. We want to see them at the head of the campaign against the cuts and the Tory Government, not trailing behind.

Hospital workers are showing the way. Let the rest of our movement take up the banner with us!

CAR JOBS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

kid capitalist on a two-year loan from the Chloride group, has taken up the mantle worn by Beeching in the time when the railways were stripped to the bone.

18,000 jobs have already been axed at Leyland since January 1978. These latest proposals would put Edwardes' unemployment tally up to a staggering 40,000!

Besides the Canley closure, it is proposed that car assembly will cease at Abingdon and that closures take place at Coseley Engineering, Tipton No 2 Foundry, a substantial part of West Yorkshire Foundries, Tile Hill and major parts of Castle Bromwich.

Leyland Vehicles Park Royal and South Works plants have also been singled out for destruction.

It is clear neither Leyland plant nor Leyland worker is safe so

long as this process of dismantling is allowed to continue unabated.

It is intended that the TR7 and TR8 models be transferred from Canley to Solihull. But Bill Mullins, senior shop steward at the Rover plant in Solihull, is absolutely confident that Rover workers will refuse to touch any Canley work.

Bill Mullins pointed to the standing resolution of the BL cars shop stewards' combine committee which commits all BL workers to refuse work from other plants unless the workers at that plant agree to the transfer.

That resolution, pushed by the Rover stewards, was not taken up over the Speke closure. No doubt some stewards at Canley thought they were safeguarding their factory when they went along with the transfer of work from Speke. Now, less than 12 months later, they have learnt differently.

The lesson is clear: the ban on the transfer of work must be rigorously

enforced! The combine stewards, moreover, should go further, mobilising the whole of the Leyland workforce in a united fight against these plans.

Edwardes has tried to blame "strike-happy" workers. That is an old, old story and it is absolutely devoid of truth.

The Abingdon plant, for instance, has had no strikes for years! The demise of Leyland, the drop in its share of the home market to a mere 20%, and its total incapacity to compete on the world market has been brought about by years of under-investment. Even the much-vaunted programme of investment currently underway is chicken-feed when compared with that of Leyland's main overseas rivals.

Edwardes has threatened the unions that if they fail to co-operate then the government might demand even more draconian measures. In an attempt to provoke a battle between the plants he has suggested that within the overall figure

of 25,000 redundancies—which is fixed—the actual detailed proposals could be changed.

The answer of the unions must be a united company-wide campaign against all closures. Bill Mullins told us:

"If Leyland shop stewards even start to talk about the size of redundancy pay, instead of a principled fight against all plant closures and sackings, then the future for Leyland workers is bleak.

"We at Rover will be calling for an emergency meeting of the BL cars' combine stewards' committee. "The combine stewards," he said, "must organise an initial one-day strike to pull the whole workforce together on this issue and to show the threatened workers that they are not alone.

"The shop stewards in each plant under threat should also begin immediately to draw up plans for occupations. If these workers show their resolve, then without doubt the whole of Leyland will respond with solidarity action."



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