



# TORIES DECLARE CLASS WAR

## £3,500million cuts to come

The Tory public spending cuts announced a week ago amount to an open declaration of class war.

In the interests of boosting big business profits, the Tories have begun the wholesale destruction of services vital to the lives of working people.

The Tories blithely described the cuts package as "a cold douche". Deliberately induced pneumonia would be more like it.

Millions of workers, their children, and their old folk, if the Tories are allowed to get away with it, are about to be plunged back into the miserable conditions of the 1930s.

Some of the most important achievements of two generations of struggle by the labour movement will be wiped out—unless the whole movement organises itself in a mass campaign to stop the Tories in their tracks.

The Tory chief secretary to the Treasury, John Biffen MP, complacently outlined a massive £3,500 million cut in public expenditure, with another £500 million of public assets to be sold off to private interests.

By Lynn Walsh

These cuts follow the already disastrous reductions in public spending mistakenly carried out by the last Labour government under pressure from big business.

Apart from a few items, like reduced subsidies to private industry and less spending on motorways, most of the cuts will fall directly onto ordinary people.

Biffen himself admitted that these measures, far from reviving the economy, will lead to at least another 300,000 workers joining the dole queues over the next year.

The actual figure is likely to be considerably higher, perhaps 750,000.

On the other hand, however, despite the "dire necessity" to make cuts "in the national interest", the Tories are actually increasing arms spending.

Next year, over £8,000 million will be squandered on "defence". This is a 3% increase.

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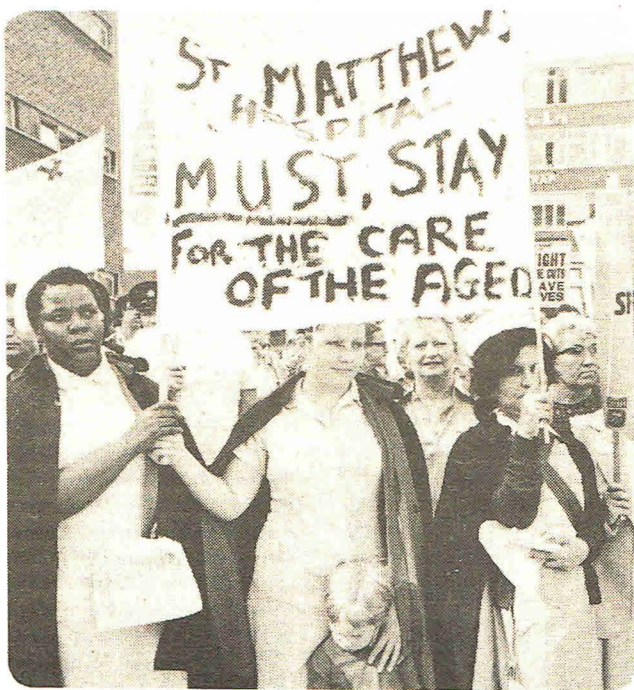
Tory class war demands working class mobilisation

# 'They're grinding us into the ground'

How would you like to take a pay cut of nearly £10 a week? Well, if you're the average working class family, according to two organisations closely associated with poverty and low wages, you just have.

By Frank Chesterton

The Child Poverty Action Group and the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers have published independently figures showing that a family earning between £60 and £80 a week with two children going to school by bus



will be severely hit by the Tory government's spending cuts.

School meals will cost this average family £5 a week, they face rent rises

of up to £2.50, increased VAT charges of £2, and an inflationary cut of £1 in the value of their child  
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FIGHTING FUND-

Eight weeks left - but we can do it

Under the Tories, life gets harder by the hour.

'Militant' is confident its programme provides the answer. But its resources are tiny. The task of building its fighting capacity is made more and more urgent by the Tory attacks.

What can be done for the millions of jobless and homeless?

Number one priority for the labour movement is to get the Tories out. But hand in hand with that task goes the need for socialist policies to ensure a lasting victory over poverty and uncertainty.

But if money is on your mind, think of 'Militant'. It too, is desperately short of cash. Another £27,000 is needed by the 5th January—only two months from now.

However tight your budget, a number one priority for every reader of the 'Militant' must be a donation to its Fighting Fund.

Send the pennies and the £s, the 'fighting fivers'. Collect donations from the labour movement, your workmates, friends and family—it's in your interest! [Fighting Fund, page 13].

FIGHT CUTS WITH SOCIALIST POLICIES



# Militant

## HOW TO FIGHT THE CUTS

Already, public meetings and demonstrations called by the labour and trade union movement to fight the Tory cuts have met with the biggest response for decades.

But the fight is only just beginning.

All the resources of the movement must be deployed to explain the disastrous effects of the cuts and to organise a mass campaign to stop them being carried through.

In particular, the trade unions, especially in the public sector, must be involved in the campaign.

Liverpool district council Labour group has given a magnificent lead by making sure that its workers will be fully involved in the national lobby on 28 November.

### Tory blackmail

Throughout the country, Labour councillors, the elected public representatives of the labour movement, must give a lead in resisting Tory policies.

Backed by the organised strength of the labour movement, they must declare a firm policy of:

- ★ No cuts!
- ★ No rate increases!
- ★ No rent increases!

Nor will the trade unions be taken in for a moment by the Tory blackmail on pay. Accept increases less than inflation [i.e. take a pay cut], say the Tories, or more jobs will go.

Workers will not tolerate poverty wages. And what guarantee is there—under the Tories—that jobs will be preserved even if low wages are accepted?

Public-sector trade unions, backed by the Labour councils, must step up the fight for

- ★ £70 a week minimum wage for all!
- ★ 35-hour week with no loss of pay!
- ★ No redundancies!

Only on these policies will it be possible successfully to build up a mass movement capable of defeating the Tory government.

It is vital, moreover, that these immediate demands should be linked to socialist economic policies. The idea that the cuts can be fought on a 'non-political' basis is a completely mistaken one.

The Thatcher government is undoubtedly the most short-sighted, vicious, anti-working class government since the 1930s. But their programme of cuts is dictated by the catastrophic, crisis position of British capitalism.

According to the Bank of

England's latest quarterly survey, output in the first half of this year was only ½% above the second half of 1978. Industrial investment was up by 2½%, but is expected to fall next year.

And the key factor as far as big business is concerned is profitability. "All in all, real profitability for industrial and commercial companies outside the North Sea sector could this year fall appreciably below the 3½% recorded in 1975."

This is the crunch as far as big business is concerned, if there is insufficient profit, there will be no investment, no production, no jobs.

Tory tax concessions have put millions into the pockets of the wealthy, and the spending cuts are designed to allow millions more to be directed towards the company directors, property tycoons, and big financiers.

But even the representatives of big business admit that the Tories' measures will not revive investment and output. "The British Institute of Management", reported the 'Daily Telegraph' [31 October], "expressed concern that the decline in manufacturing industries would be accelerated by government spending cuts and Mrs Thatcher's disengagement policy."

The removal of the remaining exchange controls, moreover, will mean even more cash going abroad to more profitable investments. Yet big business is still not satisfied. "The truth is," said the Tory 'Telegraph', "that Mrs Thatcher's administration has not succeeded in cutting public expenditure as drastically as it hoped when it came into office."

### Link up the fight

They are asking for more! Any government that tries to work within this rotten system, as the last Labour government proved, is inexorably forced to try to boost the profitability of big business through more and more drastic cuts in workers' living standards.

Only a bold socialist programme can provide a viable alternative to the continued decay of Britain, and the poverty and suffering this will entail for millions of workers.

The fight against the cuts and for a living wage for all workers must therefore be linked to fundamental socialist demands:

★ For the nationalisation of the 200 major monopolies, with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.

★ For workers' control and management of industry!

★ For a democratic socialist plan of production to develop the economy in the interests of working people!

# DEFENDING A WORKERS' NEWSPAPER

At a time when big business is mounting its biggest attack for decades on the living standards and rights of working people, it is vital for the labour movement to be united in a socialist fight-back.

Unfortunately, not everyone in the Labour Party seems to believe in this. John Golding MP is persisting in his high court action for libel damages against 'Militant'.

Despite massive protests from trade unionists, including members of his own union, he has so far not accepted 'Militant's' offer of space in its columns to put his case and settle the dispute within the labour movement.

His action has already brought first bewilderment and then condemnation

from all sections of the labour movement.

Journalists at Doncaster NUJ branch passed a resolution condemning Golding's libel action and stating that "We believe that this is contrary to the traditions of the labour movement where disputes are settled by debate in the trade unions and the Labour Party."

What is John Golding afraid of, has been the response of many 'Militant' readers?

What 'Militant's' readers have not been afraid of is putting their money where their mouth is. And 'Militant's' support for workers in struggle has been greatly appreciated.

Amongst the donations received this week were £4.20 from workers at Cammel Lairds, £9.50 from Coventry busmen (collected by V

Infantino) and one reader was given £1 while leafletting a Vauxhall's meeting on Merseyside.

From the Derbyshire Miners' Area Council came a very welcome £25, from the NUM Edlington Lodge £5 plus and an individual £5 from miner P Davies.

'Militant's' support for low-paid workers last winter has clearly not been forgotten. Hull Hospital's Central NUPE branch donated £5. Contributions this week are again too numerous to mention, but a £50 donation from M Walsh (Lambeth) has been especially appreciated.

Primarily, of course, 'Militant' rests upon its support within the movement. So cash received from Labour Parties and LPYS branches is doubly welcome.

We hope other LPYS branches will follow the

example of Young Socialists on the Isle of Wight, who raised £2 from the Ryde branch and £1.35 from Freshwater branch, this week.

All the indications are that John Golding is pursuing his case. Already 'Militant' has incurred substantial expense in arranging its legal defence and campaigning to defend the paper.

It is urgent that in the next few weeks this attack on a socialist paper is raised in all parts of the labour movement and financial assistance given to help prevent damage being inflicted on a paper that has always stood in the interests of all workers.

Send resolutions and donations to: Militant Defence Fund, 5 Cremer House, Deptford Church Street, London SE8.

## Railway closures- Militant backed up



Militant reports that the bosses of British Rail were to axe 41 rail lines, have been repeatedly denied by the bosses, in their attempts to hush up the whole issue of cutbacks

Militant, which has repeatedly warned of the cuts since we obtained the confidential Rail Business Review in July, has now been backed by the Guardian [November 7] who published a front page article on the cuts, based on similar information.

The 41 lines published for closure by the Guardian vary slightly to those published by Militant [issue 474]-this is due to the fact there is a list of a total of 85 lines, out of which the bosses can choose those for closure. However, the fact remains that 900 miles of track are up for closure.

### After shipbuilding and steel, the bosses want to vandalise British Rail

As Militant stated in its first exclusive exposure of the rail cutbacks, the bosses are trying to supplement with bus services - 'British Rail has been unsuccessful in trying to persuade the National Bus Company to run substitute services' [Guardian].

And even if the bosses do persuade the bus company to run a service, the usual pattern is that the bus company carry on the service as long as they

recieve a subsidy-when the subsidy goes, so does the bus service, leaving whole communities without any form of public transport.

So now the truth is out - and now all those bosses, BR spokesmen [issue 477] and for that matter the Tories must be asked why they were telling lies. Why did BR spokesmen up and down the country say no lines were to close, and why did Norman Fowler, Tory Secretary of Transport, categorically state not only once but four times-once to the Tory conference-that there would be no 'Beeching' like cuts, when in fact these closures would be the largest cutbacks in passenger service since Lord Beeching's cuts in the '60s.

In just the same way as the bosses and the Tories can't be trusted in telling the truth, they cannot be trusted in trying to run society along the lines of their chaotic profit system.

## Refugees: Tories cut the life-line

It's not just in Britain that the Tories are showing their teeth. Twelve days ago, on October 29th, Home Secretary Whitelaw, announced a drastic cut in the visa programme for Latin American refugees.

He tried to justify this by implying that the human rights position in Latin America was improving. No Human Rights Committee shares this view.

According to Amnesty International "throughout the region there continues to be a high level of political violence: abductions, disappearances, torture and extrajudicial executions or assassinations" (Annual Report, page 15).

In Uruguay nearly one person in every thousand is a political prisoner. In Argentina there are 2,500 known political prisoners, as well as over 10,000 'disappeared' persons. In Paraguay six people have died from torture alone this year. And the last few months in Chile have seen an intensification of repression.

It is not then surprising that there has been an increase in visa applications over the last year to come to Britain. The numbers involved are low—280 applications in the last eighteen months. But it seems that the Tories will stop at nothing to attack victims of right-wing terror.

## Poly occupied

Students at the Polytechnic of Central London decided at a mass meeting on Tuesday to occupy the college building in Regents Street in protest against the Tory government's decision to raise the fees for overseas students and against the Tory cuts in general.



# stop this Tory threat, before it starts...

Behind the barrage of biased press reports of threats of legal action, the Liverpool Labour Party have clear and definite reasons for supporting the Personnel Committee's decision to allow all city council employees the day off with full pay on 28th November to attend the national demonstration lobby in London.

The decimation of local government services and the destruction of jobs and job opportunities means that the entire labour and trade union movement must link up to fight this inhumane government.

Any capitalist employer chooses how best to utilise his employees for his own profit purposes. So why should the Labour Party not encourage its local authority employees to join them in an activity which if repeated in other local authorities, could certainly force a change in the Tories' proposed cut-backs?

The fight is just starting, but already the use of the courts is being threatened as a way of preventing the labour and trade union movement from mobilising against the cuts. This will not work!

Labour councillors must be prepared to fight, regardless of any legal threat to their position. But if there is, there must be an immediate mobilisation of the entire movement if any Labour council is threatened with this.

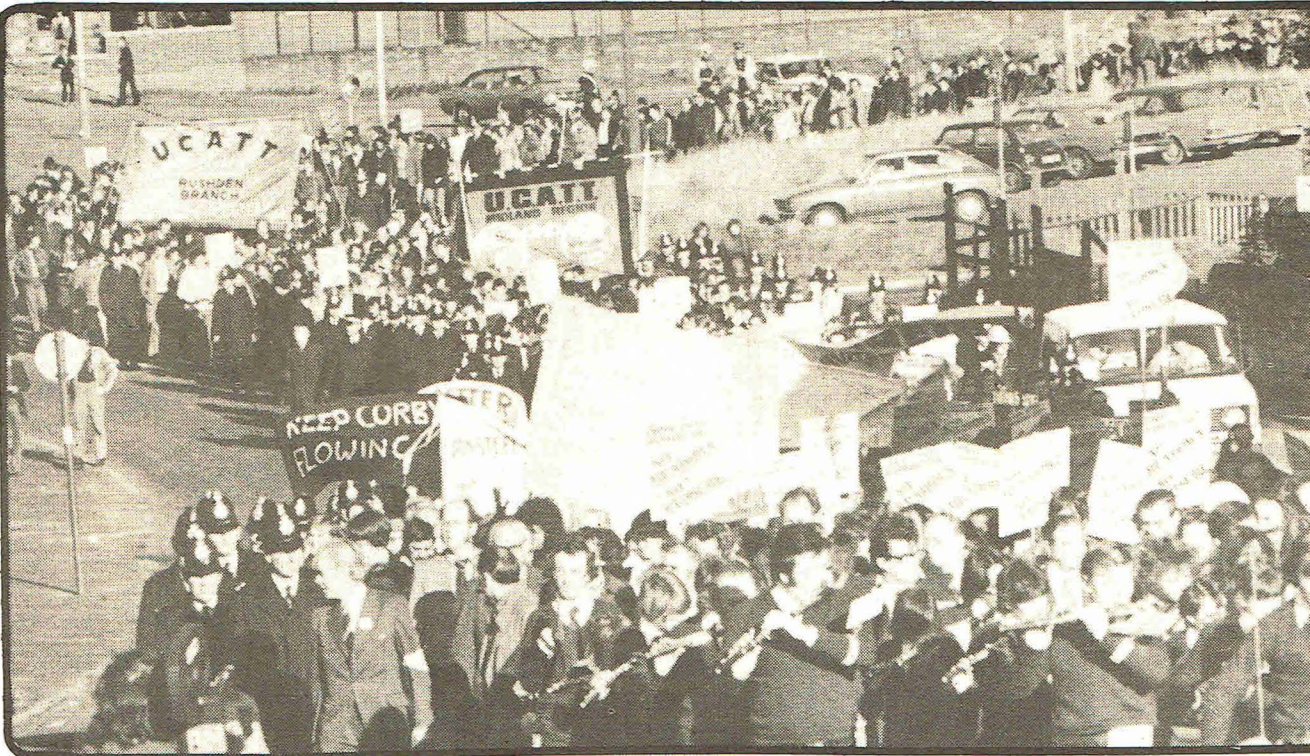
Labour councillors must unite with the public sector unions in the campaign against this Tory government and encourage every possible move to assist their union action. All Labour councillors must be seen to be standing alongside the workers full square against the Tory onslaught in the coming struggles.

By  
Cllr. Derek Hatton

## WHY POSTAL CHARGES ARE UP

Beware of Sir William Barlow, he speaks with forked tongue!

The Post Office chairman has attempted to blame the recently announced rises in prices of Post Office services on Post Office workers' pay rises. The price increases include nearly 67% on minimum phone calls, a probable 2p on letters (to bring the increase in stamps to 30% in a year), rises in phone unit costs 3p to 3.5p, quarterly



## CORBY ON THE MARCH

Workers in the threatened steel town of Corby held their second demonstration last Thursday [1st November], when an estimated 15,000 crowd marched through the town.

The mood was more subdued than in the September stoppage. Nevertheless the resolve of Corby workers has been the main force leading to the ISTC's recommendations for action to stop the steel closures [see back page].

## PRAISE FROM

# JIM?

'The Militant do more education than anybody else'

In a television interview with leading Labour right-winger Shirley Williams, Jim Callaghan last week acknowledged the growing support for 'Militant' within the Labour Party.

In an unusually candid comment he said: "We (the Labour Party) have neglected education. We've allowed it all to fall into the hands of the 'Militant' group. They do more education than anybody else."

What Jim was driving at was the growth of support for the ideas and demands advocated by 'Militant'. Disillusioned with the piecemeal programme of reform, advocated by Labour's right wing, more and more Labour Party members and trade unionists are turning to the programme of 'Militant' as a solution to the problems they face.

The policies of Labour's right wing clearly paved the way for the return of this savagely anti-working class Government. Yet in the interview, Jim later commented:

"If you have an extreme form of Socialism people will rebel against it—they may not vote for it, or if they vote against the Conservatives and therefore vote for it, there will be a quick and swift reaction. "You've got to carry the

By George  
Williamson

(Hackney  
Central LPYS)

people of this country with you on a basis that they accept, that what you're doing is relevant to their problems. Now we mustn't go to the point where we put up some nostrum like, what is it, nationalising 200 companies..

"There are people in the party, who want to nationalise 200 companies. If you were to do that, the country would say this isn't relevant. No, we don't understand what this is about..."

Well didn't Labour's general election defeat signal the rejection of the Labour leadership's right-wing policies by millions of working class voters?

On the other hand, the fact that Callaghan should go out of his way to mention the 'Militant' and criticise the call for the nationalisation of 200 major monopolies is eloquent testimony to the widespread support for this demand in Labour's ranks.

If it is so "irrelevant", why



is Jim so concerned about it? In reality, the nationalisation of the monopolies would provide the only means of introducing a socialist plan of production, and by the same token, the only means of carrying through all the many reforms promised by successive Labour governments, but abandoned under pressure from big business.

If the failures and pitfalls of past Labour governments are to be avoided, it is essential. It is a programme, the necessity of which will be reinforced, with the mass unemployment, cuts in public expenditure and dire poverty faced by millions under this Tory Government.

In another speech at Grimsby, Jim Callaghan renewed his attack on the 'Militant' and the Labour Party Young Socialists, and this has inevitably been taken up by the press and the media.

Faced with a catastrophe under this government, trade unionists and their families will undoubtedly give their support to the programme and lead which "Militant" gives in increasing numbers.

The socialist alternative we advocate is the only viable alternative to the misery and poverty offered by capitalism.

By Dave Farrar  
(Manchester UPW in a personal capacity)

## HANDSWORTH LPYS OPPOSE APARTHEID

The way that the Lancaster House Conference is put forward by the media, anyone would think that the 'great' 'caring' ruling classes of Southern Africa were desperately trying to find a peaceful solution out of some kindness of their hearts against the 'troublemaking' guerrillas.

But these people have never had peace on their minds—the only thing they care about is their profits.

Take just one Tory—Lord Carrington—the chairman of the Lancaster House conference. What are his interests in finding a solution in Southern Africa? Many! He held directorships in Barclays Bank, Rio Tinto Zinc, Cadbury Schweppes, all of whom operate in Southern Africa.

Throughout the period of apartheid policy in Southern Africa, he and people like him have never had any qualms about investing in these countries, and making massive profits from the super-exploitation of the black workers. In fact, the British bosses are the major investors in Southern Africa.

After all these years, it's only now, when their profits are threatened, that they have visions about the unjust nature of apartheid, and they want to come to some 'peaceful' compromise.

But on their basis there can be no real solution. So long as their system remains, the blacks will achieve no better standard of living, no political

power. Capitalism in Southern Africa developed precisely because of the use of black workers as cheap labour.

The black workers and peasants in southern Africa have begun to fight back, threatening the very foundations of the bosses' system.

Workers in Britain must give them every possible aid in their struggle. Our struggle is one. Often we are working for the very same employers who have the blood of Southern African school children and workers on their hands.

If the Tories lift sanctions from Southern Africa, the trade unions must maintain, and effectively impose, those sanctions. Activists in the movement must bring up the question of Southern Africa and British industries' involvement there in their trade union branches and Labour Party.

Handsworth Labour Party Young Socialists have organised a demonstration and conference on 10 November.

Leading up to that we have been to trade union offices and to local trade unionists with our material. In our own area, we have been leafletting and canvassing houses, youth clubs and colleges.

The response among black youth in the area has been good, with many helping us in our activity. The feeling of solidarity with the struggle taking place in Southern Africa is strong.

But this campaign is just the beginning and the LPYS must ensure that it is taken up in the labour and trade union movement more seriously than it has been previously.

★ Solidarity with the oppressed of Southern Africa  
★ Down with racism and apartheid  
★ Forward to a socialist Southern Africa

Demonstration details  
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By  
Yasmin Barry

(LPYS National Committee & Sec Handsworth LPYS Southern Africa Campaign)



# MILITANT READERS MEETINGS ROUND-UP

The attempts by the Tories to rush through their reactionary policies, alongside the important democratic reforms in the Labour Party won by the party's rank and file, has rekindled the fighting spirit of many workers.

This has been shown by the number of workers now attending Militant readers' meetings and other events which are regularly held up and down the country.

One of the best Militant readers' meetings last month was in Liverpool. There, over 120 people came to hear Peter Taaffe, editor of the 'Militant', and Tony Mulhearn, a delegate to conference who seconded the resolution on re-selection, speak on 'Which way for Labour now?'

An excellent discussion followed after one worker said the 'Militant' was being too optimistic, and said the labour movement had a long way to go before the Labour Party took a socialist standpoint.

However, in reply supporters of the 'Militant' said the events at conference had sparked off renewed interest in the Labour Party and had encouraged many workers to join the Party.

The discussion also moved on to the ailing capitalist system and the question of redundancies, especially those looming in the print industry. Print workers at the meeting pointed out that many workers had rejected the proposed closures, despite the offers of massive redundancy pay-

ments.

After the discussion, £240 was raised for the fighting fund.

In Newcastle, £167 was raised at a Trotsky centenary meeting and exhibition. About 80 people attended the exhibition, which displayed photos, posters and works of Trotsky, and then a discussion on the life of Trotsky began after a lead-off by Ted Grant.

'Which way now for Labour after the conference' has been a popular topic for 'Militant' discussion groups. In Hackney Tony Saunio, LPYS representative on the NEC of the Labour Party, spoke on this theme, alongside Ernie Roberts, MP for Hackney North. £23 was raised at the meeting.

Similar meetings were held in South London, where 50 people attended to hear Ray Apps (Brighton Kemptown CLP). Meetings on the same theme were held in Stockton and Swindon.

Industrial topics have been popular too. In Manchester, a meeting on 'The fight for the Engineering claim' was a success, and £32 was raised for the fighting fund. Another meeting, called 'Post Office workers under attack' attracted UPW and POEU members. In Greenwich, 'Marxism and the Trade Unions' was the topic at a Militant supporters' meeting where Wayne Jones, Militant Industrial Correspondent was the speaker.

Other events included a dance in Birmingham, where more than 50 people celebrated the 15th anniversary of the 'Militant' paper.



The platform at a Militant readers' meeting during this year's general election

## Wokingham 'A DAY OF SOCIALISM'

The third Annual Socialist Day organised by the Wokingham Constituency Labour Party was held in Bracknell.

This year's event was by far the most successful to date both in terms of the numbers attending and the level of political debate.

Over 60 Labour Party, LPYS and trade union activists from Wokingham, Reading, Maidenhead and Newbury participated in a day of political and social activity which catered not only for adults but also their kids.

The day got off to a good start with a debate between Alan Furley, Wokingham's Parliamentary Labour candidate at the last election and Lynn Walsh of the 'Militant' editorial board.

Alan kicked off by welcoming the democratic reforms of the Labour Party which were carried at this year's annual conference and went on to outline his political position (Tribune), although he did

not believe that import controls, except in very specific cases, should be advocated.

He attacked the Tory cuts in public expenditure and argued for Labour to nationalise the banks and introduce legally binding planning agreements in industry when next in government.

Lynn Walsh spoke in favour of the ideas put forward by the Marxists in the Labour Party who support the 'Militant' newspaper.

He pointed to the huge crisis of British capitalism which would have devastating repercussions for the working class unless the whole strength of the labour movement was mobilised to defend the gains won over the past period.

Lynn argued that savage cuts in public expenditure and rising unemployment were inevitable under capitalism, and that only policies which brought the commanding heights of the economy under the control and management of the working class linked to a plan of production offered the only

way out.

There was a lively discussion from the floor which reflected the changing mood at present in the Labour Party. The plight of the low-paid workers and the damaging cuts in services were raised by several contributors.

Andy Bevan, the Labour Party National Youth Officer led off a discussion on 'Youth in the Labour Party' in a speech which was well received by all those present.

Andy emphasised the importance of drawing youth into the trade unions and the Labour Party. He attacked Tory proposals to introduce 'short, sharp sentences' for young offenders.

He also called for more finance to be made available by the Labour Party to develop the LPYS and during the discussion older Party members took up in a constructive way the question of involving the LPYS in all areas of the Party's activities.

Andy explained the need for LPYS branches to combine political activity with

social events.

The day was rounded off with an evening of folk, music hall and community singing, and £20 was raised for Party funds.

The day's success hinged on the fact that socialist ideas were discussed in a serious and fraternal way, with most people attending participating. Clearly the clarification of political ideas as a pre-requisite to action is a priority at the present time and in this sense the Socialist Day represented a step forward in the Wokingham area.

The political lessons learnt must now be taken into the local community and used to build up the Labour Party and LPYS into fighting socialist organisations. If we are successful, next year's Socialist Day will attract even more people including new members involved in the Labour Party for the first time.

By Terry Pearce  
(Political Education Officer, Wokingham CLP)

## Dalkeith - support the anti-cuts campaign

In the East of Scotland, Midlothian and East Lothian Trades Council is leading the way forward against the Tory cuts.

It is organising the trade union and labour movement and all sections of the community, including housewives, community councils, pensioners, youth sections and unemployed in a mass demonstration to be held in Dalkeith on Saturday 10 November.

It is obvious that the Tories are not going to listen to reason or pleas of 'play fair' from local authorities anxious not to implement Tory policies, therefore it is essential that the working class mobilise behind their organisations. The trade unions and Labour Party must give positive leadership in order to direct the anger that millions of people throughout Britain are showing against the Tory government. This anger, channeled into the kind of mass protest that Midlothian is showing will encourage Labour-controlled local authorities to make a stand against the cuts knowing that the working class will support them in this stand.

Midlothian District Council for instance are opposing any attempt by the Tories to enforce them to make cuts in all public and social services and they can be ensured that the trade union movement in the district, which includes many powerful NUM branches, will back our councillors to the hilt.

This area has been further hit by the withdrawal of the Regional Aid Grant.

The trade union movement, working alongside an organised Labour Party can unite the working class not only in forcing the Tories to retreat but also to lay the foundations of an early return of a Labour government armed with socialist policies.

Midlothian and East Lothian have organised this demonstration which will start as a march from Dukes Gates, Dalkeith, leaving at 10.30 a.m. for the Community Council, Dalkeith, where a rally will take place. Amongst the speakers will be Dennis Skinner MP, Ron Curran NUPE, and Jimmy Airdrie AUEW.

Banners and placards will be welcome and amongst the demonstrators will be the Newbattle Socialist Housing Action Committee.

## NOLS STUDENT PERSPECTIVES A MISH-MASH OF VAGUE IDEAS

"How then is the leadership position achieved? It is not primarily through finding the 'correct programme'...The politics of youth, sex, culture and personal relations are as important as economics..."

These two amazing comments are from a document on 'Student Perspectives' approved by the majority on the National Organisation of Labour Students National Committee at their recent meeting. The document outlines the decline and collapse of the 'Broad Left' in NUS in the past few years, which the NOLS leadership have immersed themselves in; but gives no reasons for this decline.

The document puts forward no political programme, beyond vague references to the 'alternative economic strategy'. It is a mish-mash of vague ideas and analysis, which provides no clear direction or aims for NOLS members.

Despite the claims of the document that the NOLS

leadership want to promote "socialist debate", they have not allowed the Marxist minority on the NC to put forward a document. This is against the tradition of minority documents within NOLS.

The whole meeting had very little political discussion, although a number of issues were discussed which are important to the future work and development of NOLS.

The majority rejected the proposal that part-time students should be able to join NOLS, and play a role in college Labour Clubs. The reason for refusing this is that part-time students may become "political footballs".

What the NOLS leadership are afraid of is an influx of young trade union activists into NOLS, bringing their experiences of the labour movement. Any active trade unionist would certainly not accept the present way NOLS is run, with procedures more complicated than any other section of the Labour Party, and almost unparalleled anywhere in the labour move-

ment.

To reinforce this point a new pitfall has been introduced for Labour Clubs affiliating to NOLS. Another form—giving details of Club meetings doing NOLS business—must be sent in. This means the Labour Party Student Organiser now gets this information in triplicate! Soon, being a Labour Club secretary will have to be a full-time position, the affiliation procedure is so complicated!

The majority also turned down a resolution calling for NEC representatives and NOLS NEC members to have the right to check the forms and cards of affiliated Clubs. This move would have given far greater accountability in NOLS, and one wonders why it was turned down.

The NOLS visitor to the SSU (Swedish YS) Camp in the summer, Dave Fisher, had launched a scurrilous attack on the LPYS in an interview with the camp's newspaper. Some of the comments were similar to those of the right wing in the

Labour Party, or the Tory press. Although a resolution attacking him was rejected, the majority effectively disowned him, saying his views did not represent NOLS. Dave Fisher did not withdraw his comments, so we presume he stands by them. However, he was elected later in the meeting to attend another Conference representing NOLS!

However, despite the inaptitude of the NOLS leadership, there is enormous potential for Labour Clubs this term. Many Clubs have increased their active membership. Every Club should be intervening in the campaign on Overseas students' fees. Building links with the local LPYS and Labour Party is also essential—every Labour Club activist should be recruited to the LPYS. On the basis of fighting for Marxist policies, students can be won to Labour Clubs and the labour movement.

By Sue Horne  
(NOLS NC, North West Region)



# LEFT and RIGHT

## 'No strikes'

'Strikes are unnecessary' 'Management and workers have identical interests' Workers have a democratic labour relations procedure'. Soviet Weekly is trying to explain why there are 'no strikes' in the USSR.

Their reasons hold as little water as their claim that there are no political prisoners in Russia. The occasional disputes, they say, are due to workers' "Indisciplined attitudes" and the odd bureaucratic management decision.

But in Russia today these bureaucrats are so parasitic on the planned economy that in one year 10,000 managerial staff [not the top ones of course] are dismissed for high handed decisions. There is a huge differential between the living standards of workers and the top bureaucrats. And still there are no strikes? It's obviously a shame that such a 'democratic labour relations procedure' wasn't exported to countries like Poland where the massive strikes of recent years can no longer be hidden.

How much longer will 'Soviet Weekly' be able to make its 'no strikes' claim in the USSR?

## Play the game

If you want to buy a game of 'Monopoly' you can now forget about the inferior £3.45 version. Buy one of a limited number of special games with a satinwood board, on a redwood and mahogany table, hall marked silver play tokens, and an embossed personal name plate to prove you own it.

Only £886. A good way to spend your tax rebate, not just a game but a hedge against inflation. Anybody who 'plays' in the real monopoly world of property will tell you that such things appreciate in value and are far more profitable than industrial investment.

The price might stop you. Latest figures show it would take an average worker ten weeks full take-home pay. For the building company Wimpey [1977 profits £51,365,000] five minutes, and Trafalgar House with its property interests it's less than 5 minutes' profits. But then if you can make a fortune out of the real thing why worry with a mere game?

## Cashing in on cuts

"Budget cuts are forcing schools to cut back on recruiting. Classrooms are growing more and more crowded" admitted the Tory 'Daily Express' last week. But it was an advertisement. The advertisement's solution to this problem? "Now more than ever you need Britain's best colour encyclopaedia". Well, it's an ill wind that blows no capitalist any good.

For ordinary working class families, this is "economic rationing" of education. We would say "now more than ever you need socialism" but we won't get a half page advert in the 'Daily Express' to say it.

# LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

After years of extreme exploitation, catering workers are more and more becoming organised. In this article, a catering worker describes what happened in one London workplace.

I have never written anything like this before, so I hope my mistakes will be forgiven. I have worked at these offices in Holborn for quite a while now. I have never been so shocked and dismayed at the inhumanity of capitalist to worker. It is phenomenal.

Firstly, there are the appalling working conditions. Extreme heat, dangerous flooring, broken windows and filthy changing rooms.

Secondly, people were used as machines, constantly going from one job to another. In many cases they were going to jobs where they had no idea what they were supposed to be doing, and they were constantly working into their breakfast and lunch breaks.

Thirdly, are the sarcastic, insensitive remarks made by management. Insults implying that workers were untidy and not fit to do their jobs. They always tried to play one worker (usually a new one who didn't know what the manager was like) against an older established one. In one case the management even came in and said "Who shall I upset today?"

Lastly, they always tried to make people work beyond their 8½ hours, and not allow them overtime.

This seems to indicate an abyss into which all must fall. But now there is a light—or a



Photo: Derek Spiers (IFL)

Catering workers are increasingly organised to fight to improve conditions

**"I have never been so shocked and dismayed at the inhumanity of capitalist to worker. It is phenomenal. But now at least we have a union."**

knight in shining armour. Although for obvious reasons, it was kept secret for a long period, these people need a union—and now they are in a union. So at last these misused maltreated people are represented.

A so-called guild which had been in existence would not allow these people to join them. Why? Because the Guild was a union run by

management for themselves—and their bootlickers.

It's a good ending though, the union stepped in and gained negotiating rights (eventually). Now we are all represented in a very good union.

Of course, problems still arise. One clause of our contract of employment states "In the case of disciplinary action, one verbal warning

will be given, in the second case a written warning."

I know many cases where the management have forgotten this clause and given no verbal warning. Workers have been subjected to a form of kangaroo court. Two managers sit on one side of the table and fire a quick succession of double barrelled questions, and give no time for an answer.

If you do manage to answer, you are leered and laughed at. In the end your brain is in such a knot that when you are asked to sign a piece of paper, you sign it. Not realising that this is solid evidence on which you can be dismissed unless you "knuckle under".

But at least now we have a union.

# 'BITTER APPLES'

7% of the population own 84% of the wealth. That has been the message of the 7:84 Theatre company since 1971. Their latest musical 'Bitter Apples' is touring most major towns this autumn.

It brings to life the effects of political events in Britain on working people since 1968. Set in Merseyside, it compares the 1968 days of 'student revolt' amongst "revolutionary" poets and musicians, who ten years on were either totally demoralised, or had "sold out", precisely when the working class faced the severest onslaught since the '30s.

The first half of the play shows a young Liverpool working class girl and her family, living next door to a group of "revolutionaries", musicians and poets calling themselves the "Liverpool Liberation Army".

These "students in revolt" misinterpreted events in Vietnam, France, Czechoslovakia and Northern Ireland as marking a "new revolution" led by intellectuals which would soon bring the final downfall of capitalism and imperialism.

Their leadership is, however, treated with scorn by their working class neighbours. "We're the only workers here! You lot have never done a day's work in your lives!"

The second half of the play

set in 1978 shows most of these musicians having "made it big" and living in luxury returning to their old flat in Liverpool and finding their former neighbours still facing all the pressures of working class life.

"21 years old and only 9 months' work since I left school. Now Cammell Laird's are laying me off, I haven't told me folks yet, that would finish them off. Dad hasn't worked for four years himself," says the son of the family.

But we see the resilience and fighting spirit of working class people compared to the impatience and flabbiness of so many "student revolutionaries" who fall by the wayside.

The "star" of the play, the girl left to bring up a child on her own since she was sixteen turns round to her former boyfriend from 1968 and exclaims:

"Ten years ago you were full of hope for the future. Remember those letters you wrote me from the barricades in Paris? How dare you bring such gloom into my life? Surely you realise that my life is only just starting!"

The events of 1968 were important, not for showing a future of 'intellectual' revolution, but as a harbinger of the future. They show that only the working class acting in a united way can transform society along socialist lines.

The efforts of poets, musicians, students and intellectuals can assist this movement. They can never replace it!

By  
**Mike Levene**

(Trent Poly Labour Club)



# STOP THE CUTS • STOP THE CUTS • STOP THE CUTS

## Mobilise to fight the Tories

### Liverpool cuts conference

"All over the country people are connecting cuts in public expenditure with the decision by the government to run down industry and allow market forces to determine the future of this country."

These were the opening remarks of Tony Benn, addressing the Liverpool anti-cuts conference on Sunday.

The conference was called by the Liverpool District Labour Party and Trades Council and was attended by more than 300 delegates from the Liverpool area.

Time and time again the point was stressed that the cuts were due to the international crisis of capitalism, and not due to personalities in power—the profit system can no longer afford the 'welfare state'.

Councillor Derek Hatton outlining the Tory attacks said £240m was to be cut from education expenditure (school meals, milk and transport), £242m off council house building, and also drastic cuts in health and education. He said "The Tories are doing a good job for the people they represent—if we could say the same for the last Labour government we would be in a much better

By  
**Peter Rubenstein**  
(Liverpool Toxteth CLP)

position today."

John Cowling, speaking for the workers of Corby, pointed out that a concerted fightback by every section of the labour movement is necessary, a theme that ran throughout the whole of the conference.

Ian Lowes, GMWU convenor for the local authority said public sector workers cannot and should not be asked to fight the cuts alone. The whole movement and especially the 'big battalions' must put up a united fight.

Eddie Loydon, speaking from the platform, said that the struggle against the Industrial Relations Act, linking every level of the movement in our campaign, and that the struggle must be organised around a carefully thought out socialist programme.



Terry Harrison, Euro-parliamentary candidate for Liverpool in this year's EEC election, speaking at the conference.

### OXFORD

Nursery education is not a luxury, it is a necessity.

We need nurseries to help our children develop during the vital pre-school years, prepare them for school, provide stimulation and facilities to further their development, and to help them develop socially and emotionally by being with children and adults outside the immediate family. We owe it to our kids to fight for nursery places to be made available.

But we also need to demand nurseries as a right for the benefit of parents. Nurseries are especially important for working class women.

They have steadily decreased since the war.

This decline can be directly related to the fall in capitalism's need for women as workers. In the 2nd World War nurseries were provided for women, so that they could work in munitions factories or join the land army.

But now that unemployment is soaring and redundancies are being announced daily, the representatives of the capitalist class, the Tories are prepared to finish nurseries off altogether.

In Oxford, which is one of the 18 Local Education Authorities with the worst record for under fives, the Tory dominated county council announced in September its intention to close the 12 nursery schools and 16 nurs-

ery classes, entailing the loss of teaching and ancillary workers jobs, plus the nursery course at the College of Further Education which has 72 places.

The Save Our Nurseries Campaign was set up in Oxford to fight these proposals, attracting over 100 people to its initial meetings, including representatives from the nurseries and nursery classes, local trade unions and labour party wards.

The campaign decided that it would fight to save the nurseries, but also oppose all cuts, not wanting nurseries saved at the expense of other sectors.

It is now expected that the Tories in Oxford will overturn the recommendation of the Education Committee regarding nurseries despite the small concession it was. SONC and many trade unionists and other organisations and individuals will be lobbying the full council meeting on November 13.

As these Tory councillors are revealed in their true light, as people totally removed from the needs and aspirations of ordinary working people, political conclusions will have to be drawn.

We cannot stop at just opposing the Tory cuts; we have to work for a government and councils which will reverse the cuts and extend our nurseries and other vital services. This means joining the Labour Party and fighting for the adoption of Socialist policies to defeat the anarchy of capitalism which is cutting our services and throwing thousands on the dole.

### AVON

Tory-controlled Avon County Council has responded swiftly to government demands to curb public expenditure.

Cuts already announced in both the education and social services budgets leave no doubt that without a massive campaign of resistance on the part of the local labour and trade union movement, vital and already over-stretched services will be cynically stripped to the bone.

The social services committee meeting on 11 October agreed to slice the budget by £15,000 this year, in spite of further million pounds almost certainly to be lost in 1980-81.

These spiteful cuts will have a dramatically harmful

effect on the elderly, physically disabled and mentally ill. As always under capitalism, those least able to defend themselves are sacrificed first on the altar of profit.

The closure of the family group homes (FGHs) in Bristol along with the short-stay Devon House Hostel for the mentally ill will result in savings of £25,000.

Answering the fears of the twenty staff standing to lose their jobs the Director of Social Services expressed the hope that 'redeployment' will be possible. He has obviously 'forgotten' that over one hundred posts in social services are already lying vacant due to a freeze on recruitment.

Other proud achievements of these fine public-spirited councillors include the chopping of £10,000 from the budget to the Bristol workshops for the blind, £8,000 from bed-and-breakfast payments for homeless families,

£10,000 from industrial therapy organisations, £4,000 from the home-help service and £15,000 from meals on wheels.

Surely, it can only be a matter of time before the Tories introduce legislation making it illegal to be old, blind, infirm or mentally disabled, and to depend upon the state for existence?

This shameful package of suffering includes a cut of £15,000 from the budget for services to handicapped people, meaning that there will be a total stop on all full aid for installation of telephones and adaptation to property and fittings for the handicapped.

The Tories are obviously keen to share the misery as widely as possible and a 3% cut in the education budget has resulted in a loss in expenditure of £4,035 million.

Already, 430 teaching and non-teaching posts have been earmarked for disappearance

over the next nine months and if natural wastage and retirement do not provide this saving, there will be sackings.

At a mass meeting, Avon National Union of Teachers agreed to fight the cuts and will be refusing to cover for timetable changes due to the cuts.

On 15 November NUPE workers will be joining teachers in a strike, a protest that is sure to evoke the sympathy of working people in Avon.

One important point needs to be stressed about the action committees that have sprung up: the need to see the fightback against Avon in its wider political context.

Only with a socialist Britain will the miseries of cuts, unemployment and bad housing disappear forever.

By  
**Robin Clapp**  
(South West Labour Party REC)

### NEWCASTLE

Things are bad in the north—but unless Thatcher is stopped, they will get even worse. The labour movement in the north is ready to fight. The Northern region Labour Party and TUC are launching a joint campaign against the Tory cuts, on Saturday 10th November with a demonstration and rally in Newcastle.

The LPYS is holding a march prior to the main demonstration to attract as many youth as possible.

Comrades are to assemble at 10 a.m., Saturday 10th November, at Adelaide Shopping Centre, from there we shall march to Forth Street—the assembly point for the Labour Party/TUC march.

YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT  
New leaflet, 'Fight for jobs—Stop the Tories' £4 per 1000  
Anti-Unemployment posters £3 for 50  
35-hour week Newsprint poster £1 for 20  
Stop SUS poster £1 for 10  
All prices inclusive of postage. Send money with order to  
YCAU, 435 New Cross Road, London S.E.14

## Yarmouth — TESTING GROUND FOR THE POLICE

A massive police operation was launched in the town of Great Yarmouth on October 26th. The purpose—to protect the conference of the fascist National Front from demonstrators.

The few hundred fascists were guarded by some three thousand police, including a large body of SPG drafted from all over the country. The entire operation cost well over £250,000.

The 'enemy' for the police were a group of 250 demonstrators, who marched perfectly peacefully through the Town Centre. In fact the only arrest was that of an NF member who protested violently at the placing of a wreath laid in memory of 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis.

The police used the operation as a testing ground for future events. John Cannell of the Yarmouth Trades Council executive described the town as being virtually under martial law. He spoke of

underwater frogmen patrolling the Wellington Pier [presumably looking for limpet mines!] and of special police launches patrolling the immediate seaward vicinity of the pier.

### No-go area

A no-go area was declared around the sea front. Hundreds of police cordoned off an area some three hundred yards either side of the pier entrance. Special passes were issued by the Chief Constable

to those living inside the no-go area!

Police lines stretched down the beach and barriers extended into the sea. All potential missiles were removed from the beach [including pebbles!] and road blocks were set up on all roads into Yarmouth.

The picket and anti-fascist demonstration on Saturday was quite small. Undoubtedly most workers see this new Tory government as being the most important immediate threat. Certainly the Tories are reactionary enough, and from within the ranks of these

Tories, future fascist forces could arise.

But it is important to stress that fascism is not dead, despite the huge setbacks in election results and membership of the NF.

The police were mobilised in Yarmouth to protect the NF conference. The capitalist state cannot be relied upon to defeat fascism, a point also stressed by last week's trial of Martin Webster. The tremendous pressure of anti-fascist forces, particularly the organised working class, ensured that 'inciting race hatred' was

illegal.

It also ensured Webster was charged. But the so-called "impartial" law, which has sentenced numerous Asians and other demonstrators to jail for opposing the fascists at Southall in April, suspended Webster's six month sentence in order not to "make a martyr" of him.

The threat of fascism remains for the future. Only the labour movement which is built on the unity of workers, black and white, can lead the fight against it.



# 36th COMMUNIST PARTY CONGRESS

**Why is the CP still declining when more and more workers are looking to Marxism?**

**The Thirty-sixth Congress of the British Communist Party meets at a crucial turning-point for the British working class.**

By  
**Roger Silverman**

Six months after the victory of the Thatcher government, it is already probably the most unpopular government in living memory. At the first test, in the Manchester Central by-election, the Tories lost their deposit.

More days have been lost through strikes in the first nine months of 1979 than in any comparable period since the 1926 General Strike. Already, the stormy years of 1972-74 which culminated in the overthrow of the Heath government, have been surpassed.

Two million engineering workers have staged six weekly two-day strikes in the biggest-ever single mobilisation of workers short of the general strike. Workers at Times Newspapers and the commercial television companies have won spectacular victories over employers pursuing the most ruthless tactics.

The prospect opens up of titanic clashes between the government and local councils, with "Clay Crosses" on the scale of Liverpool, Lambeth and Sheffield. There is growing recognition of the repressive role of the police, especially the SPG, after the incidents at Southall, on the Vauxhall picket lines, etc. All this, with inflation doubled to 17% and the onset of a new deep recession!

In this context, the politics of reformism are in crisis. In the general election the Tories won as a result of mass disillusion with the record of the Labour government. The historic decisions of the last LP Conference have changed

the whole balance of power within the Party. The domination of right-wing Labour MPs is being undermined.

Within the rank and file there is a resurgence of interest in the ideas of Marxism.

Should this not be the occasion for a mass influx of workers into the Communist Party? Is this not the classic situation contemplated for the CPGB by Lenin in 1920, of a Labour government that "will prove that I am right, will bring the masses over to my side, will hasten the political death of the Hendersons and the Snowdens..."? (Right-wing Labour leaders of that period).

**To explain the CP's decline, the leadership blames the workers—when in the rank and file of the labour movement there is a resurgence of interest in the ideas of Marxism!**

But no! The Political Resolution at this Congress reports a decline in Party membership "from 25,293 in July 1977 to 20,599 in July 1979." This follows an earlier fall in membership from 28,519 in 1975! Thus, in the last four years membership has dropped by nearly one-third! Moreover, it was reported at the last Congress that only 56% of the nominal members even paid their dues!



Meeting of CP's Congress Arrangements Committee being filmed for ITV programme 'Decision': a belated encouragement of public discussion, but no clear Marxist programme or perspective have emerged.

The CP has in reality made no headway in forty years. It is weaker than at any time since the 1930s.

In 20 out of 24 constituencies, the CP's vote actually dropped between the October 1974 and the 1979 general elections.

How do the theoreticians of the CP explain this phenomenon? They take refuge in the excuse of every bankrupt leadership in history: they blame the workers. Thus, 'Marxism Today' (June 1979) explained the election result as follows: "A significant shift to the right has taken place among the British people... A mass, popular right-wing base of support is now being carved out in British politics."

This is indicated by "the decline in size of the Labour Party and the Communist Party." In doing so, they incidentally provide an alibi also for the right-wing Labour leaders who squandered the loyalty of their supporters through their anti-working class policies.

Any thinking CP worker will be profoundly disturbed at the prolonged decline which threatens the party with the same fate as the Independent Labour Party, which took 40 years to die, but had already lost all significance in the mid-1930s.

There is no alibi to be found in the objective situation. On the contrary, the "threat" of Marxism is giving nightmares both to the Labour right wing and the capitalist class. The capitalist press which screamed in 1923 about the CP's "sedition" and "subversion", today reserves its hysteria for the "Militant tendency".

The CP today is indulgently patronised along with the trendy middle class sects. This was well illustrated by the recent scare story in the 'News of the World' which devoted a full page to lurid tales of Marxist "conspiracies" by the Militant tendency, complete with "foreign gold" amounting to £1 million a year, "links with Russia and the IRA" (in spite of our principled stand against both Stalinist totalitarianism and individual terrorism).

But the CP featured only as an after-thought in a footnote shared with some of the more outlandish fringe groups.

Similarly, one only has to consider the ravings of Callaghan, Shirley Williams, Frank Chapple, the Social Democratic Alliance, etc., about the 'Militant', to see whom they identify as the real challenge to the ideas of the Labour right wing.

Why is it that the CP is regarded even by workers looking towards Marxism as no alternative? Because it puts forward no alternative policies to those of reformism. It talks of a series of "Left governments" carrying out, not socialist policies, but "a major democratic transformation", building an alliance with "sections of the capitalist class", an economic programme of Keynesian "reflation" combined with chauvinistic import controls, etc.

(For a full analysis of the CP programme "British Road to Socialism", see article by Peter Taaffe in 'Militant International Review', Autumn 1978).

The unkindest comment came from the Tribune Labour MP Gwilym Roberts, writing in the 'Morning Star' (25 March 1977): "Where is the revolutionary type of socialism one would expect from the Communist Party? It appears to have been completely lost in a document from which the Communist Party emerges as a minute, impotent version of the Labour Party!"

The CP leadership, during the course of the long post-war boom, was so anxious to accommodate itself to reformist illusions, and ingratiate itself not only with the Labour right wing but even with Liberals, Tories, churchmen, etc., that it has left itself without any justification for a separate existence.

Its industrial base, at one time a formidable source of influence, is fast disintegrating, as the collapse of its position inside the engineering industry has shown. Increasingly, the CP has become dominated by all kinds of do-gooders and

trendies with their pet fashionable social causes.

An additional factor repelling potential worker recruits is the odium still surrounding the CP through contamination with the ugly bureaucratic Stalinist regimes of Russia and Eastern Europe.

It is true that the present CP leadership has tried of late to distance itself from these repressive regimes, with perfunctory rebukes on the persecution of "dissidents", the massacre of Polish workers in 1971, the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, etc. But it has never even made a pretence at a reassessment of the nature of these regimes.

**The CP leadership has as yet failed to make a genuine Marxist re-assessment of the Stalinist regimes**

'Militant' has always defended the social base of these states, where landlordism and capitalism have been abolished and tremendous economic advances have been achieved through the operation of a planned economy. But we denounce the corrupt elites which usurp political power and wax fat on the body of the planned economy, while masquerading in the guise of "Communist Parties".

To refer to them blithely as "socialist countries", as the CP does, in the very same breath as denouncing the crimes of their rulers, only devalues and discredits the very word "socialism".

The plunge in the membership and influence of the CP, at a time when genuine Marxism has been renewed and vindicated by events, has racked the Party in internal dissension. Even after the exodus of hundreds of activists to form a "New Communist Party", a deadlock prevails between three different factions: (1) a neo-reformist "Eurocommunist" wing led by the National Organiser, Dave Cook, and the Editor of 'Marxism Today', Martin Jaques;

(2) the relics of the CP's traditional industrial base, clustered round the Industrial Organiser, Mike Costello, which shrinks instinctively away from the leadership's opportunism but harks back blindly towards the comfort of trusting the "Socialist Motherland" in the USSR; and (3) the CP's Executive Committee, which is balancing uneasily between these two extremes.

The three-way split on the question of inner-Party democracy is symptomatic. The proposals of the Cook faction take the party full circle from the monolithic era of obedient twists and turns at the command of the Kremlin, towards a virtual liquidation of the Party structure. They reflect in organisational terms the political irrelevance of the Party. They represent the logical conclusion of its political submergence into a shapeless and colourless "progressive movement".

It is to the credit of the Party that it has belatedly embraced a democratic spirit and encouraged public discussion in the columns of its journals, including invitations to other left tendencies. We particularly welcome the publication in 'Comment' of a contribution by the Editor of 'Militant', Peter Taaffe.

But it is significant that not one word has been offered in reply to his arguments! We appeal to honest CP workers to think these issues out from the beginning; to answer the question why the CP continues to fade into obscurity regardless of every ebb or flow in the class struggle.

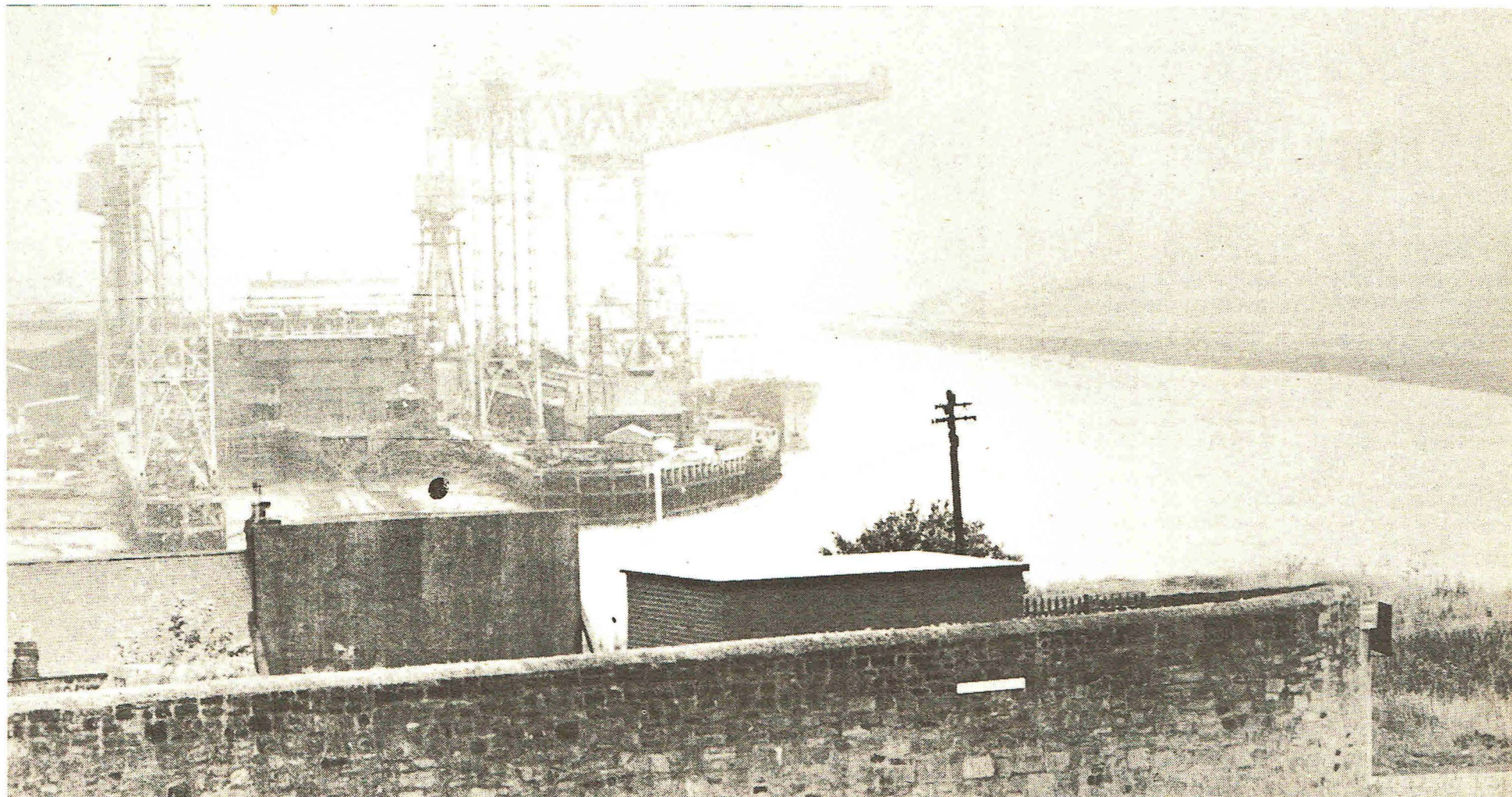
We appeal to them to fight for a return to the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky, which are based on internationalism, workers' democracy, and a faith in the revolutionary potential of the international working class; and to link this campaign to the work of the Marxists who have succeeded, in the face of bitter opposition from the ruling class and the Labour right wing, in firmly and irrevocably establishing Marxism as an accepted and integral current within the mass party of the British working class.



# NEWCASTLE..

Reports: Bob Wade  
Jeff Price  
Photos: Julian McKittrick

## LIVING FROM DAY TO DAY



The Geordies are facing the worst unemployment levels and living conditions since the 1930s. As one worker commented, "In the thirties we lived for tomorrow—now we live from day to day".

**Every day this year 55 jobs have been lost through closures and redundancies in the Newcastle area. Already there are 127,000 officially unemployed—and now a new onslaught of cut backs by the Tory government, and the continuing helter skelter spiral into deeper crisis by the capitalist system will mean even more misery for the workers of Newcastle.**

For many years the Labour Councils of the North-East of England have tried with varying degrees of success to make sure that the money raised from the rates and the money received from the central government was spent

wisely and was used to improve the lot of the working people that they represented.

Newcastle District Council's problems are typical of the many big City Labour Councils. Newcastle has lost many of the traditional industries associated with the north. The closure of the Vickers Scotswood factory is typical of the problem; skilled labour intensive industries

close, and warehouses and offices replace them.

The decline of the manufacturing industry has hit the Newcastle area particularly hard—various schemes, such as the youth opportunity programmes, have been used like a cosmetic to patch up this hideous aspect of capitalism. But as the profit system moves into even deeper crisis, even these will have to be cast aside: the bosses demand more cutbacks in public expenditure, as they try to prop up their ever collapsing system.

Since 1974 the Council has launched a clearance and revitalisation programme to solve the city's chronic housing problem, and although much has been done, no one can argue that the problem is anywhere near being solved. As the young move away to find jobs in other parts of the country or even abroad, it has left an even older population increasingly reliant on social services.

The budget of the Council reflects these problems—out of a total budget (77/78) of £94 million, £12 million was spent on social services.

The housing programme represented another £6.75 million and education £58m. Almost £70m out of a total budget of £94m.

Now Newcastle like every other area is being faced with an impossible task by the Tory government, who are slashing £300 million nationally out of the rate support

grant (RSG). With the increase in the minimum lending rate from 12% to 14% plus other cost increases (fuel and VAT etc.) it means either Newcastle drastically cuts its budget, or massively increase the rates. The leader of the Council reported to the District Labour Party that because of the cut in the RSG it could mean rate increases in excess of 40%!

Close examination of the budgets of particular council departments shows that the room for savings that would be of little consequence or minimal effect doesn't exist.

Tory claims that the cuts will cause no actual harm are ridiculous—for example just examine the figures for the Housing Revenue Account.

Expenditure	£26,000,000
Rent Income	£10,000,000
Debt Charges	£16,000,000

To raise more money would mean a massive increase in rents.

### The banks don't suffer

Greater problems will be created by the fact that the government has refused to meet the extra cost of the Clegg report on pay comparability. Newcastle has promised that it will accept the findings of Clegg; now, where will the money come from?

There is of course one section of society that the council must cushion against

hardship, the people who receive the third largest section of the council's budget, the banks and finance companies. The Council has to borrow large amounts of money to meet sections of its programme and because they are charged crippling rates of interest, the debt charges are enormous.

Although the total debt charges are difficult to calculate, on the general rate fund debt charges total £10m, all this on top of the spending of £84m.

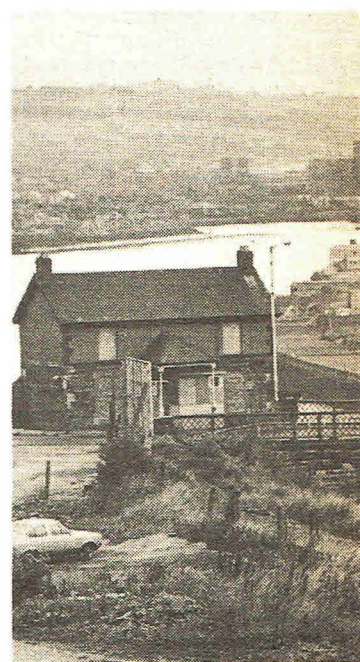
On the Housing Revenue Account it amounts to 60% of the budget. For every pound collected in rent the Council pays £1.60 in debt charges.

So what can the Council do? How can it fight this direct attack on the quality of life of working people and their families?

Having been elected on its programme, the Labour Council must tell the Tories that it intends to implement that programme. The Tories have thrown down the gauntlet, we must accept the challenge and fight to win. Labour must launch a massive programme of public involvement in a campaign against the government and the cuts. Meetings with the trade unions, Trade Councils, local Labour Parties and tenants' organisations must be organised immediately. The Council must go on the offensive, using all its resources to mobilise the working class of Newcastle, meeting in the schools, workplaces and social clubs.

'Fight The Cuts With Labour' must be our slogan. The Council has much economic power and pressure—it must be used to hit the Tories where it hurts most, at the heart of profits and big business. Industrial action, non payment of debt charges, refusal to supply data to government industrial departments investigating possible cutbacks, and any other measures the Council may feel appropriate, must be used.

The government has threatened to suspend or bankrupt any Council which refuses to tow the line. If they do, so be it. Let the Tories take the responsibility, Labour should





# FIGHT BACK WITH THE UWU

Newcastle Trades Council have taken a major step in organising the unemployed through setting up the Unemployed Workers Union.

This is an important measure—it brings the unemployed, especially the youth who do not have TU experience into the trade union movement, and can organise joint campaigns with local trade unions. It also has an unemployment centre where the unemployed can go for help.

Solidarity between workers and the unemployed is essential—history has shown that unemployment is used by the bosses to split the working class—on the one hand unemployed become desperate for work and if manipulated by the bosses can be used as an army of blacklegs in a strike situation; and also the threat of the dole can be used against workers [who have a job] by the bosses when workers move to fight for

better conditions and wages—'if you don't like your job there's plenty more who will do it.'

Members of the UWU explained their aims and campaigns;

Alec McFadden—"Our main aim is to organise the unemployed into a union and to campaign for work and an end to unemployment. We especially aim at the youth—this summer alone 40,000 youngsters have left school and many of them will end up on the dole queue. We are organising them and linking up with unions in the workplaces of the major industries around here.

"We are beginning to establish ourselves—we have set up a new branch in the Spennymoor area and already have 80 members.

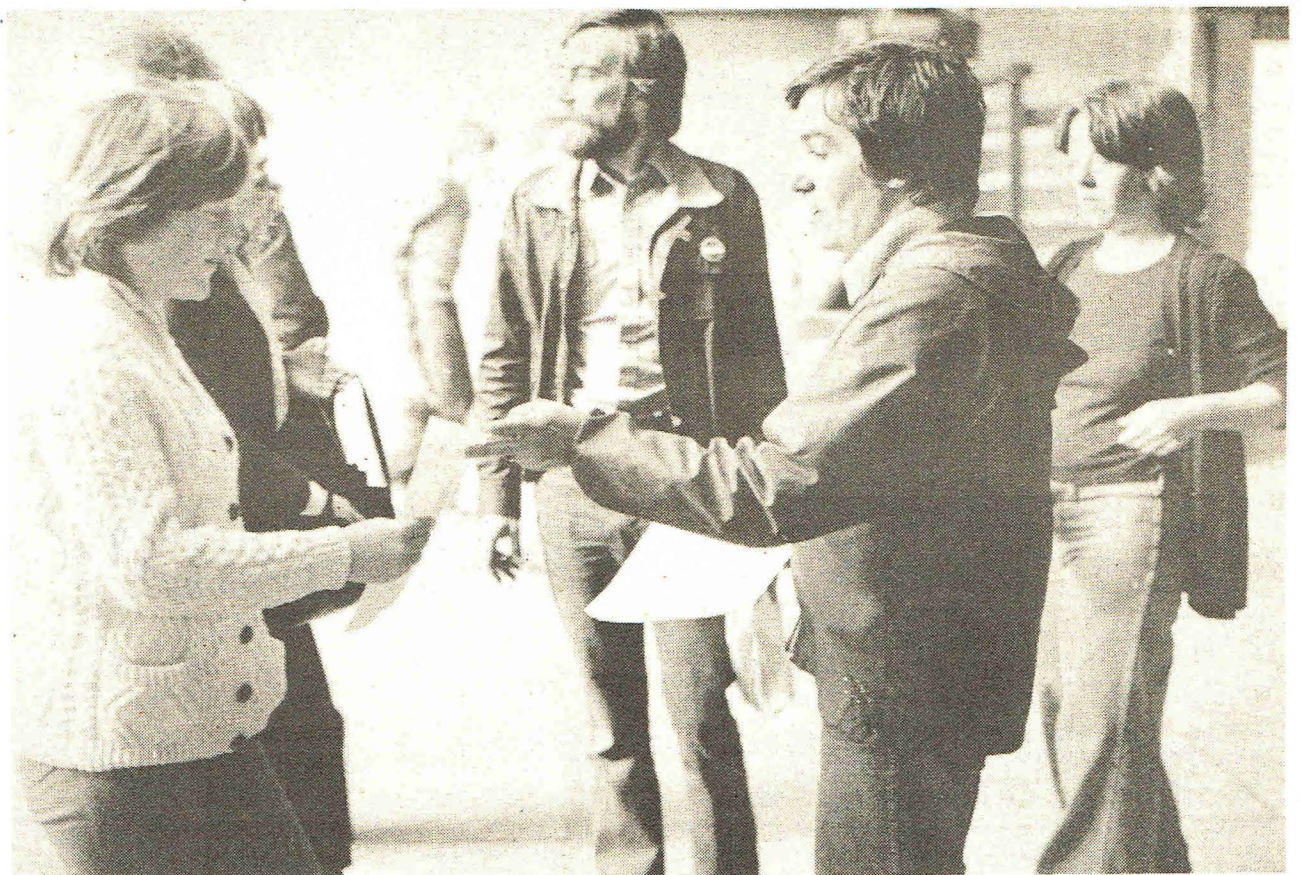
"Our campaigns at present are to stop redundancies and to get the unemployed not to accept fortnightly payments of benefit.

"In the Courtaulds dispute we were invited to speak in three factory places where workers were preparing to take action against closures. There, we explained what benefits they were eligible to during the strike action, and also called on the workers not to accept redundancies, as it would mean more work disappearing from Newcastle for good.

"Now with the latest round of cutbacks the Tories are demanding in the hospitals and civil service, we will launch a campaign to protect these jobs."

Gordon Bell—"Most of the unemployed who come to our centre tell us some hair-raising stories of the predicament they are in. One man had been offered a job of night-watchman on a building site—for working 54 hours he would take home £27 a week!

"You are beginning to get two generations in the same family both out of work—one family told us they had become so poor and desperate



Jeff Price, Gordon Bell and Kath Hardisty, of the UWU, leaflet youngsters signing on at the dole

for food they killed and ate their pet rabbit."

Kath Hardisty [Newcastle North LPYS]—"The other day three girls came into the centre who had been taking part in a job creation scheme. They were very angry. They had been told that they would undergo a period of 'office training'—they expected they would be taught filing and general office duties. Yet all they had done was clean toilets! They were just being used as cheap labour."

One of the UWU's present campaigns is to stop the

Tories introducing fortnightly signing on the dole—this will mean less jobs in the social services, and also affect the unemployed.

Unemployed Chris Edwards, of the Tyneside branch of UWU, said, "Now I don't like signing on weekly—joining the back end of a queue to take part in Tyneside's only growth industry is not the best way to spend half an hour. But we argue our case like this—if you're down to your last tin of beans with two days to go until the Giro arrives, then under fortnightly signing

it means that those beans will be your last for 4 days.

"Such measures as fortnightly signing also accept the fact of unemployment, which the working class of Tyneside are not prepared to do. As one man said to me, 'If this government had its way they'd just get you to ring up once a year to confirm you're still alive.'"

Ann Hughes, 16 unemployed.

"I left school in May—I haven't been able to find work yet. I've tried everywhere. I'm not really bothered what I do, any job will do. As far as I

know only three or four people from my year at school have managed to find work.

"I live at home—I give my parents £6 a week out of £11 dole money—that leaves me £5 to spend. I only go out once a week because that's all I can afford. When I first signed on I didn't get any money for a month—I went four weeks without any money. I was lucky I was living at home.

"What annoys me is that my parents think I'm just not trying to find work. I makes it very difficult at home."

Bordering on the Scotswood housing estate are now derelict Noble Street and Norwich House flats, a typical example of the failure of capitalism's attempts at crash built housing programmes.

Built in the mid 1960s, the flats were badly planned and constructed that soon living conditions there became so bad, it is believed that some tenants set fire to their flats in order to force the council to rehouse them.

The flats are now boarded up and are useless, save providing the bored youngsters of Scotswood with a dangerous playground—yet the council are still paying off the debt charges on the money they borrowed from the banks to build them and will be doing so until 1990!



## 'The pride and the confidence went with the jobs'

One area that highlights the decay and degeneration of Newcastle is the Scotswood housing estate to the west end of the city.

Newcastle has always been a depressed area. As one old worker said, "In the thirties we lived for tomorrow—now we live from day to day."

Scotswood has all the taints of an area of depression—two generations of unemployment, houses in neglect because of the run down of council maintenance services, and the general air of despair which hangs over the whole area.

Three community and social workers, Joe Caffrey, Ed Myers and Katrina McCormick, described the Scotswood area and the problems it

faces:

Joe: "When this estate was first built it was a progressive experimental idea, giving modest but habitable homes to the workers of the coal pits and the other main employer in the area, Vickers. But now of course, all these major employers have closed, and many of the workshops which provided the jobs from the late thirties to the late fifties are now used as warehouses, and as such only provide work for a few people.

It is now estimated that on the Scotswood estate itself there is about 21% unemployment. In this area, out of 10 years of a workers' life, 5 of those he will be dependant on some form of state benefit."

Ed: "In Newcastle, the

people of Scotswood are blacked as far as credit is concerned—because of their reputation of poverty they are a bad bet as far as lending money is concerned. Mind you, these sharks who are loath to give them credit take their 'provi tickets' (providence vouchers) quick enough. You usually find that a housewife has no cash left in the house so she gives a shop owner a £10 provi ticket and takes about £9's worth of food.

"Every time a person is forced to do this it means the shopowner can rake off about 10% for himself. What is even more tragic is that families are forced to do this with their child benefit books as well, usually exchanging

them for cash".

Katrina: "As far as I'm concerned the degeneration of Scotswood goes hand in hand with the rise in unemployment. During the 50s this was a model estate—houses were tidy, gardens and allotments were looked after and there was a whole community life—pigeon, whippet clubs, and other social gatherings. Most of the workers were employed at Vickers, and, although they were making weapons of destruction, they had pride in their work because of the precision and expertise that was needed. Now there is no work—the pride and confidence has gone with it, and the thriving community spirit has been replaced by widespread demoralisation."







# KAMPUCHEA

**Kampuchea [formerly Cambodia] is a devastated country. A majority of its remaining four to five million people face imminent starvation.**

Eighty or ninety per cent of the country's children are suffering from malnutrition. Diseases like malaria, dysentery, and even anthrax—which can easily be wiped out with drugs—have reached epidemic proportions.

The destruction and death which has been visited on this small country in the last decade is being seen as a new 'holocaust'.

During 1970-73 Cambodia was subjected to barbarous American bombing. In the aftermath of the war, the US puppet regime of Lon Nol was overthrown by the Khmer Rouge which took power in April 1975, proclaiming a 'Democratic Kampuchea'.

For four years, until it was brought down by the Vietnamese invasion last January, the Khmer Rouge regime under Pol Pot subjected the country to a ruthless dictatorship. It claimed to have returned society to 'year zero', wiping out the past, and to be carrying through a 'total revolution'.

Recent reports from inside Kampuchea, particularly John Pilger's lengthy report in the 'Daily Mirror' (12 & 13 September) and his harrowing television documentary, (ITV, 30 October), have highlighted the horrifying intensity and scale of the repression under Pol Pot.

What could give rise to such a barbaric regime? What was its real social and political character?

What has been changed now by the Vietnamese replacing 'Democratic Kampuchea' with a 'People's Republic of Kampuchea'?

The capitalist press is now printing fearless exposures of the horrors of the Pol Pot regime. They are inhibited only by imperialism's current attempts to establish diplomatic links and lucrative trade deals with the Chinese bureaucracy, which is still backing the deposed Pol Pot regime.

By highlighting the terrible repression in Kampuchea and the conflicts between the so-called 'socialist' countries in South-East Asia, they hope to distort and discredit the idea of a socialist society among the workers in Britain.

When US imperialism was devastating Cambodia with carpet-bombing, the capitalist press was silent. Until the eve of US defeat in Vietnam, they fervently supported the intervention of US imperialism.

They printed no fearless exposures of the Lon Nol regime, propped up by American arms.

By  
Lynn Walsh

The crass hypocrisy of imperialism's 'humanitarian' denunciations of the so-called 'Communist' regimes, however, is laid bare by their cynical attempts to use desperately needed food as another weapon of war.

Only a trickle is getting through, mainly through small voluntary relief organisations. The priority for Carter and Thatcher is not to feed the starving, but as 'The Guardian' says, "to structure aid in such a way as to give minimum legitimacy to Heng Samrin (the Vietnamese commander now ruling Kampuchea) and maximum help to Pol Pot."

Forced to abandon its military intervention in Vietnam, US imperialism (with Britain tagging along) is trying to undermine the attempt of Vietnam (backed by the Russian bureaucracy) to dominate South-East Asia. To this end they have sided with Pol Pot, the Khmer Rouge leader backed by the Chinese leadership.

The Vietnamese leaders, however, having brought down the Khmer Rouge regime by their military intervention, are now posing as the 'liberators' of Vietnam—a claim supported by some liberals and lefts in Britain.

But it is precisely the narrow nationalist policies of the Vietnamese, the Russian, and the Chinese bureaucracies, and their rivalry in SE Asia, which has conditioned the developments in Cambodia/Kampuchea.

## Between 1970 and 1973 US imperialism dropped the equivalent in tons of five Hiroshima bombs on neutral Cambodia

Liberal commentators like Pilger present the measures of the Khmer Rouge regime as the irrational, destructive work of totally mad or evil men. But give the fact that this was a bonapartist leadership attempting a social transformation within the national limits of an economically primitive country, their Draconian economic measures and ferocious repression were determined by the situation which faced them.

This does not for a moment justify or excuse the horrendous crimes of the Stalinist regime which took over Kampuchea in 1975.

But there is fundamentally nothing to choose between the different Stalinist regimes. The Vietnam-backed Heng Samrin regime may for the moment appear almost benign compared to that of Pol Pot. But in every case, the policies of the Stalinist regimes, whether in Russia, China, Vietnam, or Kampuchea under the Khmer Rouge, are determined by the bur-

# Who is responsible?



**Pol Pot, Prime Minister of 'Democratic Kampuchea' 1975-79 and general secretary of the Kampuchean Communist Party, whose cadres and fighters are known as the Khmer Rouge.**



**Heng Samrin, Vietnam's consul in Kampuchea. Heading the so-called 'National United Front for National Salvation', Heng led the Vietnamese forces which brought down Pol Pot's regime in January this year.**

eaucratic, bonapartist character of their ruling elite, and by the circumstances confronting them.

As John Pilger's reports themselves made clear, between the Spring of 1970 and 1973 the equivalent in tons of five Hiroshima bombs was dropped on Cambodia. This devastation of a formally neutral country was the result of an unconstitutional, secret decision by Nixon and Kissinger, who regarded it as a 'logical' extension of US intervention in SE Asia.

By 1975 Cambodia had suffered dislocation and devastation that equalled and probably surpassed that of Laos and Vietnam. At least 600,000 people died as a result of the bombing, and consequent malnutrition and disease.

It is imperialism that bears the primary responsibility for events in Kampuchea. The Khmer Rouge regime was, in the last analysis, the product of decades of colonial exploitation, and four or five years of bloody military intervention.

Faced with a critical shortage of food, the Khmer Rouge instigated the forced transfer of the urban population to the countryside. By its fall, the Pol Pot government had, in fact, restored a self-sufficiency in rice—but at enormous human cost.

The Khmer Rouge also favoured the evacuation of the towns for political reasons. The towns were, by their very nature, centres for the capitalists, merchants, financiers, and professional middle clas-

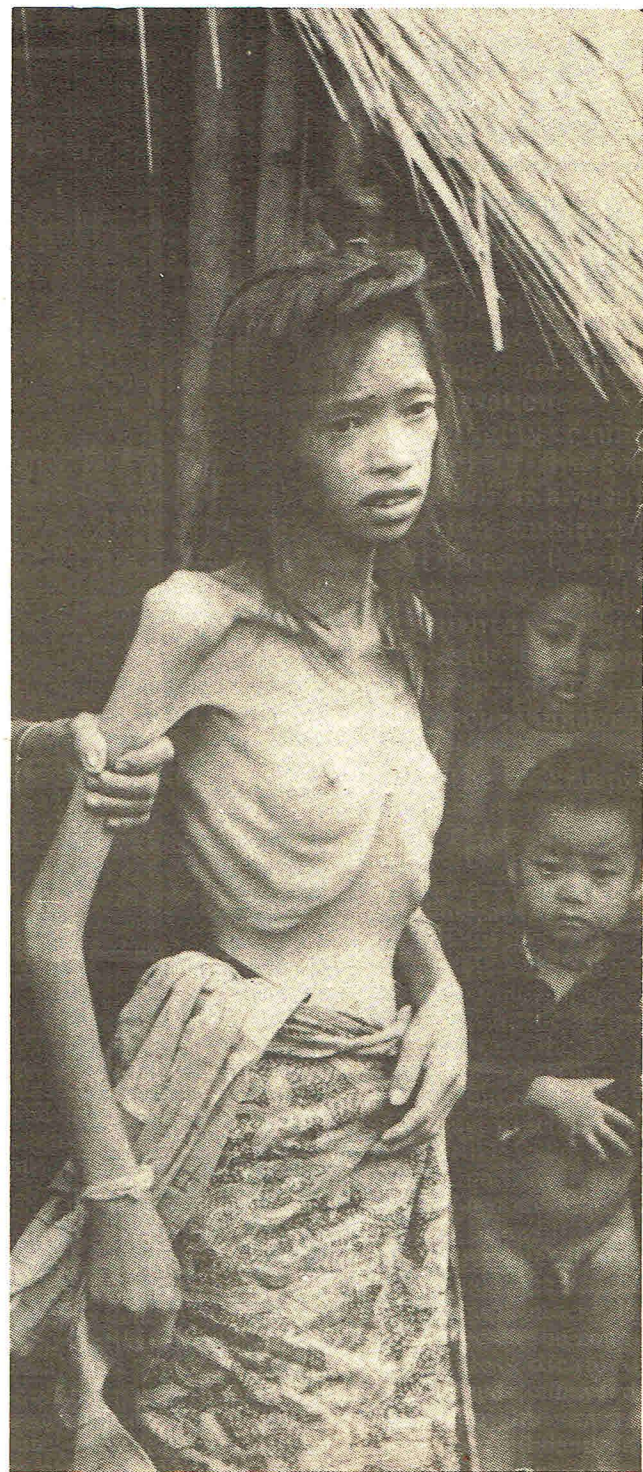
ses, linked to US imperialism and its puppet regime, and thus the obvious basis of counter-revolutionary opposition to the Khmer Rouge regime.

As a leadership evidently lacking overwhelming mass support, the Khmer Rouge was forced to take drastic repressive measures to secure its power. In the countryside, they could rely on the support or passive acceptance of the peasantry, who make up over 80% of the country's population.

The Khmer Rouge not only destroyed the rotten Lon Nol government but eliminated landlordism and capitalism, and Kampuchea, like Vietnam, and Russia and China, must now be characterised as a proletarian bonapartist state. As in every other case where progressive property relations have been introduced by Stalinist methods, this has been at an enormous human cost.

In Russia, Stalin's forced collectivisation of the peasantry, his forced labour and prison camps, and his political executions, claimed five or six million victims, or more. In Kampuchea, the Khmer Rouge's purges (perhaps 200,000 executions) and the fatal effects of their forced migrations and harsh forced-labour regime in the countryside, has taken the proportionately heavier toll in relation to the country's seven million—probably a million victims or more.

Only a genuine Marxist leadership, with mass support among the workers and



peasants, and making an internationalist appeal to the stronger sections of the working class in the more economically developed countries could achieve the social transformation of an underdeveloped country in a democratic manner and without a terrible expenditure of human resources.

Such a perspective has nothing in common with Stalinism.

It would be entirely wrong to suppose that Vietnam intervened in Kampuchea for democratic or humanitarian reasons. Under Ho Chi Minh and after, the Hanoi regime has never hesitated to use repression if necessary to safeguard its privilege and power.

Since the start of its conflict with the Chinese bureaucracy, for instance, the Vietnamese government has instigated a thoroughly undemocratic, nationalistic campaign against the ethnic Chinese in northern border regions, provoking a mass exodus of refugees.

Although only 1% of the population in the north, the ethnic Chinese made up about 10% of the skilled working class, and their expulsion has disrupted industry and added to food and other shortages in Vietnam.

The conflict with China, which led to war last year, itself arises from the national rivalry between the bureaucracies for domination of SE Asia.

Backed by the Russian leadership, Vietnam, the strongest military power of

the region, is undoubtedly attempting to establish its hegemony over SE Asia. Vietnam's attempts to set up an Indo-China Federation, as a means of cementing their domination, was at least partly responsible (together with the Chinese leadership's manoeuvres in Cambodia) for the Khmer Rouge's commitment to an extreme form of 'socialism in one country'.

Laos is already a satellite of Vietnam.

Whatever the welcome for the Vietnamese forces for the moment, the Hanoi-controlled Heng Samrin regime has taken over colossal problems in Kampuchea. In all probability it will also face armed resistance from the remnants of the Khmer Rouge, as well as from nationalist and right-wing forces.

How can the appalling problems of backwardness in South-East Asia be overcome and the national conflicts be resolved?

Only a Socialist Federation South-East Asia, based on the fraternal co-operation of the states involved and undertaking internationalist collaboration with the working class of the advanced capitalist countries, can provide a way forward.

This would presuppose the removal of the parasitic bureaucracies which misappropriate and squander the gains of the planned economy—and necessitate the establishment of democratic rule by the workers and peasants.



## S.KOREA GHANA ZIMBABWE

# SPLIT IN RULING-CLASS AS S.KOREA MOVES INTO CRISIS

By  
Jim Chrystie

The assassination of President Park, South Korea's dictator, sent shock-waves through the capitals of Western imperialism. In a year which has seen the downfall of such bastions of capitalism in the 'third world' as the Shah of Iran, and the growing strike wave in Brazil, is South Korea about to follow suit?

The ruling class in the West had reason to be scared. For the assassination of Park was not an isolated act of individual terror committed by a deranged madman.

It was done by the head of the Korean CIA and arose over an argument on how best to handle the rising discontent in the country, as the economy stutters into trouble.

Splits in the ruling class are an indication of a regime in crisis. In S Korea this split

took a particularly graphic and final form. The head of the Korean CIA invited Park and five aides to dinner and shot them dead.

Ten days before, mass demonstrations broke out in Pusan, the country's second largest city, as workers protested about the expulsion of the Opposition leader from the National Assembly. Tanks and troops were sent in to Pusan to crush the protest, and Park was reportedly angry at the Korean CIA's incompetence.

The discontent at Pusan was just part of a rising protest by Korean workers. The industrialisation of S Korea over the last 20 years has created capitalism's grave-digger, a massive working class.

And now its economic growth is being affected by world recession and the increase in protectionism. The current projected growth rate of 6½%, although large

by capitalist standards, is only half last year's 12%.

## Economy slows down

With the economy geared to the export market [35% of Gross National Product] restrictions on importation of Korean goods e.g. textiles is causing a cutback in the economy. Textile and shoe exports account for 40% of textile earnings.

Korean workers have not taken cutbacks lying down. Recently there was a mass sit-in by some textile workers objecting to the closure of their factory.

In the last two decades the

staggering economic development of South Korea has created a large working class. In 1961 when Park seized power, GNP was only \$2 billion.

By last year this had grown by 1,800% to \$36 billion. 20% of the country's population now live in Seoul, the capital, but workers are faced by inflation of over 30%.

The discontent of workers has been reflected by the opposition capitalist New Democratic Party. They have become a sounding-board for urban discontent and demands for constitutional change.

"As long as national income was growing fast, open

opposition was largely confined to intellectual dissidents, students and Christians. When the economy turned down last year and urban workers found themselves up against problems of soaring prices, shortages of consumer items, and loss of jobs, unrest spread rapidly." [Financial Times, 29 October.]

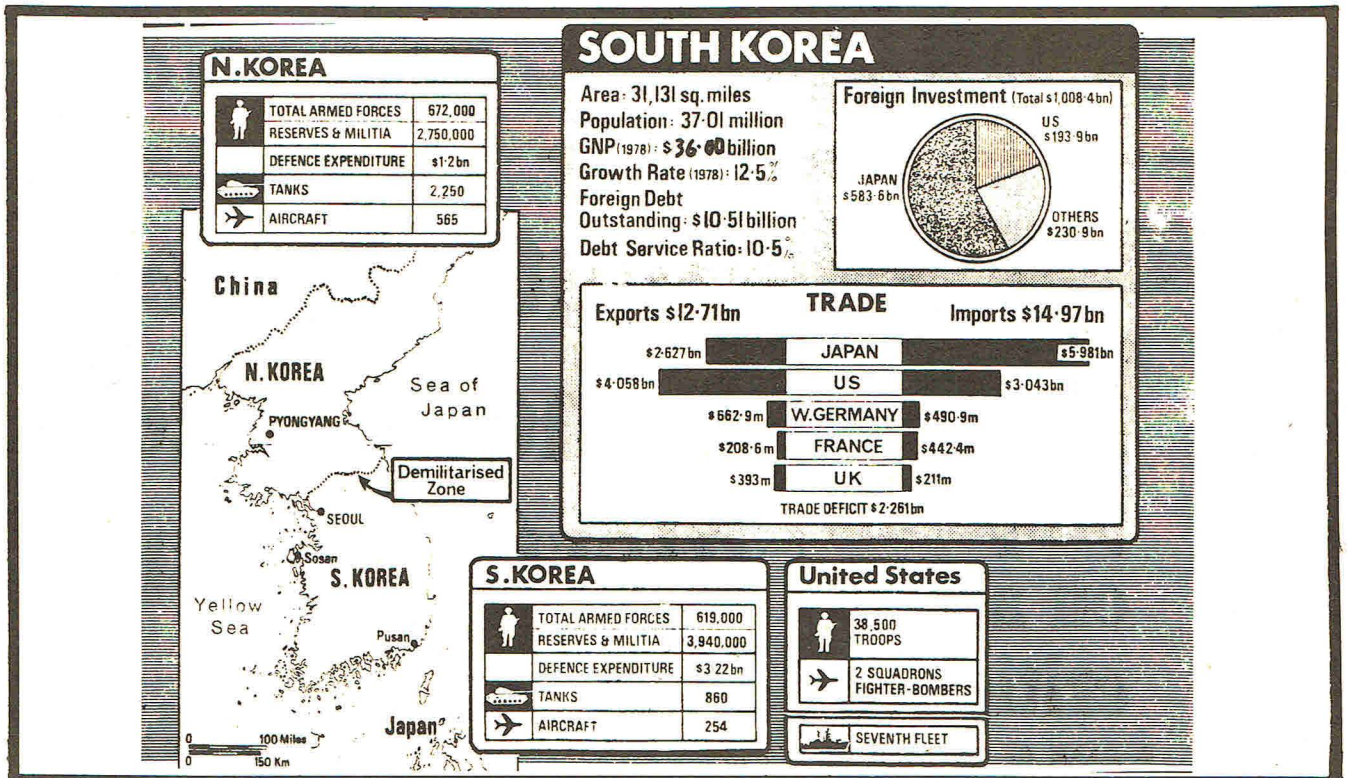
The New Democratic Party reflected this discontent. Earlier this year it elected a new leader Kim Young-sam who vigorously attacked the Park dictatorship.

His call for an end to martial law and Park's Emergency reflected the unrest of workers and the middle class.

Park responded by repression declaring Kim's election as Opposition leader invalid.

When the NDP then quit the Assembly in protest in October, the people of Pusan took to the streets. This provoked Park's military suppression and the clash with the Korean CIA for not preventing the outbreak.

The regime and its American backers may now be able to install a new dictator. But they will not be able to restore long-term stability. The Korean workers, a new young working class, are rising to their feet and they are not prepared to endure economic recession and political dictatorship for much longer.



# STRIKE WAVE ROCKS NEW GHANAIAN REGIME

The first three weeks of the People's National Party [PNP] government has seen a massive strike wave as workers have moved into struggle. This has led to a class polarisation within the ruling party itself.

The strike actions have involved industrial and dock workers, and mine and cocoa workers who have vowed not to accept any promises from the government until their full demands were met. Even the conservative white-collar worker have embarked on selective national strikes to back up their demands.

The impotence of the PNP government can be seen in its contradictory pronouncements—the newly-appointed Minister of Internal Affairs assured workers that the new government would not use the police and special branch to terrorise them. A week later the police used teargas and viciously attacked more than 500 teachers demonstrating against government policies.

The medical profession are flexing their muscles against the new government. In all there have been not less than 20 strikes since the PNP took over from the military.

Much seems to hinge on the attitude of the military in the coming months. Since the uprising of 4 June, which launched the 'revolution' and the 'house-cleaning exercise' the armed forces reflected the anti-elite, anti-privilege attitude which is shared by the workers and peasants of the

By  
Joni  
Bako-Onipa

country. They had to leave office, because of the military's general unpopularity, but are biding their time. They have said that any future government will be subjected to the most vigorous scrutiny by the people who elected them.

One of the basic tenets of the concordat between the military and the PNP government is that the 'house-cleaning' will continue during civilian rule. And President Limman has agreed that this is so. However, some of the most widely heard calls for 'house-cleaning' directly concern the leadership of the PNP itself.

For a long time, there has been a clear split between the 'old guard' of Nkruma's CPP right wing and the left-wing represented by the youth wing and the new strength of the left opposition led by Jonny Hanson who led the People's Revolutionary Party into the PNP.

There has been the emergence of Marxist ideas in the PNP which is more of a middle-class nationalist than a democratic socialist party. The reactionary tactics of the right wing is shown in their calculated policy of isolating the left in the cabinet and in the leadership of the party.

The Marxist influence in the party has scared the right wing, that they are attempting to suspend the leadership of the youth wing, claiming that it has been infiltrated by

"misguided elements" whose aim it is to sow division in the party.

The President's lack of control in the party has been exposed by the strikes and the left-right clash. President Limman never formed a party but was brought in as a compromise leader since the right-wing corrupt leadership dared not show itself to the Ghanaian people. It has now formed groups of thugs to terrorise opponents.

The polarisation in Ghanaian society also arises from the fiscal policies dictated by the IMF which the government is adopting to solve Ghana's problems.

The workers have demonstrated through strikes their determination to use their increased strength and confidence. All that is required is a Marxist leadership with a revolutionary determination, a socialist programme to mobilise the masses and an internationalist perspective.

The workers are in no mood to accept attacks on their living standard which has at best remained static during the previous military regimes. They have turned to their own trade unions to fight the government austerity measures.

In the course of such struggles the pressure of the workers will force a split in the PNP and the formation of a clear socialist party. Armed with a Marxist understanding this will have the opportunity of mobilising the workers to nationalise the banks and monopolies and trading enterprises under workers' control and management.



Demonstration by Ghanaian workers

## ZIMBABWE

### DEFEAT IMPERIALISM'S PLANS! FORWARD TO A SOCIALIST SOUTHERN AFRICA!

#### Birmingham DEMONSTRATIONS

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10th

Assemble 12.00 noon, junction of

Rose Hill, Soho Road.

March to Farcroft, Rookery Rd,

Handsworth for

Conference 2-5 p.m.

Organised by LPYS Southern

Africa Campaign

London

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 11th

1.30 p.m. Speakers Corner

March to Rally at Trafalgar Sq.

Organised by Anti-Apartheid

Movement

LPYS Branches—bring banners



# LETTERS

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

## How we beat our bosses

Dear Comrades,

I work for a company by the name of PGW Holdings, wholesale paint merchants, where I am shop steward.

On Friday October 12th, 10 minutes before we were due to go home, I was called to the office and told by management that one of our members had been sacked. His references were 'not good enough', although he had worked for the company for almost a year.

They did not wish him to work a week's notice, but would give him a week's money in lieu. When I asked if this man's work had been satisfactory I was told 'That's got nothing to do with it.'

I called a meeting of our members at which it was decided that our sacked brother should report for work on Monday. If he was sent home there would be a walk out.

On the Monday, to cut the story short, the company began to back down and with the full backing of our full time official we achieved immediate reinstatement.

What is important is to draw the correct conclusions from this experience. This was an attack on our union organisation by trying to get rid of one of our more active members. We were treating this as a case of victimisation.

Keeping the membership informed on the situation was vital if we expected their support.

The most important lesson is that it was only by relying on our collective strength that we made the company back down. During the dispute not a thing was moved out of the warehouse, until we had achieved reinstatement.

As a result of this dispute I feel confident that on any future issue we can take on the company on very much better terms.

Perhaps in future issues of the paper we can take up the problems of trade union organisation in small workplaces.

Fraternally,  
Ray Carr  
T&GWU  
(Personal capacity)

## Margaret Thatcher—patient-basher

Dear Comrades,

1 in 6 people are diagnosed as mentally ill at some time in their lives. In Birmingham, that one is going to have their problems intensified by the threatened closure of the John Connolly hospital in Sparkbrook.

The local Area Health Authority is currently busy shuffling figures and catchment areas around to convince us that the closure of the hospital will actually improve the lot of the mentally ill in the area.

In the words of an ASTMS member, a consultant psychiatrist, the hospital has "always been underbedded" and "never fully staffed". The South Birmingham hospital was opened in 1965, and has catered uniquely, for the special needs of immigrants in a community orientated way, rather than the traditional psychiatric "social control" approach.

This reduction in facilities has not been attributed to Thatcher's cuts...or so the AHA would have us believe. No. This particular reduction in the living standards of working people is attributed to the IMPROVEMENT of the service!

The AHA are suggesting that by reducing the number of beds available to the mentally ill from 90 to 45, the lot of the patients will be

improved. You can't deny they've got a sense of humour! They are surely joking when they expect us to believe this ridiculous claim.

The unions involved, not surprisingly, don't get the joke. COHSE, ASTMS, and NUPE members involved are organising to present an obstacle in the path of the AHA. The local Indian Workers' Association and the Bangladeshi Association are also defending the hospital.

It is only by coming together in this way that we can have a cat's chance in hell of putting a stop to the attack on our living standards made by that great lady of the lamp, Margaret Thatcher [patient-basher].

Maybe this is part of her next election campaign. If she can intensify mental illness, her share of the vote might not slump after all. And let's face it, she's driving us all round the bend.

Offers of assistance should be sent to M. O'Shea, 627 Stratford Road, Sparkbrook, Birmingham. For speakers contact J. Al-Seffai, Neurophysiology dept, John Connolly Hospital, Birmingham. Tel 021-453-3771

Yours fraternally,  
Deb Grace  
[Selly Oak LPYS]  
and  
and Martin Glozier  
[Sparkhill LPYS]

## Disabled workers campaign

Dear Sir,

May I make a few points on the item "Disabled Workers" by KR Cocker, in your columns on the 19/10.

He refers to 'green cards' for disabled workers. Well, there are two types of green cards—one section is for the hard-to-place disabled worker; the other is for the less difficult handicap.

He also refers to firms' obligations: that 10% of the work force should be made up of the disabled. Under the Chronic Sick & Disabled Act 1970, the official quota of disabled that should be employed in firms is a minimum of 3%. But, naturally, firms can employ a higher percentage!

For Mr Cocker's benefit (and others), at this time there is a campaign by the Manpower Services, called "Fit to Work", going round all the country—with the aim to educate small and large businesses into employing disabled people.

If anybody is interested, they could write to Manpower Services for literature or pay a visit to their local Job Centre where they will be given information and help and "Jobs for the disabled".

Yours,  
Cllr. Don Waller,  
c/o Town Hall,  
Hackney, London E8

## The real 'enemies of democracy'

Dear Comrades,

The publication of Paul McCormack's infamous "Enemies of Democracy" which aims to give an account of Marxist "infiltration" in the Labour Party, coincides with a report which will have confirmed the suspicions of many Labour Party and trade union members.

According to 'The Guardian' (13.10.79) Julian Lewis, McCormack's sidekick in the battle to prevent Newham North East Labour Party exercising its democratic right of recall over the MP—has admitted to having received financial aid from John Gouriet, a director of the self-styled National Association for Freedom (an organisation known for the callousness of its involvement in anti-union activities, now known as 'The Freedom Association, presumably because people were getting it mixed up with the fascist National Front).

Let this then be an object lesson to those who doubt the need for accountability over elected representatives and favour witchhunts and enquiries into the left. There are "enemies of democracy" and "infiltrators", but they lie elsewhere!

Fraternally,  
L Kaplan,  
(Ardwick LPYS,  
Manchester)

## Jamaican socialists

Dear Editor,

I have just read Lynn Walsh's brilliant and correct analysis of a backward right winger (Shirley Williams) published in your issue of 21st September 1979.

The problems socialists encounter in the British Labour Party are not unknown to socialists in Jamaica's Peoples National Party. This is perhaps no coincidence because our party was put in motion with not a little help from Sir Stafford Cripps, a veteran of your Labour Party, and as such has suffered from the petty-bourgeois distractions characteristic of Fabianism.

The parallel continues up to our recent annual conferences in which the progressive nature of both our parties were emphasised and vindicated. In Jamaica the PNP has put itself on a militant footing by electing almost exclusively comrades committed to deep Party democracy and advance the socialist process.

There is no celebration here of "left" victory because we know that a party which makes any pretence at being socialist can be nothing if not "left".

We would like to congratulate the 'Militant' movement in the British Labour Party for the strides they have made at your recently concluded conference. In our Party the Leader has always been elected at General Conference, the supreme body of the Party. This year there was an "innovation", the General Secretary was also elected at General Conference.

Thanks for my copies of Militant—my friends, comrades and clients enjoy it.

Your very truly,  
Enoch L. Blake  
Kingston, Jamaica

## Backwards down the job ladder

Dear Comrades,

When I was 16 I left school for a very special job [or so I thought!]. It was a training post in local government.

Four days a week I would work as a 'storekeeper-clerk' and one day a week I would do a part-time course [lasting 2 years. This, my employer said would give me work experience and also a qualification equivalent to two 'A-levels'.

Great, I thought—the 'ideal' job. Bitter experience has proved me wrong. The 'work-experience' was carrying boxes of stationary about all day to the various departments in a rather large building—plus

any other work nobody else wanted to do.

Still, I stuck out the part-time course plus another year—but then packed in my job. Although I passed the exams with credits, it became obvious local authority employers preferred people with degrees—so that's what I did!

Although sceptical about the employers' claim that this was an 'ideal' training post I said nothing—failure to complete this year of training means you fail the course.

However, this job wasn't as bad as the one I had when I was 16—it was worse.

Not only was I given consistently boring jobs,

asked to fetch the bosses' coffee and used as a general errand boy—I was paid the appalling salary of £1,701 per year gross.

At 22 years old I am financially worse off than when I was 16. When I finish my course next year unemployment is likely to be 2 million, inflation could well be 20% plus. Not a very bright future.

I don't have to go through any more 'training' to prove to myself that socialism, as put forward by the "Militant" is the only answer!

Fraternally,  
A Militant Supporter

## What goes on at Worcester College for the blind

Dear Comrades,

At our school there is a union. You will get the joke if you read further on.

This union is a talking-shop where you throw suggestions forward and they are immediately turned down.

This school is a boarding school so therefore we attend all meals. At a meeting of the union there was a suggestion that we could leave the dining-room when the bell for seconds went.

Now surely the democratic way to decide this was for the union representatives for each form to vote?

This of course did not happen, all that did happen was a meeting of the staff and the idea was immediately rejected.

I am sure everyone would agree that when an argument between pupil and staff is happening it should be fought on fair grounds and the teacher should not have the power to give detention when he or she is being beaten, which happens occasionally here.

There is a strong feeling here that we should work five days a week. The present

situation is that we have to work Saturday mornings, which obliterates any plans that we have for the weekend. When you succeed in getting time off for a holiday, snide comments are made to you by everybody.

If we did manage to get a five day week we could eventually succeed in integrating blind and sighted boys which in this competitive society is a necessity.

A fair number of people come from one-parent families of broken homes, yet local education authorities will not

give them a grant to pay for their clothes. I am lucky because I get one, but surely in the case of people not so fortunate as me, the rule of school uniform should be omitted. It should be anyway, but at a school like this we do not stand much chance of that.

I hope this letter has given you a proper insight into what actually happens at Worcester College for the Blind. Please do not give my name as I fear expulsion.

## Boss ends family holidays

Dear Comrades,

Present-day Tory policy seems intent to reverse the clock and put us back to a time where the employer dictates and rules our lives.

Listening to a conversation the other day it seems some employers have taken the initiative and already begun to take such measures.

One such company is W.E. Cary (Manchester). Recently the management sent round letters which the employees had to sign stating that under no circumstances will they take holidays other than those stated by the firm, even when holidays are taken without pay.

The majority of women work in the office, so this means families will be unable to take holidays together, because their husbands' holidays may occur at a different time.

The present archival conditions and pay at this company seem well suited to Victorian ages. The reason the employers are allowed to operate under these conditions is because there is no union in the company.

No doubt Margaret Thatcher would hold this up as a shining example of private enterprise.

Best wishes,  
Peter Gunn  
(Chairman Salford LPYS)



# EIGHT WEEKS TO GO!

This week Militant's Fighting Fund has reached £58,295 towards its annual target of £85,000. This means that £26,703 is left to raise in the nine weeks now left before January 5th! But if all our readers and supporters make the maximum effort, the £85,000 figure can be achieved.

Last year, for several weeks running in the autumn we had a weekly figure of over £3,000. We need that same enthusiasm to be demonstrated once again. This year, given the mood developing against the Tories, an all-out drive for cash should bring even greater results!

What does this mean for each area shown on the progress chart?

**Eastern** have £2,000 left to raise—a massive amount! But, if every supporter goes after cash for 'Militant' at every opportunity, the target could be reached. This week's £60.21 included an excellent £47.22 collection from a Militant Readers' Meeting in Southend.

**Hants & IOW** is one of the areas nearest its target. They should go well over the £807 needed. However, this week's figure was dangerously low—only £13 (of which £3 came from R Bell, Portsmouth).

**Humberside** are £659 short of their target and only £31 came in this week. Special thanks to P Howard and R Leggott, and to the organisers of the curry evening in Cleethorpes which brought in £20.

By Steve Cawley

**London North** have £3,759 to get to the target. This works out at just over £400 a week. £202 this week came from a large number of 'smaller' contributions including D Cheesomon, B Williams, F Curtis, D Chaloner (FBU EC), A Tanner, P Smith, P Fagan, S Todd-Hunter, and a £50 rebate from C Hill.

**London South** are in the lead at present, still with £679 or £75 per week needed. Special thanks to C Barber (Croydon), Militant Readers Meeting in Deptford (collection, after expenses £59) and a Lambeth supporter for £20 'union expenses'.

**Manchester & Lancs** must plan to get another £2,274 by the year's end. This week's £87 was mainly from a local Militant sellers' rally, but the sale of Rochdale tomatoes helped.

**Merseyside** have to raise another £2,130 to meet their target, or £237 a week on average—by no means impossible; the comrades in that area managed £222 this week! Thanks to all who donated at

rallies, socials etc. and to Liverpool University Labour Club members (£18), P Corran (NGA) £3, R Hughes £10, and a Chester supporter £20.

**Midlands East** need £975 and have broken the £1,000 barrier! This week Leicester readers were the area's 'leaders', contributing almost all the £104 received. £40 was from a meeting on the Labour Party conference, and two students gave us £10 each.

**Midlands West** have got to find £323 on average for the next nine weeks to hit the target, £2,906 in all. This week they managed £243. But very special thanks to a Northfield reader who gave a massive £100! Thanks also to P Cammack (£22), M Hanbury (£3), Birmingham readers £18, car lifts Handsworth (£5), three Coventry teachers (£5.50), and many others.

**Northern's** slice of the target is similar—supporters need to raise £2,230, just under £250 per week, £101 reached us this week, but £85 of that came from Hartlepool alone! Thanks also to S Bober (Whickham) for £3.20.

**Scotland East** are £1,294 off target, and we've already included money promised to be 'on the way', so the comrades will have to pull out all the stops. Special thanks

to Bill Murray of Edinburgh North CLP for donating his tax rebate.

**Scotland East** are unfortunately 'propping up the table' at the moment. Another £2,500 to go means a strong finish is essential. K McCoombes sent us a fiver this week—how many others in West Scotland can match this straight away?

**South East** is maintaining its position in the table, with a very welcome £10 donation from Littlehampton Labour Party. £15 came from Reading supporters including a £10 tax rebate from I Warwick. £996 left.

**South West** managed £60 but need almost double that each week to achieve the £1,068 required by January 5th! Bristol readers R Moss (£10), J Gee (£1) and M Starr (£1.35) and Swindon readers R Hunt (£2) and W Turpin (£1) are helping, but the most welcome donation of all was £4 from shop stewards at Lucas. Many thanks!

**Wales East** supporters are £1,324 or £147 per week short of their target. The only receipts this week were £5 collected at Cardiff University Labour Club and tax rebates of £11 from Caerphilly.

**Wales West's** shortfall is pretty similar—£1,251 or £139 a week. Most of the

## TARGET FOR THE YEAR - £85,000

Area	Received
Eastern	4,700
Hants & IOW	3,100
Humberside	2,000
London North	9,500
London South	3,900
Manchester & Dist	4,500
Merseyside	5,000
Midlands East	3,300
Midlands West	9,000
Northern	5,500
Scotland East	2,900
Scotland West	4,500
South East	4,500
South West	3,100
Wales East	2,600
Wales West	3,400
Yorkshire	6,800
Others	6,700
<b>Total</b>	<b>58,295</b>

# THIS WEEK £1,372

latest £35 came from tax rebates and student donation in Swansea, but a number of other supporters such as L Rees (AUEW) gave us £1.

**Yorkshire** readers have got a serious job ahead to get the £3,298 or £366 per week to meet their target! Only £22 this week, but special thanks to P Rees (Sheffield) for the £5 he collected for 'public singing'. Thanks also to P Sharpe (Sheffield) and M Pawinski (Leeds) for their £1s, and to comrades in NW Leeds Labour Party who put into a collection. Rotherham '50 Club' continues to make money for Militant—an example to follow in other areas of Yorkshire?

The 'Others' line on the

chart has gone ahead brilliantly as usual; with supporters at national meetings of the labour movement always remembering Militant's needs.

**In many towns, supporters get together to organise collections and fund-raising—but don't wait for Christmas! Ask your family, mates and any other readers of 'Militant' to send your paper a donation now to help raise cash for a fighting Marxist paper—its the best insurance for every body's future—free from the hardships dictated by the Tories and their system.**

## ads

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

## MILITANT MEETINGS

**LONDON Militant Public Meeting** 'The Struggle for a Socialist United Ireland'. Hear: John Throne (Administrative Council, Irish Labour Party); Peter Hadden (Sec, N Ireland Labour & Trade Union Group). 7.30 pm, Wednesday 12 December, Waterloo Action Centre, Baylis Road, Waterloo

**GREENWICH Marxist Discussion Group.** 'What is Trotskyism?'. 8 p.m. Thursday 15 November Greenwich Labour Party rooms, 32 Woolwich Rd, SE 10.

**TROTSKY Centenary Rally.** Hear: Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board) and leading international speakers. 7.00 pm Friday 30 November, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London N.C.1. 30p admission.

## CLASSIFIED

**SOUTHAMPTON LPYS Public Meeting** Hear: Andy Bevan (Labour Party National Youth Officer) on 'How to fight the cuts'. 7.30 pm, 13 November, at Labour Party Rooms, Burgess Road, Southampton

**Trotsky Centenary badges.** Available in four colours, black on red, gold, white or grey. One badge 20p + 10p post and packing. 10: £1.50 + 20p p&p. 50: £6 + 40p p&p. 100: £10 + 80p p&p. Order from Anne Mulkeen, Flat 1, 133 Victoria Way, Charlton, London S.E.7.

You've seen the rest—now buy the best. 'Don't blame me' badges: 3 colours, 20p each plus postage. Order from B Faulkes, 375 Cambridge Heath Road, London E.2. Cheques payable to 'NE London Militant Supporters'.

**STRATHCLYDE Militant supporters' draw results:** 3 November: 1st prize 25&35, 25&43, 35&43. 2nd prize 16&3, 16&6, 16&12, 16&21, 16&45.

**MIKE LEVENE'S housewarming party.** Saturday 24 November, 8 till late. 5 Sherbrooke Road, Carrington, Nottingham. All welcome; bring drinks!

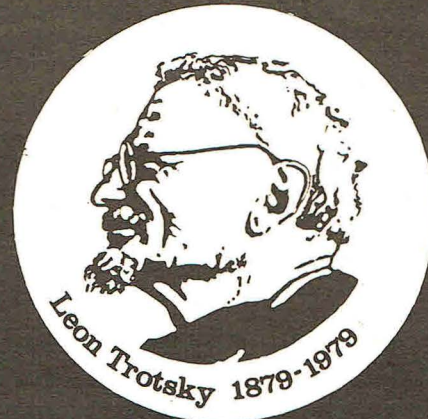
Steve Glennon's flat-warming party November 10th.

## MILITANT IRISH MONTHLY

Price 10p November issue out now! Articles on the Irish Labour Party, Women, Youth & Socialism, and the Catholic Church.  
Order from Militant Irish Monthly, 75 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin.  
6 issues £1.08 12 issues £2.16

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# Vale of Belvoir inquiry - NCB announce more pit closures

The Coal Board are to shut ten East Midlands collieries.

All six Leicestershire pits are to close between 1987 and 1989. Four pits in South Nottinghamshire will, they claim, also run out of coal in the 1980s.

Many miners are suspicious of the NCB's reasons for launching this attack on 8,500 jobs last week.

The announcement coincided with the inquiry into plans for a new mining project in the Vale of Belvoir, in North East Leicestershire.

The Board, apparently with the support of the Leicestershire and South Notts area NUM leaders, are using the threatened closures as a lever to convince the inquiry of the need for the new mines.

Tony Cross, of East Nottingham Labour Party explains the background to the NCB's threats to axe jobs in the East Midlands:

The man in the National Coal Board information office in Mansfield panicked. All I did was ask him for facts and figures on the future of mining in Nottinghamshire.

"What sort of information do you want?...are you an NCB employee?... he stuttered. When reassured that what I wanted was the NCB's stock leaflet, he calmed down. Some information is "not for public consumption" he explained.

In Mansfield "the public" is made up very largely of miners or their dependants. The Coal Board seems most concerned that they shouldn't know too much about something that is of great importance to them—the future of their jobs.

## Secret Report

One NCB estimate about the future of mining in this area can be found in two pamphlets produced last year by the Institute for Workers Control: "Ashfield, What's Going Wrong" and "The Case of Belvoir".

They give figures showing that about 13,000 mining jobs in Nottinghamshire may disappear before 1996. In the Mansfield-Ashfield area, "employment is likely to

decline from approximately 9,100 jobs in 1976 to 2,300 in 1996."

These predictions were made in a "Topic Report" on mining in 1975 produced for council officials by the NCB—on condition that they were not made public or even shown to councillors or union officials! Eleven such reports had already been published: only this one on the future of miners' jobs has been restricted, and is available "in summary form only".

## Are more miners to become industrial nomads, chasing jobs from pit to pit?

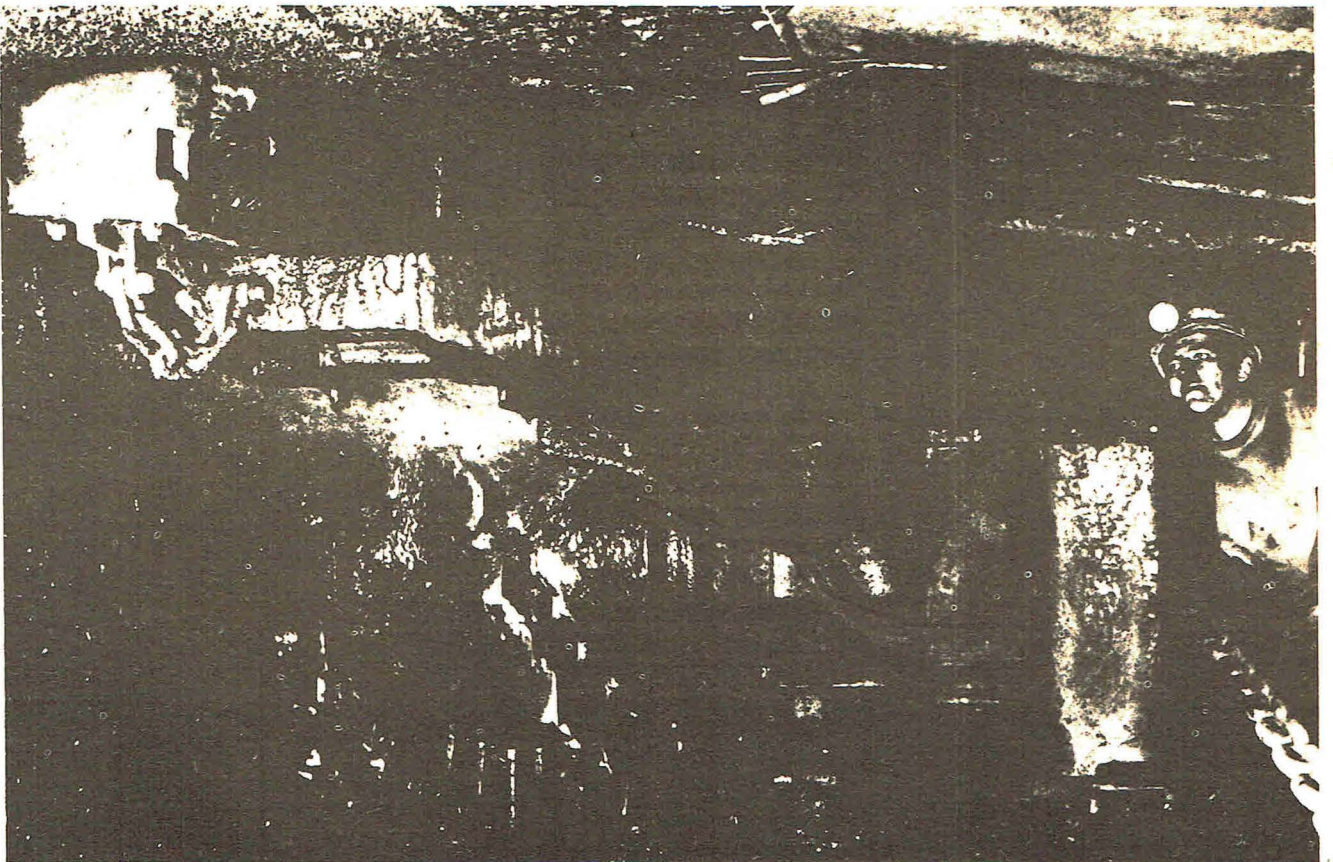
Miners will ask what action the right wing dominated Notts. Area NUM Executive took. In March 1977 they issued a joint statement with the NCB aimed at "allaying fears" on the issue.

Only the NUM chairman, Len Clarke, had been handed a copy of the report and it had not been circulated to Executive members. But the statement quoted Communist Party member and union financial secretary Joe Whelan as saying he "saw no point in getting alarmed about long-term predictions which were bound to be unreliable".

In fact the Coal Board did release new figures in 1978. They said seven pits in South Notts. may go in the next 15 years and left a question mark over the future of North Notts pits such as Sutton, Sherwood and Mansfield. But no predictions were made for the five years after that, the years into which the previous reports had bunched most of the closures.

Last year Notts. miners balloted on taking industrial action to save Teversal colliery from closure. Now it is clear that Teversal is not the only pit threatened.

If the NUM area Executive had conducted a campaign, explaining the drastic measures that the Coal Board were discussing and the bleak prospect for jobs in the area, showing that they were determined to fight unjustified closures, the membership could undoubtedly have been



Coal cutting machinery fitted with nucleonic steering device so that no stone is mined—will such technical advances mean better conditions for mines, or longer dole queues?

convinced of the need to vote for action.

The NCB seems keen to close pits, even where, like Teversal, the NUM argues that there are workable reserves. Why? Could it be that they want ready-trained labour for the new 'superpits' proposed in the Vale of Belvoir?

Are we to accept the sacrificing of whole communities; miners and their families forced to become industrial nomads, chasing jobs from pit to pit? Many have already been uprooted once, moving to the area after closures in the North East.

Mining should start in the Vale of Belvoir, although the NUM and the labour movement must ensure maximum

protection for the environment. But the labour should not be provided by closures, driving out workers at a forced pace. There are already enough unemployed in the East Midlands looking for work.

Only 4,100 jobs will be created, since in the new pits miners are expected to be three or four times as productive as any working today.

The Coal Board may claim that it will be difficult to find labour because of the nature of the job. Technological developments such as they plan to use mean, however, that it could soon be technically possible to eliminate virtually all the dangerous and arduous underground

work.

If the alternative is the dole queue though, it would mean more misery, not less. Only socialist planning could ensure that all workers benefit from technical advances by a progressive shortening of the working week and work-sharing. The latest announced closures will wipe out twice as many jobs as the Vale of Belvoir project would provide. As far as the Coal Board is concerned it is clear that this is only the first round of job cuts; the fight against redundancies must start now.

In the course of this struggle miners and the whole of the labour movement must demand:

• An end to secret reports and 'confidential' negotia-

tions

• Workers' control and management of the mining industry

• No closures except on grounds of safety or proven exhaustion, determined by the Union

• Alternative work at equivalent rates and benefits for all displaced by closures

• No redundancies, work or full pay

The capitalists' deindustrialisation of Britain and the way they threaten to use new technology places a question mark over every workers' job. The conclusion is clear — the miners' future will never be secure until an integrated energy industry is fuelling a socialist planned economy.

## EETPU members fight redundancies MAKE CROWN HOUSE STRIKE OFFICIAL

Despite high hopes, the strike of EETPU members at Crown House Engineering (see last week's report) has not been made official.

A recommendation from the area official to the National Executive that they back the strike (as far as some workers can remember the first time in three years that this has been done), it was rejected. The NEC dismissed the recommendation, claiming that the men had not explored every avenue before coming out.

Ken Burrough, deputy shop steward and strike committee member, told us: "We've got a cut and dried case. I can't understand why the NEC didn't make it official."

Despite this set-back the men's attitude is likely to harden. Crown House are now notifying the Department of Employment of another 36 redundancies.

Sparks for Raskleigh Phipps have come off the site, as have the sparks from Holiday Hall. Management's confrontation approach, flaunting established procedures and agreements, is seen as an attempt to break the shop floor organisation.

They have even gone to the lengths of issuing a letter to all drivers saying that "apart from an unofficial dispute by Crown House Electrical oper-

atives, work on the site is proceeding as normal for all other 750 operatives. All deliveries of builders' materials to the site should proceed as normal, and this has the approval of Convenor Steward and Works Committee."

In spite of this scandalous behaviour by the site convenor and works' committee most of the drivers are turning back at the picket line. Pressure must now be brought to bear on the NEC to make the strike official, through every section of the union.

The foremen, EETPU members, who are continuing to work, are to be branched under rule 27 for not supporting the three-week work-in prior to the strike. "While we worked with no supervision I actually saw them playing tiddlywinks," Ken Burrough told me.

"The strike committee is 100% strong. It's early days yet but we've had all sorts of support on the picket line from all kinds of sources like yourself. It's really opened the eyes of the men."

By Bob Faulkes

(EETPU and Hackney Central Labour Party)

## Richy Pearce stands for TGWU Executive

Richy Pearce, chairman of the Southampton Docks Shop Stewards' Committee and chairman of the National Ports Shop Stewards' Committee is standing in Region No. 2 for election to the General Executive Committee of the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Richy has played a leading role in the struggles of the dockers since the early 1970s. This is the second time he has stood for the GEC, narrowly missing election two years ago.

Richy is standing on a programme aimed at building a fighting, democratic union. At present members tend to be distanced from the hierarchy. Many officials and leading union members become divorced from the ranks of the members.

Richy stands for furthering the rights of T&GWU members in the battle for greater democratic control.

The attacks of the Tory government aim to cripple the strength of unions such as the giant, powerful T&GWU.

The union needs to be organised and ready to fight back on every level. In this situation the need for leadership from the GEC has never been greater.

Richy is pledged to make the GEC more representative of the feelings of the membership and so help ensure that this body will lead the union's fight against the Tory attacks.

Richy is also a long standing member of the Labour Party. He has fought shoulder to shoulder with others in the Party for greater democratic control by Labour Party members and for the implementation of the decisions of Labour Party conferences.

The fight for accountability and control is vital in both wings of our movement. If the major trade unions are to lead a campaign against this vicious Tory government, we must ensure that the Labour Party responds to our needs, offering a clear political alternative for trade unionists and working people.



# BL - EDWARDES BEWARE!

## After ballot debacle - battle looms on wages

The Confederation of British Industry at their conference in Birmingham applauded the courage, determination and initiative of Sir Michael Edwardes in successfully appealing to the shop-floor over the heads of the trade unions. The bosses' 'trade union' thinks that other companies should follow his example, circumventing and isolating the stewards' organisations.

Edwardes, appointed by a Labour industry secretary, is setting the pace for an onslaught on the unions throughout British industry. Yet he heads a nationalised corporation, bailed out after being bankrupted by profiteering capitalists.

Certainly Edwardes appears to be getting it all his own way. The cold brutality of his announcement that 25,000 jobs and 13 plants should be written off show how far he is prepared to go. But he should take warning. The derisory pay offer just announced is already stirring the anger of the BL workforce.

The mood of demoralisation demonstrated in the ballot on his 'plan' could change quickly. Nevertheless, the size of his seven to one majority probably surprised even those shop stewards who anticipated defeat.

The last three years have seen the self confidence of the BL workforce seriously shaken. The management's media monopoly has endlessly repeated the same story: "Leyland is near the brink", "its survival is at risk" if the workers don't concede on jobs and wages.

### The votes

The Speke closure, the last batch of 15,000 redundancies and the succession of wage agreements, cutting real earnings as part of the social contract, all without any organised company-wide fight back, have sapped the militancy in Leyland. With no effective co-ordinated leadership, a feeling developed that the company's attacks could not be thwarted.

Even in the threatened plants it is likely that a majority backed Edwardes. "The closures are inevitable; the whole company is tottering, let's get out before it collapses completely". Much of the 20% abstention can probably be accounted for by this feeling of helplessness.

The stewards voted overwhelmingly to take up Edwardes' challenge, and oppose the onslaught on jobs. The 15,000 'no' votes will have included a large proportion of shop stewards and activists in

By  
**Bill Mullins**  
(Senior steward T&GWU  
Rover Solihull)

the union branches. But what support did they receive from the trade union leaders?

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions' executive gave its seal of approval to the Edwardes plan. The T&GWU, which came out against the plan, failed to conduct any effective mass campaign to counteract the Confed. T&GWU stewards who a few weeks earlier had been going around convincing their members to follow a Confed strike call, now had to convince those same workers that another Confed recommendation should be ignored.

The debacle of the Leyland ballot sprang from fear, disillusion and the lack of any convincing alternative. The combine shop stewards, because of their failure to fight for recognition and acceptance as the national wage-negotiating body, have not yet won the company-wide authority to carry the mass of workers with them.

### Combine unity is vital

For years 'Militant' supporters among the BL shop stewards have argued that Leyland stewards must recognise the need for unity across the combine in the struggle for a living wage and to save jobs. The idea of plant by plant bargaining, we pointed out, could only serve the interests of BL management.

Although this was eventually accepted in words, in practice national leadership from the shop stewards has been badly lacking. This led to set-backs on pay. On jobs it has proved disastrous.

In face of Edwardes' latest ultimatum, the BL stewards simply passed the buck to the Confed leaders, who up to now have played very little direct role in BL negotiations.

The ballot result has boosted the self-assurance of management. Edwardes considers that he has the stewards on the run. Now he is going in for the kill.

On wages, he has decided that 5% is all he need offer, linked to a productivity deal that involves wiping out 10 to 14,000 more jobs. As if that were not enough, the deal also sets out to destroy every element of workers' control over management methods in the factories.

To trigger off the productivity payments, the workforce are required not only to boost production, but to watch every local agreement being

torn up before their very eyes. Manning levels, track speeds, mobility of labour; under Edwardes' scheme all will become management prerogatives, sweeping away the hard-won gains of decades.

Already at Rover Solihull, where 1,500 jobs have recently been lost, there has not been a full week's production since and a war of attrition has set in over the speed of the job and manning levels.

Edwardes may seem to be on top now. He may even score one or two more temporary victories. But before long there will be a spontaneous explosion of opposition to these measures.

This counter-revolution cannot be carried out peacefully. This year's wage claim could even be the start.

### Change of mood

Shop stewards must not themselves lose confidence, or be caught out by a rapid change of mood of the shop floor. The Combine and the Leyland Combine Joint Negotiating Committee should launch their own propaganda war to explain the £24 wage claim, pre-empting management and the next ballot they will quite probably organise.

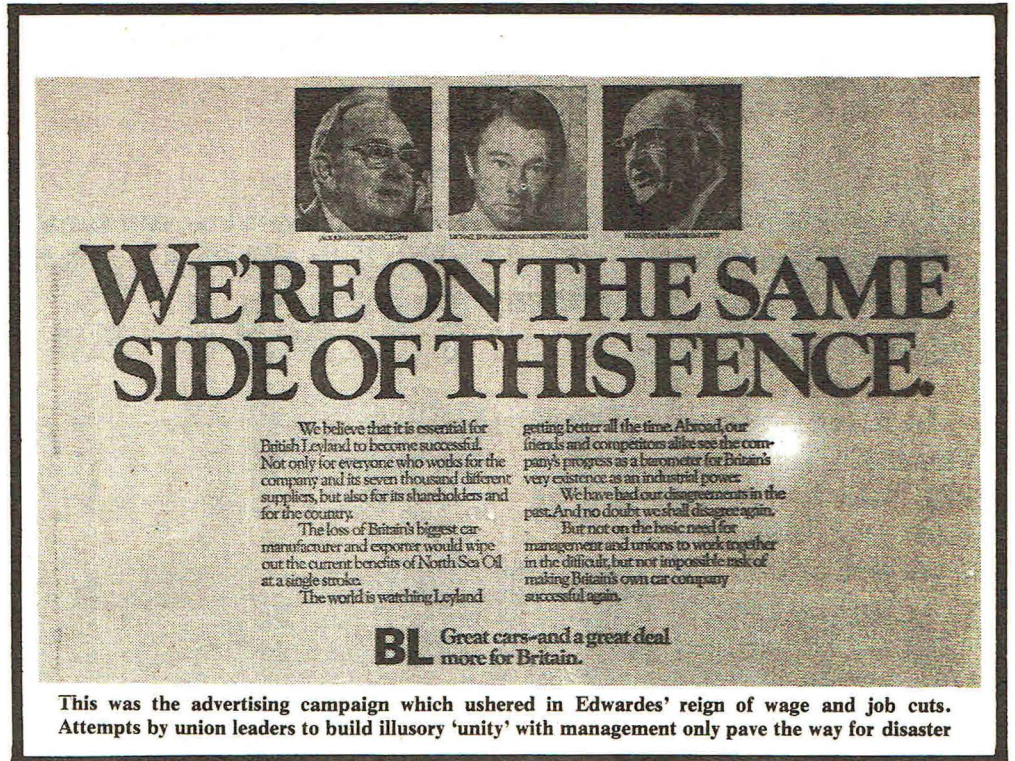
To stop the Edwardes' bandwagon in its tracks needs more than this, however. Car workers have to be sure that there is a better way. The T&GWU in their ballot leaflets exposed the contradictions of the 'plan'. Edwardes is already reducing investment and production targets for the new models like the Mini Metro before they are even produced. He pays lip-service to the idea that under-capitalisation is the company's real curse, but unable to rectify it, intends to make the workers eat dirt.

Many will be sceptical that Edwardes has any real intention to revive the company. Rather, the suspicion is that he will sell off what is profitable and do his best to wreck the rest.

The combine committee in particular has the responsibility to draw the conclusions from the plight of Leyland. There is only one alternative to the present management sabotage that it can offer workers—a socialist programme of action.

To fight for every job, to save every plant, and to at least maintain the value of wage rates will take co-ordinated national action. But to stop the rot a political campaign must also be waged.

We must spell out the real answer to BL's crisis: workers' control and management of Leyland and the ending of capitalist management methods. Leyland must be democratically run as a publicly owned concern, integrated in a fully nationalised automotive industry.



**WE'RE ON THE SAME SIDE OF THIS FENCE.**

We believe that it is essential for British Leyland to become successful. Not only for everyone who works for the company and its seven thousand different suppliers, but also for its shareholders and for the country.

The loss of Britain's biggest car manufacturer and exporter would wipe out the current benefits of North Sea Oil at a single stroke.

The world is watching Leyland.

getting better all the time. Abroad, our friends and competitors alike see the company's progress as a barometer for Britain's very existence as an industrial power.

We have had our disappointments in the past. And no doubt we shall disagree again.

But not on the basic need for management and unions to work together in the difficult, but not impossible task of making Britain's own car company successful again.

**BL** Great cars—and a great deal more for Britain.

This was the advertising campaign which ushered in Edwardes' reign of wage and job cuts. Attempts by union leaders to build illusory 'unity' with management only pave the way for disaster

## SHOP STEWARDS MUST PREPARE TO LEAD A FIGHT

Five percent plus a productivity deal. What the hell does BL chairman Edwardes think we are going to do with this derisory wage offer?

After accepting 5% in 1976, 10% in '77 and 5% in '78 under the social contract, this latest offer is being treated with disgust on the shop floor.

The productivity deal has been estimated to involve a further reduction of 10,000 to 14,000 jobs on top of the 25,000 already in the pipeline. The strings attached to the productivity deal would also undermine shop stewards' ability to negotiate manning levels and the pace of work. Edwardes seems to want to turn BL into a labour camp.

Leyland workers have suffered significant reductions in real wages in recent years. How can we be expected to settle below the inflation rate this time around?

The Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee have asked for £24 across the board. But even this would not restore wages in real terms to the level of 1974.

It is vital that the Joint Negotiating Committee and shop stewards in each factory produce leaflets and organise mass meetings to explain the case for this rise. Only if a full-bodied campaign is launched, will we hang on to the

## CHIX: low paid fight for union rights

Ninety workers are on strike at the Chix sweet factory in Slough for recognition of their union, the G&MWU, and for improved wages and conditions.

Before the strike, packers were earning 95p per hour and machine operators £1.10 per hour. Only a handful of the original workforce are crossing the picket lines, but



Leyland workers march against the plan to cut jobs, early in October—but a consistent union campaign was needed to dispel demoralisation

By Les Kuriata (EETPU, Longbridge)

remnants of our shrinking wage packets.

If an aggressive stance is not taken up, Edwardes will undoubtedly try to undermine the trade unions, as he did on the 25,000 jobs issue, with a secret ballot. He will then have the support and backing of the bosses' press, which will go to any lengths to influence the workforce. During the secret ballot, the reactionary 'Birmingham Evening Mail' carried articles and front page appeals by management, almost every day.

Leyland management are always claiming the workforce are strike-happy. But despite

us accepting the social contract for 3 years, they are still using the same old sob story—'moderate your pay claims or we will go to the wall'. Now we must demand a decent rise or our standard of living will go to the wall.

Because of the poor leadership shown by the union officials, Leyland workers have not seen any alternative around which they could fight to save the 25,000 jobs threatened under the Edwardes' plan. But this 5% pay offer could be the straw to break the camel's back. BL workers may well be in a militant mood over the next month or two.

management are bussing in scabs from an agency.

Many of the strikers are Asian women and are new to industrial action, but the labour movement has started to mobilise support. Two mass pickets have been organised, and more are to be arranged.

Help is needed any day of the week, especially between

6am and 9am when the scabs are brought in. The factory is situated on Farnham Road on the outskirts of Slough Trading Estate.

Messages of support and offers of help to Mr. Anwar, 271 Goodman Park, Slough, or details from London Region GMWU — Telephone: 01-202-0071.



# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH  
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## STEEL — FIRST STEP IN FIGHT BACK

In Corby, trade unionists have again and again mounted inspiring demonstrations of grit and solidarity against closure of steel making. At last, this fire has broken through to national level.

The Iron and Steel Trades' Confederation, the main steel union, has responded to the pounding of its members. If the unions do not stop closures now, no plant will survive.

Casually and clinically, on 1st November, British Steel Corporation managers buried more than 6,000 jobs at Corby.

This Friday, after more mock 'negotiations', they will do the same at Shotton.

Two weeks ago they threatened to close Ravenscraig if the Hunterston ore terminal didn't open. For months they have warned that any plant which doesn't break even will close.

They're on the rampage. No steel jobs are safe!

In the past, steel workers have shown that they are willing to fight to defend jobs. But in the end they have been isolated and picked off.

That is why the ISTC call for an overtime ban and national one-day stoppage and demonstration is of enormous importance.

In the past, however, BSC have played off threatened plants against each other. The national one-day strike must be used to draw all the workers in the industry together.

Unity of action is the need of the hour.

Teesside and Ravenscraig



## plan now for one-day strike

workers will not be more secure if Corby and Shotton shut down. No steel town is safe as long as big business is allowed to destroy manufacturing industry.

In every works, union members must seize the initiative. The overtime ban must be absolute.

Preparations must begin at once for the one-day strike.

The demonstration in London can be a display of workers' power to send shivers up the spines of the BSC management and the other Tories in Whitehall.

The ISTC has now taken the first step. It is essential to be ready for an all-out national strike if BSC attempts to transfer production from Corby or lay off any Corby workers.

The action should be

applied equally in the private steel sector. No overtime should be worked there either; the sharks who own private steel must not be allowed to feast on orders lost by a nationalised industry.

It will also be vital to black steel at the ports and shut off the stockholders' supplies. In that way, 'big business, starved of supplies would be forced to give in.

A pitched battle to save jobs could be the turning point not for steel alone but for cars, engineering and all those sectors facing cutbacks and closure.

This is the time for the TUC's pledge at this year's Congress to be honoured.

Steel workers must be on their guard against any backsliding by union leaders. No more job sales! In future,

the brutal determination of BSC must be met by equal determination from the union leaders.

A national strike was threatened over Bilston, but the plant was still allowed to fall. If the fight to save Shotton and Corby is conducted with determination, spelling out a clear alternative to BSC's disaster plans, this time we will succeed.

Only capitalist lunacy could allow the destruction of this vital industry, in the name of 'economic growth'. How can any economy grow without steel?

The industry should be run by a board consisting of a third, a third, and a third; that is of the steel unions; the rest of the trade union movement through the TUC, to co-ordinate planning with other industries; and the government.

Private steel industry must be taken back into public control and integrated into the nationalised sector, so that we can plan and regulate production to meet social need, rather than the dictates of profit.

## CLASS WAR

Continued from page 1  
 increase over current spending.

The cash devoted to "law and order" will also go up 3 3/4% to £2,540 million. Clearly, the Tories intend to spend more on the police, especially sections like the Special Patrol Group, for use against trade unionists and the labour movement in general.

The spokesmen of big business realise that the draconian slashing of services they intend to carry out will provoke massive resistance from working people.

These are the main cuts:  
 ★ NHS prescriptions charges will go up from 45p [already 25p up in June] to 70p next April. Many of the sick will now go without vital medicines.

★ Dental charges [already up £2 to £7 in the Tory budget] will be raised again "in line with increased costs".

★ Expenditure on housing will go down 5.6% to £5,000 million. There will therefore be even more families condemned to homelessness or to live in slums.

★ Education spending will be cut 4.3% to £9,250 million. Most under-5s will be denied nursery education and even fewer over-16s will get the chance of higher education. Spending on new schools is cut by half, and 21,000 teaching jobs are threatened.

★ Despite an expected rise in unemployment, expenditure on social security payments will go up by only 1.2% to £19.9m. This means in practice an intended cut in benefits. Jenkin's proposal to take on 600 extra "fraud" investigators indic-

ates the Tories intend to make it even more difficult and humiliating for claimants to get the benefits to which they are entitled.

★ The British Rail passenger grant will be down £22 million, meaning more rail cuts.

★ Motor insurance premiums will go up as the government levies a contribution towards the cost of road accidents to the NHS.

★ Britain's EEC contribution will rise from £919 million to £1,000 million.

The cuts package will fall particularly on the local authorities, and Environment Secretary Heseltine has already threatened new legislation to impose more rigid cash limits and spending curbs on Labour Councils.

He has also told the local authorities that the government will not tolerate pay settlements for public service workers of 17.5% or "anything like it".

With price increases already at this level, this would mean a pay cut in real terms for local authority workers.

The mass ranks of the labour and trade union movement must be mobilised with even greater determination to fight these cuts and the big business system which is dictating them.

The Tories stand for a small handful of wealthy millionaires who own most of the country's industry and run it for their own profit. The labour movement represents millions and millions of people who work to produce the country's wealth.

The conclusion is clear. The movement must fight for bold socialist policies that put wealth and power in the hands of working people.

## CUTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

benefit allowance. They also face increased bus, prescription and dental charges.

Thatcher's much-acclaimed cut in income tax will, at the very best, contribute £2.

The Tories' new Electricity Discount Scheme is also a thinly-disguised pay cut. The existing scheme caters for four and a half million people, but the new one only 350,000.

The Tories point out that people will receive more [95p a week]. But they don't say they are excluding all childless single people, couples

aged under 75, including the unemployed, families whose youngest child is over five, and people who receive rent or rate rebates.

The scheme will 'save' the government £28 1/2 million.

One East Midlands doctor summed up the viciousness of the Tory plans in the plight of one of his patients.

The man is unemployed, run-down and anaemic. To make him fit for work he should have a course of anti-biotics and iron, but with the new charges the man would probably throw away this prescription. So the doctor prescribes only the antibiotics, the anaemia remains untreated.

The man stays unfit for work and will probably be back soon with another illness.

The average prescription has three items, so the cost has risen from £1.35 to £2.10 "at a stroke". For the average working class patient it is cheaper now to buy many drugs without a prescription.

In Rochdale, one mother of a small boy, living on social security because, as a one-parent family she cannot work, told the 'Militant':

"The local authority is also talking of putting up school meals to 50 pence a day. With bus fares it will cost me nearly a pound a day to send my boy to school. It is just impossible. He will have to come home for dinner, but the food I can give him will in no way match the good school dinners he used to get."

The abolition of price controls, tax cuts favouring the wealthy, increase in government handouts to private education and massive rise in spending on the police

and the armed forces show that Thatcher has declared class war.

Only the trade union and labour movement, responsive to the needs of working people, can stop this madness. In Liverpool, the Labour-controlled City council aims to give all its workers a day off on full pay to support the Labour Party cuts campaign lobby of Parliament on 28 November.

Lambeth Council workers, South Yorkshire Trades Council, the Fire Brigades Union have all held major demonstrations. And this is just the tip of the iceberg.

As our Rochdale reader said: "The Tories are trying to grind us into the ground, and we cannot afford to let them get away with it. The Labour Party and public sector unions have to get together and put a stop to this madness once and for all."

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