

Militant

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TORIES' SECRET PLANS - MURDER OF THE WELFARE STATE



"Some of the cuts being considered are options which no government which had not taken leave of its senses would implement in the short term."

There could be no better description of the Tory policy of vicious cutbacks—and these words came from a Tory!

This is what Jenkin, Tory Secretary—'butcher' would be a better title—of

Social Services told Civil Service union leaders ['Guardian' 22 September]. He talks of 'in the

By
Bob Wade

UNIONS MUST DEFEND RIGHTS OF WORKING PEOPLE!

short term'—can we presume from this that as far as he is concerned it would be quite sane to try and get away with massive cuts in the long term?

He added that the public should not get to hear of the proposals because they were 'too alarming'.

They are certainly alar-

ming! Every day brings more news of the Tory axe ruthlessly slashing at the welfare state. The latest section for the chop are school-leavers and pensioners.

The Tories have given the Department of Health and Social Security a

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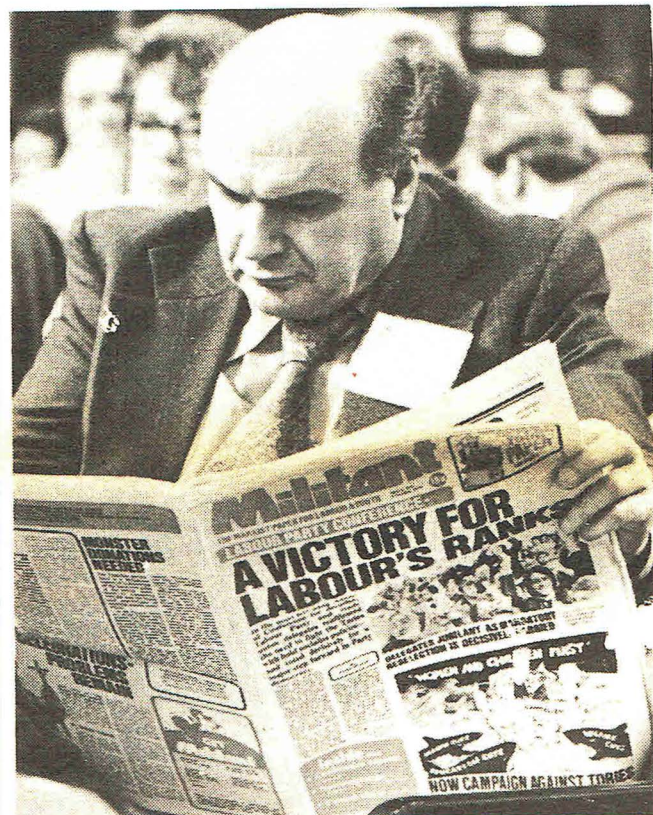


Photo: J McKirrick

MAKE SURE WORKERS GET THE TRUTH

Go out on the streets and make sure people are getting 'Militant'! That's our appeal to all our supporters.

The resolve seen at Labour's Conference is beginning to be transformed. Four supporters in the little mining village of Clowne in Derbyshire last Saturday sold EIGHTY papers in a couple of hours!

Every seller should get out to the factories and shopping centres with placards and posters appealing to workers to join us in the Labour Party and Young Socialists in the fight against this brutal bosses' government.

Our sales at Conference were up again; over 1,200 copies of "Militant" were sold in Brighton.

A wave of interest has been aroused among working people as the Labour

Clowne has shown how it can be done. Now let's repeat this success in every town and village and dramatically boost the sales of "Militant".

Militant

A WATERSHED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LABOUR PARTY

This year's conference will undoubtedly be seen as the most important for decades, probably since the Labour Party adopted its socialist constitution in 1918.

The democratic reforms—the amendment of the constitution to allow for mandatory re-selection and the vote on the principle to give the NEC the final say over the election Manifesto—are a great step forward. Predictably, the capitalist

press has been foaming at the mouth about the swing to the left. They have tried to portray it as an outbreak of madness: 'Bonkers in Brighton' asserted the Tory 'Daily Telegraph'.

Alternatively, following right-wing MPs like Shirley Williams, they have tried to attribute it to the insidious work of Marxist 'termites' chewing away at the Party. But change in the Labour

Party is not the work of a small handful of people. Fundamentally, it reflects deeper changes in society.

On television, Jim Callaghan attacked Mrs Thatcher's right-wing policies, and bemoaned the fact they were producing a class polarisation, pushing Labour further to the left.

But the policies of the Tory government are not just a whim on the part of Thatcher and her crew. They are dictated by the desperate position of big business. A further radicalisation of the working class is the inevitable product of the crisis in British society.

Reflecting the mood of the active layers of the working class, conference delegates drew the lessons of Labour's defeat. The determination of both constituency delegates and the key trade union delegations to implement mandatory re-selection was bound up with the recognition that attempts, as under previous Labour governments, to run a diseased capitalist economy for the benefit of the working class are doomed to failure.

The conference was undoubtedly a devastating defeat for the right-wing parliamentary leadership, and their attempts to justify their record cut no ice with delegates. "The right wing of the Labour Party" aptly commented Peter Jenkins ['Guardian' 1 October], "has passed into the hands of the ideological receiver; intellectually it is bank-

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rupt." The press has scornfully referred to this year's decisions on party democracy as "the October revolution". And as after any revolution, the old regime, encouraged by the media, will attempt a counter-revolution.

Right-wing MPs, particularly those around the mis-named Labour Victory Group, and some of the trade union leaders, are looking to the Joint NEC-trade union enquiry as a means of vetoing the constitutional reforms—or even of delivering the Party back into the hands of the right

wing. There is little doubt, moreover, that the right will once again try to whip up a witch-hunt against the 'Militant'. But they will not succeed.

The angry, hostile response to Frank Chapple [and one or two others] when they attacked the Militant tendency in conference is an indication of their isolation.

The unions themselves are rapidly moving to the left. In the battles of the coming months, the demand for socialist policies and democratic accountability of trade union leaders will come to the fore.

At this conference many of the union delegations were split down the middle, with lay delegates protesting at the way in which some leaders swung their block vote to the right, often contrary to their own union's policy.

Significantly, one EETPU delegate told the LPYS meeting that he and fellow lay members of the delegation had protested at Chapple's attack on the left.

This is the music of the future as far as the unions at present dominated by right-wing leaders are concerned.

The rank and file of the labour movement must now demand that the NEC has a majority on the joint enquiry committee, and that the parliamentary leadership and right-wing union leaders are not allowed to manipulate it to undermine Conference decisions.

The democratisation of the Party was the key issue in Brighton. But in other debates conference affirmed the need to implement socialist measures based on nationalisation and democratic working class control.

Although composite 26 [moved by NUPE] calling for the nationalisation of major monopolies and banks was carried, composite 30, which included the call for the nationalisation of the 200 major monopolies, was defeated on the recommendation of the NEC [see report, centre pages].

Jim Callaghan, however, later referred to this demand as the 'talisman' of true, Clause 4 socialism.

Whether or not Jim Callaghan was being facetious, there is no doubt that in the next period of class battles the mass ranks of the Party and the unions will come to the conclusion that only the implementation of Clause 4 [and similar clauses in the constitutions of the industrial unions, including the EETPU] can provide a way forward.

And within a crisis-ridden monopoly capitalism, only the policies advocated by the Marxists can give practical effect to Clause 4.

The 1979 conference is a watershed in the development of the Labour Party into a mass, working class Party fighting for a socialist society.

Northern Ireland BREAK WITH TORY POLICIES

In Northern Ireland, workers face the most squalid housing conditions, worse unemployment and lower wages than anywhere in Britain. Members of the AUEW, EETPU and the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union also live with the daily threat of sectarian violence and regular harassment by the British army.

Delegates to conference were justifiably determined that the resolutions on Northern Ireland, originally left off the final agenda, should be debated. Consistent pressure from the floor of conference won considerable support and ensured that two resolutions were eventually discussed.

The press tried to paint this as the work of extremists, forcing a 'dangerous' debate onto an unwilling Conference. But in spite of pressure to get through an array of other issues on the last morning, conference listened attentively as delegates from the rostrum spelt out the urgent need for Labour to establish a clear, independent socialist position on Ireland, breaking the 'bi-partisan' support for reactionary Tory policies.

The lack of a political approach meant tolerating the 'military routinism' of patrols, spot-checks and raids on workers' homes, said one speaker.

Johnny Noble, of Newcastle Central CLP, drew on the

Report on public ownership debate and more photos, centre pages.

experience of a delegation sent to Northern Ireland from Newcastle Trades Council. In spite of all the obstacles, the trade unions in the North cross the sectarian divide, uniting workers in the common struggles they face. For these workers, nothing has changed since the 1930s to end poverty and unemployment, he said.

The present sectarian-based political parties cannot unite workers in their fight to improve their conditions: the trade unions provide the basis for workers' unity not only in the North but throughout Ireland and Britain.

The first resolution, which called for the withdrawal of British troops and "the right of all the people of Ireland to self-determination" unfortunately put forward no answers to the remaining problems of economic decay and of sectarianism which would still confront workers.

This left the way open for Michael Foot, on behalf of the NEC, to play on delegates' fears in rejecting both resolutions and defending the Labour government's past approach. "Lives could be at

stake in the way we handle this problem," he said. Conference should make it clear that "terrorism was no part of our democracy."

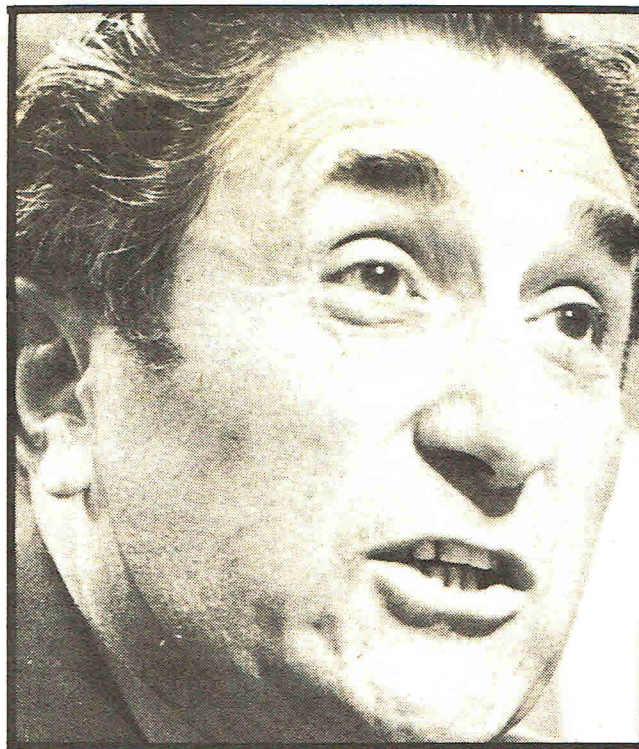
He tried to brand both resolutions with giving encouragement to violence, although the second composite was criticising the bi-partisan approach and called for "a distinctive Labour policy on Ireland."

"It still involves sentences and propositions which could lead to a complete misunderstanding across the Irish Sea," Foot said. It was not true that Labour was merely following Tory policy.

What Michael Foot seemed to be saying was that any criticism of the present approach could spark off more violence. While indicating that "a political solution" was needed, he offered no answers.

Conference, subdued by the suggestion that they might "condemn not only Northern Ireland but the whole of Ireland to civil war", accepted the NEC's recommendations and defeated both resolutions.

It was noticeable, however, that while the call merely for "troops out" was overwhelmingly rejected, within the Constituency section about a third of the delegates voted in favour of the proposal that Labour should hammer out a socialist alternative to replace the present parliamentary agreement with the Tories.



Left: Frank Chapple, EETPU, speaking on party democracy debate on Tuesday: his outburst against the left in general and "Militant" in particular provoked an angry response from delegates. Below: voting unanimously for composite 26 calling for a massive extension of public ownership.



Successful meeting on Ireland

The first point made at Monday evening's meeting called by the Northern Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group and chaired by Eddie McParland of Greenwich LP, was that it was a disgrace that Ireland was not on the agenda

for debate—an omission that was reversed by lobbying of the CAC and protests from the floor of conference. Over 70 attended the meeting at Brighton Labour Club, and heard Johnny Noble, delegate from Newcastle Central, and

Peter Hadden, from the Labour and Trade Union Group. Peter's clear Marxist analysis of events in the North was followed by discussion, and a collection for the NIL&TUG raised over £60.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT MUST HOLD ITS OWN ENQUIRY INTO THE KILLING OF BLAIR PEACH



Police activities at Southall in April.

Photo: Militant.

By
Jim Christie

The police sealed off the town of Trowbridge in Wiltshire last week. Reinforcements from other areas were rushed in as road blocks were set up around the town.

The hunt was on for the vicious killer of Police Constable Desmond Kellam.

But while this killer was being sought, with no effort being spared, another killer was being allowed to go free.

Six months after the paramilitary Special Patrol Group (SPG) went into Southall to protect the fascists and terrorised the local Asian population it was announced by the Director of Public Prosecutions that there would be no prosecution over the killing of Blair Peach and that enquiries were being brought to an end.

The ruling class hope to cow blacks, Asians, and the whole labour movement with its specially trained police and

their breaking-up of picket lines and demonstration. They have created the SPG as their sharp edge of repression.

The police chiefs and their Tory masters have answered repeated calls for a full investigation and prosecution of whoever was responsible for Peach's death with both blanket defence of the SPG's role and claims that they are unable to find out what really happened.

Such has been the outrage that the Tories are now resorting to a second-line of defence. Attorney-General, Sir Michael Havers, has hinted that a "judicial enquiry" might be necessary.

Describing the SPG as a "force within the force" he stated: "One is always slightly frightened about any elitist force. They may form such a friendship with each other that one may get a blank wall when one conducts an investi-

gation." Is Havers admitting that the SPG are beyond control and outside the law. What better argument is there for closing down the SPG? With the murder of Blair Peach whitewashed they have virtually been given a licence to kill.

Many eyewitnesses have reported how Peach was attacked by members of the SPG. Lead-filled coshes, similar to the weapon which pathologists think killed Peach, have been found in SPG members' lockers.

The van which brought the SPG group to the murder scene must be known from the logging of the orders over the radio. So the suspects could be narrowed down to 20 or less officers.

The cover-up over Peach's murder has shown where power lies. The police authorities make the ridiculous claim that eyewitnesses who saw the police attack could not identify which individual policemen or men clubbed Peach to death. It was hardly surprising that uniformed men look similar and that the police did not stop to allow their numbers to be taken.

The police authorities must know which SPG men were involved when Peach was killed

One eyewitness, Amanda Leon, also points out that identification was made more difficult by the fact that three months had passed before she was asked to an identification parade. Also at one line-up she says the policemen all wore beards, as the suspect involved had grown one since the Southall murder.

Contrast that with the speedy arrest of a suspect for the awful murder of PC Kellam in Trowbridge. Or the sentences handed out to Asians involved in the Southall demonstrations.

Almost all the convictions handed out—and 85% of those before the magistrates have been convicted—have been on the say of one police witness.

One 14 year-old boy had

seven eyewitnesses to testify that at the time he was supposed to be holding a dangerous weapon, he was being tended by a doctor and an ex-ambulance man for injuries. They were all ignored by the magistrate, who, on the evidence of a single policeman, fined the youth £100. In another case, the magistrate claimed that two defence witnesses were as guilty as the defendant and bound them over "to keep the peace".

The police authorities must know which SPG men were involved when Peach was killed. Yet they are not prepared to investigate the SPG. Indeed, the media and Police Federation spokesmen have tried to use the murder of PC Kellam—sensationally publicised in the press—as a

smokescreen to obscure the ending of the investigation into Peach's murder.

The labour movement must set up its own enquiry into Peach's murder and the SPG role in Southall last April.

The terrorising of the Asian population is a threat to all working people. On the day the authorities dropped enquiries into Peach's murder, moreover, the SPG again showed their true purpose. Sixty SPG members attacked a picket line of Vauxhall workers at Harwich, beat up strikers, and arrested four pickets.

The ruling class hope that they can continue to operate like this without hindrance. Their aim is to crush the organised strength of the labour movement.

A judicial enquiry in the hands of the Tories and their lawyers would only be a more elaborate cover-up of the real role of the SPG.

It is vital that the labour movement mobilises to counter the threat from the SPG, conducts its own investigation into the SPG and the Southall events, and calls for the immediate disbanding of the SPG.

MILITANT DEFENCE FUND.

Attacks on the 'Militant' from the Conference rostrum by one or two right-wingers last week got a cool response from delegates, to say the least.

One well known trade union speaker was booed down by an enraged conference. There was, on the other hand, overwhelming support among delegates and visitors for our defence campaign against John Golding's libel action against "Militant".

During the conference, about £250 was raised in Brighton for our Defence Fund (which is of course separate and apart from the Fighting Fund which jumped £1,100 at the Militant meeting).

Most significant was the £2 each donated by POEU delegates Robbie Harper, Phil Lloyd, Phil Hoot, Donald McDonald, and Jock Cam-

bell. These are the Broad Left members elected at POEU conference to fill five of the six elected places in the Union's delegation.

Like many other members of the POEU, and an impressive number of branches which have sent resolutions and letters to the Union's Executive and Labour NEC, they have expressed their complete condemnation of the action of their union's sponsored MP in taking court action against a socialist paper.

More Labour MPs also made donations: Stan Thorne £5, Alan Roberts £5, and three others £31 between them.

National Graphical Association delegates gave £10, and in the last week we have again received further valuable contributions from trade union organisations and activists.

The secretary of Scottish Graphical Division, West Branch of SOGAT has informed us that they will shortly

The ranks of the labour movement constitute the highest court of appeal there is, and the support so far received leaves no doubt as to the almost unanimous verdict on John Golding's action.

be moving a resolution condemning John Golding's action at Glasgow Trades Council, and the branch will consider a donation at its next meeting.

George Young, an Executive member of the furniture trade union FTAT gave £5 and said he would be raising the issue at the executive's next meeting.

At Knightsbridge Bakery in Manchester, Mike Skully collected £5.20 from his work-mates and says "the collection

is continuing".

In Liverpool, General and Municipal Workers' Branch No. 5 branch committee has sent £10; and Barry Williams President of the trade council £1.

Sheffield Central ASTMS branch has sent £5; and £8.64 was collected at the London District Council of the Metal Mechanics; £3 was collected at the Brighton branch of AUEW (TASS).

Dave Challoner, an Executive member of the Fire

Brigades Union has donated a handsome £10.

Further support has come in, too from Labour Parties. Lambeth Central CLP, donated £5 and passed the following resolution:

"This GMC deplores the action of John Golding MP in serving a High Court writ for libel on the paper Militant. We consider it scandalous that a Labour MP, sponsored by a Trade Union (POEU), should take action of this sort against a socialist paper. We further pledge a donation of £5 for the defence fund".

Members of the general management committee of Sheffield Heeley CLP have donated £12.83, and the Party has voted £10 out of its funds. Members of Godiva Branch, Coventry SE CLP collected £9.55 between them, and Owen Davies, secretary of Hanover Branch LP, Brighton, personally donated £10.

Harehill/Roundhay Bran-

ch of NE Leeds CLP has also passed a resolution deploring John Golding's action.

As far as 'Militant' is concerned, the ranks of the labour movement constitute the highest court of appeal there is. And the support so far received, both in resolutions and cash, leaves no doubt as to the almost unanimous verdict on John Golding's action.

However, the case still has to go to court—and despite our having what should be in legal terms a cast iron case, we have to be prepared for the crippling costs and damages that could hit us as a result of this action.

We would like to thank all those who have sent cash — apologising again for not being able to mention every contribution — and urge all our readers to keep up the effort to assure the support and finance needed to guarantee the future of 'Militant'.

You can ensure our future

LABOUR'S YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST CUTS

The recently launched national campaign against the cuts is the most important activity ever - launched in the history of the Labour Party Young Socialists.

The LPYS have a proud record when it comes to fighting unemployment, low living standards, racialism and redundancies. We have organised marches, rallies, demonstrations and lobbies of Parliament.

But never before has role of Labour's youth movement been so important. The most horrendous Tory attacks on the living standards of working people and their families in Britain. The dismantling of the NHS, the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs and the virtual mutilation of the education will destroy the already thin fabric of society.

Last Saturday 6th October for example in a front page article the Daily Mirror revealed that 'a young couple have given away two of their seven children to spare their daughter and baby son from lives of poverty'.

Workers suffer

Existing on £24.80 per week the unemployed parents Joe and Helen Naylor were forced to make this horrifying decision in order to "do the best for our kids". This is a scandal yet apparently not so for the wealthy Tories.

They are proposing even more chops in workers' income and social wage. Hence "the government scheme to help the poor pay their electricity bills is likely to be cut this winter because of public spending cuts". And "it is known that it (the government) wants to tax sickness and unemployment benefits." (Guardian 7/9/79)

This is why the success of the LPYS cuts campaign is so vital. As the standard bearers of Britain's working class youth, the LPYS will not tolerate the implementation of any measures which will attempt to lay the blame for capitalism's disastrous economic collapse on to the shoulders of the working class youth and their families.

Every LPYS branch should now be drawing up plans for the national week of action

By
Steve Higham

(Labour Party
Young Socialists North
West Regional
Committee)

planned for October 27th to
November 3rd.

This means mapping out a programme of action, estate canvasses, street meetings, leafletting schools, etc, generally turning out to capture the huge wave of working class discontent with the Tories.

In Liverpool a car cavalcade is being organised on November 3rd, which with our own decorated LPYS bus will parade around the city centre to give socialist answers to Thatcher and her crew. Branches clearly will need to equip themselves with all the necessary materials for a successful campaign, leaflets, posters, petitions, stickers, megaphones etc.

Branch finances will be in a healthier position following the September 16th fund raising week. Those branches which didn't participate should get cracking. A healthy bank balance will allow for the purchase of national material from Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, Transport House, Smith Square, London Sw1 P 3JA.

Organise action now

Local initiatives should however be drawn up, like posters and leaflets advertising public meetings around the cuts campaign. Most important of all, however, is to involve the trade unions and young workers in our campaign. Only the might of the 13 million strong labour and trade union movement actually has the strength to smash the Tories.

LPYS branches should be sending letters to trade councils, shop stewards committees, trade union branches asking for the opportunity to speak at their meetings, for financial assistance and for the circulation of LPYS material around young workers in the factories and offices.



What future does capitalism offer to these youngsters? A London LPYS demo

Photo: MILITANT

Public meetings such as those being arranged in Bootle, St Helens, Kirkby, Crosby and Southport should be addressed by leading local

LPYS and trade union speakers. The potential for recruitment into our ranks is enormous. Bootle LPYS for example sold 45 Militants in

just two hours on an estate canvass.

This is the only way to go forward. Activity and more activity will build the LPYS

from within the massed ranks of working class youth.

Meanwhile, in a different world...

ROY AND HIS TOY

Labour councils around Britain are struggling to avert the worst horrors of Ma Thatcher's ruthless "housekeeping" exercise.

Education, school dinners, old folks' homes, children's homes, hospitals and jobs vanish without trace. Our younger generation faces a future on the scrapheap.

After a time, all this talk of doom and gloom becomes depressing. So, it was a welcome relief to switch on BBC and see a programme which showed us the pleasanter side of life.

'Top Sailing' went to Monte Carlo to look at the beautiful people and the toys they keep in this attractive tax haven.

We met people like the lady who travelled home to the US with her daughter on the QE2 and found it so "simple" after the luxury of her father's personal yacht which cost several million pounds and came equipped with its own speedboat and

By Terri Patterson

(Clackmannan & East
Stirlingshire CLP)

helicopter.

We were allowed to watch as Jean Pierre, the chef, shopped for the evening meal. He would spend £25 for each person. That evening an extra £25 was spent. A meal was prepared, ready-to-serve, in case the host, Roy, decided to fly over unexpectedly from Miami and surprise everyone.

His guests drank a toast "to Roy and his toy"! Among his other toys is his plane: "This year he has a Falcon Ten. Last year he had a BAC One Eleven."

Spoiling all this jolly fun a sour note was introduced. It

seems that some chefs are unscrupulous enough to cheat their owners. They manage, while carving the joint, to carve off a nice 10% for themselves.

Such dishonesty! These poor millionaires are deprived of hard-earned cash! A dinner costing merely £22.50 per head would be a sadly inferior experience.

A well-paid skilled British worker would take 49 years to earn enough to pay for running one of these yachts for one year. He would have to work for a further 400 years to actually pay for the yacht. There is no need to go on.

Roy and the others like him possess more wealth than any single man or any one family could create in a lifetime.

On a planet where millions of people die of starvation every year and others eke out a miserable existence the lifestyle of Roy and his friends is a scandal. The system which maintains them is an obscenity.

There will come a time when this planet is truly civilised and such disgusting waste and greed is a thing of the past—swept into the dustbin of history.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 20th 12.30 pm
'DEMONSTRATE AGAINST THE TORIES'

Assemble Shepherds Bush Green [opposite the Tube station] and march to North Kensington for a Rally outside the Tabernacle. LPYS, labour Party and trade union speakers.

CAPITALISM'S CRAZY LOGIC

The most successful 'Militant' readers' meeting held in Caerphilly took place recently when 50 people heard Peter Taaffe speak on "Which way forward for Labour?"

"No government has been so unpopular since Ethelred the Unready," he said, describing how the cuts in public spending will devastate services and cause massive unemployment. However, Peter asked how it was that Labour lost the election and let the Tories in.

"One thing is clear. Thatcher is remaining true to the class that put her there—she remains loyal. If only we could say the same of our leadership." Working within the confines of capitalism has ruined Labour's programme and it was the logic of capitalism which was now dictating Tory policies.

The general strike in Corby was a forerunner of what will happen on a national scale if the Tories stick to their guns.

The Labour Party must lead the fight against the Tories and adopt policies to end the capitalist system. Reforms are impossible in a dying economy. "Alexander the Great tried to untie the Gordian knot and in the end only when he took his sword to it was it completely undone."

The enthusiasm did not only show in a full discussion but also in a Fighting Fund collection of £135 including a donation of £20 from John Goulding [a 'Militant' supporter in Caerphilly].

By Lynne Cuthbert, (Caerphilly LPYS)

South African Rugby tour

UNIONS MUST USE THEIR MUSCLE

Three hundred or so demonstrators marched through the streets of Exeter on Wednesday to protest against the appearance of the South African rugby team. Prominent on the demonstration were Labour Party and LPYS banners.

Despite the fact that the demonstration took place during the afternoon there were a number of workers who had given up half a day's pay to protest against the degrada-

tion imposed on their black brothers in South Africa.

The night before, following an initiative from the LPYS, the Labour Party held a public meeting to explain the issues behind the tour. Over 30 people turned up to hear Robin Clapp, regional chairman of South West LPYS give a clear and sober analysis of the developments within Southern Africa as a whole.

"South Africans are not inherently racist but racialism arises from the need to divide white workers and black workers in order to protect the profits of the bosses." Robin went on to

expose the hypocrisy of the Tories in allowing this tour to go on.

The Tories, so-called defenders of "freedom," he explained, were backing one of the most reactionary regimes in the world where the majority of the population are denied even the basic freedoms of movement and where to live.

John Lloyd, chairman of Exeter Anti Apartheid, then gave a bit of background to sport in South Africa, and explained the form the demonstration would take.

Perhaps inevitably, most contributions from the floor

were concerned with the question of the demonstration but Robin Clapp pointed out in summing up that no one should see the demonstration as the end of the campaign, rather it should be a springboard to take the ideas into the movement where the trade unions can use their muscle and discipline to bring down not only the reactionary regime in South Africa but also their Tory backer in Britain.

By Mick Whale

(Exeter LPYS)

LEFT & RIGHT

INTEREST—ON A HEAP OF RUBBLE

"Birkenhead has shown the way to the world," proclaimed the head of Wirral housing committee as two tower blocks were blown up last week.

At a demolition cost of £200,000, 240 flats were blown up. But that is not the last payment Wirral will make on the flats. They still owe £620,000 for their construction and will be paying interest charges to the banks and moneylenders for the next 40 years.

"Faulty Towers" was the name given to these uninhabitable, damp flats by local inhabitants. Crazy might be a more appropriate comment for a system that does not provide decent housing for ordinary people but does allow private financiers to grow rich whether the flats go up or down. If instead of giving in to the moneylenders, Birkenhead ended all interest charges and began to build houses for people, it would provide a better example for 'the world' to follow.

SWEET DREAMS

The bosses won't have liked last week's Labour Party conference. But that didn't stop one enterprising advertiser getting in on the act. A full page advert in the 'Guardian' headed 'Relax Brothers' extolled the virtues of Ovaltine in cooling delegates down "when the day gets a bit heated."

"Ovaltine—in place of strife" was the bold conclusion. But it will take more than Ovaltine to "cool down" the class struggle and make us all "happy girls and boys" together. This year the bosses need Ovaltine to avoid their nightmares about a socialist Labour Party. Next year they will need whisky, but still the class struggle won't go away.

ONE-MAN BAND

'Militant' has always pointed out the way in which the tremendous advantages of a planned economy are reduced to a minimum by the lack of workers' democracy in the Stalinist states. One of the newest of these, Afghanistan, has a new leader, Hafizullah Amin.

He has announced that he will introduce a degree of democracy into the country. In his first public statement as President he said that in future Afghanistan would no longer be ruled by one man; it would be run in consultation with the Central Committee of the ruling Khalq party, the Revolutionary Council and the Council of Ministers.

Mr Amin is secretary general of the Party, chairman of the Revolutionary Council and the country's first minister.

Not exactly workers' democracy. Mr Amin claimed that "self centred and notorious elements" in conflict with the working classes had been eliminated. Not yet, Mr Amin, not yet.

'ROOM AT THE BOTTOM'

When John Braine was the Secretary of Keighley Communist Party, he published his famous novel, 'Room At the Top', in which he showed how an ambitious young man could escape from the working class by marrying the boss's daughter.

Following the book's success Braine escaped to Dorking and recently spoke on Tory platforms during the general election campaign.

However a more unsung local hero published his own answer to Braine in 1959 entitled 'Room at the Bottom.' His name was Harry Goldthorpe and he was the first secretary and founder of the Bradford Unemployed Association in the 1920s.

Harry maintained that the Joe Lampton's of this world were one in a hundred thousand and that the great majority of the working classes are doomed by the system under which they live 'to stay down at this level on which they were born.'

He makes the point that for those who prefer to speak the truth about the system, rather than cheat and lie, there is no 'room at the top' but plenty of room at the bottom.

Lifetime of rebellion

He describes his early youth in Manningham in Bradford, then tells of his first encounter with the dole queue in 1926.

Whilst grumbling about the lack of breakfast in the queue, he was told by the clerk to shut up or he'd punch his nose!

When they picked the clerk up off the floor Goldthorpe was escorted off the premises by the two policemen.

Thus began a life-time of rebellion against authority, and subsequent persecution by the authorities. The first step was to organise a club for the unemployed in Quebec Street. Open air meetings were held to explain the plight of the unemployed and demand maintenance or work.

Goldthorpe was sent on 'test work' where four men took turns to sit on and chop firewood. As he says 'all that was done in a week by this idiotic method could have been done in one day by one man using a power saw!'

After almost burning the depot down, he was ejected again and this time was sent to an institution for mental defectives, to help feed chickens, which were 'dispatched to certain prominent gentlemen in the city whose right to have them I very much doubt.'

Goldthorpe decided to re-route some of these to the unemployed club where they would do more good.

After four months he was summoned to the office and given a cup of tea. The officer then asked him 'Do you tell lies, Goldthorpe?' 'Not where the truth will fit. Why?' answered Harry. 'How many chickens have you stolen from this establishment?'

'As near as I have counted, 965' answered Harry.

After a 'vivid' silence the officer asked 'What else have you had from here?', 'About three tons of meal and



On a routine visit to the pawn shop in the 1920s

thousands of eggs'

'What have you done with all this stuff?'

'I gave it to where it would do most good—the unemployed' answered Harry.

On being told that he would hear more of this Harry laughed, and invited the officer to come down to the unemployed club, bringing the police with him, to watch the hens laying eggs for the unemployed.

That night the officer turned up and when he saw the hens was speechless. The local papers, the 'Telegraph' and 'Argus', were given the story but refused to publish, and nothing more was heard of the chickens.

Goldthorpe's refusal to accept the system led him to the workhouse where he developed a healthy contempt for patronising 'social workers' from the middle classes who had no experience of poverty and whose only solution consisted of sending able bodied men to the workhouse.

He was refused dole and jailed for six weeks for being unable to pay his rates! Instead of breaking his spirit this only confirmed his suspicions of the rottenness of the system and determined him to fight its injustice harder than before.

The unemployed club produced its own newspaper to circulate its ideas, and also employed men who had run out of benefit, stamping their

cards though unable to pay wages, but thus enabling the men to qualify for benefit again.

One member who informed on this activity was tarred and feathered, creating an outcry in the press.

But as Goldthorpe says in defence of the unemployed, "Informing" was the sort of thing that struck at the very roots of our attempts to organise ourselves against those who inflicted poverty on us. Our handicaps were big enough without the burden of rats in our midst.

"If we sinned against society, the pillars of society were ready enough to make examples of us: ours might have been a rough sort of justice, but we were equally entitled to make examples of our sinners."

Refusing to silently starve

Amongst the activities of the club were the provision of free meals and children's outings to the seaside, but as Goldthorpe says they refused to do other workers out of jobs by working at low rates and 'their greatest crime' was refusing to starve silently and respectably but instead making everyone aware that they were starving.

It was interesting to note at this time that the Communist Party published a letter in the Telegraph & Argus disasso-

Review by
Keith Narey
(Chairman,
Manningham
Labour Party)
of 'Room at the
Bottom' by
Harry Goldthorpe

[published by
Square One
pamphlets,
price 20p]

ciating themselves from Goldthorpe and his comrades.

The tragedy of the activities of the unemployed is that they were not reflected in political activity inside the mass organisations.

Coming after the betrayal of the trades union leaders in the General Strike of 1926, and the sell out of the national government of 1931 many workers were left demoralised and disillusioned, a prey to cynicism or worse, Fascism.

The courageous struggles of people like Goldthorpe and his comrades deserved far better leaders than those who then masqueraded as the leaders of the labour and trade union movement.

The lessons of this isolation and weakness must be learned by today's generation. With the threat of a return to mass unemployment it is essential that the fight is not left to 'gut' socialists and individuals no matter how sincere and brave.

Link unemployed to trade unions

The rank-and-file of the labour movement, especially the youth, must campaign to recruit all the unemployed into the trade unions at a nominal subscription of a couple of pence a week; into the Labour Party for a minimum donation of say 15p, as for pensioners.

In this way the struggles of the unemployed can be linked to the struggles of workers to transform society along socialist lines—the army of the unemployed could become an army working for socialism to develop a society where the persecution of people like Goldthorpe, the indignities of the dole queue, the desperation of a future without work for school leavers, will be impossible.

The wealth exists to provide such a society, and the development of computer technology offers its rapid spread throughout the world, so that workers everywhere can share that 'room at the top', and ensure that the struggles of individuals like Harry Goldthorpe were not in vain.

Militant pamphlet
"The 35-hour week
and the fight against
unemployment"
By Brian Ingham
Price 40p
(plus 10p p&p)
from World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN

SACRIFICED FOR PROFIT—

BOSSSES' GREED ENDANGERS WORKERS' HEARING

The bosses are secretly trying to smash any attempts to reduce noise levels at work.

In a letter from the CBI to the Health and Safety Executive, marked 'Strictly private and confidential' [which has come into the hands of the Militant] the capitalists show how they are quite prepared to defeat legislation to reduce noise levels at work by a press campaign based, not on reason, but on sheer distortion of facts.

The bosses who are eager enough through their press to criticise loud music people choose to hear at discos and concerts, are refusing to reduce the noise workers are forced to endure at work.

As the letter admits 'Up to 100,000 more might be saved serious impairment' of hearing if the standard legal level was reduced to the lower level requested by the TUC.

And should the Health and Safety Executive refuse to accept the CBI's proposed high levels, 'it would produce such an adverse reaction from industry that it would be virtually impossible to conduct a rational public debate on any package of proposals.' In other words that a hysterical press campaign would be formulated against the Health and Safety Executive's legislation.

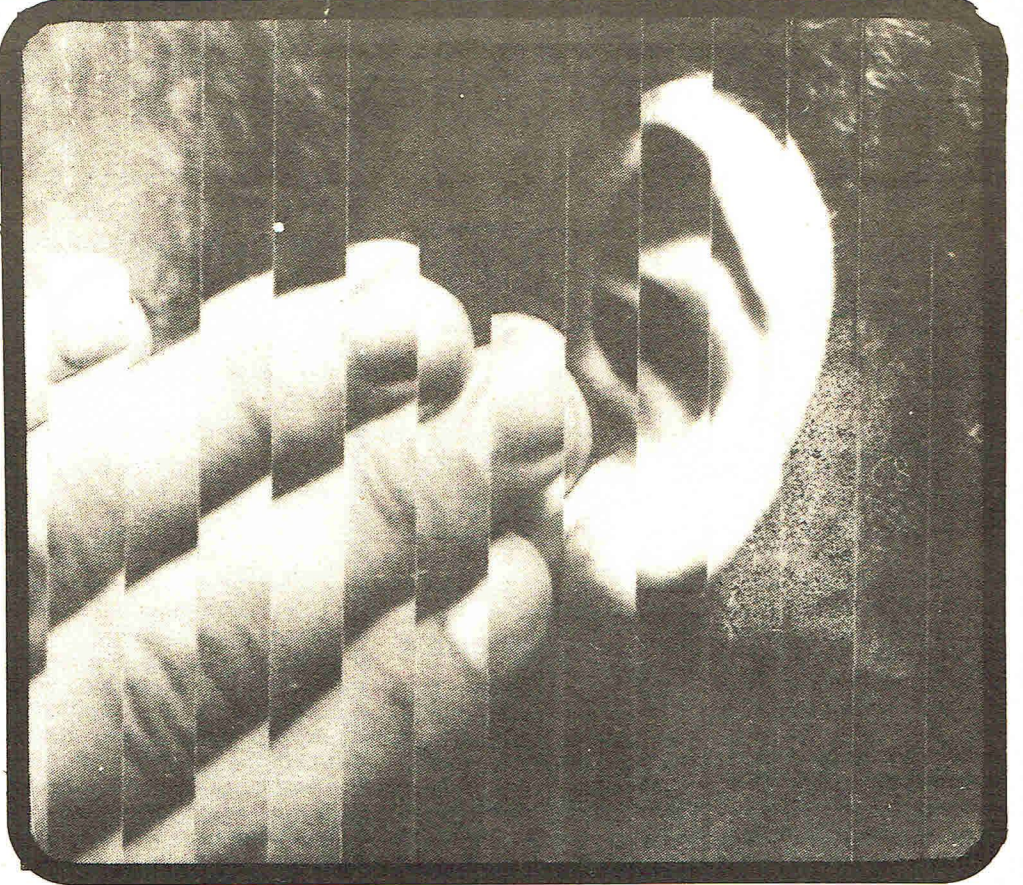
The CBI are pressuring the Health and Safety Executive to adopt a path of 'prudence' and change its discussion paper in the CBI's favour before making it public.

The CBI candidly admit

that their sole consideration in the matter is the defence of its members profits. "In the UK's present competitive situation even the costs of the relatively modest proposals for lower noise levels would mean closures and redundancies in some sectors of industry."

Excessive noise at work is an insidious evil. It causes deafness and severe impairment of hearing; mental strain and nervous disorder; it isolates workers from each other at work by a wall of noise; it is an extreme irritant and produces inability to relax at home—it may be a significant cause of child and wife battering.

The cold blooded calculation of the capitalists on this issue is sickening—the threat of an avowedly non-rational campaign in the media to



For more information on the effects of noise, see 'Noise', a pamphlet produced by the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, 9 Poland Street, London W1

defeat the progressive legislation; the behind the scenes attempts to persuade the executive to change its legislation proposals before there is any democratic discussion of them; and above all their acceptance that their policies will cause deafness or serious impairment of hearing to 100,000 workers in manuf-

acturing industry alone.

The capitalist class is so incapable of running the industry it controls that it must sacrifice the health of its workers to keep going at all.

Workers must press the TUC to secure legislation reducing the noise level, and demand the nationalisation of any firm which threatens

redundancies or closure because it cannot 'afford' to take the necessary noise reduction measures.

If the capitalist class cannot run industry without sacrificing the health of the workers, then they must surrender control to those who can.

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

Further evidence of poor facilities in maternity hospitals was recently given by Dr James Appleyard, consultant paediatrician at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital. "Up to 5,000 newborn babies died every year through lack of intensive care facilities... Many who live are left with physical handicaps which have been largely eliminated in countries with adequate facilities and the motivation to tackle the problem... Only two out of 21 newborn units had nurses able to resuscitate a baby on duty 24 hours a day. One third lacked resident paediatric house staff and nearly a third were unable to keep infants in warm enough surroundings." ['The Guardian', 1 October]. "While committees shuffle piles of paper," Dr Appleyard said, "babies suffocate unnecessarily in their mothers' wombs and die without proper care in understaffed newborn units."

Despite big business pessimism about profit levels, major companies have been handing out even more to capitalist investors in dividend payments. "The dividend growth shown by the FT-Actuaries All-Share Index... is now running at an annual rate of over 22 percent." ['Financial Times' 1 October] Yet the latest Department of Industry survey indicates a 3% decline in manufacturing investment this year—and a 7% decline next year. The survey predicts that manu-

facturers' investment in 1979 may be about £50 million lower than in 1978. At £3.8bn [1975 prices] this would be £377bn lower than in 1970! These crucial investment figures completely belie the Thatcher government's claim that their policies are fostering a revival of British industry. On the contrary, as the 'Financial Times' says, "the results [of the DoI survey] suggest that manufacturers are now actively pruning investment plans in anticipation of a recession."

A quarter of a million people in Britain continue to work full time for a poverty wage, although they would be financially better off unemployed. This is one of the conclusions of the Low Pay Unit's latest report, 'One in Eight: A Report on Britain's Poor', which uses figures from the DHSS's latest Family Expenditure Survey [Dec 1977]. One in eight [2.02 million people] were living on incomes below the supplementary benefit level [described by the SB Commission as "barely adequate to meet families' needs"] and 4.16 million people were receiving supplementary benefits. According to a more realistic definition of poverty, however, i.e. earnings up to 40% above the SB level, one in eight [i.e. 14 million people living in 7.6 million families] were living in poverty at the end of 1977. The worsening position of British capitalism and brutal Tory policies can only mean a worsening of the appalling level of poverty revealed by this LPU report.

Serious objections to the sale of council houses, always pointed out by the labour movement, have now been confirmed by none other than the Tory-controlled Greater London Council, the arch-auctioneers of council houses. "The GLC last night halted the sale of homes to ten council tenants because of huge losses if they went ahead," reported 'The Guardian' [2 October]. "Interest charges on each of the homes would cost ratepayers an estimated £130,000 over the next 60 years... Sales halted included a house in Clark Road, Tower Hamlets, where the market value, £18,500 is £23,700 below the building price of £42,200." So much for the GLC's claim to be able to sell off council houses at a huge profit. Shouldn't they look into the exorbitant cost of construction [by private contractors?]? Sales, moreover, have been completely static for six months [6,000 out of 200,000 homes] refuting the Tories' claims that there is a huge demand for purchasing by tenants. And "costs are rising, particularly following the appointment of a highly-paid 'super-salesman' to direct sales, recruitment of extra staff, and the opening of home ownership offices."

Have you got any facts and figures for workers' notebook? Send them in to 'Militant'.

DEMONSTRATE AGAINST CORRIE ABORTION BILL

Photo: Lawrence Sparham IFL (2)



Trade unionists have been in the lead in the fight to maintain abortion rights

Corrie's bill to restrict the availability of abortion is another Tory attack on the working class. Make no mistake. As Carol Butcher's article last week showed the right to abortion is a class issue.

Wealthy women in our society have never had any such restriction on their rights. They can afford to use the expensive private clinics which would blossom if Corrie's Bill was

passed. This is Tory 'freedom of choice.'

But Tory freedom needs money; the kind of money outside the reach of working class women who may desperately need a termination of pregnancy.

As with the health cuts, it is the working class who will suffer. The TUC have organised a demonstration on October 28th. Make sure your union, Labour Party and YS branch are

there, to show Corrie and the rest of the Tory party that if they want to start slashing into our hard-won services, they've got a hell of a fight on their hands.

NATIONAL TUC DEMONSTRATION Against the Corrie Bill Sunday October 28th, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park, London 12 noon

More rows in fascist ranks

The re-election of Tyndall as chairman of the National Front and the suspension of two of its leading members marks another step in the internal feuding of the NF, as they lose credibility after the hammering they received in the election.

The history of the NF has been one of splits and rows (see 'Militant' 468), the latest purge being against the aristocrat Fountaine, who was expelled as NF deputy chairman by Tyndall during the election period.

In the latest purge, two supporters of Fountaine on the NF directorate have been suspended. The internal politics of fascism came as a nasty shock to Fountaine—a fascist who found his own tactics used against him—"You will find all these tactics in 'Mein Kampf'," he told 'The Guardian' (4 October).

According to the same report, these more recent purges and rows have resulted in many NF members resigning in disgust.

But this does not mean we

can bid farewell to the nazis of the National Front. Tyndall has remained firmly in control of the NF and realises that if it is to grow it must build from the disillusioned ranks of the middle classes, not from the lumpen proletariat as it has attempted in the past. It's very existence is a threat to the working class and the labour movement as a whole—whenever the fascists raise their ugly heads they must be stopped in their tracks by the mass ranks of the labour movement.

NORTHERN IRELAND:

MASS ACTION NOT

The killing of Lord Mountbatten, among others, at Mullaghmore and the deaths of 18 soldiers near Warrenpoint have focused attention on the campaign of individual terror being waged by the Provisional IRA.

In Britain the popular capitalist press has foamed at the mouth in its cries for revenge.

The Provos, on the other hand, have proclaimed these incidents as proof of their 'invincibility' and as a vindication of their methods of struggle.

Socialists will evaluate these two incidents in a very different manner—in terms of the effect they will have on the class struggle in Britain and Ireland.

One of the theoretical foundations of Marxism is its opposition to the tactic of individual terror.

In Russia, for example, the early Marxists sharpened their theoretical armoury in the unrelenting fight against this false method of struggle. At all times the Russian Marxists counterposed mass action by the working class to often heroic but always foolhardy methods of the terrorist groups.

In 1917 history vindicated their stand. Marxism, in the form of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks placed itself at the head of a mass revolutionary upsurge and succeeded in accomplishing what decades of terrorist activity had failed to do.

In 1972 the first copy of the Militant Irish Monthly carried a major article headed: 'Provisional IRA strategy will not defeat imperialism'. Today, while the dust raised by the Mullaghmore and Warrenpoint bombings obscures the sight of many people, we entirely stand by our past analysis.

British imperialism, which is an economic as well as military system, can only be overthrown by the united mass action of the Irish working class.

Far from leading towards such action the activities of the provos, and in their shadows, the Irish National Liberation Army, point in the opposite direction.

Individual terror does not raise the sights of workers to the goal of a socialist revolution. Instead of demonstrating the need for activity by the working class, the individual terrorist substitutes his 'heroic deeds' for such actions. If anything is 'demonstrated' it is that the working class and their organisations do not appear to be necessary.

But there can be no substitute for the class struggle! This iron law of history will not be bent as organisations like the Provos must learn to their cost.

Capitalism cannot be shocked into non-existence by the noise of explosions, no matter how loud. Nor will the loss of a few of its representatives near the downfall of the system itself.

Those who applaud and rely on Provo-style methods are blind to this fact. They confuse individual representatives of the system and individual blocks of property with the system itself.

The real legacy of their actions, unless and until they

By
Peter Hadden
(South Belfast Branch,
Labour and Trade
Union Group)

are superseded by the movement of the working class, is not the weakening but the strengthening of the apparatus of the state and the increase of repression.

Invariably, the ultimate fate of terrorist groupings is isolation from any mass support and, in real terms, military defeat.

Added to such arguments which weigh against the adoption of the tactic of individual terror (particularly in any advanced capitalist country), is another factor which applies to Northern Ireland.

This is the plain fact that the effects of the Provos' activity is to increase sectarian tension and further divide the working class.

The death of Mountbatten and the killing of the soldiers actually underlines all these arguments against individual terror.

Reprinted
from 'Militant
Irish Monthly'

A specially expanded edition of the Provos' newspaper after the recent killings boasts that this campaign has been demonstrated to be succeeding. They quote the confidential British Army "Document 37" as admitting that the Provos cannot be defeated. They hail the death of Mountbatten as a firm thrust into the flesh of imperialism.

Marxists must soberly examine such claims. Lord Mountbatten was a former representative of imperialism who presided over such 'achievements' as the partition of India and the subsequent pogroms in which 200,000 people died. He was also a relation of the monarchy.

But he was not the first establishment victim to have fallen victim to the bomb or the bullet of a guerrilla organisation. In 1881 the Russian terrorist group 'People's Will' blew to pieces, not a 79-year-old retired representative of imperialism, blood related to the throne, but the self-styled 'semi-divine' ruling Tsar of all the Russians himself.

And what was the result? Another Tsar! Increased repression! The arrest of those responsible and a huge step towards the isolation of their organisations!

If a Tsar is expendable how much more so is the occasional aged earl? If the system can afford an earl or two it will not be too severely weakened by the loss of a platoon of mere 'foot soldiers' even if they come from the



1978—Belfast dockers march against arrest under Prevention of Terrorism Act

INDIVIDUAL TERROR



Individual terrorism—a blind alley for workers

elite of the army—the paratroopers.

It is perfectly true that the Provos can continue some form of operations for a long period of time. This was the evaluation given by the stolen army document. But whether imperialism can quickly defeat the IRA is scarcely the main point.

For those who support the Provos the real question is not so much whether they can be defeated but whether they can succeed in defeating imperialism. The answer is firmly no. Not in 1979, not in 1980, nor—should they continue—until the year 2000 will they succeed in this.

The real legacy of these bombings has been to provide the ruling classes, North, South and in Britain with an excuse to step up repression.

The North is to have 1,000 extra police. In the South court operations are to be tightened so as to restrict the rights of the accused.

In addition, a firm platform has been offered to all shades of bigotry.

A boost to divisive anti-Irish sentiment has been provided in Britain. In the

North, the immediate result has been the re-emergence of the death squads of loyalist para-militarism.

Above all, these events have very temporarily, stunned the

After the deaths at Warrenpoint there was a demonstration of over 1,000 people. This was called by middle-class and religious elements but it was nonetheless significant

Ireland made by the union tops since the days of partition.

Despite and in part because of the return to the streets of the killers the workers of the North are ready to respond to a call to oppose sectarianism. It is now up to the unions to give a lead and mobilise their ranks to action against sectarianism and against the poverty inflicted by capitalism.

Mass demonstrations surpassing those of the Better Life for All Campaign could now be organised to oppose jointly the attacks of the Tories and the activities of the bigots.

Such mass action, along with socialist policies, can unite the labour movement throughout Ireland and point the way to the overthrow of capitalism, North and south, and towards the socialist reunification of the country.

The methods of the Provos point to division, isolation, despair and eventual defeat.

The real lesson of Mullaghmore and Warrenpoint is that these methods should be abandoned.

Only mass action with a socialist lead can unite the labour movement and point a way to the overthrow of capitalism.

rising movement of the working class, just at a time when the attention of all workers needs to be focused on opposition to the policies of the Tory government.

It has been left to the labour movement to 'lift the bill' for these explosions.

There will, of course, be some Provisionals who would not lament a return to the bitter sectarianism of recent years. The labour movement can ensure that their ambitions and those of the loyalist bigots are thwarted.

In the North, despite these bombings and despite recent killings by loyalist bigots, the mood remains anti-sectarian.

That it was probably the first demonstration of such size to have been held by the people of a predominantly Catholic area against the deaths of soldiers.

Equally, the call by the trade unions for a two minute silence on the day of the Mountbatten funeral, despite its no less pious nature, and despite its being called jointly with the Confederation of British industry, was significant. The call was well supported and demonstrations held in some areas.

Also, it was a call to workers North and South, probably the first simultaneous call to action throughout

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

**The fight for
a socialist
programme:**

**DELEGATES
DEMAND
EXTENDED
PUBLIC
OWNERSHIP**

“No matter how sincere a Labour government, unless they implement a programme of fundamental change, they will be forced to attack workers”

The crucial debate on Party democracy at the beginning of Conference left delegates eager to thrash out what will be in the Party's next election manifesto.

Although the mood was less intense, there was keen political interest. Throughout the week, the conference hall and the visitors' galleries were packed.

After Wednesday morning's vote giving the NEC the final say in drawing up the election manifesto, Conference went on to debate 'Future policy and development'.

The first speakers claimed that voters did not demand the implementing of conference decisions, and that Labour must

broaden its electoral support by winning back the 'middle ground'. Their resolution, almost alone in its praise for the last government's record in 'restoring the economy' and 'preserving jobs', went no further than that in its support for the Party's right-wing leaders. Its muted calls for an inquiry into the reasons for Labour's defeat was passed without much note.

Ray Apps of Brighton Kemptown CLP proposed a resolution (composite 30) calling for a mass recruitment campaign taking up the key issues of unemployment, low pay and public spending, linking this to the Party's commitment to a socialist society by demanding the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies, the banks and insurance companies.

Ray pointed out that, at the 1973 conference, 'Militant' supporters had warned that carrying out the last election

manifesto would mean an attack on capitalism; the only alternative was "to carry out the programme of the CBI and the Bank of England." The programme put forward in the resolution would be the starting point for any reforms, he said.

Ian Stowell, Moss Side CLP and an AUEW-TASS shop steward, pointed to the millions now being poured into bookies' clubs and land speculation while manufacturing industry was allowed to rot. No matter how sincere a Labour government, he said, unless they implemented a programme of fundamental change they would be forced to attack workers' wages, as the last government had done, and lose their support.

Tony Benn, replying to the brief debate, outlined in graphic terms the background against which the future of the Labour Party had to be considered: world economic slump and the de-industrialisation of manufacturing industry, bringing

serious economic and political consequences. The old ideas of permanent full employment and a flourishing mixed economy had proved to be an illusion; compassionate administration of decaying capitalism was killed off not by Party Conference but by the IMF.

Exposing the power of the City of London, the media, the Common Market and the multinationals to dictate to Labour cabinets, he called for accountable public control over investment, a 'breathing space' through import controls, expansion of the public services and the abolition of the House of Lords, bureaucracy in nationalised industries and all patronage in the public sector.

It was the first time in many years that a speaker from the platform at Conference seriously attempted to answer the ideas and programme of Marxism. "What is wrong is not that reform has failed," Benn argued, "but that we have not fought for it." In opposing the call for a massive extension of public ownership and a national plan of production, Benn declared that a return to full employment would mean taking on the banks and financial institutions. We have to win support in the next election; we also have to generate enough support to carry our programme through, he said.

On his NEC recommendation, the resolution was defeated. But the solid showing of support particularly, though not entirely, from the Constituency delegates' section, is an indication for the future. The crucial debate on the economic foundations of Labour's programme is being taken up increasingly in the local branches and committees of the Party, and within the trade unions. More and more the debate is focusing around the 'alternative strategy' of the 'Tribune' left and the programme of Marxism put forward by 'Militant' supporters.

“The debate is focusing around 'Tribune's' 'alternative strategy' and the programme of Marxism”

Conference went on to pass by a large majority a resolution calling on the next Labour government to renationalise without compensation any part of the public industries or assets sold off by the Tories. It was "a serious warning—when we take power, your fingers and wallets will be burned if you rob the British people" declared Clive Jenkins, ASTMS general secretary.

Speakers outlined the

threat to Rolls Royce, British Leyland and Ferranti, all of which had received vast subsidies from the National Enterprise Board. Kevin Pattison of Leeds East CLP and POEU pointed out that the Post Office and his union were wide open to Tory attacks.

In the debate on 'new technology' a resolution welcoming the possibilities for improved living standards opened up by micro-electronics and other developments in technology, demanded that the benefits go to workers, in shorter working hours, longer holidays and earlier retire-

ment rather than filling the coffers of the multinationals and their financiers. It was passed unanimously.

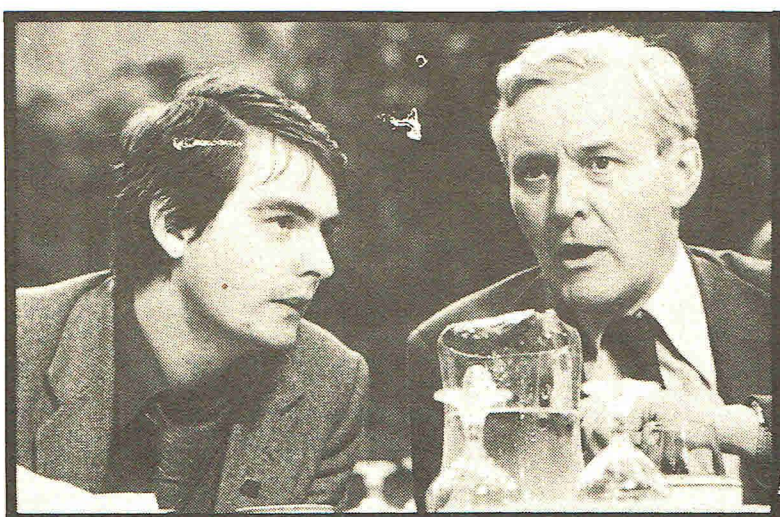
It called for the full involvement of the trade unions in planning technological change and proposed that the NEC set up a working party to study the effects and "formulate a policy for a planned economy."

On Thursday, conference again passed unopposed a resolution on public owner-



CONFERENCE '79

Pictures: Trade union delegations cast their votes [far left]. Below: Delegates enthusiastically applaud victory in vote on re-selection of Parliamentary candidates. Conference platform: Tony Saunois, LPYS rep. on the NEC, and Tony Benn [left]. Michael Foot consults Jim Callaghan [right].



ship. The resolution condemned the "complete failure of private enterprise to provide adequate living standards for the majority of working people" and called for the extension of public ownership "under democratic control and management over the major monopolies and finance institutions", combined with an expansion of the NEB, compulsory planning agreements, increases in useful public spending and a national health corporation bringing the medical and drug manufacturing industries into public ownership.

Alan Fisher [NUPE] warned that the Tory assault on the public services would turn back the clock to the eighteenth century. Events, plus the educational work conducted by the Labour Party, could establish the support necessary for achieving a socialist society.

Dave Nellist, Coventry SE CLP, commanded attention and support as he charted the erosion of living standards in Britain over the last fifteen years: "from the third richest in the EEC to the second poorest." The capitalists' refusal to invest in manufacturing industry, where real wealth is created, has lost them world markets and wrecked whole industries, he explained, quoting the decimation of the British motor bike industry. In 1953, 95% of the world's bike market

was British. Now only 3% of bikes sold in Britain are not imported.

Public ownership must be extended, "but not as in the past—with ex-bankers and former owners to run them, with compensation at such a level that we're still paying today for industries like the mines, railway, steel, taken over decades ago...How about re-selection for the nationalised industry boards!"

Eddie Loyden, speaking as a delegate from Liverpool Garston CLP, pointed out that nationalisation has resulted in the closure of shipyards, the destruction of jobs at British Leyland. The NEB, dominated by big business and commercial interests, has often destroyed rather than built up industry. "Let's go for public ownership under democratic control," he concluded.

The debate spotlighted the decay of specific industries. Locked out Rolls Royce workers denied the right to work by a state-financed firm being used as the shock-troops in the Engineering Employers' bid to break the Confed strike, lobbied outside the conference centre. Shipyard workers had travelled to Brighton to win support for their fight to halt closures.

Jeremy Birch, Birmingham Selly Oak CLP, reminded the Conference of the devastating consequences that BL's

proposed 30,000 redundancies would have on the West Midlands. After decades of negligence, mismanagement and underinvestment, British car manufacturers were being beaten on world and home markets, he said. "Nationalisation plus Michael Edwardes doesn't amount to socialism in the motor industry...Why don't we nationalise Ford, Vauxhall and Chrysler/Talbot—that's the only guarantee we've got that we'll have a car industry in the future."

"The illusion of compassionate administration of decaying capitalism was killed off not by Party Conference but by the IMF"

Following Tony Benn's speech earlier in the week and several debates which had starkly and repeatedly underlined the chronic down-hill slide of British industry, delegates accepted the NEC's recommendation and enthusiastically supported the nationalisation of key profitable sectors, the major monopolies and financial institutions. Earlier conference had rejected a call for Labour to campaign on such a pro-

gramme.

The escalating economic problems and the defeat of the last Labour government have been reflected in a sharp shift to the left in the trade unions and the Labour Party. Nationalisation is seen as the only way to counter redundancies and closures, but not as a necessary and viable programme for taking control of the economy, to replace the anarchy of capitalism with democratic socialist planning.

This year's conference, however, showed that in

debate and in voting, a growing section of Labour and trade union activists are looking to such a programme. With the democratic reforms won this year, conference, as Labour's key decision-making body, will in the next few years return again and again to this debate in the search for a lasting alternative to Toryism; finding the road to a genuine socialist transformation of society.

By our reporters at Brighton
Photos by Julian McKittrick

A VISION OF WORKERS' POWER

"Jim Callaghan came up to congratulate me after the NEC results had been announced and added at the end: 'You know, Neil, there's only one way to go from here—that's down.' Well, I said, I'm always willing to learn from someone with experience."

So quipped Neil Kinnock at the opening of his contribution at the 'Tribune' rally, a rally which followed a severe set-back to the right wing's grip on the parliamentary party after the re-selection proposals had been carried.

Despite a high level of humour, however, what policies 'Tribune' stood on went largely untouched. Just what would they do if the leadership of the Party came into their hands?

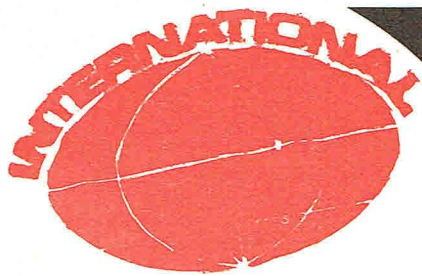
Tony Benn, after congratulating 'Tribune' on lifting their sales above those of 'The Times', spent most of his time talking about the need to

demystify the media which so distorts the socialist message. Eric Heffer mainly spoke about Party democracy.

It was only Jimmy Reid that raised the question of economic democracy and working-class control of industry, but he didn't draw out what that demanded as a political programme.

The rally was certainly awash with a vision of workers' power but you got the feeling that for the 'Tribune' comrades, to win support for socialism is to achieve it: the vital question of how you break the power of the capitalist class is ignored.

An interesting comment on the abilities of 'Militant' and 'Tribune' to enthuse their supporters is that the collection from five times as many people as were at the 'Militant' meeting raised only slightly more cash.



S. AFRICA - HUNGARY

APARTHEID ALLOWS AFRICAN UNIONS?

'The beginning of the end of apartheid.' The most progressive step taken by any Government in South Africa.' This is the reaction of the capitalist allies of the apartheid regime to the recent announcement that trade union rights will be extended to black 'Migrant' workers in South Africa.

As 'Militant' explained (20 July 1979) the changes in the law on labour relations are being made against the rising tide of revolution in South Africa and in an attempt to restore profits for the ruling class. In June this year the government-appointed Wiehahn Commission recommended that certain limited and state-controlled trade union rights be granted to African workers.

Bowing before the pressure of its right wing and in a transparent attempt to further divide the black working class, the regime rejected the recommendation. Instead it opted to grant such rights to "settled" workers but excluding "migrant" and "commuter" workers (i.e. those workers who supposedly commute from one of the countries "independent" bantustans). It also maintained the bar against mineworkers, farmworkers and domestic servants from joining legally recognised unions. In so doing it effectively excluded the majority of African work-

ers from joining trade unions.

The regime, expertly assisted by the world capitalist press, "sold" this package to international opinion as an extension of trade union rights for blacks, proclaiming "the end of apartheid". Trying to force it down the throat of the black working class has proved more difficult.

If they were able to the regime would permanently outlaw trade unionism for Africans. However, they are keenly aware that such a course would drive the workers' movement underground making it more difficult to monitor and control.

Their only choice is to bring trade unions under state control by allowing a closely watched system of registration and then clamping down on any

By Jim
Phillips



worker organisation which takes place independently of the state apparatus.

At the root of all these recent manoeuvres lies the fear of the ruling class for the growing objective basis for workers' unity as workers are thrown together in production and as the old methods of dividing the class (e.g. on racial lines) become less and less adequate.

But to forestall the cohesion of the working class, which grows daily in strength and militancy, new methods of division must be found—hence the Wiehahn strategy.

Workers' action is always repressed [above]

The recent announcement to admit South African-born "migrants" and "commuters" to registered unions is a partial climb-down on the part of the ruling class. It is a limited concession and a grudging recognition of the growing strength of the black proletariat in South Africa. It shows the growing weakness of the ruling class in the present period.

In this situation it is all

the more important for the workers' movement to retain the initiative, hammer home its advantage and drive further wedges into the weakening armour of the state. This calls for a militant struggle combining underground resistance with effective forms of open struggle through the independent unions.

Far from swallowing the pro-South African propaganda of the capitalist press, now is the time for the international labour movement to step up its solidarity action and material aid to the oppressed workers of South Africa.

HOW BLACK PANTHERS WENT DOWN A BLIND ALLEY

By Yasmin Barry
(LPYS National Committee)

It isn't very often that Birmingham's 'independent local radio station [BRMB] has anyone of much interest on their programmes. But recently the topic, and personality being interviewed ensured that I continued to listen through to the end.

The person being interviewed was Eldridge Cleaver, one of the former leaders of the Black Panther Party. He described his life, the frustration of his childhood, his politicisation in prison, turning first towards the black moslems, then to socialism.

He told of the harassment of black people, and the vicious persecution of their leaders in America.

Then I realised why they put Eldridge Cleaver on. He led the most ultra-left section of the Panthers, describing America as fascist, and in desperation, that section turned to terrorism.

In one incident, three policemen were killed, and Cleaver, wanted by police, escaped to Cuba, living there for time, and frequently visiting the Soviet Union, and other so-called 'socialist' countries. He was appalled by what he saw in these countries, and then 'realised, that lies had been told, and that Marxism was wrong'.

In revulsion he moved to France, where he 'had a vision, and realised that Christ was the way'.

Ah, so that's it, Eldridge Cleaver was put on the show so he could relate his new found knowledge to black kids in Birmingham going through the same type of upbringing, and tell them now, before they get involved, that Marxism wasn't the way forward. The answer lay in 'their hearts' and Christ.

But I don't think he fooled anyone. During the 'phone-in' all the black youth who phoned in, expressed complete cynicism to what he was saying.

No doubt at one time Cleaver, as with most members of the Black Panthers, were very sincere, but they didn't have a Marxist analysis of what was going on, they went blindly from one idea to the next, which ensured the demise of the movement. Left groups in America instead of giving a clear class guidance to the Panthers, and winning them over permanently to the ideas of Marxism, tail-ended the movement.

Now ten years after the movement, the ex-leaders, are dead, non-political, or coming out with reactionary rubbish, hailing the present system.

Hungarian economy - WHO BENEFITS?

The control of the Eastern European economies by hidebound bureaucracies is beginning to take its toll in gross inefficiency. The top bureaucrats are even beginning despondently to extol the sick capitalist system as more efficient.

A recent book published by Kossuth, the official publishing house of the Hungarian Communist Party is extremely pessimistic about the prospects for the Hungarian economy.

The so-called 'communist economic theorist' Ferenc Kosma argues that 'socialist' systems [i.e. those of the Eastern European Stalinist bloc] have

tremendous difficulty in developing the organisational, decision-making and executive techniques which will eventually prove their superiority".

He maintains that economic prosperity as measured by consumer standards will never reach the levels of Western Europe. Therefore they shouldn't try.

"The socialist society can only aim at a realistic target—the achievement of a modest standard of prosperity for the population at large. Prosperity as it is known in Western Europe will be attained by only a very few in Hungary".

Roger Shrivess
looks at a
recent book by a
'Communist
Economic
Theorist'

That last phrase not only contains a devastating admission of great differentials in 'socialist' Hungary. It also puts its finger on the economic problems which cause him to laud the efficiency and competitiveness of capitalist concerns.

Hungary is not governed by the working class. A caste of bureaucrats make all the decisions, stifle dissension and workers rights and prepare plans without the guidance of the workers. It is a mere caricature of the workers' democracy introduced under Lenin and Trotsky even in the dark civil war days after the October revolution.

At one stage, the abolition of capitalism by itself gave these economies a boost, and even the terrible bureaucratic waste and plunder the USSR did not stop the development of Eastern European society.

Now the bureaucracy are nothing but parasites. It is these bureaucrats who will be the 'few' who enjoy Western levels of affluence. They act only as an obstruction. Economic and political life will be geared to making their lives wealthier and easier, just as the bosses do in Britain.

Get rid of them and the workers of Hungary would soon be getting more than Western-style affluence. The possibilities for development which proper workers' democracy would have on a planned economy would make the pessimism of this Professor seem laughable.

SPAIN-AUSTRALIA-HOLLAND

CLASS POLARISATION CONTINUES IN SPANISH SOCIALIST PARTY

Class divisions within the Spanish Socialist Party [PSOE] increased at its Emergency Conference at the end of September.

This Conference was called because at the congress held earlier in the year, the Party's General Secretary

[Fillipe Gonzalez] resigned after the Party re-affirmed its Marxist base.

The September Conference

again stated that the Party was based on Marxism, whilst respecting individual's "freedom of conscience". Obviously the right-wing of the Party around Gonzalez had organised for this Conference.

But despite changing the rules on how delegates were chosen (by provinces, not by branches) they did not get things totally their own way.

The real issue at the Conference was who runs the Party, and what the composition of the Executive Committee would be. As expected

Gonzalez (above) was re-elected General Secretary.

But in the right-wing's determination to control the Party they aroused anger from the Basque delegates and even forced some lefts to fight.

At first Gonzalez tried to remove Txiki Benegas, a middle of the road member of the Basque PSOE, from the Party's Executive. But the Basque delegates then threatened to abstain until Benegas was included.

Most of the business at this

Conference was conducted in the corridors and behind closed doors. Gonzalez tried to fix up a deal with Luis Gomez Llorente, leader of the 'critical' section. But the right-wing would not accept a 'synthesis' Executive.

So the 'critical' section put up its own list for election. Although heavily defeated, this will not end the polarisation and opposition within the PSOE.

Llorente describing the new Executive as too homogenous, resigned as Deputy Speaker in the Parliament to concentrate more time on work within the PSOE. The centre left was surprised at the right-wing's intransigence.

Tierno Galvan, the honorary President of the Party, was ousted because he was identified as being 'on the left'. The Madrid section now also has no representative because its member, Alonso Puerta, was ousted from the Executive.

The reason for the right-wing moves is clear. They want to clear the decks to enter a coalition or working arrangement with the capitalist UCD government. Such a move would arouse enormous opposition within the PSOE.

Despite their partial victories at this conference the right

wing will prove unable to carry all sections of the Party with them. For they have no programme to take the working class forward.

This last conference was far less representative than the one held earlier this year. According to official figures 23% of delegates were in the Civil Service, 15% in professional jobs, but only 7% were skilled workers, 1% unskilled workers and 0.3% agricultural workers (the other 50% were students, housewives and party officials).

The partial gains by the right will not last. Already they have had to give way on the question of Marxism, and the political resolutions accepted at this Conference were virtually identical to those passed at the earlier Congress.

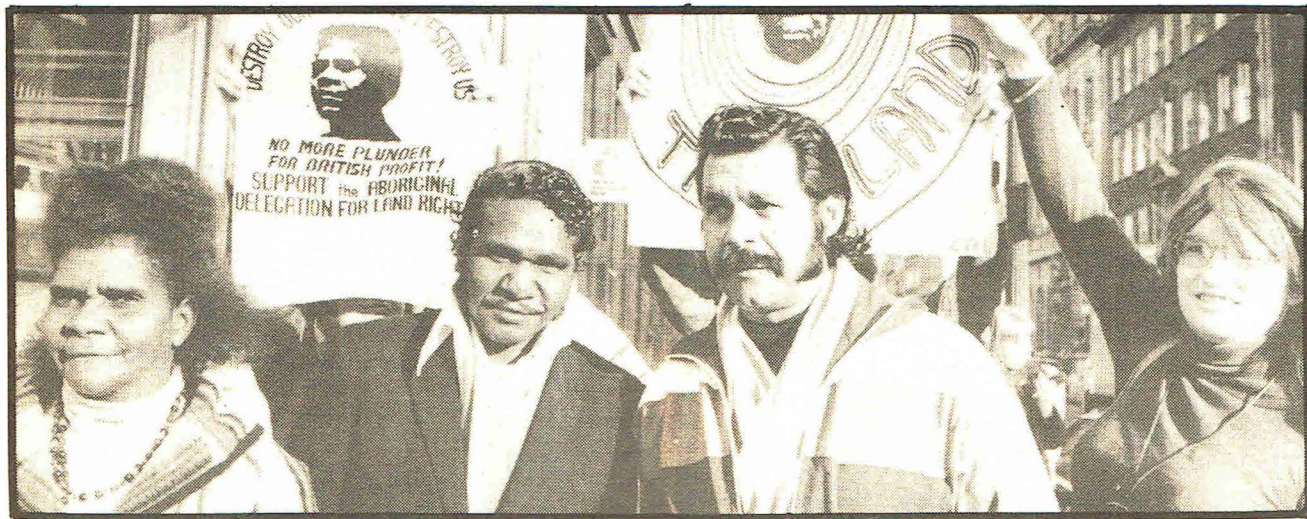
Although Gonzalez has promised there will be no witch-hunt, the moves against the left have led to the beginnings of a struggle to make the PSOE a fighting socialist organisation.

With all the problems facing Spanish capitalism in the coming period the PSOE will be changed and transformed again to make it truly representative of the Spanish working class in their struggle for socialism.



AUSTRALIAN UNIONS DEMAND SAFEGUARDS ON URANIUM MINING

Australian Aborigines demonstrate against multinationals mining on their land



The pro-uranium mining forces received a major rebuttal at the recent annual Australian Trade Union Congress [ACTU]. After a heated and emotional debate the ACTU Executive proposal to lift the bans on uranium mining was defeated by a clear majority of 512 votes to 318.

Although this vote cannot guarantee that all uranium shall stay in the ground, it gives a clear indication that many trade unionists are very uncertain still, about the unresolved dangers and hazards of mining uranium and consequently realize that until sufficient real safe-guards and waste disposal facilities can be guaranteed, all mining should cease.

Already it is clear that

Prime Minister Fraser will try and use the union division over the issue of uranium, to try and widen the split in the Labour Movement. 'The Australian' newspaper claimed that Fraser would use the division 'as a springboard for a major attack' on Labour's policies.

By Sherry Leyden in Sydney

One of the Australian Labour Party's (ALP) platforms, if elected, is for a moratorium on uranium mining. On the very day of the ACTU Executive proposal, Fraser announced his Government's intention to build a uranium enrichment plant in Queensland or Western Australia, trying to sow more discord and put more pressure on the ACTU executive.

The ACTU President, Bob Hawke, who spoke for 40 minutes in favour of the executive proposal, believes that the Fraser government is working to ensure adequate safeguards are enforced especially against Australian uranium being used for nuclear weapons.

But the government is really 'safe-guarding' future mining company sales and profits by continually relaxing safeguards.

Its most recent safeguards backdown was to allow international uranium buyers complete owners rights in using the ore. Previously Fraser pledged that Australia would maintain control of exported uranium right up to the disposal on reprocessing of the spent fuel.

The government has already signed a 'safeguards' treaty with Filipino dictator Marcos and has had talks with the South Korean mili-

tary dictatorship who would certainly like nuclear weapons.

At present there is only one small operating mine at Mary Kathleen in NW Queensland but three projects have received federal Government approval—Ranger Nabalack in the Northern Territory, Yeelirrie in Western Australia. Two others are awaiting approval.

Uranium mining company executives are unwilling to comment yet on the ACTU Congress decision but some are cynical as to the effectiveness of the ban 'We've had no difficulty in getting labour' one said.

But now, with the strength of the Congress decision there is a call to the anti-uranium movement to really maintain and increase their efforts to secure true, effective bans on uranium mining and export.

ROTTERDAM DOCKERS RETURN TO WORK

The unofficial Rotterdam dockworkers' strike is over. On 22nd September the union leaders agreed to an improved offer from the employers, even though this was rejected by the workforce.

By Frans Hoffman

(Editor, Dutch socialist paper, Voorwarts)

The deal arranged over the heads of the workers included an extra £6 a week [earlier offer £1], optional retirement at 63 and a few extra days' holidays. This was some way short of the workers' demand for £8 a week, retirement at 60, a 35-hour week and extra holidays, but the new offer reflected the struggle the workers had waged.

In their fight tugboat and dock workers have waged a major battle against the employers in the courts and in the streets [see 'Militant' 7th and 14th September]. Once when dockers were holding their daily mass meeting, they were surrounded by police.

A few workers were arrested for "disturbing the order". When other strikers came to ask what was going

on the police moved in with brutal force. Later on the police broke up the picket lines and made charges by the gates and in the streets.

The bosses recruited scab labour, which was not difficult considering the high unemployment in Rotterdam. On the 19th September the union leadership scandalously offered a loan of £125 to anyone who wanted to return to work. Coupled with the new deal worked out with management and massive police intervention, this broke the dockers' strike.

The bitterness of the strike and the way it ended has created great anger in the Dutch labour movement.

The tugboat workers whose action sparked off the strike are still continuing their industrial action. Unlike the dockers they have occupied the tugboats, denying their use to the management. The dock authority are now breaking their own safety rules and allowing some boats in without tugs.

Dutch workers may have suffered a defeat in the dockers' strike. But there is little respite for the bosses. A new wave of radicalisation is growing amongst workers as they try to combat the effects of the capitalist recession. Two days after the ending of the dockers' strike, Royal Dutch Shell workers began an official strike for a 35-hour week.

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Theory —a guide to action

Dear Comrades

Dave Hughes' letter, (issue 471) makes an important contribution to the debate on the future of the labour movement. He is right to point out that the labour movement must be seen to lead the fight on behalf of all the oppressed minorities.

We must be the most resolute fighters in their defence, just as we must be in the forefront of the fight back against the Tories, and this means mass action not speeches in Parliament or Council Chambers. Our discussion would be abstract and sterile indeed, if limited to a debate on a manifesto for the next Labour government.

We would deserve to be dubbed armchair philosophers if we retired to the drawing room to debate the future, while our class are engaged in a desperate struggle to defend jobs, living standards, social services and trade union rights.

Just a cursory glance through any issue of 'Militant' will show that our supporters are involved in all, and to the forefront of many of these struggles.

However it would be an error in the opposite direction to adopt the 'struggle is all' approach of some of the sects, who throw themselves into one campaign after another, making no attempt to generalise these struggles and link them to the need to change society. They just add as an afterthought the need for socialism.

I do not, of course, imply in anyway this is the position of Dave, his letter leads inescapably to the need for a transitional programme as put forward by 'Militant'.

Theory and practice are not mutually exclusive but are indivisible. Marxist theory is not for study by learned professors. Theory is the distilled experience of the class struggle and a guide to action by the working class.

Ray Apps
Brighton Kempton CLP

Service with a smile— WORKERS SERVE BOSSES SMILE

Dear Comrades

Heartiest congratulations to Vic Dale regarding his article... 'Behind That Sunny Smile' (21/9/79). It is high time that attention was drawn to the exploitation of hotel workers.

On September 20th the Chairman of the English Tourist Board, Mr Michael Montague was reported to have said that "...Service with a smile, and offering good value for money should be the watchwords for all England's hoteliers..." This piece of good advice was when he was addressing the Hotel Industry Marketing Group in London.

He went on to cast some unjustified criticisms against hall porters and waiters who

he accused of "forgetting one of the oldest adages in the business—namely, however wrong the customer may seem to be, the customer must always be made to feel that he is in the right..." What nonsense!

Has the Chairman of the English Tourist Board ever worked as a waiter or hall porter? In my opinion he ought to try it sometime—preferably when there a couple of conferences in progress plus one hundred and fifty guests arriving and departing, and a wedding or two.

He might find himself unable to cope after being rushed off his feet, like a blue-arsed fly. Particularly if

he is working at a hotel which is cutting its staff in order to boost its profits.

He could be forgiven for forgetting to smile and make the right noises whilst grovelling to customers.

He sees fit to lay blame for inefficiency unfairly but squarely on the shoulders of our waiters and hall porters who do a magnificent job along with the other workers in the hotel industry.

Mr Montague would have done better to advise hoteliers to concentrate on better conditions for their workers, whose efforts appear to be ignored, along with their welfare.

Sincerely
Lomond Handley

Post unions must unite to save jobs

Comrades

Congratulations on Dave Farrar's article on splitting the Post Office (September 21st). The announcement may seem on the surface to POEU members, though not to our brothers in the UPW, only a cosmetic exercise.

However the announcement was coupled with an attack on the Post Office monopoly, which will have a drastic effect on the telecomms business. Private companies would make enormous profits by installing equipment directly on to the customer's line.

This Tory proposal will be opposed by all the unions concerned. However on the issue of splitting the business the unions are not united. The POEU unfortunately agree in principle to establishing a separate telecomms business.

There is one major problem however in splitting the telecomms side from the postal side. This is the danger of the two businesses wasting their energies competing with each other.

The planning of new communication networks will require more co-operation not less.

An area which obviously needs joint planning is in the introduction of facsimile equipment enabling customers to send a written message electronically in seconds. The effect on the postal business could be dramatic. All unions in the Post Office must unite to ensure postmen's jobs are not lost.

Fraternally
Kevin Pattison
Branch Secretary Leeds
Internal POEU,
(personal capacity)

Homeworkers' conference

Dear Sir

In the past you have carried stories in the columns of your newspaper about the hardship of Homeworkers. Many of your readers may be interested to know that the National Homeworking Campaign are organising a Conference on Saturday 13th October 1979 at St Pancras Church House, Lancing Street (near Euston Station), London NW1.

John Grant MP, Junior Minister at the Department of Employment in the last Labour government will discuss the Campaign's achievements so far. John Tilley MP for Lambeth Central, whose constituency has scores of Homeworkers, will discuss the future of the Campaign.

Other speakers will discuss the problems homeworkers face and possible grass-roots initiatives. Your help in publicising this meeting possibly through your letters columns will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely
Helen Eadie
Organisation Officer
G&MWU Southern region.

Ghost of Christmas past

Dear Comrades

In response to the vicious cuts imposed by the Tories, Islington Council have decided to reduce the temperature of the central heating in their homes for the elderly. Islington social services advises the old people to wear woollen hats in bad and have at least one hot meal a day!

Other advice includes wearing bed socks and putting newspaper between the blankets. And yet this is denied as being a 'return to the Dickens era'!

Fears are being expressed that the old folks will supplement their heating with potentially hazardous paraffin heaters. But there again, Maggie Thatcher, not one to let a few pensioners through the profit net, has bumped up the price of paraffin by about 25%.

A friend of mine who works for Aladdin heaters, told me that during a particularly cold winter his factory was stacked to the ceiling with cartons of unsold heaters. In terms of capitalist economics this represents a 'lack of demand', because under capitalism a genuine human need can only be satisfied when the person has the money to pay for the goods.

As winter draws near thousands of old people are faced with the risk of 'hypothermia'—a fancy medical term for freezing to death!

Faced with overwhelmingly superior odds from its competitors, British capitalism has no choice but to turn on its own working class. Young, old, capable or sick, it makes no difference, we all have to pay the price of their failure.

Forward to a 'Militant' Britain! Forward to the world socialist revolution.

Yours comrades
Clive Gravell
COHSE

BATTLING MAGGIE - SAVIOR OF BRITISH BOXING?

Dear Comrades

Whilst reading the sports page of the 'Western Mail' one small article took my attention. A Liverpool boxer decided to turn to professional boxing as a way of making a living and the reporter boldly tells his readers that Andy Palmer the ABA heavyweight champion has taken this decision partly because of the unemployment in Liverpool.

This reminds me of the view of some older workers when recalling the 30s that only hungry fighters make champions. If the first five months of this Tory government is anything to go by, the prospect for British boxing must be looking very rosy.

If Thatcher manages to go her full five years Britain stands a good chance of gaining world champions at every weight.

Tony Burns
Bedwellty Labour Party & AUEW

Russian invasion of Hungary—an example of proletarian internationalism?

Dear Editor,

David Brandon (Militant 467), exposes the clear anti-Leninist, and therefore anti-socialist essence of 'Trotskyism'. He attacks Lenin's concept of the possibility of being able to build socialism in one country, as being 'Utopian' and 'Reactionary'. He admonishes the socialist states, for not utilising the international working class, but, doubtless like others of his creed, he was horrorstruck when that utilisation took place under the banner of 'Proletarian Internationalism', when the workers' armies of 'Socialist Eastern Europe' rendered fraternal assistance to the comrades in both Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and, by doing so instilled a crushing defeat on the perpetrators of the attem-

pted bourgeois counter-revolution.

Or perhaps David Brandon has been so busy getting the 'ears' (if not the votes) of the electorate and recruiting in general on behalf of social democracy, that he failed to notice the 'Principled Ideological Guidance', and the 'Concrete Practical Support', that has been given by the Socialist Camp, to the liberation movements, from Cuba to Viet-Nam to Angola, where and whenever it was necessary. It would appear that David Brandon's 'Scarecrow Theory', had little relevance to these peoples.

Regarding the comments of accusations of 'Sectarianism', David Brandon should as a Labour Party Secretary, be aware, and ought to under-

stand that it is not that the Labour Party, has a 'reformist' leadership that is suppressing a 'revolutionary' structure, or constitution, for that matter.

The fact is that the 'party', is, was, and always will be a party of reform (at best), rather than one of revolution. Moreover Comrade Brandon enquires as to the alternative to working inside a Social Democratic organisation, such as the Labour Party.

More than 50 years ago, Lenin advised revolutionaries, to support Labour, as the 'Rope supports the Hanged Man'. Not wanting to be accused of being a 'Sectarian Dogmatist', I would say that this advice is somewhat out of date, as the 'hanged corpse', referred to by Lenin, is now

badly decomposed and as such ought to be cut down and buried (perhaps in lime).

The real alternative for the working class in Britain, as elsewhere lies in the construction of a party based soundly on the principles of Marxism-Leninism, Scientific Socialism, bonded firmly to a movement of 'Internationalist Dimensions', of which the totalitarian regimes of David Brandon's (or President Jimmy Carter for that matter) fantasies play a vanguard role.

Yours Fraternally,
Gavin Reed,
Rawmarsh,
Sth. Yorks.

VAUXHALL- POLICE ATTACKS FAIL TO WEAKEN WORKERS' RESOLVE

Report by
Tommy Baugh
AUEW Vauxhall
Ellesmere Port

"We have been out of work for five weeks on the cobbles, been kicked and punched and arrested. What more can they do?" This attitude of defiance to the vicious attacks by employers and police characterised Monday's mass meeting at Vauxhall Ellesmere Port.

After five weeks on the breadline, a mass meeting of TGWU workers upheld their previous decision to stay out for their original claim.

Their district and regional committees have endorsed their action, said John Farrell convenor, and are awaiting EC reply. Flying pickets have been operating all over the South East coast with Dover, Sheerness, Felixstowe, Ipswich and Harwich, the mainstays of the operations.

Support has been fantastic from the workers, completely closing all ports. On September 29th at a dockers national shop stewards meeting at Preston, it was agreed to black all Vauxhall goods in and out of the country.

However, I feel the role played by the Special Patrol Group (SPG) of the police should be made fully known.

On Saturday 22nd, ten pickets were arrested. They were carrying out a lawful picket as had been agreed with the local police, for the past week.

However, on the day in question, a wagon approached the line and stopped at the request of the pickets. Tony Woodley, deputy convenor, had asked the driver what he had in the back of the truck, and was told it was empty.

As the checker was about to check to make sure this was true, the Sergeant in charge of the SPG gave a shout. "Lets have some arrests boys" and the police ran into the pickets, who had their backs to them at the time and kicked and punched and booted them. They made ten arrests.

These pickets were kicked and pushed without any provocation whatsoever. The following day, Vauxhall Motors told Luton drivers that if they did not cross the picket lines, they would lay the plant off en masse. Nine trucks were driven to Harwich to break the pickets.

Once again the Special Patrol Group turned out in force, seventy or eighty of them! They made three more arrests, totalling thirteen in all, using their normal polite methods; a good beating up first, and asking questions later.

The following Thursday (October 4th) once more twelve SPG policemen beat

up five pickets, putting two in hospital for treatment. It is ironic that with cuts in the Health Service and so much undermanning at the hospitals, the police should be trying to fill already overcrowded wards.

Since then a further two pickets have been arrested, and a High Court injunction served on five of the workers.

However John Farrell told the meeting at Ellesmere Port that Moss Evans had given him assurances when they had spoken at Brighton, that all people arrested, and their families would be helped by the trade union, and that he had agreed that they had a right to strike and a right to picket.

At the mass meeting John Farrell said, to great applause that he would not go back to work as a mouse or as a dog but as a man on equal footing with the management. This was given a loud cheer. As Tony Woodley put it "we have been out of work for five weeks on the cobbles, been kicked and punched and arrested. What more can they do?"

The meeting was well run, with speakers for and against the strike being allowed to have their say. At the end of the day, common sense prevailed and a vote of two to one was recorded in favour of the shop stewards' call to stay out.

The picketing will continue and be increased if necessary. Also the stall of Vauxhall Motors at the forthcoming Motor Show will be blacked. There are £10-£15 million worth of cars and goods boxed off at the docks, and this must be a great concern to the company.

The union side are willing to meet management, but they seem unwilling to meet us at the moment, but must surely come round the table as time wears on, especially after seeing how this vote went.

We must call on the trade union movement urgently, to demand the disbandment of the Special Patrol Group. They are a law unto themselves, bullying and arresting workers without grounds or reason.

We also call on all sections of the labour movement to support us in our fight against overwhelming but not unbeatable odds. Financial aid is necessary. Send to VM Fighting Fund, c/o 33 Valley Road, Harwich, Essex.

WORKERS ANGRY AT STRIKE BREAKING

Three hundred flying pickets blockaded Rosedale Mouldings Ltd., at Bedwas near Caerphilly last week, when management tried to remove £500,000 worth of plastic mouldings from the factory.

By
Anthony Tynan
(NUM)

Three weeks ago, the employers closed the factory saying the company was losing money because of the weekly two-day stoppages. The workers have been picketing the factory since. On Thursday morning (4 October) seventeen lorries passed the pickets and went round to the back of the factory.

The drivers then started to load the lorries with boxes from the factory, containing plastic mouldings made before the factory closed. The pickets on duty contacted some of the others who were off duty, and also the AUEW district office in Pontypridd where a meeting of 300 AUEW convenors and shop stewards was discussing the national dispute.

As soon as they heard the news from Rosedale, they left the meeting and everyone piled into cars and vans. They then drove over to Caerphilly, a few miles away.

As they arrived, some of the loaded lorries were just about to drive away. The flying pickets literally flew over a wall and a low barricade. They stopped the lorries in their tracks.

Some tyres were let down and the pickets jumped on to the lorries and threw all the boxes of plastic mouldings on to the ground. Some of the plastic mouldings were set alight.

After twenty minutes, the local fire brigade arrived, but



they refused to cross the picket line, so they passed a hose from the fire engine to the pickets who then put out the fires as well as spraying some of the lorry drivers.

After some of the front lorries were unloaded, the drivers tried to leave the premises, but the pickets would not let them out until

all the lorries were emptied. The drivers than had no choice but to agree.

After a few of the empty lorries left, a fully loaded one headed straight for the gate. But the mood of the pickets was such that about sixty of them stormed the lorry, and the lorry had to stop dead. They opened the door and

turned every single object in the back of the lorry on to the floor, scattering the broken boxes and plastic mouldings everywhere.

This convinced the other lorry drivers that the pickets meant business. Some drivers set about unloading their own lorries with the help of the pickets. The AUEW convenor of the factory, Ivor Sibley, said: "That lorry contains moulds for making some of the plastic items. If that gets out of the plant, we will lose everything we are fighting for because it could be set up anywhere."

After the lorries left, the pickets set about building a strong barricade of old metal gates, pipes, scaffolding and boxes. When asked in the early evening how long they were prepared to mount a really strong picket line in case the lorries return, they said "we are quite happy to watch until the morning. We used to work permanently on the night shift".

David Davies, one of the pickets who has just been refused permission for his two children to have free school dinners, said "This used to be a happy family firm. Their attitude now is to destroy the union, and we have a duty to stop that. We don't need much to survive".

The flying pickets were all convenors and stewards, male and female. They all realise just how vicious the bosses are, so they will all be more involved in the struggle against them.

One picket I spoke to who had been in the AUEW 20 years said he never experienced anything like that in his life. For the last few years he has not been involved in politics because he has been disillusioned with the Labour Party, but the leftward swing of Labour Party Conference and this massive demonstration of solidarity at Roseland has given him a new lease of life.

ITV STRIKE-THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LOCKOUT

"Very sour." That was how pickets outside Anglia Television (ATV) in Birmingham described their relationship with management.

ACTT members have been suspended for six weeks. For five weeks 50 EETPU members and 300 NATKE members have not been allowed to earn their living at ATV either.

A few maintenance staff were exempted from the lock-out, plus Mr Matthew's chauffeur. The latter, a NATKE member, promptly left anyway!

So fast was the forced evacuation that food was left on the canteen table. Public health workers have just been permitted to cross the picket line, in order to fumigate the canteen.

Afternoon and evening shift workers had no notice at all of the move by manage-

**ATV pickets
spoke to
Deb Grace**

ment which has deprived them of their income for weeks.

On 10th August ACTT members refused to accept management's offer, made in reply to their request, for a 25% wage rise. They were promptly suspended.

On the 22nd, management announced that there was no work available for the other workers. One picket said that, had they been more experienced, they would have occupied the plant rather than leave it as they did.

ATV's head of security has led non-unionised employees of Chaseman's Security over

the picket line. It is rumoured that they are now actually sleeping there. The firm has been blacked as a consequence and one picket said that members would never again work with them.

One picket said that he hadn't used to be militant; he had never embarked on industrial action before. But ATV can expect no loyalty from these workers once they have been allowed to return to work.

Two pickets expressed great relief at having the 'Militant' report on their situation; it was an opportunity, they said, to have the truth told about the ITV affair.

These workers have been denied the opportunity to work by their employers, who are currently living off the profits made over years gone by. Yet ATV say they cannot afford to give the employees a pay rise. It is ATV who are

on strike in this case, not the employees!

The pickets complained of unfair treatment by the media, and yet they are media employees. Article 8 of their contract of work explains this to an extent:

"To guard against mis-interpretation and to safeguard ATV's interests it is company policy for the Press Department to communicate information to others outside ATV."

"Therefore no employee shall, without informing the Press Department and without the management's consent, make any statement or express any opinion or disclose information specified below whether in writing, telephone conversation or any other medium in any circumstances in which it is likely to become public..."

Ever wondered why some articles in the 'Militant' are anonymous?

CONFED CLAIM-

ENGINEERS BREAK THE 40-HOUR BARRIER

By Wayne Jones

(Industrial correspondent)

The winning of a 39-hour week for over 3 million workers in the engineering industry is an achievement of historical importance to the working class of Britain and Europe.

The 40-hour barrier has been broken. This is an important first step forward in the campaign to reduce working hours in the face of mass unemployment. It will be used as a lever by other unions in negotiations throughout industry.

Already, Ford workers have announced their intention to pursue the 35-hour week with

been needlessly granted to the employers on the time scale for cutting the working week and working year.

In particular, this is the case with the shelving of the demand for the 35-hour week by 1982, and also the four year moratorium on any further reduction of hours and holidays.

Many engineering workers are angry and disappointed at the settlement. They feel much more could have been achieved if more determined

The main issue at the national engineering shop stewards' committee will be the need to renew the leadership of the AUEW.

the "utmost vigour" as part of their forthcoming claim; and David Basnett has said that the G&MWU will "capitalise on the engineers' breakthrough."

It is also a severe blow to the plans of the bosses and the Tories. They hoped to defeat one of the strongest and best organised sections of the working class.

They understand that to drive down wages and living standards they must smash the obstacle of the mighty trade union movement. They have failed.

Instead, the confidence of the working class in their ability to withstand and defeat the attacks of the employing class, has been raised. But the active trade unionists in the industry know that no gains would have been made without the strikes and overtime ban.

Terry Duffy and the rest of the right-wing leaders have attempted to claim the credit for what has been achieved. But the gains have been made despite their 'leadership'.

Nevertheless, the settlement certainly cannot be regarded as an unqualified success. Big concessions have

and resolute leadership had been given.

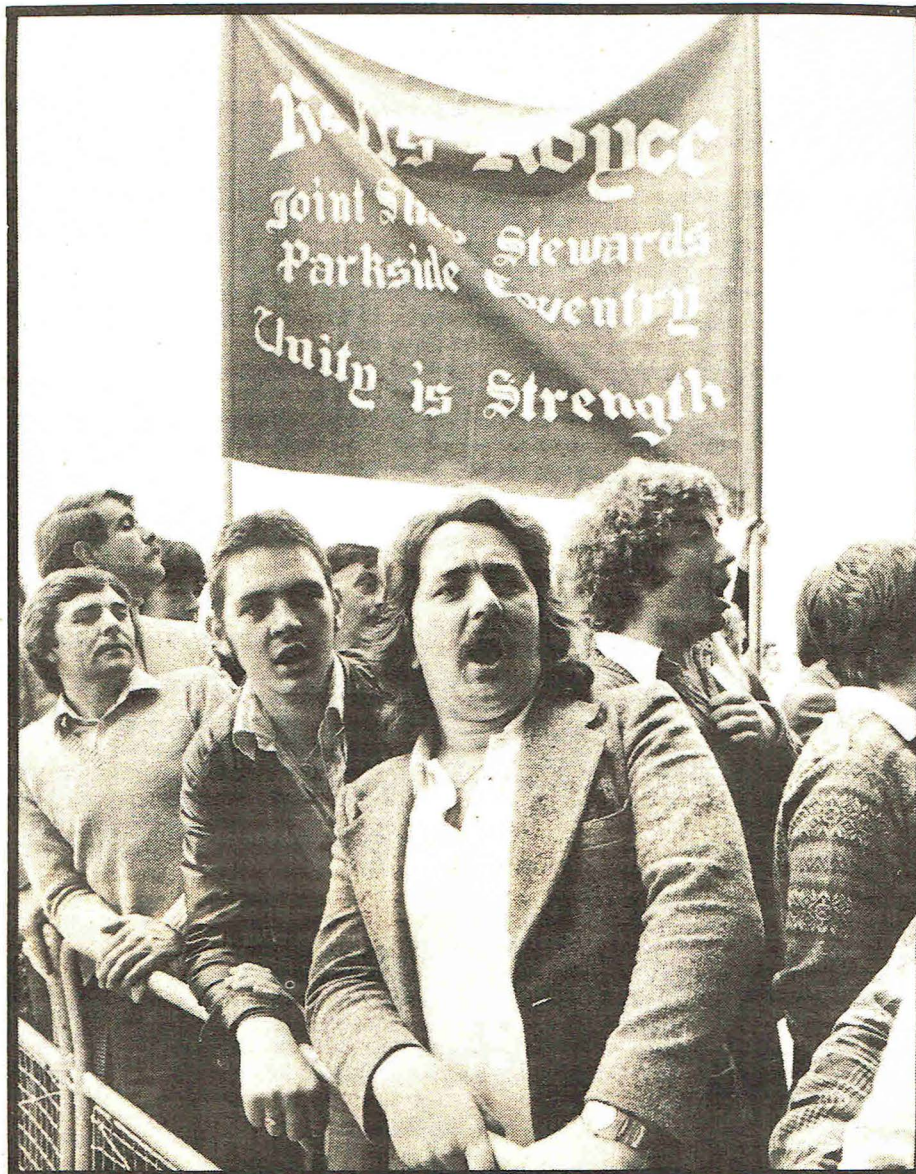
The support for the strike was solid. It was the employers who were weakening, despite building up their huge strike fund and receiving financial support and assistance from their European counterparts.

Splits between the bosses were highlighted by GEC's announcement of planned withdrawal from the EEF, and the increasing number of settlements made to meet the full claim.

The use of lock-outs, with the state-owned Rolls Royce as a spearhead, only hardened the resolve of the workers. Neither this nor the unscrupulous press campaign could break the tremendous solidarity of the engineering workers.

In the August AUEW Journal, John Boyd said, "Let no one waver—we can win if we are steadfast and loyal." The steadfastness and loyalty of engineering workers is beyond doubt.

Hesitancy and weakness came from the top, not the rank and file. Duffy and the right wing, ready to concede £70 at the outset of the



Rolls Royce workers lobby Labour Party conference

Photo: MILITANT

Main points of settlement

- ★ A 39 hour week from November 1st 1981
- ★ Two days extra holiday from November 1st 1979 and one extra day in each year of the following three years
- ★ Skilled rates up from £60 to £73 basic. Unskilled from £45 to £52.50
- ★ No further claims on hours or holidays for four years

dispute, were continually attempting to find a way out rather than unleash the full power of the union. They were really hanging on to the coat tails of the more forward looking and decisive leadership at plant level.

It was only because of the

pressure from the left on the AUEW National Committee that any action was called at all. They in turn reflected demands from the shopfloor to recoup the losses of recent years.

There would have been overwhelming support for a

total stoppage—provided the leadership energetically explained the issues and showed itself determined to fight for the full claim.

Nevertheless, the superiority of national action, using the collective strength of the union, has been demonstrated.

This and other lessons of the strike will be closely examined at the coming meeting of the newly-formed national engineering shop stewards' committee.

Events have shown the need to draw together on a national co-ordinated basis the shop floor activists in the engineering industry.

This is an important step

forward, and it can play a major role inside the Confed—not only to put pressure on the Confed leadership but also as an effective voice in directing disputes and putting negotiations in the hands of the shop floor leaders.

A fighting union

The main issue, however, will be the need to renew the leadership of the AUEW and the steps to be taken to achieve this.

The vicious, anti-working class nature of the Tory government make this task imperative. A fighting, democratic union with strong, decisive leadership is vital.

Coming battles will make it certain that the 35-hour week will again become an urgent, fighting demand for engineering workers long before the expiry of this four-year agreement on hours and holidays. The paper moratorium will die its own death.

Undoubtedly, local negotiations at factory and company level will include this demand. An issue of such importance to the working class cannot be postponed.

The determination of the engineering workers has secured a famous victory for the whole working class. The swinging of the Tory axe on public services, the cruel abandonment of industries run down by the neglect of capitalism, all these will give added urgency to the demand for shorter hours.

The advances won by the engineering workers will be seen as a crucial first move in the fight against the spectre of mass unemployment.

LEICESTER 'MILITANT' PUBLIC MEETING

'The AUEW struggle for the full claim and the struggle to democratise the Labour Party'

Speakers: Nick Ramsell (AUEW shop steward GEC Whetstone), Steve Marquis (Leicester South Labour Party Conference delegate). The Griffith Inn, Belgrave Gate, Leicester, 7.45 pm. Monday 22 October.

Manchester

The reaction from members of Confed, unions in Manchester to the settlement was initially one of anger. Workers felt they had not got a good settlement.

Now the mood has changed a bit. The feeling is that we are glad we got a victory not a defeat—if this is a victory.

The most important lessons of the strike have been first of all the tremendous support we have shown to the claim—the tremendous solidarity.

We must ensure that next time we are a lot more prepared for strike action. This time, there was only one national leaflet, and no real campaign with mass meetings and so on.

In future we must use the great loyalty and solidarity of our members more effectively. Then we'll get a real victory.

By Johnny Byrne
(AUEW GEC Distribution Switchgear)

ROLLS -

The anger of workers at the numerous attacks on jobs and wages was reflected at last week's Labour Party conference.

Lobbies of trade union and Labour Party leaders were organised by among others workers at Robb Caledon, Dundee and Western Ship-repairers, facing redundancies and by Rolls Royce workers locked out by their employers.

"Backing down on all major points"

Workers on the shop floor here see the new agreement as a back down on all four main points by our negotiators.

The new minimum rates will be subject to implementation on the anniversary dates of local settlements, which could mean employers costing this settlement with any settlement reached at plant level. The only point fully conceded was on extra holidays which will give our

Lobbying Labour's Conference

About 70 Rolls Royce workers from Leavesden plant at Watford, Parkside Coventry and Bristol arrived on transport organised by the shop stewards' committee. They came to impress on the leaders of the labour movement their anger at the lock-out.

"Open the gates at Rolls," they said. When a 'Militant' reporter asked if they wanted to get back to work, the

answer came, "We want to occupy."

The lobby took place before the settlement was announced. One of the lobbyists said, "You won't get an all-out strike for just one hour off. We need an all-out strike for a 35-hour week."

Whatever may have been settled at the moment, this demand will be a major rallying cry in years to come.

While the breakthrough on reducing the working week is a step forward, it will, in terms of increasing leisure time for our members and reducing the present scandalously high levels of unemployment, have little or no immediate effect.

By Pat Gallagher (AUEW Sunbeam Electric)

Daystrom, Gloucester—

SACKED FOR STRIKING

Nigel Coulson [South West Regional Youth Committee] spoke to Alan Gribble [AUEW-TASS Daystrom, Gloucester].

NC: What has happened since the last article was in the 'Militant'?

AG: We've all been dismissed. The company sent us letters on 12th September saying that if we failed to return to work on the Friday they would deem it as a repudiation of the terms of our contract of employment. Hence nobody returned to work and the struggle continues.

Meanwhile back in the high court an utterly biased and sometimes untrue affidavit was used to secure an injunction preventing the strikers entering the company

premises of two other factories unassociated with the dispute.

The pickets' arrangements have been modified to meet with the terms of the injunction and continue effectively.

The company now displays Securicor guard dog notices and have tried all the normal dirty management tactics. Nevertheless the strikers remain undeterred and the strike continues.

NC: What support have you received from the labour movement?

AG: We have received both moral and financial support from the Young Socialists and other trade unionists in the area. Our support in BSC [one of Daystrom's major customers] is growing.

Militant

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EXCLUSIVE

MORE LINES TO GO

British Rail management aim to carry through plans which would decimate the railways.

PLANNED CLOSURES
(See right)

They are planning a whole series of cuts in jobs, services and rolling stock, as 'Militant' [issue 466] revealed when we published extracts from the secret BR management board's Corporate Rail Business Review.

The Review said that "40 lines" would be closed—they are now going to carry this through and close 41 passenger lines in three to six months.

The closures of these lines will affect 296 stations, many of which will be closed down. It will also mean the end of the New Holland Town pier Ferry. Many of these lines have been threatened before, but given the severity of the bosses' plans, it seems they will go for good this time, if the bosses get their way.

It is estimated that these closures will affect nearly 900 railway workers—these workers should demand from management to be told what their future is.

And, of course, whole

communities will be affected. In the rural areas it will mean workers having to rely on infrequent, and sometimes non-existent, rural bus services.

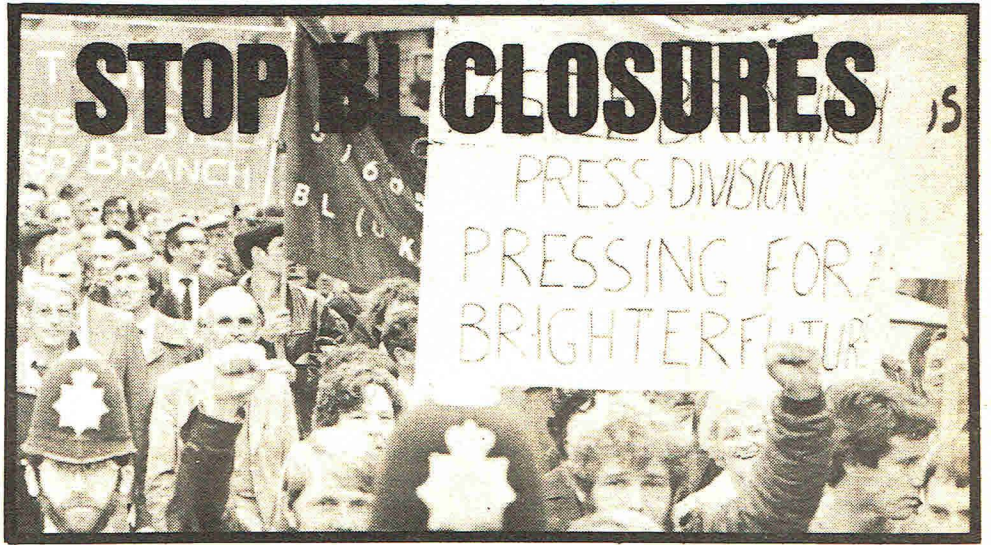
In the inner-city areas, where workers rely on public transport to get to work, they will be forced to use the already overburdened bus services. It will mean frustrating and aggravating journeys to and from work on overcrowded buses.

The Executive of the NUR has threatened industrial action should the management board go ahead with plans to close the Manchester-Sheffield (Woodhead) freight line, and recently the ASLEF Kings Cross branch passed a resolution calling on their union to fight any threat of closure with industrial action.

This call must be taken up throughout the rail unions, and given backing by the trade union movement, as it is an issue which affects the working class as a whole. Only the labour movement can save the country's rail system from being vandalised by the axemen of the management board.

- Burnley-Colne
- Carnford-Skipton
- Stockport-Stalybridge
- Barnet Green-Redditch
- Ramsgate via Minster-Dover
- Pelaw-South Shields
- Heaton-West Monkseaton
- Peterborough-Spalding
- March-Sleaford
- Boston-Skegness
- New Holland Town-New Holland Pier
- Hull-Scarborough
- Middlesborough-Whitby
- Romford-Upminster
- Barking-Kentish Town
- Clapham Junction-Kensington [Olympia]
- Watford Junction-Croxley Green
- Watford Junction-St Albans Abbey
- Ashford-Hastings
- Plymouth-Gunnislake
- Turo-Falmouth
- Bristol-Seven Beach
- Exeter-Barnstaple
- Davey Junction-Pwllheli
- Llandudno Junction-Bleenaffestiniog
- Bidston-Wrexham [Central]
- Norwich-Sheringham
- Ipswich-Lowestoft
- Par-Newquay
- St Erth-St Ives
- Liskeard-Looe
- Craven Arms-Llanelli
- Woodside-Selsdon
- Wimbledon-West Croydon
- Ealing Broadway-Greenford
- Bedford-Bletchley
- Princes Risborough-Banbury
- Marks Tey-Sudbury
- Darlington-Bishop Auckland
- Barrow-Carlisle
- Inverness-Kyle of Lochalsh

Photo: J McKittrick



"When a delegation of Italian car industry shop stewards visited our factory in Castle Bromwich and saw our press shop they collapsed in hysterical laughter—it was so antiquated."

This comment from Mick Ruddy, shop steward [paint shop] hit directly at the heart of the problem facing the British manufacturing industry and British Leyland in particular.

Mick was one of the 1,500 Leyland workers who joined the demonstration in London to show their bitter opposition to the Edwardes' plan to cut a further 75,000 jobs—many of them told similar stories of BL mismanagement and lack of investment.

As the march wound past the plush BL offices in Piccadilly, shouts of 'We want work' filled the air. The workers aimed their anger at Sir Michael Edwardes, but most of them recognise that he is only a mouth-piece for big business.

His ruthless decisions have always been based on the profit motive in the context of an ailing capitalist economy

By
Wayne Jones

beset with the problems of world-wide recession. The conclusion is always: cut wages and jobs and 'rationalise' the industry.

The Tories don't give a damn about the Leyland workers or the British car industry. Only the working class can save the British manufacturing industry.

But this demands a political fight and a campaign of explanation and action from the trade union leaders. The demand must be for a fully state-owned car industry, taking over BL, Fords, Chrysler/Talbot and Vauxhall, with proper workers' control and management, not the capitalist-run chaos which exists at the moment.

A fight can be mounted but decisive leadership from the trade unions is necessary to do this.

This does not mean passing the buck back to the workers by saying "show us you are serious and we will back you".

The BL Trade Union Combine Committee must take responsibility for this urgent task. It is the shop-floor leaders who must take the initiative and start action.

Occupation Committees must be set up under the overall direction of the BL-TUC Executive and prepare plans to occupy any threatened plants. The Executive would be the vital link between these committees and the rest of British Leyland.

This must be tied to resolute action now to defend jobs. As Jim Pickard, Works Committee Chairman at Park Royal, said: "Our jobs are the jobs of the working class as a whole. We must fight to preserve them. We are here to express our solidarity. We have an affinity with these workers. We don't want to see the vehicle industry go to the wall".

TORY PLANS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

whole list of 'options' for cuts—everyone of them is a direct attack on working people.

The 'Guardian' [October 9] revealed some of the proposals, contained in a government document [Code SSC/9/79]. The incredibly vicious plans "...included no right to sick pay for six days [and the obligation for the next six weeks to be placed on employers rather than the state]; abolition of the maternity grant; raising the pension age for women from 60 to 65; abolition of the earnings related unemployment an sickness benefit."

The Tories are well aware of the devastating effect this will have on defenceless sections of the working class—as the document says; "The above reductions are well short of target, and across-the-board cuts in the value of

benefits are inescapable. Besides reducing the up-ratings to prices only, it is necessary to have no uprating at all until November 1983, by which time the real value of the retirement pension will have been cut by over £4."

Stopping benefit for school leavers is also up the Tories' sleeve. They want to stop the pittance of £14 a week benefit going to school-leavers who can't find work, for up to six weeks.

Under the heading 'Plan to curb job shirkers', the 'Daily Mail' [8 October] said, "Cutting out the payments would encourage them to get jobs quickly rather than wait for something to turn up while relying on state money."

There are some youngsters in areas like Liverpool and Belfast who have been 'waiting for something to turn up' for the

past three years—the reason it hasn't is because there's no work.

In Merseyside, Glasgow and Newcastle it is estimated that 50% of this year's school leavers will still be jobless in twelve months' time. This latest Tory plan is nothing more than a vicious attack on helpless unemployed youth.

Cuts—in defence of profit

But the top prize in the Tory stakes for losing their senses must go to Keith Joseph who "told a university audience that he would like to see the end of student grants and to give students loans which they would have to repay afterwards". ['Daily Mail'].

What are students who can't find work supposed to do—pay back the money out of their dole cheques? And how could teachers just starting work pay back a massive loan of over £3,000 out of their meagre wages?

Thankfully, Joseph admitted that he was

having trouble of convincing the Tory cabinet itself of implementing this crazy scheme.

The Tories certainly appear to have lost their senses—but this bout of madness is so they can ensure increased profits for big business at the expense of working people.

In defence of their bankrupt, decaying profit system they have no choice but to enforce these harsh and lunatic cuts—a 'welfare state' set up in a capitalist system is built on unstable ground. When capitalism moves into crisis, welfare services become a liability to the bosses and will be dumped like many other gains of the labour movement.

This is what is happening, and the catchword of the Tories is cut, cut and cut again. The only way to blunt the Tory axe is for the labour movement to demand that not one fraction of the gains that have been won, such as education, health and social services, is touched by the Tory madmen [and women] and to put forward a socialist answer to the lunacy and chaos of the profit system.



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