

Militant

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LPYS

Young
Socialists'
Conference

Reports and photos, pages 3, 8, 9



BRISTOL YOUTH ANGER EXPLODES

The heavy-handed police raid on the Black and White Cafe in St Pauls, Bristol, was just the spark that ignited an explosion of anger and discontent among the young people of this run-down, inner-city area.

By Pat Graham

(Secretary,
St Pauls Ward
Labour Party)

Violence erupted on the streets last Wednesday evening when a "routine" police raid on the café suddenly and dramatically escalated into mass confrontation between police and black youth.

The trouble started at 3.30 pm when a squad of police carried out a drugs raid on the Black and White Café, a regular meeting place for black youth, and began making arrests, taking away crates of beer and other goods.

Within a short time, a large crowd had gathered outside to protest at the police action. Many of the by-standers claimed that police had used bully-boy tactics inside the café, and that they were smashing things up, arresting anyone they could lay their hands on.

As the mood of the crowd became angrier, fighting broke out and the police called in reinforcements. They attempted to disperse the crowd by using dogs, but by this time there were literally hundreds of young people on the streets and the police were unable to control the situation.

By late evening the whole area had become a battle ground, with police cars overturned, buildings on fire, shop windows smashed and widespread looting tak-

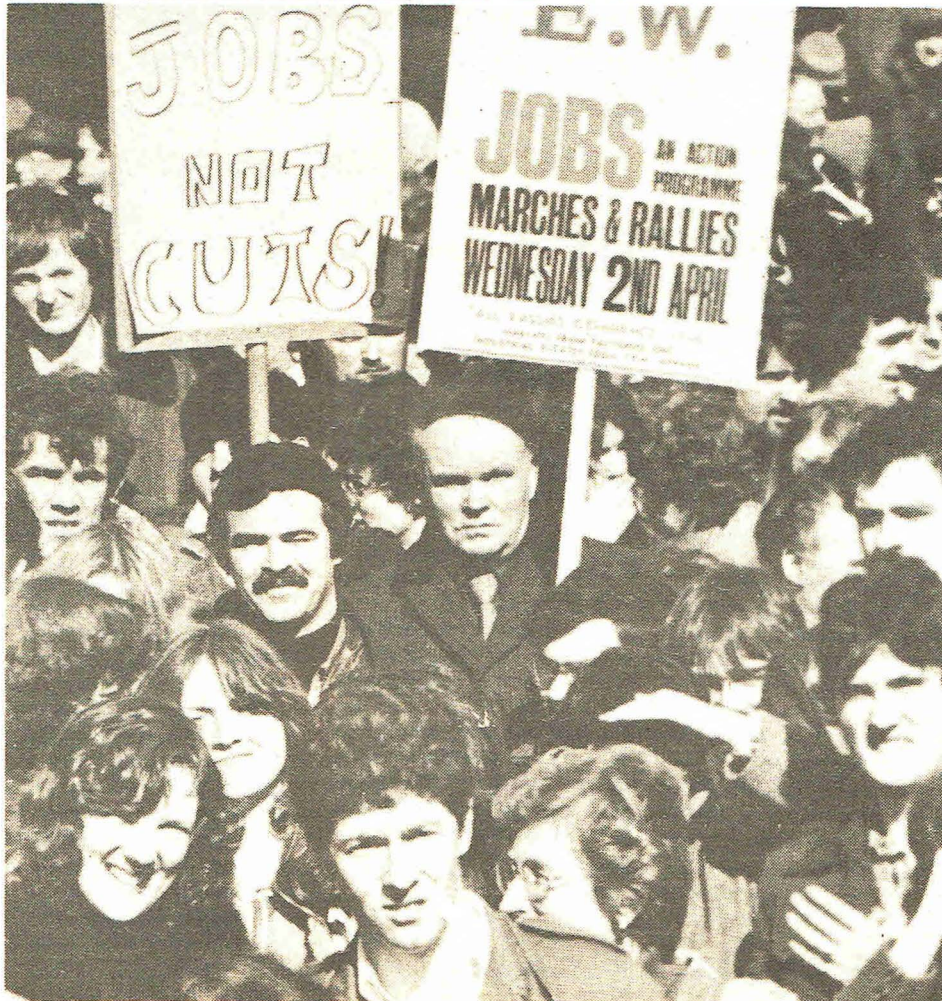
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St Pauls, Wednesday night: Photo by Mike Leggett [IFL]

N-IRELAND PARALYSED BY GENERAL STRIKE

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Magnificent £3,000 From Militant Meeting

Record collection at the LPYS Conference Militant Readers' Meeting in Llanudno!

£100 from LP Young Socialists' National Committee members, then a flood of individual and collective donations of £70, £60, £50, £40, £30, £20 and 'tenners'! The 'fivers' and the £s pushed the total way over the £3,000 mark. Many thanks to every contributor there and elsewhere. This massive boost has

taken Militant's Fighting Fund to within reach of the first quarter-year target. But many areas on the chart [page 13] are still a long way off. So rush cash to 'Militant' offices [cheques and POs to 'Militant'] and 'phone by mid-day 13 April to tell us what's been raised and what's on its way.

Make your area's black line "shoot" across the chart and give 'Militant' the ammunition it needs to back up your fight for socialism.

Photo: Derek Spiers (IFL)

BRISTOL EXPLODES



Photo: Mike Leggett (IFL)

After the youth of St. Paul's exploded, the press arrived to ask the reason why.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE.
ing place.

The police at this stage decided to abandon the scene, and they did not return until after midnight when most of the young people had gone home.

Police chiefs clearly miscalculated the strength of reaction which their presence in St Pauls would provoke. The police particularly underestimated the widespread hostility and resentment that existed towards them. However, local community leaders, particularly those involved with youth, had repeatedly warned of the potentially explosive situation in this area.

St Pauls, like many inner-city areas, already suffers from chronic social problems: high unemployment, poverty, lack of amenities and basic facilities for young people, poor and inadequate housing.

Black youth, moreover, complain bitterly of being continually harassed by police, of frequently being picked up and detained for no reason under the notorious 'sus' laws.

Fascists, on the other hand, can rely on full police protection whenever they decide to peddle their racist position on the streets or in the schools. All these factors have combined to create

unbearable social tensions which could have erupted at any time.

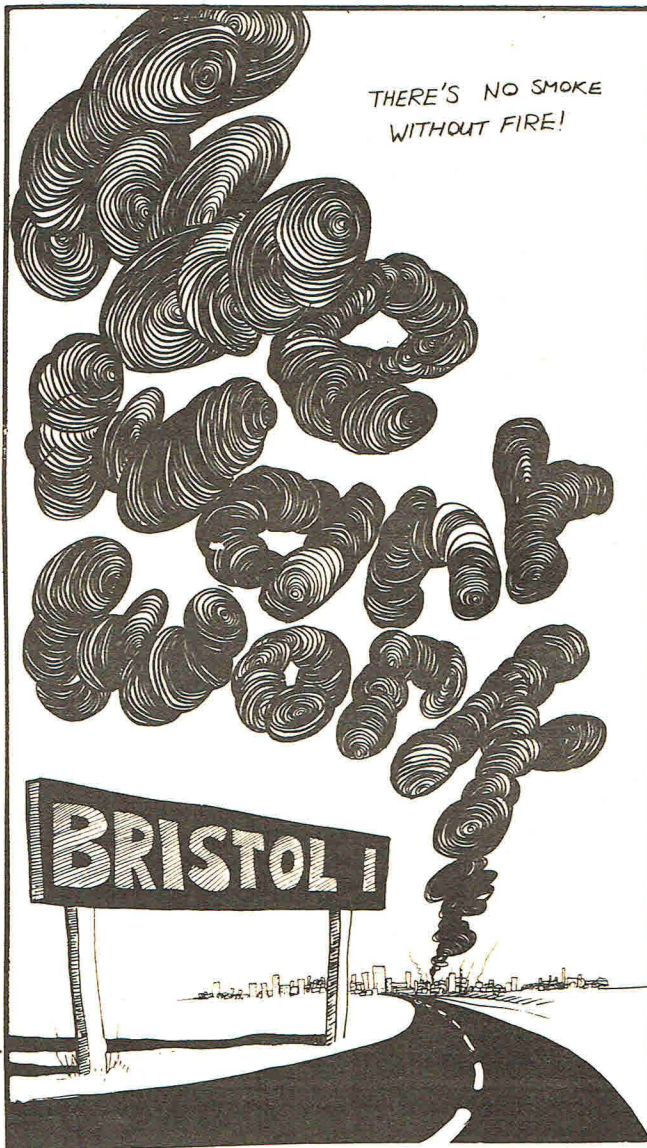
The raid on the Black and White Café proved to be the spark. Because of the deep-rooted mistrust and antagonism which exists towards the police they became the focal point of all the anger and discontent.

Young kids are paying a high price for the crisis of capitalism. Tory policies of massive cut-backs in public spending and increased unemployment offer tens of thousands of young people only a bleak future of frustration and despair.

The Tory answer to those problems is the "short, sharp shock treatment" in one of Whitelaw's detention centres, or a spell of military service in N Ireland.

Unless young people can be offered an alternative to the misery of the dole queue, sections of youth will undoubtedly vent their rage in destructive ways even resorting to smashing up their own communities.

It is now vital that the labour and trade union movement conducts its own enquiry into the events of Wednesday, and mount a serious campaign in the area to explain the issues.



GIVE US BACK OUR SPORT

Amid the deafening press silence on the policies and programme of the LPYS discussed at this year's conference, one item slipped through. A minute section in a resolution on leisure calling for the nationalisation of sports facilities, and the remarks of a Scottish delegate made reporters excited.

'Nationalise football' was the only slogan the press mentioned from YS conference. The lead in the 'Daily Star', editorials in the 'Telegraph' and 'Mirror' and a boring predictable cartoon in

By
Dave Farrar

the 'Sun' were amongst the consequences.

The sensationalism of the media shows only their ignorance of football in this country. The LPYS don't want a vast bureaucratic state football system.

We do think that the working class who play and pay to watch soccer should control football and not the small businessmen, and sometimes big businessmen who treat football as their plaything.

Present-day football is not

run in the interest of players and spectators. This can be seen by the exorbitant entrance fees for the often non-existent facilities. Young players are promised the earth as apprentices and paid peanuts.

They are given no education and should they suffer serious injury or fail to make the grade, as the vast majority do, they are tossed on the scrapheap with no thought of their livelihood or future.

Professional sport is becoming more and more enmeshed with big business as can be seen with the row over advertising on the shirts. The day may not be long away when, as in the USA, whole teams are owned and controlled by one man or firm. Even the stars who 'make

it' are subjected to enormous pressures and their lives become just an appendage of the product they advertise. The processes in society cannot be divorced from sport, as the Olympics have shown, monopolisation, centralisation, the profit motive and the callous attitude of the bosses are just as much a part of sport as anything else.

Workers' control and management of industry is vital—but so is workers' control over our leisure facilities. John Moores, boss of Littlewood's pools, has huge stockholdings in both Liverpool and Everton football clubs. So much for loyalty!

All we are saying is give us back our game. The players and supporters deserve no less.

LPYS STATEMENT STOP POLICE HARASSMENT

The Labour Party Young Socialists condemns the systematic police harassment of the youth of St Paul's, Bristol, which was the immediate cause of the rioting on 3 April.

Furthermore, we condemn the initial attempts by the big-business-owned press to portray the events as a race riot in the hope of whipping up race hatred. Even from the TV film it was clear that what took place was a spontaneous movement of the working class youth of the area in response to the terrible conditions they face and, above all, the vicious treatment that has been meted out by the police.

The LPYS demand an immediate labour movement inquiry into the cause of the riots.

We utterly condemn the call by former Labour Home Secretary, Merlyn Rees, for the formation of regional mobile police forces. The experience of the Special Patrol Group in London and elsewhere clearly shows that such specially trained police units are created to intensify the harassment of the working class. Since its formation the SPG has been systematically deployed against blacks and trade unionists engaged in strike action.

The sending in of extra police to patrol St. Paul's will not in any way solve the problems facing the people of the area. On the contrary, a greater police presence will actually lead to further victimisation of the youth, especially the young blacks who have always been at the receiving end of police harassment.

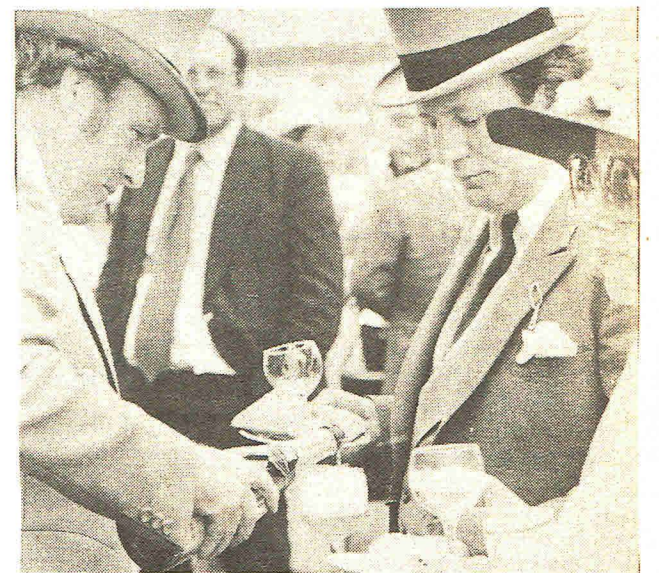
The increasing bitterness and anger demonstrated by the youth of many areas against the miserable life they face under capitalism will not disappear.

Such spontaneous explosions of anger merely reflect the oppression and bitterness of the youth. What is required is the concentration and organisation of the energies of youth with a clear socialist programme to fight capitalism.

We, the LPYS, set ourselves the task of winning the youth to our movement and campaigning for the Labour Party and Trade Unions to defend the youth.

We demand:

- ★ An end to police harassment.
- ★ Disband the Special Patrol Group.
- ★ A job and a living wage for all.



The real looters

In the debates on racism, fascism and the police, the LPYS made quite clear its condemnation of looters, but it fundamentally differed over the crucial question of who the real looters of society were.

Rob Cadwgan [National Committee] spoke of how the youth of Bristol rose up in the only way they knew how. We saw the looters—they met every year at Tory Party Conference, and every week on the Stock Exchange. These looters closed hospitals, denied patients kidney machines and when we protested about social conditions they sent in the Special Patrol Group.

In the debates, delegates from Handsworth, Tower Hamlets, and elsewhere spoke of how the police harassed youth especially black youth. The demand was made for the repeal of the 'Sus' laws, the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the disbandment of the Special Patrol Group and Special Air Service.

Brian Kelly [Bristol NE] condemned Merlyn Rees' call for more riot squads as backward and reactionary.

He pointed out that the danger of fascism now arose not so much from the skin-heads of the crumbling National Front, as from the skin-heads in pin-striped suits on the right-wing of the Tory Party. They wanted to increase the forces of state repression.

Janice Clare [Stevenage] pointed out that it was essential to break the majority of policemen and women, who come from working-class backgrounds, away from the control of the officer and ruling caste. And to help do this the labour movement must campaign for trade union rights within the police force and army to offer an alternative and prevent victimisation of the rank and file.

The overall mood of the debate was defiant confidence—that the socialist and labour movement would defeat fascism and repression—summed up in Rob Cadwgan's message to the Tories: "You won't drive this generation into the gutter."

WORKERS MUST NOT PAY FOR BOSSES' CRISIS!

The highlight of this year's LPYS national conference for many Young Socialists was without a doubt the Militant Readers' Meeting on Saturday night.

Nearly 2,000 Young Socialists packed into Llandudno's Astra Theatre to hear Terry Fields of the Fire Brigades Union Executive, and Ted Grant, political editor of the 'Militant'.

Terry opened the meeting by showing how more and more workers were becoming frustrated by the betrayals and reversals of the labour movement leadership—the disputes the leaders had refused to make official, the handling of the Derek Robinson dismissal, and the back-peddling over the proposed general strike in South Wales.

He commented on Len Murray's recent remark that the trade unions didn't want power, as "they wouldn't know what to do with it." Terry added that it was certainly true that the trade union leaders wouldn't know what to do with it. But the question of control of society was a fundamental issue for

the working class.

Trade unions must use their resources, he said, to campaign and educate their members against the Tories and the capitalist system. They should not invest their money in works of art and so on, but use it to buy space in the press or for TV broadcasts to put forward the trade union case.

But more urgent was the need to call a 24-hour general strike on 14 May, as the first step to force the Tories out.

Ted Grant's brilliant contribution inspired the whole audience, with his clear Marxist analysis of capitalism today. He began by saying that during the recent "witch-hunting" stories in the Tory press, he had been referred to by one cynic as the "oldest Young Socialist in the country." This, he said, was a compliment, given the high calibre and political awareness of the YS.

Ted went on to expose the proponents of capitalism, both in and out of the labour movement, who claimed to have solved the contradictions inherent in the profit system



Ted Grant speaking at the meeting

through applying the ideas of Keynesian economics. Given the protracted boom from 1950-74, the ruling class were able to concede "reforms" to the working people, such as the "welfare state" and so on.

This situation, he said, strengthened the right-wing of the Labour Party, typified by the trendy, middle class professionals who entered the Party in search of a career.

With the stable situation of the capitalist boom—with low unemployment, and rising living standards, these right-wing elements rose to the head of the party. Yet even then, they were unsuccessful in their attempts to remove Clause IV of the Labour Party constitution because of the determined opposition of the rank and file.

But as the Marxists, and the Marxists alone, in the party pointed out, the contradictions inherent in the profit system would lead it to crisis, as is clear today. Now the capitalist class are turning to the ideas of 'Friedmanism', the ideas of the Victorian times, for a solution, offering only ten to twenty years of austerity to the working

classes. With the growing instability of the system over the years, there would be the possibility, if the working class failed to transform the society, of totalitarian reaction and another world war. This had happened twice this century already. But in this event, it would be a nuclear and biological holocaust. Ted also took the support-ers of the 'Tribune' to task, explaining the hopelessness, let alone its reactionary connotations, of import controls as a solution to economic crisis and that any attempt to squeeze reforms out of this diseased capitalist system would be in vain.

Faced with this crisis of capitalism, Ted explained, the labour movement must be armed with the policies and perspective of Marxism which can break the power of capital and bring about the socialist transformation of society.

During the meeting a tremendous collection for the fighting fund was held, raising over £3,100 (before the expenses), which included donations of £100 from the YS National Committee and only ten to twenty years of austerity to the working 'Militant Irish Monthly'.

Ted Grant was given a standing ovation by the 2,000 Young Socialists who packed the theatre for the Militant Readers Meeting

Class anger will build 'socialist youth!'

"Is it anything to do with the Tories?" was what one 6-year-old kid asked Frank Taylor, T&G member at Massey Ferguson, when he was going round the Merseyside estates asking for support for the workers' occupation. Frank told this story at the meeting launching the newly-named LPYS monthly paper, 'Socialist Youth'. [For background article on occupation see page 15.]

The little girl who had spoken to Frank said she hated Thatcher because the increases in the price of school meals had cut into her sweet money. And as the meeting showed, that anger spread through all generations.

One speaker told of how a 50-year-old steel picket from Consett proudly told him of how law-abiding he had been. But he wasn't going to obey laws that threw him out of work.

A representative from the Meccano Occupation force spoke of how the bosses had broken into the factory and evicted the pickets. Also on Merseyside the closure of leisure facilities, especially Eric's, a famous punk-rock

disco, had attracted 500 young people on a protest demonstration.

The years of slumber of the labour movement were over, Andy Bevan told the meeting. Whilst Prince Charles recuperated in hospital sipping iced champagne after an exhausting polo match, young workers were moving into struggle.

The politics of consensus had gone, because reality had changed. But it was necessary to link the militant trade unionism with the socialist struggle to change society.

This theme was expanded on by Bill Mullins [senior shop steward, Rover, Solihull] who spoke of the need to make May 14th a one-day General Strike, to demonstrate to workers their own power. Properly organised with mass meetings etc, it would draw workers together in class opposition to the bosses. It would be the beginning of a movement to bring down the Tories.

In the discussion at the meeting a number of visitors to the Conference spoke of how the LPYS organised and involved itself in workers' struggles over the last year. Yet it was recognised that the LPYS needed a bigger industrial base and Linda Reid called to all LPYS members to use the new 'Socialist Youth' as a campaigning paper to win more young industrial workers to Labour's youth organisation.

More Conference reports on pages 8 & 9

NOT JUST TALK - BUT ACTION TOO

The LPYS are far from being just a talking shop. This was proved by the excellent conference session on LPYS organisation.

YS branches throughout the country have been involved in all the big class battles of the past few years. Young Socialists in the Rotherham area described how they had become actively involved in the picket lines and the strike HQ during the steel strike.

Handsworth YS had had a turnover of £800 in the past nine months, money being spent on campaigning activity and coming in from new YS members.

Pete Skerret from Coventry South West YS described how his YS had grown to 100 members. He also described the influence YS ideas were having in the AUEW, where the AUEW Youth Section had passed the resolution putting forward YS policy on fighting unemployment.

The YS is a fighting working class organisation. Lynn Cuthbert G&MWU sponsored delegate talked of the fight to get a G&MWU youth section, and other speakers of the need to turn the TUC Youth Conference into a fighting socialist body with democratic control.

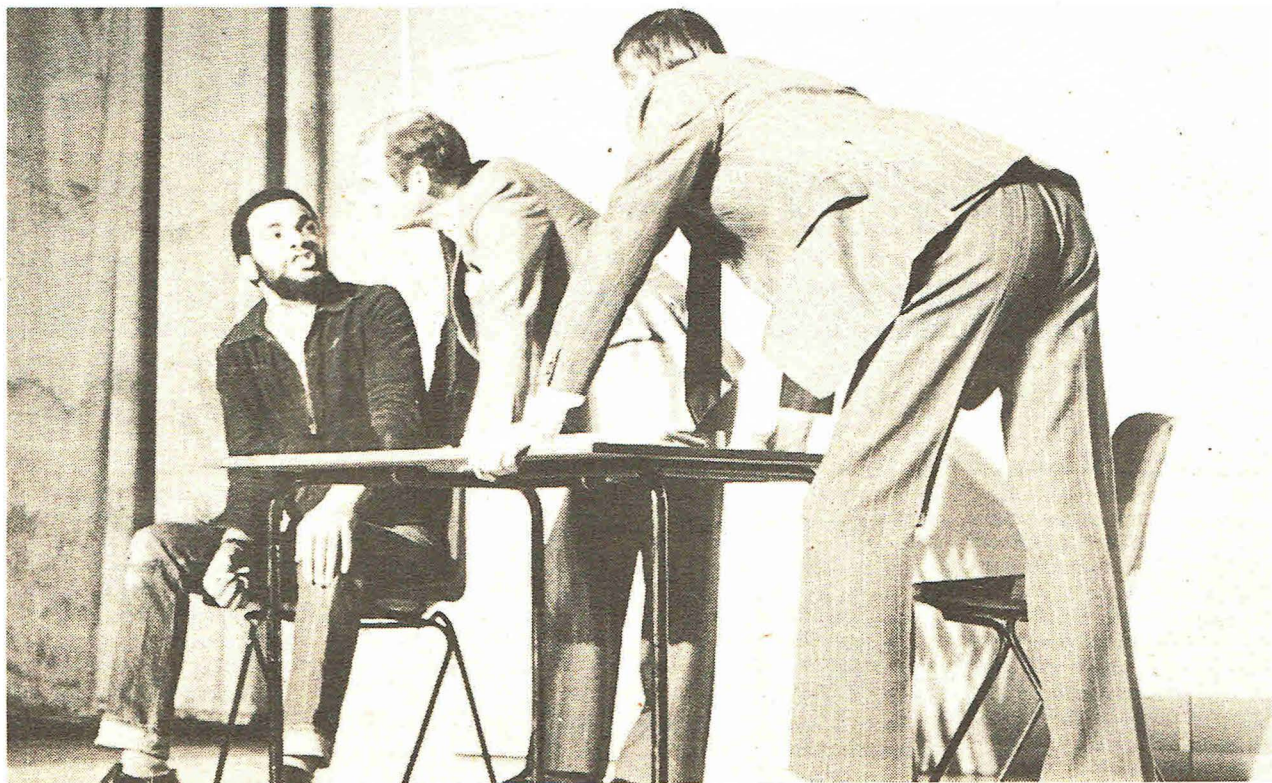
Already Glasgow delegates reported that there was an unofficial but active YS branch in ASLEF in Scotland but the LPYS is fighting for the right of unions to affiliate directly to the Young Socialists.

The YS, reported Tony Sauniois, still needed finance as the campaigning budget was far too small, but the most burning need was for the YS to turn out to build a mass socialist youth movement in Britain.



'SUS'— a hard hitting play

During the conference, the 7:84 Theatre Group presented Barrie Keefe's play 'Sus'. This excellent presentation showed quite clearly the harassment young blacks receive at the hands of some sections of the police. The fine acting, alongside the hard-hitting script was well-received by the Young Socialists, who, at the end of the play heard a speaker calling for action against the Scottish Criminal Justice Bill



FIGHTING AGAINST A BLEAK FUTURE

The 9% cut in education expenditure announced as part of the budget package of cuts means a bleak future for schools and colleges.

Higher education will be hit by the 'full cost' fees for overseas students, and possible further cuts in discretionary grants.

These are only the latest in a series of attacks on higher education. For example, at North East London Poly, where there is a deficit of £2.4 million between the Poly's cash needs and the cash available, possibly four departments could close—making up to 276 staff redundant.

In London, there are proposals to cut the number of medical schools from 34 to 6, including closing the Westminster teaching hospital. This will hit both students, and the National Health Service. The need for a united campaign against the cuts, with NUS linking up in action with the trade union movement, is graphically clear.

The campaign against fee increases must continue. They will undoubtedly lead to the closure of colleges with a high intake of overseas students, cutting educational opportunity for overseas and British students.

Even from the point of view of British capitalism, these fee increases are lunacy, as courses which specialised in industrially-orientated research will close. They also mean enormous hardship for thousands of overseas students, many of whom are self-financing.

NUS must also campaign on the burning question of unemployment. For example, for science and engineering graduates, there are 8% fewer jobs available this year. In electronics and computing, the fall in graduate job requirements is 15%.

By
Peter Lush

In mechanical engineering, some firms have abandoned graduate recruitment altogether. The cuts in civil service expenditure, education and the NHS will all mean more graduates on the dole queues.

NUS must fight for:

- ★ A guaranteed job for every school and college leaver!
- ★ Work sharing on full pay!
- ★ Nationalise any firm threatening redundancies!
- ★ Stop the cuts—for a massive programme of public works!

It is the working class students in the FEs and technical colleges who face the worst conditions. NUS must step up its efforts to organise effective unions in these colleges, and fight for a grant of £20 a week for all 16-18 year olds in full time education.

A campaign on this, linked to a concerted fight against the cuts, could convince thousands of FE students of the need to join student unions. This is how unions can be built in the FE colleges. The debate on 'Further education' and 'union development' will be a chance to launch such a campaign.

As part of a united campaign against the Tories, NUS should call for full support for the TUC Day of Action on May 14th.

Linking up with the trade unions in higher and further education, such as NUPE, NATFHE and the AUT, the

closure of every college in the country would indicate the anger felt against the Tories.

Socialist alternative

The debate on 'Government Economic Policy' must draw up clear socialist policies as an alternative to the monetarist lunacy of the Tory government. The grants award of 15% will mean a cut in the living standards of students. NUS must call for the defeat of the Tories, and the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

But NUS must also be prepared to fight to defend the right of student unions to control their own finances and affairs. Under the transparent guise of "public accountability", the Tories are putting forward proposals to further restrict the activities of student unions. The NUS Executive must organise a militant campaign against this, and take the issue into the labour movement to seek support. The Tory government has attacked both students and the working class. The interests of students lie with the working class, organising to resist the cuts in our living standards.

NUS should launch a campaign to affiliate to the TUC and the Labour Party, to build at a national level links that already exist locally, and to draw students as a body into the labour movement.

The fight against the cuts and unemployment is a political fight—that is why NUS must seek affiliation to the Labour Party, as the mass party of the working class, as

well as the TUC.

However, to achieve this, NUS must show it is a serious force, prepared to support the activities of the labour movement. Full support should be given to workers in education fighting for a living wage. This will mean a change of direction from the Executive, who gave no support at all to the NALGO dispute last Autumn.

The Executive elections will be a major part of this conference. Last Christmas, NOLS agreed to stand independently in NUS, and to break with the 'Left Alliance'.

However, this was effectively sabotaged by the withdrawal of the two NOLS candidates for full time positions, one preferring to stand with the 'Left Alliance' (which includes the Liberals).

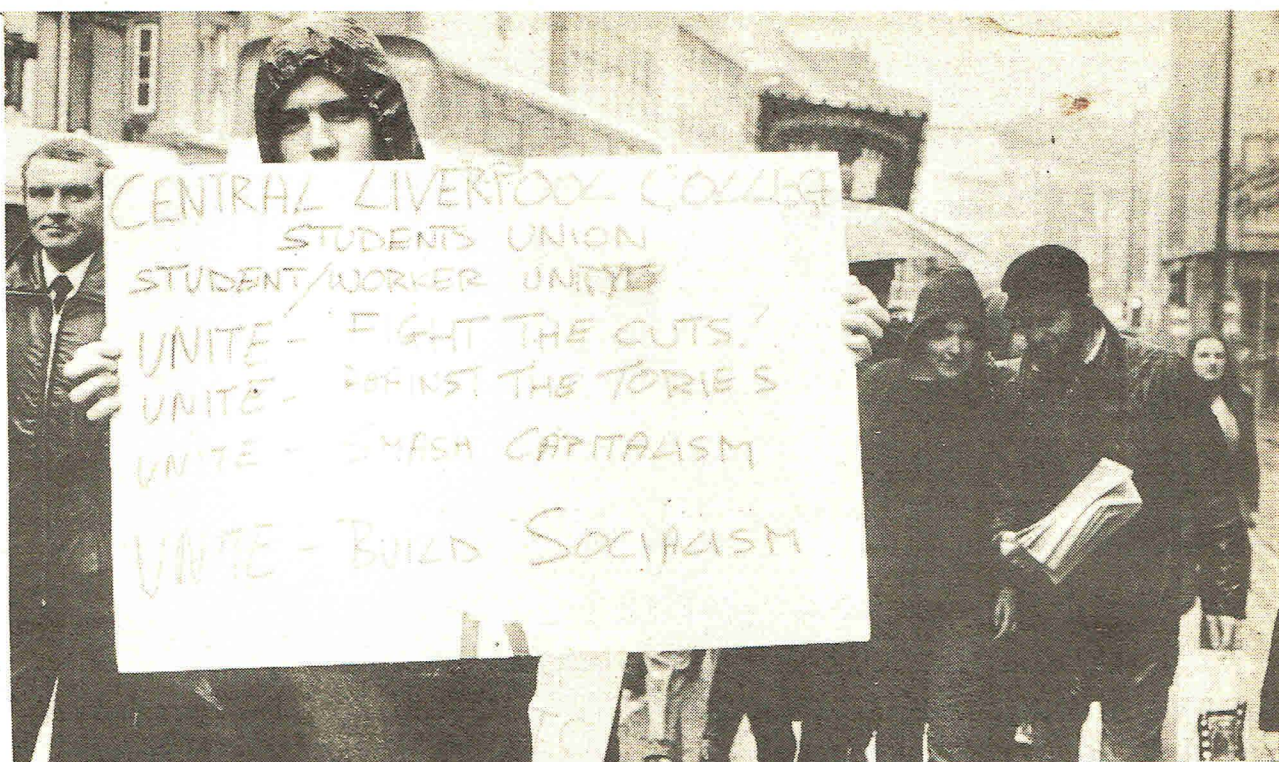
The NOLS leadership, in deciding not to run a slate for these elections, have missed

an excellent opportunity to build support for Labour and socialist policies in NUS.

Labour Students should still support the two NOLS candidates for part-time positions, despite the limited socialist policies passed at NOLS conference, they are standing on.

For the full time positions vote for 'Left Alliance' candidates, because of the lack of a viable alternative, except for Leighton Andrews, who is a member of the Liberal Party—the second party of capitalism who can do nothing to forward the interests of students. Therefore, for the position of Vice-President (Welfare), support should be given to the SSA candidate.

The new Executive face an urgent task—to organise a concerted campaign against the Tories. NUS members over the coming year must ensure this is carried out.



Students on Liverpool anti-cuts demo. Students must fight alongside the working class.

Photo: Militant

POSTAL WORKERS SHOW SOLIDARITY

During the steel strike, Welsh steelmen picketed Poole Docks.

Members of the local Labour Party and Poole LPYS asked them recently if they would like us to try to arrange for an appeal for the strike fund to be made at the UPW Conference in Bournemouth on the 17 and 18 March.

On Monday we asked an NEC member of the UPW if something could be arranged. The next day further approaches were made to the platform.

Although the opportunity to speak was denied the pickets, the conference was told by the chairman that a group of steelworkers were outside and would be taking a collection for the strike fund.

The response was overwhelming!

UPW delegates, hurrying off to lunch stopped to pile silver, £1 notes, fivers and even ten pound notes into the buckets used for the collection. Steelworkers collecting at the front entrance were lost from view as delegates almost blocked the entrance, waiting to add their donation to the strike fund.

Shouts of "Best of luck, mates!" and "Keep it up, we're with you!" could be heard all around.

To the astonishment of the steelworkers, the staggering sum of £521.20 was collected, which will go entirely to the families of strikers.

What a magnificent response for the Post Office workers, and it was only a small conference at that! This show of solidarity towards workers in another industry illustrates the depth of feeling there is towards the struggles of the working class against the Tories.

By K. Spencer
(Poole CLP)



Delegates at NUS Conference in 1978

Why we picketed the governors

Over 100 students at Kingston Polytechnic picketed a recent meeting of the Polytechnic governors in protest over mid-year increases in hostel fees and refectory prices.

The governing body is largely controlled by local Tory councillors who think that students will fall easy prey to their vicious cuts policies. Hundreds of students, not normally known for

By Dave Shields
(Kingston Poly Labour Club)

their militancy, have unanimously agreed at mass meetings on various sites to conduct a rent strike.

Despite ineffective leadership which seeks to negotiate 'compromise' deals the general mood is one of anger and hostility towards the callous attitudes of the authorities.

Students receive no in-

creases in their incomes during the academic year so it is a totally unjustified act to increase hostel fees and refectory prices—especially during the summer term when most students receive 20% less in their termly grant.

The students' demands are: no increases mid-term; all increases to be levied at the beginning of the year in line with grant increases; the period of notice on either side to be two weeks, in accordance with previous policies.

When these very reasonable

demands were made to the governors they simply ignored them—declaring that they (the Tory council) had already agreed to implement the increases. The students responded by sitting down outside the committee room making it difficult for the governors to pass.

They then moaned about students "acting irresponsibly" and "not presenting their case in the correct manner" which is rich, considering the appalling representation on the governing

body of both the students and campus trade unions.

The cloth-eared Tories on the governing body have provoked the students continuously over the academic year by refusing absolutely to consider their educational and social needs—so it is their own fault when students decided to hit them where it hurts most—their pockets—by refusing to pay any rent until their demands are met.

LEFT and RIGHT

The squeeze in Harley St

Got any sympathy for the poor doctors practicing private medicine? They use the National Health Service facilities as support for their private deals.

But now they tell us that they're facing problems.

Not health cuts or attacks on social services. Car-parking and accommodation for their private consulting-rooms are their problems.

To be a real top-notch private leech it's best to have your consulting-rooms in or near Harley Street. Sounds better that way. But now some other professional bounders such as solicitors have been renting rooms there, and taking up car space.

Dr Havard, secretary of the British Medical Association, has spotted the problems. He told the 'Guardian' last month: "Bearing in mind the changes in consultants' contracts, making more opportunities available for private practice we anticipate more demand [for premises]..."

Car parking is another problem in the precinct. How, if you're an obstetrician or an anaesthetist, are you going to get from your consulting-room to your hospital quickly when you're needed if your car is not parked near-by."

Whilst these characters face problems of how to get more and more money, kidney patients are dying for lack of resources. It's about time private medicine was ended and decent resources given to an ailing National Health Service.

Laying golden eggs

Tory minister Michael Heseltine has produced a rare mutant. No—not another economic 'theory'—but 'The Heseltinoensus,' a freak pheasant. His hidden talents have also been at work mating rare and exotic geese which are sending shivers of delight through leading ornithological circles.

What has this got to do with Heseltine's job as environment secretary? Perhaps it's a new business scheme for the "free enterprise" [i.e. no tax] zones: buying up the empty council houses we can't afford for breeding pens and sailing his ducks on deserted docklands. It may not do much for your environment, but think of all the frustrated hunters at Westminster who would be delighted!

Our honourable Tory members clearly aren't too busy to pursue their fascinating hobbies. And geese don't go on all the time about their union rights...

Enterprising democracy

Even Japanese bosses have problems. The Tokyo Iron and Steel company faces falling profits, union troubles and a lawsuit for alleged dumping in the USA which could cost them 25 million dollars. But a company official confidently predicted that the spring stockholders meeting "should be over almost as soon as it starts." No embarrassing questions are expected.

The secret, as always, is organisation and investment. Big Japanese companies pay out an estimated \$350 million a year to buy protection at shareholders' meetings. This thriving racket is run by the Sokaiya [translated literally: stockholders' meeting-attenders]: smoothly turned-out gangsters who investigate company scandals and other embarrassing information, then extort money to keep quiet and to shut up other awkward questioners at meetings by heckling, bought votes and violence when necessary. The Sokaiya number an estimated 6,500, but businessmen refuse to co-operate in stamping them out: they cannot survive without them, they say [or with the avalanche of exposed scandals].

This imaginative scheme of business management came into its own, like Japanese capitalism, after the second world war. Along with all the millions poured in by American capitalism to create a stable buffer against 'the Reds' in the East went all that's best in the entrepreneurial tradition, it seems. So next time you're being told how wonderfully co-operative the Japanese are with their bosses, remind your gaffer that the unions are not the only ones shackled in the land where 'free enterprise' seems to blossom.

EXTRACTING THE BOSSSES' TEETH

'Goldsborough' is set in an isolated mining town in America in the mid-1950s. The miners' union is corrupt and controlled by the bosses and the local establishment. The whole area is controlled through graft, corruption and violence.

No opposition is allowed to exist. Any which emerges is either bought-off or crushed through frame-ups or persecution. Doc Hale is the only man who tries to stand up and fight, resulting in a lot of personal suffering.

A wild-cat strike transforms this situation.

For the first time Doc Hale finds himself with an ally that is powerful enough to stand up to the local establishment. On the one side stand the mineowners, the local politicians and the union leaders who have been bought off. On the other side stands the rank and file miners and Doc Hale.

Lead by a rank and file member, Carlisle Kennedy, they learn the hard way—in the university of struggle. To begin with they have difficulty in keeping the men together.

The mine is closed and there is no activity. But the enemy, with the whip of class interest, quickly changes this. The opening of strip mines which will cash in on the demand for coal leads to the organisation of flying pickets.

The bosses learn too, however. After the initial success of the pickets the scabs are armed and consequently wound a picket. From this the miners learn the need for armed flying pickets.

The experience of being on strike even leads to the miners learning the basics of dentistry. Necessity is the mother of invention.

Doc Hales' dental practice is used as the strike centre, but as the phone is tapped they use a code based on teeth. "It's my second molar



American miners and their wives "in the university of struggle" during the 1977 miners' strike

A review of 'Goldsborough' by Stefan Heym

[Currently out of print, but ask you local library]

on the right" says the voice on the phone. That means that New Pendleton is calling.

Then Doc says "That's too bad, I thought we had fixed your lower left bicupid." This means 'get over to the Richfield assembly point.'

ABCs of struggle

Because the strike is a long drawn out affair with considerable suffering and hardship, the miners are also forced to learn the ABCs of struggle. Solidarity comes in the form of organising relief from other trade unionists in the big cities such as Philadelphia.

Miners who have never been out of the district go and speak to other trade union branches and appeal for support. For the miners these

are lessons well learnt.

But for Doc Hale this is not enough. He tries to preach to them about the political nature of the strike and how things need changing in the local establishment. Even if they do not totally grasp these things it is clear that the miners are drawing the lessons.

They begin to shed the illusions of a "democratic America". Bilek, an old miner originally from Poland, explains at a meeting what it was like in the old country and how they were treated by the village policeman, the symbol of oppression.

He explains "he's still around, he's riding on the coal trucks alongside the scabs. He fires at us from pistols and sawn-off shotguns, he sits in the courthouse throwing the law at us, he's with the gangsters and racketeers and the politicians, he's in with the big union leaders, knifing

us. "He's learnt to write and to speak but we don't find his name signed in the papers, don't hear it on the radio. Sometimes I think he got himself into the White House too."

Doc Hale receives the support and the ear of the miners because of his practical support and solidarity. His only fault is his lack of faith in the miners, and his own impatience.

The outcome of the strike is a partial victory. The miners achieve some of their aims. But the combination of violence and frame-ups force Doc Hale out of town. The establishment are cock-a-hoop—they are confident that everything will now return to normal.

But the strike has built explosive material into the base of their society. The miners have learnt the lessons of class struggle, and for the first time an opposition slate will be organised, around Kennedy, to try and take the leadership of the local.

For many workers the conditions described will be familiar. For steelworkers a reading of this book will bring back many graphic memories and experiences. It's well worth obtaining it through your local library.

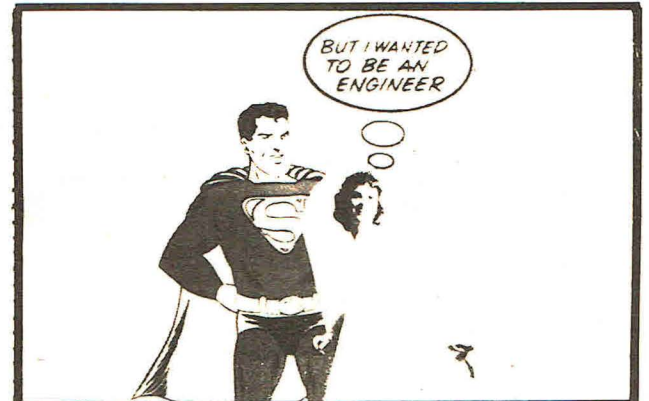
HOW TO GET SOCIALIST FILMS

Want to hire a film for your trade union branch, Labour Party or LPYS meeting? But not quite sure which film to choose, where to obtain it, how to get a

projector, and how to show it? Then an excellent new pamphlet is recommended.

It lists and gives brief synopses of 80 films: trade union, anti-racist, anti-sexist,

Below: 'Z', based on the assassination of a Greek Communist MP



"Superman and the bride", a documentary on sex roles: "slick, fast and funny".

international and general feature films. It gives the cost of hiring and where they can be obtained, as well as hints on how to run a film show successfully.

The pamphlet 'Films for Socialists—where to get them

and how to show them" costs £1 [inc. p&p] from Ken Hulme, Room 427, Wool Exchange, Brushfield Street, London E1.

Tel: London 01-247 0335
Southwest 0272-551582
North 0532-460171.

THROWING DOWN THE GAUNTLET

Councillors Pat Bayle and Val Pearce explain how Bracknell's Labour Group is expanding and improving the Town Council's services.

Bracknell town council, which covers Bracknell new town, is the largest town council in the country. Last year Labour gained control on a wave of anti-Tory feeling only a few weeks after the general election.

At the rate-setting meeting on Friday, 29 February, the Labour group successfully put forward a programme which will extend and improve the services provided by the council.

When Labour assumed control of the Town Council last June, the Bracknell District Labour Party and the Labour group decided to try, as far as possible within the confines of the scope of the Town Council, to redress the balance in favour of the most badly hit sections of the community. This meant adopting policies diametrically opposed to those being carried out by Tory councils, and even unfortunately by some Labour councils. Rather than cut services, we were determined to expand and improve them.

Several specific areas where Tory cuts have been particularly damaging were located, including the withdrawal of free school milk for infants and nursery school children, and the decision by the Tory district council to abolish free television licences for old age pensioners.

The Labour groups decided to provide both the free milk and the TV licences at the

earliest opportunity. It was also agreed to help fund the building of a centre for the performing arts, the first of its kind in Bracknell. The grant to South Hill Park Arts Centre was also to be increased considerably, enabling the Centre to maintain its community-based activities. Grants to local adventure playgrounds were to be increased, too, as was the money available for summer play schemes.

We decided, as far as possible, to redress the balance

The whole package represented an expansion of services provided by the council and the introduction of new services previously supplied by other local authorities.

The Labour group considered that this improvement of services more than justified the relatively small 1.5p in the £ increase (from 3.5p to 5.0p in the £) in the Town rate.

The Town rate is only a fraction of the total rate of 76.9p in the £ when the (Tory-controlled) district and (Tory-controlled) county council rates for last year are included. An average three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Bracknell has a rateable value of £262, producing a rate bill of £201 last year.

This year, both the district and county councils are proposing big rate increases — while at the same time

cutting services.

On the 29 February, at the rate-fixing meeting, the Tory opposition group made a pathetic attempt to oppose the introduction of free school milk. In fact, in spite of moving an amendment to delete the free school milk they merely abstained when the item was voted on, after trying unsuccessfully to withdraw the amendment. Clearly aware of local support for the scheme, they lost their nerve at the last moment.

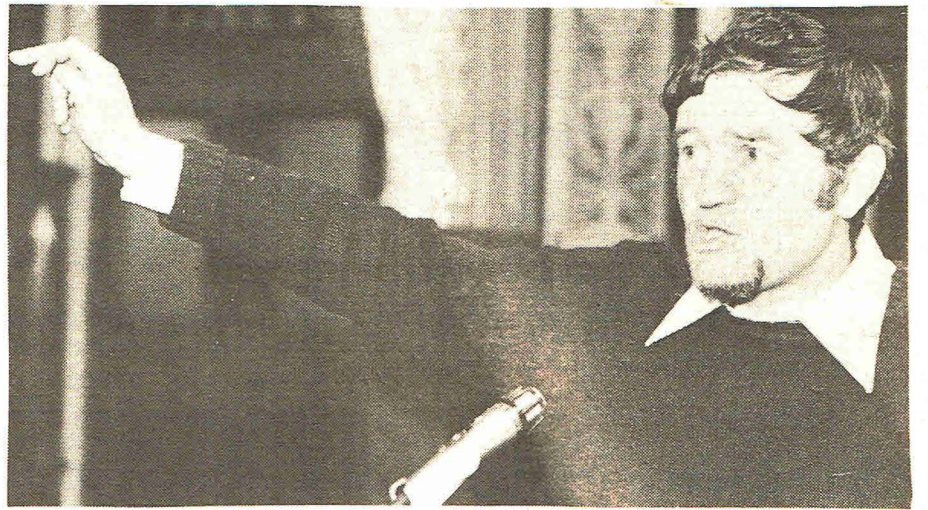
As for the television licences, they didn't even try to oppose the scheme. Backed up by Labour Party members in the public gallery, the Labour group enthusiastically pushed the package through.

The Bracknell District Labour Party now has the responsibility to defend and publicise the decisions taken by the Labour group against the inevitable criticism in the local press. There is even a possibility that the government, egged on by local Tories (including the MP), will try to take some form of action against the town council.

If this should happen, the Labour Party must mobilise a campaign involving local trade unions to defend the councillors, such a campaign would be supported by large sections of the Bracknell community.

Although the Tory government cannot be defeated by the actions of individual local Labour councils, the stand taken by Bracknell town council should serve as a beacon for other Labour controlled councils to follow.

Not only have services been fully maintained and even improved, no cuts have been implemented in spite of local press hysteria and pressure from the government. The labour movement must give full support to all Labour councils that throw down the gauntlet to the government by refusing to make cuts.



Pat Wall, President of Bradford Trades Council, calling for 24-hour strike action on 14 May.
Photos: J McKittrick (MILITANT)



MERSEYSIDE-ANTI CUTS CONFERENCE

Support for a one-day general strike on 14 May and the call for national co-ordination of anti-cuts campaigns was the message from the Anti-Cuts Conference in Liverpool on 22 March.

Over 180 Labour Party and trade union members attended the conference, called by the Merseyside Anti-Cuts Committee.

"No Labour group can win the fight against Tory cuts in isolation," said Terry Harrison, opening the conference. "Only national co-ordination and organisation through anti-cuts campaigns based around Labour Parties, trades councils, and local authority unions can win the battle".

Pat Wall, president of

By Richard Knights

massive response on 14 May from the labour movement," said Colin Barnett, North-West TUC Secretary. He welcomed the initiative of the Merseyside anti-cuts committee. "This can only be the beginning of the campaign to defeat the Tory government's present policies."

Eric Heffer MP hoped Labour's National Executive would soon formulate a national policy on the cuts. He said the NEC would support all labour councillors resisting the implementation of cuts cuts.

Joan Maynard criticised the right-wing of the the NEC's local government sub-committee for blocking attempts to thrash out a national response to Labour Councils' fight-back.

Parasites

Millions of council house tenants face big rent increases this month. In Bolsover, Derbyshire, rents have gone up by an average of £2 per week. With everything else going up, this is one more blow to working class families.

The Council sent a diagram to tenants showing where their money comes from and where it goes. Over £2,830,000, 49% of their housing income, comes from rents.

Yet the staggering sum of £3,188,530, 55% of their housing expenditure, goes as interest charges to the banks. So for every £1 of rent collected, £1.12 is sent to the banks.

The Tories often claim that council rents are subsidised by the rates and are below the 'market price'. Heseltine has threatened to force rents up by cutting government subsi-

By John Dale

What hypocrisy! The truth is clear from these figures. Tenants are subsidising the directors and shareholders of the banks. The real 'market price' should be about £5 per week instead of £11 per week for an average three-bedroom house.

Labour councillors should be using these figures which reflect housing budgets throughout the country to lead a fight back against rent increases and win support for the nationalisation of the banks.

Bolsover District Council Estimated housing revenue Account 1980/81

Main items of expenditure		
	£	%
Loan charges	3,188,530	55%
Repairs	1,537,055	27%
Supervision & management	527,760	9%
Wardens schemes	223,015	5%
Capital contributions	192,665	3%
Open spaces	92,445	2%
Total	5,760,340	

Sources of income		
	£	%
Rents of dwellings, garages and sites	2,832,315	49%
Government subsidies	2,285,070	39%
Rate fund contribution	508,655	9%
Balances		2%
Other income		1%
Total	5,760,340	

MILITANT PAMPHLET

Militant 40p
HEALTH SERVICE PAMPHLET

**STOP THE CUTS-
DEFEND THE NHS!**

- NHS Under the Tories
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**Price 40p
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NORTHERN IRELAND GENERAL STRIKE

Workers unity in action

Most factories in Northern Ireland were closed from 2 pm last Wednesday [2 April] as thousands of workers responded to the call of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions for a Day of Action against the Tory government.

In Belfast, the workforce of the shipyard were out. So too were a large percentage of the huge Shorts aircraft factory.

Many industrial estates throughout the city were brought to a standstill. Office workers, many of them members of the public services unions, also joined the protest, as did staff from the major hospitals and from the schools. Outside Belfast there was a similar response.

By 3 o'clock, almost 10,000 workers had gathered for a huge rally outside Belfast's City Hall. Simultaneously, other rallies were being held in eleven other centres throughout the North.

In Derry, as many workers as in Belfast crowded into the Guildhall Square. In Newry and Lurgan, there were large rallies too. About 2,000 marched in Enniskillen. Over 600 heard members of Strabane trades council address a meeting there.

Even in places like Magherafelt there were rallies

of a similar size.

There has not been such a demonstration of the power and also of the unity of the working class, Catholic and Protestant, in Northern Ireland for decades. Everywhere, Catholic and Protestant workers stood shoulder to shoulder. Nowhere were the events marred by sectarian incidents —and this despite the conflict of the last ten years.

What was shown last Wednesday was the power of the labour movement in Northern Ireland to overcome sectarianism and to fight against the Tories.

The press and television are generally full of stories of religious conflict. But in both Britain and Ireland they treated the magnificent demonstration with a deafening silence.

Clearly, the bosses' press

By Peter Hadden
(Belfast Labour & Trade Union Group)



Photos: Derek Spiers [IFL]

Above: Thousands of workers, Catholic and Protestant, mass in protest against the Tories.



Left: The banner of the Labour and Trade Union Group in Belfast.

are aware of the danger to the capitalist system of a united class movement in Northern Ireland.

The demonstrations were a great success. But the Belfast march in particular could have been much bigger. Most of the workers who came out had received no clear instructions from their unions. Many of the shipyard and the Shorts workers had not been told either of the marches or of the rally.

No mass meetings had been held to organise the demonstration. With better preparation, there would have been tens of thousands not just 10,000 at the City Hall in

Belfast.

From the platform in Belfast a resolution calling on the government to set a jobs-creation target was passed. Unfortunately, no clear fighting programme to oust the Tories and end the problems of the economy were spelt out.

But in other areas an alternative was put forward. In Enniskillen, Thomas Campbell, secretary of Fermanagh trades council, received a warm response when he made a call for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

A socialist appeal was also made in Derry by 'Militant'

supporter Bill Webster, when on behalf of Derry trades council he moved a motion calling for further action against the Tories and setting out clear socialist demands.

One of the most significant features of all the demonstrations in areas like Derry, Strabane, Belfast, Fermanagh and Coleraine was the strong presence of members of the Labour and Trade Union Group, who distributed leaflets and sold the group's new pamphlet, 'Common Misery, Common Struggle'.

In Belfast and Derry, the Labour Group and Derry Labour Party held successful

meetings after the demonstrations. On the Belfast march alone, 450 copies of 'Militant Irish Monthly' were sold. Reports from other areas indicate that about 900 copies of the paper were sold overall.

Following on from the success of 2 April, the call is now being raised in Northern Ireland by the Labour and Trade Union Group and other activists for 14 May to be declared a one-day general strike, both in Britain and in Northern Ireland, and for a full turn-out on socialist demands on that day.

GOOD RESPONSE TO YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Manus Maguire, of Belfast Young Socialists and the Labour and Trade Union Group, describes their successful intervention on 2 April.

"All the branches we have covered the activities during the half-day general strike. In Belfast, where I was, the people whose names we had who were interested in joining the Young Socialists from last year's Youth for Soc-

ialism campaign, we got them together and with some supporters from Britain and Dublin we covered every point where the workers were gathering for demonstrations and activities. We were the only left-wing group who covered the march from beginning to end.

"In the Falls area a small sectlet on the fringes of the labour movement said they were going to march along the trade union route, making an H-Block protest. But the trade union-



Manus speaking at last week's national conference of the LPYS

ists from this Catholic area refused to march behind them and took an unofficial route. This shows

that, although there is a lot of sympathy for the H-Block men in this Catholic area, the people are dis-

gusted with the policies of the Provisionals, which this small group was associated with.

"We were leafletting in Protestant areas, in the heavy engineering firms. When we produced our leaflets with 'Tories out' along the top, the response was very good. They were saying, 'Yeah, get Thatcher out!' This shatters any ideas that the Protestant workers as a whole vote Tory.

"The policies of the Young Socialists and the Labour and Trade Union Group were vindicated by rank and file workers on the 2 April stoppage. The policies of sectarianism have not yet been defeated, but a lot of workers agreed with the idea of working-class unity, and this is certainly receiving a strong echo within the ranks of the labour movement."

Northern Ireland

Tory Cuts
COMMON MISERY, COMMON STRUGGLE
By Peter Hadden 30p

'COMMON MISERY, COMMON STRUGGLE'
By Peter Hadden

Price 30p + 10p P&P [postage free with orders of more than 20]. Order from: LTUG, 18 Donegall Street, Belfast

1980 LPYS CONFERENCE

YOUNG SHOW

KICK OUT THE TORIES! FIGHT FOR SOCIALISM

“The labour movement has two alternatives. We either surrender to the attacks made by the Tories or we fight. The Labour Party Young Socialists will fight.”

LPYS National Committee member Margaret Reavey's comment in her excellent lead off on the LPYS document 'Forward to socialism in the '80s' summed up the determination and optimism of the entire conference.

As Margaret pointed out, "The Tories' days are numbered. Up and down the country, rallies, demonstrations, sit-ins to protest at school, nursery and factory closures show the burning anger of our class."

The conference set about developing a programme and policies to harness this anger to the task of kicking out the Tories and building a socialist society. Margaret Reavey detailed the false promises dangled like carrots before the electorate last May by the Tories, of improvements in welfare and prosperity.

But what had happened? Millions had been cut from spending on health, housing, education, enormous attacks were being made on industries like steel, and now even the rights of the unemployed were under attack.

Labour renegade Prentice attacked 'scroungers', i.e. the unemployed—but the royal family, the biggest scroungers in the land, got huge hand-outs. Their work load, though was less than ever. They used to open schools, hospitals, motorways, but these are no longer being built.

The Tories and their capitalist backers were unable to guarantee jobs any more. In fact a huge increase in the dole queues was on the cards if capitalism continued, with an anticipated 2½% drop in production this year. In 1973-74 a drop of 1% in the advanced capitalist countries doubled the unemployment figures.

Maureen McLaughlin, a delegate from the Edinburgh area, related how a careers officer at her school told her she should consider joining the army, because of the shortage of jobs. When Maureen had argued that she wanted a proper job, she had been told, "My dear, you are an idealist."

Mick Hogan from Garston LPYS detailed some of the job losses in Merseyside in the last year, and how LPYS members had got involved on



‘The Tories days are numbered’

the picket lines and occupations at Meccano and Massey Ferguson where workers in an area with one job for thirty-seven school leavers were fighting to keep jobs.

Other speakers outlined the need for the Labour Party to be in the forefront in fighting cuts in services, with councillors resisting cuts and rent and rate increases.

Capitalism could no longer guarantee the maintenance of any services. Margaret Reavey harked back to the Tory slogan of the 'old traditional type of education'—'what they obviously meant was traditional antiquated schools and equipment.

The only 'help' to education was to the rich—£55m to encourage private education on top of the near £500m already indirectly subsidising it. For the workers, only a 9% cut back.

Speakers showed how the health service, once the best in the world, had, after years of whittling away, received huge blows. **Neil McQuade** [Nottingham North] quoted a member of a local health council who said that the only way to get off some waiting

lists is by dying. The free service is a thing of the past. Before the cuts, millions went without vital treatment. What of the future?

Other speakers stressed how the benefits which could accrue from 'new technology' were either wasted by capitalism—or led to massive unemployment.

On all aspects of the cuts and the Tory attacks, speakers supporting the majority 'Militant' position stressed that an answer was available by harnessing the enormous power of the working class to fight for a socialist society.

As **Tony Saunois**, LPYS representative on the Labour Party NEC, said, "Even just on the basis of employing the 1½ million unemployed, there would be a 20% rise in production which could give for example a 25% increase at least in health, education etc. and a 10% real increase in living standards.

If all the technical advances of the last 30 years were used, all the needs of society could be produced by about 10% of the population. Capitalism cannot bring this about. Only

Photos: MILITANT
Right: The highlight of the weekend for many LPYS members—the Militant Readers' Meeting.
Below: Margaret Reavey speaks on the YS document 'Forward to socialism in the '80s.'



Ireland - The V

The British capitalist class are directly responsible for the situation in Northern Ireland. During the debate on Ireland, delegates showed how the capitalist ruling class had used sectarianism to divide the workers of the north, in order to maintain their profit system. The repression by the British army and the terrible living standards was graphically illustrated by delegates, who also explained that these conditions were faced by both Catholic and Protestant workers alike. As the Marxists in the LPYS have consistently explained, the only way both to solve the problems of workers and to defeat the repressive forces of the British army in the North is to reject the cul-de-sac of sectarianism and strive for class unity in common struggle for social-

socialism can." Delegates provided living examples on all aspects of cuts and attacks of why capitalism must go. In all spheres, the programme of the LPYS of a 35-hour week with no loss of pay to fight unemployment, a minimum wage of £80 per week, and in particular the demand for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies under workers' control and management were reaffirmed. The conference proved once more that they are not just slogans but the only way forward for the working people of Britain.

SOCIALISTS

THE WAY

WORKERS

INTERNATIONALISM

The western capitalist class reach the height of hypocrisy in their hysterical outbursts over the Russian intervention in Afghanistan.

Fiona Winders [Wanstead and Woodford] during the international debate said the Tory press remained silent over such acts as that of American imperialism in Vietnam, yet they froth at the mouth over the actions of the Soviet Union.

However, she explained that the YS must condemn the 'imperialist' nature in which Soviet bureaucracy invaded Afghanistan as it was a 'spit in the face' of the international working class and aided the capitalists in discrediting genuine socialism.

It would be wrong to call for the withdrawal of Russian troops because of the threat of a reactionary counter-revolution, headed by the fanatical Islamic Mullahs, and backed by American imperialism. These reactionary rebels would take the country back to the middle ages and end the social reforms that came with the April '78 revolution.

However, she said, a proper socialist workers' organisation was needed to take the workers and peasants of Afghanistan forward. Political revolution, not counter-revolution, was needed.

A few delegates argued this was incorrect, saying the YS should call for Russian 'troops out' of the country—

in the same way this had been called for in 1956 over Hungary, and 1968 over Czechoslovakia. Another added it was our 'moral duty' to demand 'self-determination' for the people of Afghanistan.

Comrades replied that in the events of '56 and '68 there was no threat of counter-revolution in Hungary or Czechoslovakia, whereas the reverse was true in Afghanistan today—as Robin Clapp [Bristol SE] said, "The Young Socialists must not be guided by abstract 'morality' but by what is in the interests of the working class."

Chile...

The stark reality of the situation facing workers under the military dictatorship of Pinochet in Chile was brought home to conference with a fraternal speaker from the Chilean Socialist Party of the Interior. The comrade took the platform in a mask to prevent recognition, which could lead to his arrest, torture, and possible execution on his return to Chile.

He explained that the

The debate on internationalism, on the discussion document, 'Workers of the world unite', was approached from the basis of what was in the interests of the working class. A socialist approach, rooted amongst the workers and peasantry, was needed.

When discussing the situation in the Middle East, Ian Burns [Gateshead] showed how the PLO, the Palestinian nationalist movement, vacillated between guerrillaism and negotiating with imperialism for a solution to the misery and sufferings of the Palestinian people. But the PLO by refusing to adopt a class approach, was helping to keep Israeli workers under Zionist ideology.

The NOLS 'Clause 4' representatives walked off the platform when the PLO was criticised by Jim Newlands [National Committee] at the end, but the resolutions passed called for a class

programme, including the call for a socialist Federation of the Middle East with an autonomous Palestinian and Israeli state within it, if the Israeli and Palestinian people still wanted their own national states.

The far-ranging discussion went on to cover all areas of the Third World, Latin America, Western Europe and the Eastern European states.

Jim finished by saying the key to the setting up of a world federation of socialist states lay in the successful transformation of the advanced capitalist nations of the west. That would consolidate and deepen the anti-imperialist struggle in the so-called 'third world' and ensure a socialist revolution. At the same time it would end the Stalinist tyrannies in the East and help bring about political revolution there.

the years, the workers became demoralised, and Pinochet was allowed to come to power with no real struggle."

He outlined the horrific conditions of economic and military repression facing the Chilean workers, and warned workers of the world to learn from the lessons of Chile.

He congratulated the internationalist and Marxist position of the YS, and asked all labour movement organisations to pressurise their governments to isolate Chile through embargoes and so on. He also appealed for cash—the YS responded with a magnificent collection of £1,370.

ments.' They were answered by Ann San [Crosby] who said, "They are the ones who ignore the war—they are ignoring the class war."

In summing up the debate for the National Committee, Nick Toms again pointed out that the situation in Northern Ireland is directly the fault of the capitalists—they had created the monster of sectarianism, and were directly responsible for the sectarian holocaust that had been unleashed, which reached its peak in the '72-74 period.

But now, he added, it is evident that the working class

are rapidly turning away from the dead-end ideas of sectarianism and beginning to unite on class issues, as had been shown by the recent stoppage against the Tories.

The LPYS, he said, must help the moves by the Northern Ireland comrades to set up an independent party of Labour, which could present a socialist programme to the working class, and offer an alternative to the sterile policies of Green and Orange Toryism.

Jake Shepherd, G&MWU member at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead. "It was a great conference. I think the Militant meeting was the best. You get more political education here than you do in a year anywhere else. There shouldn't be 2,000 here next year—there should be 20,000."

A member of the Central Committee of the leading left-wing Pakistani trade union federation.

"The enthusiasm and participation of the youth is encouraging. The level of political debates is as high as I expected, because the level of the revolutionary left is so high. Now if the LPYS takes its Conference decisions out to the masses of the people it will be excellent. One criticism I would make however is that not enough black youth attended or were delegates."

Polly Simpson [Wokingham LPYS] "It's very educational. There are ten people here from the LPYS with fifteen others from the area. Nearly all will be joining the LPYS, particularly after the Militant readers meeting."

Chris Pool, sponsored delegate from Rolls Royce AUEW shop stewards committee in Bristol. "A very good conference. I've learnt a lot about the politics of the LPYS and Militant. It's made me want to go away and read more and to get more active in the YS."

"I like the idea of YS branches in workplaces, though I think they'll only really grow when the government gets really right wing and things get really bad for workers."

Jenny O'Brien [Southampton Labour Party] I came to YS conference though I'm just over YS age, because I wanted more political education.

I was very interested in the debates on education. My 4½ year old daughter was so upset at cuts in nursery education that she told me "When I'm a big girl I'm going to kill Thatcher".

I was allowed to have an education. I want to make sure my daughter does too.

I'm living on a widows pension, and trying to bring up a child. School dinners are going up to 60p a day, that's £3 a week per child. She'll only get free milk for one term when she starts her new school.

I've terrible accommodation and can't get council housing. The LPYS and Militant meetings have given us all a solution. It's also opened my eyes on international things like the poverty and torture in Chile.

Three black LPYS members from Birmingham, S. Singh and VS from Handsworth and Matthew Kelly from Erdington spoke to 'Militant'. All three are unemployed.

"Six out of ten black youth are out of work in our area. And the police are extremely violent against kids on the streets. They use 'Sus' laws and plant drugs on people. Kids often leave home at 14 or 15 because conditions are so bad and because they reject their parents values."

MK: "The last job I had was welding. It was my third job and I got £21 a week."

I was being exploited for peanuts. A lot of black youth suffer from depression."

Workers Struggle

ism. And the correctness of this position was well illustrated by Manus Maguire, fraternal speaker from the newly formed Young Socialist branches in Northern Ireland—based around the Labour and Trade Union Group and supporters of the 'Militant Irish Monthly.'

Manus described the well-received intervention made by the Young Socialists during

the April 2nd stoppage, saying hundreds of names were collected from young workers on the various demonstrations interested in joining the YS.

New YS groups were being formed in all the main areas of the North, such as Derry and Belfast, as well as in small areas such as Enniskillen and Warrenpoint. Even in Ballymena, the stronghold of Paisley, the YS had over 25

members and was growing rapidly.

Manus added, "The old sectarian slogans on the walls of the town of 'Up the Provos' or 'Up the UVF' have faded away, and new slogans of 'Ballymena YS rules OK' are appearing."

In the debate, a few delegates argued that the YS had been 'ignoring the war' in Northern Ireland, and should support the Republican move-



THE STRUGGLE FOR KURDISH RIGHTS

"The Kurds have no friends." In the first part of a two-part article John Pickard looked at the truth of this Kurdish proverb in the relationship to Iraq and Turkey (21 March).

In this article he looks at Iran, and the Kurdish nationalist movement's struggle for self-determination.

Iran

It has been in Iran there has been the most recent resurgence of Kurdish nationalism. Kurdish workers and peasants were as involved as were the masses elsewhere in the country in the overthrow of the vicious Shah dictatorship.

The collapse of the old regime inevitably raised the hopes of national rights. In the past, demands for autonomy or self-government had been presented in vain, but now the workers and peasants were prepared to present their demands from a position of strength, after the collapse of the imperial army of the Shah.

For several months after February 1979, there was in effect a 'de facto' autonomy in the Kurdish parts of Iran, due simply to the weakness of the central government.

But despite promises and declarations to the contrary, the new theocratic regime of Ayatollah Khomeini was not prepared to extend any new rights to the Kurdish regions—fearing the spread of such movement to the other national minorities. The Ayatollah was afraid in effect that Kurdish self-government would lead in the end to the disintegration of Iran itself.

The new-found power and confidence of the workers and peasants in the Kurdish areas was reinforced by the fact that the masses were also armed, and given the intransigence of the new mullahs' regime, new clashes were inevitable. After Kurdish militias occupied key towns in the north-west of Iran, they were evicted by the militia units and army units loyal to the central government.

After fierce fighting last September and October Khomeini reversed his position and announced that he was in favour of giving the Kurds limited national rights, but not the full autonomy they have been demanding.

Nationalism

Despite their common language and culture, the Kurdish national movements

in each of the three main states have functioned largely independent of each other. The KDP—the Kurdish Democratic party—has led a more or less separate existence as the leading Kurdish party in Turkey, Iran and Iraq.

The political demands have varied so that in Iraq, the Kurdish political leaders have been demanding 'autonomy' whereas in Iran and Turkey, at least up to recently, the KDP has confined itself to the demand for national rights in the sphere of language, education and so on.

The leaders of the national movements in the past have often been among the biggest landowners in Kurdistan, where at least in rural areas, semi-feudal land relations are quite common. Although there have been attempts, with some temporary success, of playing one state off against another, in reality all three governments concerned, Turkey, Iran and Iraq—as well as the USSR and Syria have all a lot to gain by the status quo.

As a result of the movement in Iran in the last year, the Kurdish movement has been re-awakened in all these areas and the response of the governments concerned has been for greater collaboration than ever before. Thus the armed forces of Turkey, Iraq and now the Ayatollah's militias are actively working together to seal their mutual borders and cut off the Kurdish militias from any aid or arms.

The heroic struggles and the disappointment of the last few years has not passed by the Kurdish leadership itself. It seems that there is a growing polarisation within the national movement between the old-style nationalists and those drawing the conclusions that social revolution and national revolution go together. The impact of the Iranian revolution has had a profound effect on these political developments within the Kurdish national movement.

None of the governments that include Kurdish minorities are prepared to ever grant the Kurdish areas anything like full national rights. None of the major imperialist powers would be in favour of promoting Kurdish movements for self-determination, because of the social and political implications that would ensue.

Within months of helping in the revolutionary overthrow of the Shah, Kurdish people found themselves fighting for their rights against the new theocratic regime

The Russian bureaucracy, because of its own Kurdish population and because of its close relations with Iraq is not prepared to assist Kurdish rights. It would indeed appear that "the Kurds have no friends."

Self-determination

But for socialists, the aspirations of several millions



cannot simply be wished away or decreed out of existence. The Kurdish question raises issues that will place themselves on the political agenda many times in the coming months and years.

The National Question today probably carries more force in political and social movements than at any time in decades. The international labour movement cannot look upon the state boundaries that exist at present as

inviolable. State boundaries based upon the gunboats and garrisons of imperialism have no justification.

The demand for the right of self-determination for the Kurds must be supported within the labour movement. The struggle for social change in the countries of the Middle East, the struggle for socialism necessarily means the struggle against all forms of national oppression.

A socialist federation that

would include all the nationalities would also include, if the different sections of the Kurdish people so desire, a socialist Kurdistan, in which there could be a full flowering of the language and culture of the Kurdish people.

'Hearing a familiar story'

Last week I went to a public meeting on the crisis in the private car industry. About 60 car workers turned up to hear the leader of their political party from a nearby car town. When a Young Socialist made a contribution from the floor, giving a socialist alternative to the crisis, the speaker replied that he was against nationalising the firm since "the public sector is already too big"; against workers' control; and against a 35-hour week or any reduction in hours without loss of pay.

The proposals which he put to the workers included more overtime, including Saturday working in some plants; more flexibility, for a drive to increase productivity; making the firm more competitive against "foreigners"; and for the government to bail out the private owners with subsidies paid by the taxpayers—with the hope that a planning agreement between the management and the government could be drawn up.

No, it wasn't a Labour Party meeting in Birmingham. It was a meeting of the Italian Communist Party in Bologna! And the speaker wasn't Eric Varley but Signor Renzo Gianotti, member of the Central Committee of the PCI and Secretary of the Party's Provincial Federation of Turin, home town of Italy's famous motor monopoly, FIAT.

By Brent Kennedy

1979 was a 'good' year for Italian capitalism: the economy grew by 5%. But Fiat lost money. Despite high demand, production of cars fell by 3,000 last year, leaving the company with only a 50.7% share of the home market, compared to 54% the previous year.

Management point to the productivity of the firm. The average German car worker, they say, has a productivity record 37% higher than a Fiat worker, and a French worker in Renault 20% higher and Peugeot 44%. But the way Fiat boss Agnelli wants to increase productivity is, of course, at the workers' expense.

Lower labour costs, worse job conditions, redundancies and overtime working—that is Agnelli's solution and he is getting the full backing of the 'Communist' Party, and their trade union leaders.

"The trade union leadership and the Communist Party have been advocating, for the first time, a more moderate approach to labour relations—from lower wage claims to the acceptance of the principle of labour mobility, job-shedding and the need to reduce the overall cost of labour..." the 'Financial Times' gloated to its investor readers recently.

Meanwhile, unemployment in Italy stands at 1.4 million—at over 7% of the workforce it's the highest in the EEC. Yet still the PCI call on the Fiat workers of job-starved Sicily to work Saturdays because the 'Panda' model they produce is in demand. It

is in keeping with the new Party and union slogan 'Fight for greater productivity.'

Unfortunately, as would be the case on a national scale if they were to form a Popular Front coalition government with the Christian Democrats, the PCI and trade union leaders have neither solved the problems of the Fiat management nor satisfied the needs of its workers. Productivity is still low, and with inflation now over 21% Italy's car manufacturers will become even less competitive internationally in the mad scramble to carve up a stagnant market in this year's world recession.

On the other hand, the Fiat workers aren't too pleased with their leaders. In a recent survey of 6,000 Fiat workers in Turin taken by the PCI, only 15% saw the main priority for improvement as being the union's campaign for "more varied and interesting work."

31% demanded better working conditions and 36% wanted better pay. 55% disliked the newly negotiated wage agreement.

Incredibly, in the biggest and most important firm in the Italian economy, with 250,000 workers who have traditionally formed the vanguard of the Italian working class, the Communist-dominated unions have allowed shop-floor organisation to degenerate to the point where only half the workers polled said they were members of a union, and only 32% declared they had always taken part in industrial action called by the unions!

Agnelli can ask for state handouts all he likes, and the PCI can support this—with requests for a planning agreement, of course. But as the

capitalist world economy takes a downturn and forces each big manufacturer into a 'dog eats dog' situation, such protectionism will not solve the fundamental problems of the profit system. And the PCI leaders can ask any unemployed ex-Chrysler worker in Britain if "planning agreements" work.

Under the sudden shock of fierce international competition the Fiat workers will very soon overtake their erstwhile 'leaders' and seek to protect their jobs and living standards by calling for work-sharing with no loss in pay, workers' control of production and the incorporation of Fiat and Alfa Romeo in a planned, state car industry by nationalising Fiat under workers' management.

It will be in the course of such class battles that a socialist programme will be taken up by the workers, and their traditional parties and unions shaken from top to bottom to create a fighting leadership worthy of the traditions of the Fiat workers.

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EL SALVADOR

ANGOLA AMERICA

REVOLT SWEEPS CENTRAL AMERICA

The assassination of Archbishop Romero and the massacre of mourners at his funeral has pushed El Salvador closer into all-out civil war. But in this it is not alone in Central America.

After the toppling of dictator Somoza in Nicaragua last year, all the American-imposed juntas trembled. Last week in an attempt to crush the growing left-wing movement in Honduras, US imperialism rushed extra military aid to that junta, and fear was also expressed about the deteriorating situation further to the north in Guatemala.

It was the armed overthrow of Somoza which has speeded up the instability of these regimes. For decades US imperialism in alliance with the local landholding elite and large multi-nationals ran the countries. Now the regimes wobble.

After Nicaragua, El Salvador is probably the most important of these countries to US imperialism. Most US firms have their regional headquarters there and it is also the seat of the Central America Common Market.

Its economic and political structure reflects the situation of most Central American

By Dave Cotterill

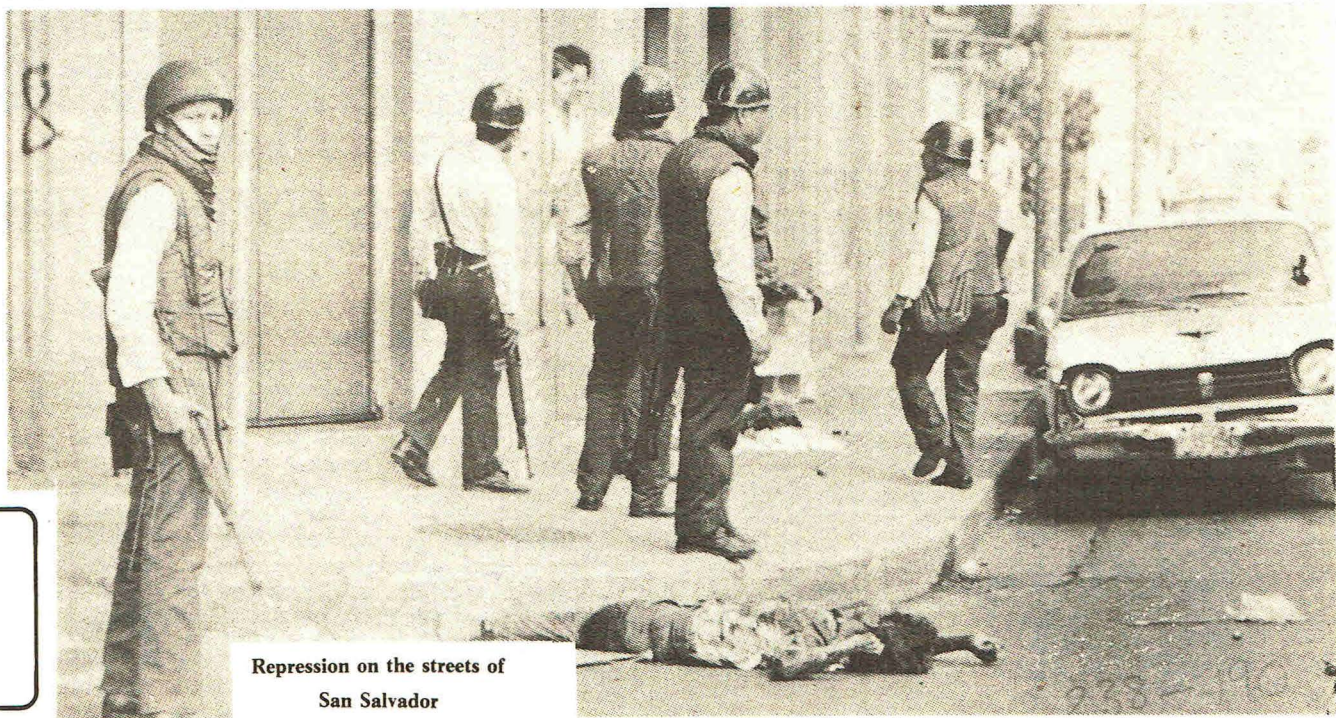
republics. Land is the crucial economic issue.

In a country the size of Wales there are 566 people a square mile—the most densely populated country in the western hemisphere. 60% of the population are dependent on agriculture for jobs. Yet there are two extremes of this dependence.

14 families rule

At one end 14 families owned 38% of all land. For 300,000 families there is no land. Unemployment and underemployment are massive problems—30% of all peasants can only find work for two or three months and a 'lucky' 20% work a maximum of 6 months.

These conditions coupled with a growing population of 120,000 a year have forced the masses from the land into the cities. This has created a fertile ground in which the guerrilla organisations of the left have flourished. In a society with such a small social basis, concentrated around 14 families, and with the backwardness of the economy only a military regime could rule, but it can only be a regime where there is not any possibility of stability—unless it is achieved on the basis of crushing the organisations of the workers and peasants.



Repression on the streets of San Salvador

As the Financial Times 26/3/80, explained "The movement for change has been put down ruthlessly. In 1932, General Martinez stifled a peasant rising in El Salvador by killing an estimated 20,000 people". It has taken three decades for the workers and peasants to recover from this blow.

Since the 1970s however, the movement of the masses has begun anew, and this time conditions are much more favourable. In the absence of a workers and peasants organisation, at first this upsurge has been reflected through the students and middle class intellectuals who have organised armed groups to struggle on behalf of the peasants and workers.

Guerrilla movement

The main group is the Popular Revolutionary Bloc which comprises a teachers federation, two peasant organisations, three student organisations and a slum dwellers group. Initially there were opposed to armed actions but increasingly they have taken up this strategy.

Beginning with kidnappings, the various guerrilla groups have secured an estimated £5.6 million and

the publication of their manifestos in the world press. From this they have moved on to occupations of embassies and assassinations of leading elements of the state apparatus. This spiral of violence on behalf of but not by peasants and workers has led to further repression on the part of the military dictatorships.

It had been the escalating violence and the polarisation occurring which last October prompted US imperialism to intervene.

In Nicaragua they had backed dictator Somoza to the last. Now they changed tactics.

In El Salvador a new junta replaced the dictator Romero and in a vicious repressive manner tried to carry out moderate land reforms.

They announced the expropriation of all farms over 1,250 acres and also the nationalisation of the banks.

This action has the blessing of the United States, which is learning the lesson of Cuba and has understood that:

"Change is inevitable. The real issue is not how to preserve stability in the face of revolution, but how to create stability out of the revolution" (The Assistant Secretary of State for Inter American Affairs).

Along with this policy of land reform from above has gone a vicious policy of

repression. A 'state of siege' has been declared to prevent independent action by peasants and workers.

In January 200,000 unarmed demonstrators were fired on and over 200 killed. Last week saw the murder of over 30 people come to mourn the murdered Archbishop.

The continuing violence on the part of the state and the right-wing groups will all fuel the anger of the masses. Archbishop Romero understood and reflected this. Shortly before his death he stated "The junta still has no support from the people...the idea of reform is good, but how can there be reform when institutionalised violence continues?"

Revolution continues

It is this inability to break the power of the right wing—and with it the power of the ruling 14 families—which has led to the withdrawal from the junta of all civilians except the Christian Democrats. But the lack of any real leadership amongst the working class and peasantry will mean there will be no short term solution.

Violent clashes in the cities and the countryside are now inevitable and it is quite feasible that as in Nicaragua a form of guerrilla war could

now take place which would extend over months, beginning firstly in the countryside and then extending to the cities. A movement which would assume mass proportions, at least in the sense of passive support from the masses for the actions of the guerrilla groups.

Much of these possible developments hinge around the actions of the military—if they persist in refusing to purge the military and the state machine, and continue with repressive measures then it is inevitable that events will develop in this direction.

It is possible however that given the lessons of Nicaragua that American imperialism may be able to exert fresh pressure to ensure that a civilian government is formed and that the military is reconstituted and the repressive state machine moderated.

The barrier to this of course is the extreme right-wing which America financed, supported and relied upon for decades. Their actions could be decisive in pushing El Salvador along the road of civil war.

But given the narrow basis of support for the regime, they will go the same way as Somoza and his National Guard. Either way the revolution sweeping Central America will continue.

Capitalists 'invest' in Angola?

Most socialists believe imperialism never really gives anything to countries of the 'underdeveloped' world. But in 1975 and early '76 United States imperialism put over 30 million dollars into Angola.

That included 30,000 side-arms (for 10,000 soldiers!), SA7 rockets and nearly half a million dollars for French and Portuguese mercenaries. By March 1976 it was clear that all this 'aid' was wasted.

Holden Roberto's FNLA (National Front for Liberation of Angola) forces fled Angola for Zaire, whilst Jonas Savimbi's UNITA (National Union for Total Independence of Angola) retreated 200 miles into southern Angola. The Soviet and

Cuban-backed MPLA (Movement for Liberation of Angola), was in power.

Although the South Africans continued to aid UNITA the CIA reluctantly withdrew. Or so it seemed.

Paying back Afghanistan

But surprise, surprise, the 'aid' appears to have been resumed. According to Robert Moss (well known friend of freedom, democracy, and western intelligence services) writing in the 'Daily Telegraph' 18 February 1980, UNITA and FNLA are now not just a worthy home for obsolete arms and CIA slush money. They are "a low cost (and potentially highly profit-

able) way of responding to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan."

A good investment no less! Despite, as he admits, an established government "recognised by the United Nations and most of its member states."

Apparently Moss is not just a lone voice in the wilderness of the 'Daily Telegraph'. A green light from somewhere recently brought Savimbi to London where he called on Tory politicians and businessmen. Touting for more 'aid', no doubt.

Western imperialism probably does not expect to topple the MPLA in Angola. But it does want to maintain military pressure on the Cubans and help persuade Angola to come to a "more agreeable" solution for neighbouring Namibia. And if the price that has to be paid is more suffering for the Angolan people there won't be many tears shed in the boardrooms of London and New York.

By Ian Ilett

PLAYING 'PORK BARREL' POLITICS IN AMERICA

"Support me, and you'll be rewarded. If you don't you may be sorry". In America it's called 'pork-barrel' politics and Carter is playing it with a vengeance as he tries to stay in the White House.

Look how he helped win the primary election in Illinois.

In Carbondale City, Illinois, City Manager Carroll Fry can tell you about presidential power. That district's House representative, Paul Simon, endorsed Senator Edward Kennedy late last year.

The Federal Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) then informed the City Manager that Carbondale City had not won a \$150,000 grant of federal funds for urban development

By Betty Traun

it had fully expected to win. "Draw your own conclusions" says Mr Fry.

The lure of gaining some of the \$29 billion a year in Washington aid available to states and localities is helping Carter win the support of influential Democrats everywhere. That's why it is stated as an axiom in political sciences that an incumbent has a 60 per cent advantage over a challenger.

Iowa, Maine, and New Hampshire threw their support to Carter in the first caucus and primary contests, and received special White House treatment as a reward. In January, Maine received federal grants double those of a year earlier.

Federal-aid money is not the only weapon in Carter's political arsenal. Appoint-

ments to higher and lesser administration jobs go to residents of those states.

Mayor Byrne of Chicago, first woman mayor of that city, was punished because she switched her support from Carter to Kennedy, so she became public enemy number one for Carter. No more money for Chicago.

All applications for urban development federal grants are being held up. Others in Illinois are also feeling Carter's wrath for backing the opposition candidate. That's the dirty politics played in this decaying system, the brunt of which falls on the poor blacks of Chicago who need decent housing.

LETTERS

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

Nuclear horror

Dear Editor

The BBC programme on 'survival in a nuclear war' made it very clear that for millions of people there would be no survival, only a dreadful death.

Many of the survivors would die later from radiation sickness. There would be no power and probably no gas and water and the sewage system would break down, so many more people would die of disease and starvation.

The speakers made it very clear that Russians and Americans could survive because they have space to evacuate their populations, but nowhere in Britain would be safe so no plans could be made to protect people here. Britain would be an early target because of the Polaris and Cruise missiles stationed here.

I do hope that 'Militant' and its supporters will campaign in every way possible to keep Britain out of a nuclear war and to get the missiles removed. The missiles might help America in a war against the Russians but life here would be at an end.

Yours sincerely
Joan Simmons
Southampton

A society that cares

Dear Comrades

Recently while waiting for a bus, I was moved by the warmth shown to an old man who had obviously been very ill of late.

The man was just standing outside the local shop enjoying the welcome sunshine when shoppers and shop assistants came up to greet him: "How's things, luv?" "Nice to see you lookin' so well."

Such attitudes can surely only mirror a future society when human beings free from the worry of redundancy, of unemployment or how to pay the next gas or electricity bill, will build a society free from want, need and loneliness.

What is more, with the ideas of socialism and of 'Militant' gaining more and more strength in the labour and trade union movement, such a society cannot be too far away.

Find enclosed £1 for the fighting fund as an investment for that future society.

Yours fraternally
Ray Physick
Durham CLP

'Apocalypse Now'—no real message

Dear Sir

As mentioned by Roy George (Letters 21 March) more space for book and film reviews in 'Militant' would be excellent but I'm sure comrade George realises that we must continue to fight for a daily paper with more pages, and only then can we devote sufficient space to a detailed treatment of films such as 'Apocalypse Now' which Jim Christie reviewed very briefly ('Militant' 492).

To say that this film has a 'liberal message' as does comrade George, is as meaningless as saying that the film is 'anti-war'. Comrade George says the film "hammers home the insanity and futility of war."

Which American or West European would support the 'insanity and futility of war' before or after seeing the film? In bourgeois terms everybody is 'liberal' in this way anyway.

As rightly pointed out by Jim Christie, we can explain the cause and effects of the Vietnam War in Marxist terms: a film that did this would have to point out the contradictions between the US propaganda and the truth on the battlefield, for example. Perhaps a film like 'Coming Home' begins to do this; but we must beware of talking in "degrees of liberality".

The way for Americans to end the "next war" can only be through the further organisation of the labour movement in that country; to this end both the films mentioned above will have no effect whatsoever.

Comradely
Tony Deegan
Söcking, West Germany

STUDENTS GREET THE DUKE

Dear Editor

The Duke of Edinburgh arrived at Birmingham University sitting in the pilot's seat of a helicopter. To some students at the University it was a chance to see and cheer the Duke, a very momentous occasion.

Yet why was there a group of about 100 students chanting, 'Unite to fight the cuts', and waving banners which read 'Education is a right not a privilege'?

At Birmingham University, due to the education cuts overseas students are to be charged full 'economic cost'

fees.

This policy is racist and detrimental to the social life and economic strength of the university. It has already resulted in a fall in the number of applications for science and engineering courses, down by 33% this year.

The funding to the university nursery is to be removed and the charge per child per week will be raised from £13.50 to £28.50.

In a time of growing population, universities have the same percentage of work-

ing class students as in 1938. But rather than expanding, all are making reductions in courses, staff, student numbers and research facilities.

Universities are competing to show their economic 'viability' under cuts. This is a clear example of Tory 'divide and conquer' policy, as each struggles to out-do the other.

Fraternally
Bob Scott
Birmingham
Edgbaston LPYS

The money-lenders' grip

Dear Comrades

This usurer-capitalist society will bring about its own eventual decline. Good for 'Militant' and its supporters: we are hastening the day through our fight to build a mass Labour Party.

The pernicious evil grip of the money-lenders is one of the chief causes of inflation and it must be broken.

Fraternally
Fred Pitfield-Bailey
Bideford, N Devon

They see as far as their profits

Dear 'Militant'

Comrades will have seen in 'Militant' (issue 496) Len Murray's comments on a general strike. The general secretary of the TUC stated that the unions, if they won a general strike, would not know what to do with the power they had.

But do the capitalists know how to use the power they have? "For an hour and a half it looked as if capitalism as we know it was about to end." This was the title of an article in the 'Guardian' newspaper.

The background to this started in autumn of last year when Mr Bunker Hunt and his brother began buying up the world's silver reserves (one of their relatives was in the privileged position of owning all of Lybia's oil). By the end of his buying spree Mr Hunt had over 200 million ounces of silver.

The US authorities then decided to clamp down because there is a limited amount of silver in the world and Mr Hunt seemed to want it all! However, with typical capitalist deviousness, Mr Hunt found loopholes in the law and he bought more.

As a result of economic clampdown, however, the price of silver began to drop. It was then that Mr Hunt sold all his silver, and the bottom dropped out of the market.

Several credit houses were in difficulty and there was a minor panic in the US Treasury. "Economists gloomily noted," the 'Guardian' continues, "that every deep recession in the world's history has been preceded by a market shock."

Faced with economic ruin, the capitalists in Britain have reacted in style. Working people in Britain are still reeling under the blows produced by "Hatchet" Howe in which many election promises have been broken. Also we learn that 1,000 people were killed by the Tories because of lack of kidney machines.

The capitalist class have no control over their economy and invariably it is the working class who suffer its discrepancies. The bosses can only see as far as the end of their hand which receives the profit.

Yours fraternally
S Kaplan
Rother Valley LPYS

Can you afford the Tories?

Photo: MILITANT

Dear Comrades

The 'Daily Mail', that well known friend of the working man, in reporting the effects of Howe's budget said that, "Taking all the changes into account, the average British family will be no worse off."

Apparently the average members of the average British family never get ill, are never forced to claim social security, are never made unemployed, don't drink, smoke, or run a car, don't work for local authorities and can afford to send their "average" children to fee-paying schools to avoid average education cuts.

If you believe that, you'll believe anything.

I enclose £1 to boost the average of the fighting fund.

Yours fraternally
Steve Davies
Cardiff N LPYS

—the NHS can't

Dear Comrades

In 1978 I had a job at the Mansfield hospital referred to in Rob Hughes' letter ('Militant' 496).

After nearly 35 years the 'temporary' buildings were showing signs of wear. The roof was so bad in places that we used to joke about putting umbrellas up when it rained.

The store-room on one surgical ward was out of infested by ants which, despite all the efforts of the staff, even ended up sharing beds with the patients. Imagine recovering from an operation in a place like that.



That was the message from over 140,000 trade unionists on the TUC anti-Tory demonstration in London last month

Apparently the previous hospital is long overdue in the Mansfield area. Any attempts to postpone its start must be fought by the labour movement.

Yours fraternally
John Dale
ASTMS

The new district general

Marks & Sparks— the social security guide

Dear Comrades

We have all read a great deal in the press recently about the estimated £200 million which "scroungers" are defrauding the DHSS of every year.

In Parliament last week, the minister for Social Security, Reg Prentice, was challenged by the Labour social security spokesman as to how this figure had been reached.

The minister openly admitted that the figure was based on statistics for shoplifting.

It is surely ludicrous to link fraud at the DHSS with theft statistics for Marks and Spencer's or Woolworth's! This leads us to further question the basis for Mr Prentice's claim that by employing an additional 1,000 fraud officers in the

DHSS, £50 million will be saved.

I would suggest that if the government is so determined to campaign against fraud then instead of imposing spending cuts at the Inland Revenue which make tax frauds much harder to detect, they should turn their attention and resources to the real 'scroungers'. Between £1,000

million and £2,000 million is lost each year through tax evasion, substantially more than Mr Prentice's "estimated" £200 million!

Fraternally
V Maxwell
Glasgow

HARD CASH BACKS MARXIST IDEAS

Inspired by the socialist enthusiasm at last weekend's LPYS conference, and by an excellent lead-off by Ted Grant at the 'Militant' Readers' Meeting on Saturday night, conference delegates and visitors backed their resolutions with hard cash, to the tune of £2,905.04 before expenses.

The mass media would have seen demonstrated, before their very eyes, how and where the 'Militant' raises its finances.

When the news trickles through to Fleet Street, we confidently expect headlines in most of the major dailies 'Labour's Youth Fights Capitalism—Join Now!' or 'Thousands of Young Workers Adopt Marxist Programme!'

The fact that you won't see such stories in the 'Excess' or the 'Wail' or even the 'Labour' 'Mirror' is one more reason to build up the resources of the workers' paper, 'Militant'.

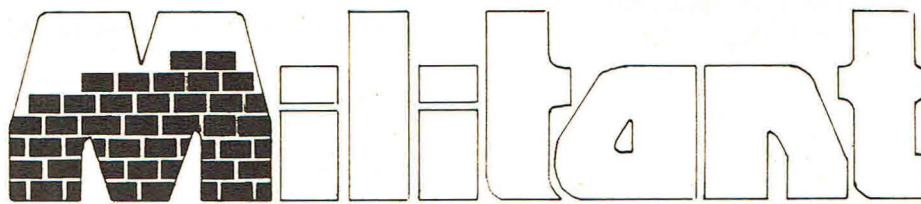
Apart from the Conference itself, supporters in all areas are making valiant efforts to reach the target: from Bristol we've had over £30, including £10 from steel pickets and £5 from N Gilbert. Students in Slough contributed £100! And two Handsworth Labour Party members, from overtime and

other sources, gave us £70 and £20!

Smaller amounts can be just as valuable if given regularly and added up—thanks to M Rodda T&GWU convenor, S London, 'Wilf' Salford LPYS, and C Slattery and P Clapham (both Sheffield, who gave us between £1 and £5 each.

After the activity and discussions at the conference on how to build the LPYS, why not get together on an informal basis this week-end, and don't forget the 'Militant'! Any crossed cheques or

Build



Area	received	Proportion of first quarter's target	Target 1st.Qtr	Target for year
Eastern	981		1,000	5,000
East Midlands	832		760	3,800
Hants & IOW	618		780	3,900
Humberside	233		500	2,500
London East	1418		1,240	6,200
London West	1104		940	4,700
London South	796		800	4,000
Manchester & Lancs	515		1,020	5,100
Merseyside	1169		1,200	6,000
Northern	1174		1,460	7,300
Scotland East	503		640	3,200
Scotland West	878		1,000	5,000
Southern	1141		1,180	5,900
South West	429		640	3,200
Wales East	360		560	2,800
Wales West	292		620	3,100
West Midlands	1792		1,800	9,000
Yorkshire	1032		1,460	7,300
Others	3691		2,400	12,000
Total received	18958		20,000	100,000

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By Steve Cawley

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SWANSEA LPYS Public Debate: 'Which Way for Labour?'
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CELEBRATE IN STYLE!

'D' day approaches and 'Militant' supporters are preparing to celebrate in style...with increased paper sales. One supporter went round his factory and got 46 extra weekly sales. Draw up a sheet and see who wants the 'Militant' every week in your workplace, Labour Party, Labour Club, or on your estate.

Special meetings are being held up and down the country [see adverts] to herald our next 500 Issues! Socials have been organised, including a dance, and a play is being organised. The sales and development of our paper have been built up by the dedicated struggle of our sellers, and everyone is hoping to make the 500th Issue not only the best ever, but also the biggest.

Have you planned an extra sales drive for that week [April 25th-May 2nd]? Celebrate in style, celebrate with enormous sales.



By Dave Farrar

ads

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Militant Readers' Meetings

BLACKBURN Militant Day School. 3.00pm: Capitalist crisis—socialist alternative. Break 5.30pm: What Future for Ireland? speakers to be confirmed 20th April, Shadsworth Road, Blackburn. Tickets 50p from 'Militant', 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn.

SOUTHEND Militant Public Meeting. 'What Militant Stands For'. Speaker: Wayne Jones (Militant Industrial Reporter). 8.00 pm. Wednesday 16 April. At The Labour Hall, 30 Cambridge Road, Southend.

BRISTOL Militant Public Meeting. 'Celebrate 500th Edition—Make 14 May a 24-hour General Strike'. Speakers: Jeremy Birch (Birmingham Selly Oak Labour Party); Pete Hammond (Labour councillor expelled from Labour Group). 7.30 pm. Wednesday 16 April. At Central Hall (in Church Hall), Old Market Street, Bristol.

postal orders posted to us over the weekend can be counted as a last-minute effort if you phone us before the books close mid-day Sunday, April 13th.

The next mile-stone in the development of the 'Militant' will be the 500th issue! Already a series of meetings have been planned by supporters in all the big cities, and supporters on Merseyside have set themselves the target of raising one pound for each

issue of the paper—£500 at their main meeting! What figure do other areas hope to reach? Write and let us know your plans. Then we can print them in this column as an added incentive! Finally, keep using the Collectors' cards, appeal sheets, cartoon books, calendars (now at a discount), and posters, to supplement your own local fund raising. Forward to the 500th and 1,000th edition!

SWANSEA Militant Public Meeting. 'Kick Out the Tories'. Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, 'Militant'). 7.30 pm. Monday 28 April, Dynevor School, Swansea.

LIVERPOOL Militant '500th Edition Dance'. Saturday 26 April. Chaucers, Hardman Street, Liverpool 2. Tickets £1. Contact 051 263 1084.

KINGSWOOD Militant Readers Meeting in conjunction with T Lucas Shop Stewards' Committee. Thursday 17 April 7.30pm. NUFLAT offices, 15 High Street, Kingswood. Speakers: Colwyn Jones (TGWU Convenor, T Lucas), Jeremy Birch (Birmingham Selly Oak Labour Party).

CHELTENHAM Militant Readers Meeting. Bevan House, 67 Clarence Street, Cheltenham. Speaker Cllr. P Hammond ('expelled' Bristol City Councillor). Thursday 17 April 7.30 pm.

MILITANT MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL
Courses: Introduction to Marxism; Marxist Economics; Marxism and the trade unions; The Life of Trotsky; China—History and Perspectives.
Film: 'The Battle for Chile'
Debate: The lessons of Chile 1970-73.
Dates: Friday 27 June to Sunday 29 June.
Venue: Goldsmith's College Students' Union, Lewisham Way, London SE 14.
Cost: £3 for whole weekend. £1.50 Saturday or Sunday only. £1 Friday evening only.
To book, or for further information, write to Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. (Cheques payable to 'Militant')

BIRMINGHAM 500th edition rally Saturday April 26th, 12 noon-5 pm. Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham.

Speakers: Ted Grant (Political Editor, Militant); Stan Sheridan (Press Officer, ISTC, S Yorkshire strike committee); Clive Gravell (Secretary, COHSE, Kidderminster branch). Plus Venceremos (Chilean folk group) and stalls, crèche, refreshments. Tickets 50p at door.

NEW 'MILITANT' BADGE
'No to anti-union laws—Socialist policies for Labour' Red and black. 20p each; 5-50 20p each; over 50, 13p each. Order from 77 Atherley road, Shirley, Southampton.

'STUFF THATCHER' badges: 2 for 45p; 5 for £1; 10 for £1.75; 50 for £7.60. Order from D. Kemp (Dept D), 114 Ladybarn Rd, Fallowfield, Manchester 14.

'We will defeat denationalisation'

says British Airways workers

Opposition is mounting among British Airways workers at Heathrow Airport to attacks on their jobs and industry.

BA are already closing down over 20 UK and Island air routes. Over 5,000 jobs in the offices, motor transport and elsewhere are threatened.

Last week shop stewards representing workers throughout BA attended a meeting organised by the shop stewards' committee to hear Labour MPs Russell Kerr and Stanley Clinton Davies. They were reporting on the latest Tory attack on the industry, the notorious plans for denationalisation of British Airways.

This is the "BP solution" with a twist. The government would control just over half the shares, with the rest sold off to capitalist sharks on the open market. The twist is that the government will not be represented on the board of directors at all.

TIM MILES and MICK BROWN
(London LPYS)
spoke to BA workers

The minority shareholders will make the decisions while getting government money—the best of both worlds.

Frank Gates (AUEW convenor) explained that there is to be no restriction on who buys the shares, so other airlines, private or otherwise, from anywhere in the world can buy shares and take over existing BA routes. Jobs are threatened.

It could mean notorious anti-trade union companies like Bristows Helicopters taking over the helicopter subsidiary, or Trust House Forte taking over the hotels and catering.

Russell Kerr pointed to the threat posed to safety standards as private interests cut corners and neglect maintenance work in order to keep up profit margins.

The shop stewards quite correctly demanded that if BA is denationalised the next Labour government must renationalise it without any compensation, in line with Labour Party conference policy.

Frank Gates responded sharply to Stanley Clinton Davies' ridiculous counter-argument that workers in the company may have bought shares. After the latest budget announcements, he said, half the workforce were too sick to work and couldn't afford a prescription, and the others can't afford to drive to work anyway, given the extra 10 pence being added to the price of a gallon of petrol.

There is already widespread dissatisfaction with



Photo: Militant.

British Airways workers from all over Britain demonstrate against denationalisation in London last month.

the impotent opposition of Labour MPs. As shop stewards pointed out, the answer must come from the workforce. They can and must stop these proposals.

"We stopped it with the

General Aviation Services (a company attempting to operate BA freight)," Frank Gates declared. "We had meetings at Brentford Football Ground and filled the stadium. A march was organised from

Hatton Cross to Heathrow Central and the 15,000 workers who turned out were attacked by police and dogs.

"But we succeeded. We did it then and we can do it now."

NOTTINGHAM TEACHERS DEFEND SMALLER CLASSES

The Tory Education Authority in Nottingham are hell-bent on prolonging a dispute that has already lasted for two months.

They are adamant that they will not back down "even if the NUT strikes in 200 schools" as one Tory councillor put it. Their attitude has provoked an unprecedented mood of militancy among local teachers, fighting to get a suspended NUT member reinstated.

Mrs Eileen Crosbie was suspended when she refused to teach a nursery class of up to 39 pupils, with only one nursery nurse to aid her.

This situation was a direct consequence of the cuts in education made in the New Year, when almost 150 nursery nurses were made redundant. Despite Mrs Crosbie's plea to the authority on behalf of her pupils and their safety, a nursery nurse was removed from her class.

The Education Authority insist that one teacher or nursery nurse is capable of taking care of up to 20 three to five year olds. The Department of Education itself nationally recommends a 13 to 1 ratio of children to staff, a figure proposed by none other than Margaret Thatcher when she was secretary of state for education.

There isn't a single authority in England and Wales which staffs its nurseries at a ratio of 20 to 1, so the Tories turned to Scotland. There, they claimed, the ratio of 20 to 1 has worked successfully for years.

By John Harrison
(Nottingham NUT)

The NUT discovered that 20 pupils to 1 teacher is the norm in Scotland: 20 pupils to 1 teacher plus a nursery nurse. The overall ratio is in fact 10 to 1. This Tory incompetence in basic maths would be laughable if it weren't for the fact that they are in office and wrecking people's lives.

Parents at Mrs Crosbie's school have worked out a rota to ensure that a ratio of 13 to 1 is actually now in operation. This alone is a total vindication of her stand, yet the council still refuse to take her back.

There is now no problem over Mrs Crosbie's class, but these arrogant and hard headed Tories are intent on confrontation and may now even sack her. If that happens the dispute will escalate still further.

Even now, striking NUT members at my own school are very angry, and will not be satisfied with just the lifting

of the suspension. The whole issue of class size is at stake, and the action should continue until it is resolved successfully.

So far there has been selective action, with about 8 schools at a time out on strike. We have been out for about a week now, and just as we are getting organised, we are about to return to work.

In three full meetings before we came out, we thrashed out strategy. The crucial thing was to get across to the parents exactly what was going on, as the council have the notorious anti-union 'Nottingham Evening Post' on their side.

As NUT school rep, I found my experience of Labour Party campaigning very useful. We hired a hall as our organising centre, duplicated maps and compiled names and addresses of parents, so that we could visit them and explain the issues. About 5,000 leaflets were distributed to advertise a public meeting. To pay for the publicity we started a strike fund and appealed for donations, organising a disco to raise cash.

Nearly every member has been out in the cold and rain to do their bit. Because of this, I believe the union will come out of the dispute stronger.

The issue, however, is a crucial one. In effect we are fighting a test case in our area on the cuts, class size and teachers' jobs. We can't afford to lose.

RAILWORKERS PREPARE FOR PAY FIGHT

By Martin Elvin
(ASLEF, Stratford)

"The steelworkers first, and we will be next," is the attitude of many railworkers at present.

That was the tone at a recent ASLEF mass meeting called by District Council No. 1 at Liverpool St., London, to discuss the 1980 wage claim, due in April, and the British Rail management document, "Strategy into the Eighties".

The meeting was addressed by assistant general secretary Don Pullen, who explained how the Tory government's attacks affect railway jobs, pay and the industry. "I'll be surprised if BR offer us more than 4% this year" stated Don Pullen.

The "Strategy" document represents the most vicious attack on jobs, conditions, and the future of the rail industry. We cannot allow it to be implemented.

It represents an amended version of the Corporate Plan documents, kept secret by BR management, and disowned when printed in "Militant". It has been re-worded and watered down in an attempt to make it more acceptable to rail workers, but the message is the same.

Job losses, cuts in freight,

parcels and passenger services, productivity deals, cuts in manning levels, attacks on hard won conditions of service: this is the price we are asked to pay for BR management's attempts to run the railways within the Tory government's capitalist guidelines.

Speaker after speaker from the floor made it clear that we want none of it. Productivity deals were clearly rejected: "We are owed money for previous productivity".

Pay rises of 20%, 25% and even 50% were demanded, to make up for what we've lost, and keep up with the soaring cost of living.

It was made quite clear: we are not prepared to sell conditions or jobs to get our pay rise. Railway workers clearly understand that a fight will be necessary this year.

The determination shown by ASLEF members at this meeting, including brothers on London Transport, must be echoed at Executive Com-

mittee level. Now, more than ever we need a joint fight by NUR, TSSA and ASLEF workers on British Rail and London Transport.

This year's pay claim must include:

- ★ Minimum 25% rise in basic pay for all railway workers.
- ★ Shorter working week of 35/36 hours now to preserve jobs.
- ★ 6 weeks holidays.
- ★ Improved enhanced rates for night work and week-ends.
- ★ No cuts in manning levels; better pay and conditions to fill the many vacancies in the London and SE Area.
- ★ Reject the 'Strategy' document, job cuts, attacks on conditions and the contraction of the industry.

The trade union leadership have a responsibility to prepare the membership for such a fight. It must be seen as part and parcel of the fight to bring down the Tories, and replace them with a Labour government committed to socialist policies for transport and society as a whole.

Sell 'Militant' to your work-mates

Order from Circulation Dept.
(address on page 16)

Anglo-Overseas Transport

The red flag goes up regularly in Rainham, London—not, unfortunately to signify workers' control, but to show that the Army firing range is in use. Stuck between the firing range and a sewerage works is an industrial estate where T&GWU members have been dismissed and locked out for

"embarrassing the company". The company is Anglo-Overseas Transport, part of the giant P&O group. The workers are warehousemen who until a year ago were largely un-unionised.

A successful recruitment campaign by a T&GWU steward put management on

the spot. So they claimed the workers had "broken the firm's agreement with the union", and dismissed them.

The crazy thing is that the workers had been trying to get management to adopt such an agreement, similar to those in the company's other depots in Stratford, East London,

which would have given them a closed shop.

The T&GWU is in the process of making the dispute official. Support and messages to shop steward Joe Durham, 94 Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch.

WELSH STEELWORKERS —

Anger runs high

By Pete Rowlands

(ISTC Port Talbot, personal capacity)

After the walk-out at Port Talbot BSC works on our first day back after the strike, feelings of anger and frustration were running high. The march on the main office by 1,000 workers left management in no doubt about that.

A loader had been sent home for refusing to work with a lorry-driver who had black-legged during the strike. When we walked out in protest, management threatened that we would forfeit our £50 'return to work' bonus.

At the mass meeting in the Afan Lido on Saturday 5th, two different points of view were put forward by our union leadership. The first was that to stay out would isolate Port Talbot, jeopardising the future of the works even more.

The other argument was that after the way the blackleg hauliers had treated us on the picket lines, it would be unthinkable to return to work under the present conditions.

The majority elected to return to work. It must be added, however, that the workforce is still unhappy about the composition of the inquiry team set up to look into the issue of the scab drivers. A team made up of half management, half union reps will consider the list of blacked firms submitted by the union.

The plant is like a tinder-box. On my first shift, you could feel the tension in the air.

Workers feel that in spite of the press campaign to paint

white as black, we have won a bit of a victory. Before the strike we were offered a 2% pay rise. We got 16% in the end—and not out of the goodness of BSC management's hearts.

Management have tried to force the issue of the blackleg drivers to test us out, see what they could get away with. This was obviously a plan made at a national level, not thought up by management locally.

With the present mood, after our taste of action expressing the pent-up bitterness of years of 'moderation,' the BSC bosses had better not try to push us too far.

We have not forgotten the threat that still hangs over our jobs. We've proved we are not cowed, that we won't let management get away with blue murder. Now, for us, the fight for jobs is a real priority.

AUEW MUST BACK MASSEY FERGUSON OCCUPATION

The Massey Ferguson occupation has entered its sixth week. The workers are determined that they will not be sacrificed on the altar of Massey Ferguson's profits.

This multi-national company, with world-wide interests, recently closed down the Kilmarnock factory and switched production to France.

Now, the Knowsley plant is to go, and with it, the livelihoods of over 400 workers and their families. At least this is the intention!

A delegation from the plant visited the LPYS Conference. I spoke to one of the workers, Frank Taylor (T&GWU):

"On the 11th February Massey issued a statement saying that it was their intention to centralise North West production of industrial and construction machinery at Manchester. An immediate embargo was put on all finished machines leaving the plant, with a proviso that should the company attempt to lay off any workers because of this action the plant would immediately be occupied.

Frank Taylor [T&GWU Massey Ferguson] spoke to Wayne Jones

"On Monday March 3rd the company announced that lay-offs would commence at 4.30 pm. The plant was occupied by the workforce at 3.30, denying management access to approximately £5 million worth of stocked machinery.

"The decision to occupy was seen as the only choice available to the workers. In just four weeks the Knowsley estate has witnessed redundancies and closures affecting five factories. We are determined to turn the tide.

"Since the occupation began, pickets from the factory have successfully closed both the Manchester and Coventry factories. This policy will continue to be applied to all the Massey factories, particularly the Manchester factory, where the workforce have unfortunately voted to accept work transferred from the

Knowsley plant.

"Despite this, support has been forthcoming from the rest of the combine. Both the Coventry and Peterborough factories have blacked engines and rear axles destined for the Manchester plant.

"There is a proposal before Knowsley Trades Council to declare a one-day general strike as part of the TUC's day of action on 14th May, with a march on Massey Ferguson."

The T&GWU made the strike official within 48 hours. The AUEW has still not done so, although about 40% of the workforce are in the AUEW.

Every AUEW district, particularly in the Manchester, Coventry and Peterborough areas where the other plants are situated, should demand that the dispute is made official immediately.

Send donations, offers of help and messages of support c/o 46 Kempton Park Road, Aintree, Liverpool 10. Cheques payable to Massey Ferguson Combined Union Appeal.

This song was written by a steel striker's daughter in Rotherham expressing the feelings of her father and other pickets.

I work bloody 'ard for me livin'
I've a wife and some kids to support,
The steelworks won't give me no money,
So a lesson they'll have to be taught.

Chorus:

I'm only a mucky steelworker,
And part of the ISTC,
I've never done 'owt to the gov'nment,
So why are they pickin' on me?

Chorus

Before now I've just kept me mouth shut,
Not a word for the workers I've said
Though the colour I'm feeling is certainly blue
The colour I'm seeing is red.

Chorus

United we'll win it together,
Divided we're certain to fall,
As for them who think they are above it,
Say s....t to 'em all.

Chorus

Our pickets are trying their hardest,
And all over Yorkshire they roam,
But I've heard there's some lazy buggers,
Who stay with their feet up at home.

Chorus

There's a certain large steelworks in Sheffield,
I'm afraid I can't mention its name,
But its women do all of its talking
So you'll know which I mean all the same.

Chorus

I know Maggie Thatcher's a woman,
Is that why she hates working men?
I think Arthur Scargill knew better,
When he called her 'Attila the Hen'.

KLEIN TEXTILE WORKERS: 'A UNION OR NOTHING'

As the strike for union recognition at Klein's clothing manufacturers enters its fifth week, the workers on the picket line know they are in for a hard struggle.

Most realise that a victory here will be an inspiration to others in small unorganised rag trade factories in and around the Salford area.

Last week management issued a second ultimatum: return to work or face the sack. Management have used every trick in an attempt to force the workers back on their terms.

Management say that the workers would be 'allowed' a works' committee. Letters have been sent out explaining that the factory's goods could be imported more cheaply and exposing the fact that we have a high level of unemployment in the area, to intimidate the workforce.

In spite of all this the strike has remained firm. For many of the pickets it has got to be union recognition or nothing. Management have refused the services of ACAS, so it seems the strike will be won on the picket line and not around the negotiating table.

About 15 workers are still scabbing, while management attempt to dictate to the majority what form of representation they can have.

These workers have had little or no financial help for four weeks. Messages of support and financial aid should be sent urgently: Cheques payable to NUTGW, c/o 84 Eleanor Cudderford Court, Silk Street, Salford M3 6HW.

By Peter Gunn
(Salford LPYS)

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NUT teach Tories a lesson

By Felicity Dowling
(President, Liverpool NUT, personal capacity)



JUST OUT
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Summer 1980

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postage from World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Mark Carlisle, the Tory all redundancies education minister, was given Eileen Crosbie, the Nottingham a rough ride at the National ham NUT member at the Union of Teachers' conference, centre of the nursery dispute, ence.

The whole of conference when she called for action to showed its disapproval. Even maintain pupil-teacher ratios. The union president politely' The most important announcement at conference reprimanded Carlisle after his nouncement at conference speech.

Others either walked out or heckled, booed and hissed. on 14 May against government policy. All associations banner saying 'Give Avon must take this opportunity to back its teachers.'

Conference passed memoranda calling for action against a good turn out on this TUC the cuts, on class sizes and restructuring pay. The Tory day of action.

These memoranda would when 54 people attended the had been stronger, however, which £120 was collected for calling for a minimum salary the fighting fund.

of £5,000 and opposition to

LEYLAND FIGHT BACK

An all-out battle at British Leyland seems to have been postponed. In its place there will probably be a war of attrition in every plant, as workers fight to maintain what they have won and to halt a return to the pre-union hell.

Management think they can lull and bribe the workforce with a "tactful communications exercise," using back pay, parity and bonus money to buy them off. But when it comes to speed-ups, de-manning, iron discipline and all the rest they have up their sleeves, then every worker will fight.

At the BL Land Rover/Range Rover plant in Solihull, 5,000 workers demanded a mass meeting before the Easter break, and voted by three to one for strike action. At Jaguar Coventry and the Common Lane, Birmingham, plant, workers also voted to strike.

This was their response to the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee's call for an official national strike.

By Eileen Short

following the ballot rejection of BL's 5% wage offer and the vicious working conditions management seek to impose.

In the face of a barrage of propaganda, AUEW and up till now T&GWU leaders have refused to call a national strike. While the AUEW executive echoed management's dire warnings, the T&GWU merely agreed to support any workers who decided to strike.

Management had decreed that any workers who returned to the plants after the Easter holiday would be considered to have accepted the company's wages and conditions proposals.

The mass-production Long-

bridge and Cowley works and many other plants are still working. Undoubtedly, workers here considered that their bargaining position was not as good as those producing the prestige cars and vans.

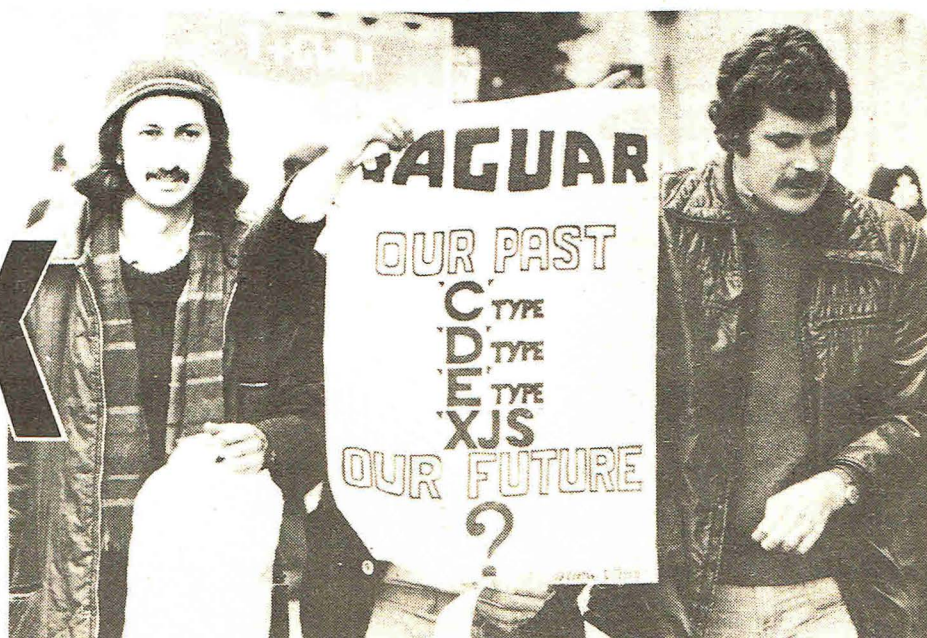
At Longbridge, however, no mass meeting was held. Senior shop stewards apparently judged that a strike call would be rejected and that a meeting was pointless. This is completely wrong.

Confusion and fears whipped up by management and the media can only be answered through discussion explaining the facts and countering the lies. If shop stewards are to win the confidence and trust of their members, regular democratic mass meetings are vital. The issue may be lost today, but this is the only way to prepare for the future.

At Rover Solihull, the SD1 (Rover cars) mass meeting was not held jointly with the Land Rover/Range Rover section. SD1 stewards felt that the vote on strike action was too narrow a mandate to call members out.

The press and BL bosses are already gleefully rubbing their hands. But they shouldn't rejoice too soon.

The invidious conditions document, aiming to remove all trade union control over working conditions and turn



Leyland Jaguar workers demonstrate against Edwardes' plan—the future is black if BL management is not stopped
 Photo: MILITANT

BL factories into virtual labour camps, has not been signed by any of the unions. Shop stewards at the major plants have said they will resist any attempt to impose the new measures.

Union leaders may not find this to their liking. But they will share responsibility. They have failed to give any clear lead since the onslaught began with the sacking of Longbridge convenor Derek Robinson.

The campaign for his reinstatement was sabotaged at its height by the AUEW executive. Now, echoing management in their calls for passive 'sacrifice', they refuse to accept the members' verdict and lead an all-out fight against wage cuts and to defend the unions.

Those who voted to strike clearly understand what is at stake. After the mass meeting of Common Lane direct (track) workers on Wednesday, their attitude was that, though they'd like to see the

other plants out as well, "We've got to make a stand now."

Rover workers were stopping every car outside the Solihull plant and warning: "If you go back in there, management will be in charge from now on."

These workers are now waiting for the T&GWU to honour its pledge and make their action official. Then shop stewards in other plants will be in a position to make a fresh appeal for action at recall meetings.

For the last ten years, BL workers have faced a consistent stream of hostile propaganda insisting that they are to blame for the company's demise. In recent years, real

pay has fallen drastically behind other workers, jobs have been axed through redundancies and closures. Has BL's performance improved?

With crisis rocking the car industry throughout the world, smaller firms like BL cannot stand up to the cut-throat competition. Ford and General Motors are investing more in one new model than BL invests in all its major factories in a year.

The fight to defend living standards, conditions and jobs must be a fight for one nationalised, integrated British car industry, under workers' control and management. That is the only way out of the Leyland crisis.

Recall LP Conference

At its meeting on 9 April, Party Conference, with the same delegates as in 1979, on 31 May at the Wembley Conference Centre.

IRAN - CARTER IMPOSES SANCTIONS

President Carter and the strategists of US imperialism are caught in a contradiction.

They know that the new sanctions against the Iranian people will not ensure release of the American hostages. But direct military intervention would provoke a mighty explosion, and almost certainly seal the fate of the hostages.

The international labour movement must condemn Carter's actions this week. For decades Western imperialism backed the Shah's dictatorship.

America's CIA trained the torturers of SAVAK, the Shah's secret police, and successive British governments, both Tory and Labour, supported the Shah's dictatorship as a regional power to protect oil supplies and other strategic interests.

Now they are feeling the consequences of the Iranian revolution.

Sanctions will have little effect. Sanctions will not bite, as US exports to Iran were only \$1.6 million in February, and no new oil has been purchased since the hostages were seized in November.

Selling the Iranian government's US-based assets will not add new pressure. They were frozen in November. The ending of diplomatic relations and visa restrictions will have little effect.

Not all the US's capitalist allies will participate in sanctions against Iran. West Germany and Japan depend for much of their crude oil on Iranian imports, and Iran's oil minister has warned that supplies will be cut off from any country joining America's sanctions.

The US military chiefs and some White House advisers are now threatening a military intervention, mining or blockading the Gulf. Senator George McGovern has called for an air strike. But any of these actions would amount to an open declaration of war.

Direct military action against Iran would provoke a massive outcry in the region.

The Iranian revolution would inevitably be given another powerful impulse, threatening capitalism in the country with complete extinction. As in Cuba, when Castro came to power, the regime could be pushed along the road of taking over the whole of the economy.

For months US imperialism pressurised the Iranian government to take control of the hostages. But that government is still fighting to control the revolution.

Khomeini evidently does not want to be seen as giving in to pressure from the former Shah's main supporter, US imperialism. The Iranian government is using the hostages to whip up nationalist fervour against American imperialism, and now against the neighbouring Iraqi dictatorship, as a way of deflecting the mounting dissatisfaction amongst Iranian working people

at the lack of jobs and other material improvements in their lives.

While not supporting the original seizure of the hostages which was a completely ineffective and counter-productive step from the point of view of working class interests, or approving in any way Khomeini's attempts to establish a theocratic dictatorship, the labour movement internationally must condemn US imperialism's plans.

Only a socialist takeover of the Iranian economy under workers' control and management, along with the spread of the revolution throughout the Middle East, can take society forward.

Coupled with a class appeal to workers in the west for solidarity action, the ground would be cut from under the feet of western imperialism.

By Jim Chrystie

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