

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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15p



TORIES LET PRICES RIP

H-BLOCK

'labour movement must fight repression'
centre pages

TALBOT SACKINGS p2

UNION CONFERENCES

NUPE—p15
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still higher profits for food giants

"People must understand there is no right or entitlement to a pay rise which keeps up with the cost of living."

As the annual inflation rate hits nearly 22%, so Tory Chancellor Sir Geoffrey Howe came over the radio telling workers they must suffer as the price of food, clothes, goods and houses rises in an ever increasing spiral.

One lot of price increases which have drastically hit the incomes of working-class families is for food. Compare today's prices with those of a year ago, and there is an astronomical increase.

A pound of rump steak then costing £2 is now £2.36! A 5oz carton of Eden Vale cream has shot up from 29½p to a staggering 40½p. But it is not just these 'luxury' foodstuffs which are roc-

Photo: Syndication International



In a stunt last year, Mrs Thatcher holds up a pound's worth of shopping—it would now cost £1.19½!

keting. A dozen white eggs are now about 7p dearer than they were in 1979. A 15oz tin of Heinz baked beans has gone from 19p to 23½p.

But of course, not just food prices are on the up and up. Petrol goes up this week yet again—to about £1.40 a gallon. Public transport fares are increasing [while the services are being cut back]. Admission prices for many leisure facilities are now getting out of reach

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE)

The average family already £15 per week worse off

A DAYS PAY FOR MILITANT

Mr GM Robinson, Assistant Regional Secretary for COHSE [Yorkshire and Humberside area] has sent 'Militant' the following letter:

" Please find enclosed a cheque for £12. This was my salary for the 14th May. I took part in a rally and mass meeting at the City Hall, Hull, where the speakers all promised to donate their day's pay to a charity or source of their choice.

It is my view that the money is better spent to keep a socialist newspaper active so as to challenge the lies and distortions of the press.

If you got paid on 14th May, follow Mr Robinson's example and send the day's pay to the 'Militant' fighting fund, and help build the Marxist voice in the labour movement. [This week's fighting fund details—see page 13].

DANGER PRESS POISON



Alan Hardman

Have you gone blind? Are you confused? Being led against your will? Vomiting up lies? If so, you're

suffering from exposure to press poison—and you need Militant's Marxist antidote. In 'The Fleet

Street Propaganda Machine' this week [page 5] we expose the Tory press' lying campaign.

IAN BURGE

The labour movement suffered a tragic loss on Sunday 18th May, with the premature death of Ian Burge.

Regular readers of 'Militant' would best remember Ian for his excellent contributions on the National Health Service, in which he worked and was an active trade unionist.

Ian's powers of research were second to none and gave fresh material and new ideas to the movement on the battle against cuts in the Health Service.

Apart from many articles in the paper, Ian was the author of several widely read 'Militant' pamphlets: 'A Socialist Programme to Save the NHS' [1977], 'Should Nurses Go On Strike?' [1979], and recently the excellent 'Stop the Cuts: Defend the NHS!' [1979]. He also wrote a pamphlet

putting the case for workers' control and management in the NHS, 'Patients First—Or Cuts First?', produced only a few weeks ago by Tower Hamlets Health District JSS Committee.

In Ian's own words, however "the fight against the cuts is not enough. Bad health is endemic in the society we at present live in and only the socialist transformation of society can provide the conditions for the prevention of ill health."

Not only a prolific writer for better health-care and socialist change, Ian was a tireless fighter both in the Labour Party and, as a member of ASTMS, in the hospital unions. At the London Hospital, where he worked, he was secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, a body he helped to form.

He gave unceasing leadership in the movement in the East End of

London to defend the Health Service from attacks and closures, and played a prominent part in the battle to save Bethnal Green hospital as a general hospital meeting the needs of the local population.

When called on, Ian also gave valuable advice on many occasions to trade-union activists in the NHS in many other areas of the country.

As a member of the North West Essex Health Board, he unflinchingly gave a lead in heading off the attacks on hospitals in the Harlow area.

Ian first settled in Harlow with his wife Barbara and twin daughters, in 1969, and rapidly involved himself in pioneering the influence of 'Militant' in the Harlow area and the Eastern Region as a whole. His family, to which Ian was devoted, was added to by the birth of another daughter, Nancy.

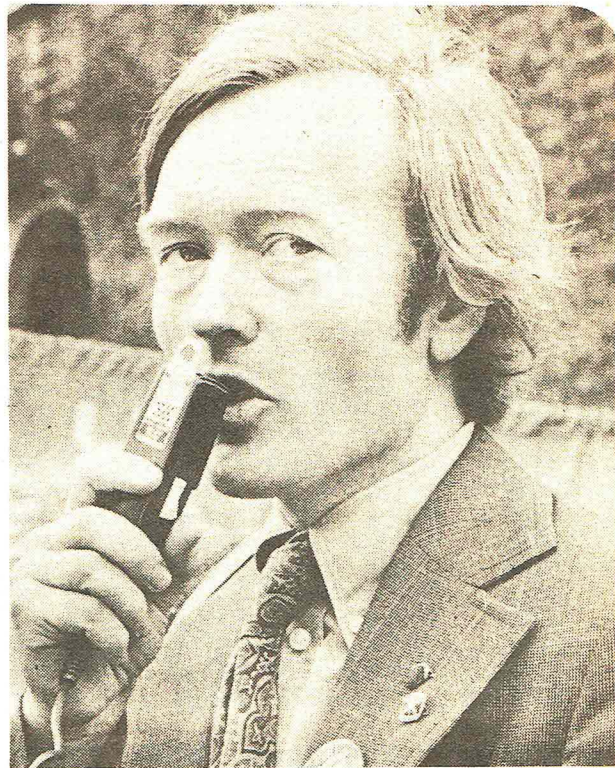
Ian quickly established himself in the Old Harlow Labour Party branch, where he became chair-

man in the '70s. His well-informed contributions to Harlow CLP's General Committee meeting were always listened to intently. When Ian was on his feet, the GMC knew that important points and facts were being put forward.

Ian's flair for new ideas and concepts were not restricted to the health field. He pioneered the use of film slides in informative talks, and made these, and his copious notes, available to any section of the labour movement.

Meticulous attention to detail made him outstanding as an organiser of paper sales. All sellers of 'Militant' in Harlow from the early '70s had their minds focused on careful accounting for papers. The testament to Ian's work is that sales of 'Militant' in Harlow rate amongst the best in the country.

His death is a great loss to all who knew him as a comrade, and especially to those who also knew him as a friend. He



was friendly and patient with people, often showing his sense of humour, very rarely angry. Ian's approach was always gentle and generous.

Ian's political achievements will live on and we will be building on them.

Remember Ian's own words: "Capitalism kills. Fight for a socialist world!"

The Militant Editorial Board sends its sincere condolences to his wife, family and friends.



Police at Southall last year

Photo: Militant

PEACH INQUEST REVEALS SPG ARMOURY

The evidence so far from police officers at the Blair Peach inquest gives an insight into the activities of the SPG. The inquest heard how crowbars, whips, a cosh, a sledgehammer and a knife were found in the lockers of SPG men—and even more incredible was the admission by a senior officer that policemen were 'expected' to carry weapons such as these when faced with 'missions where violence was expected'.

Inspector Hopkins, who was in charge of an SPG unit during the Southall events last year, told the court,

"When executing warrants some of us would have jemmies or sledgehammers." In the locker of Inspector Hopkins himself, a large wooden club was found, and he agreed in court that he had used it during Crime Squad duty.

The danger is that the police themselves decide what is a 'dangerous' situation, where they can justify themselves in the use of weapons such as these. Although the police may infer that such a situation would be against heavily armed bank robbers and so on, the facts are that a labour activist was clubbed to death during an anti-fascist demonstration.

And although the police deny any weapons other than riot shields and standard truncheons were used at Southall, the pathologist has explained to the court that Blair Peach's death was not caused by a truncheon but by a heavy, broad, smooth instrument, such as a 'blackjack' cosh.

The inquest has been told of one SPG member, with 7 unauthorised weapons, who tried to hide a metal cosh when his locker was to be searched. And of another policeman with his private collection of Nazi regalia at home.

There have discrepancies in the police account. One SPG

sergeant failed to mention in his first report the use of truncheons in the street where Peach was murdered.

Police witnesses have also disagreed over who was present at the time of the attack on anti-fascists protestors. But residents and demonstrators have told the inquest how they saw the police attack Peach.

Yet given the 12-month delay in this inquest taking place, and as the inquest itself goes on, it can be seen that the courts and the police themselves cannot be relied upon to produce the true train of events that led to the killing of Blair Peach, and the other acts of brutality at Southall last year.

Only if the labour movement conducts its own enquiry into the death of Blair Peach and the events at Southall as a whole, will the truth be established.

By
Colin Barber

Unemployment scales record heights

On the day that the worst unemployment figures for May since 1948 were announced, the capitalists had a special twist of the knife for Talbot workers at the Linwood, Clydeside factory. 1,300 people, a quarter of the workforce, are to lose their jobs in the next few months.

This is the biggest factory in the West of Scotland. In the last five months it has seen its workforce cut by nearly 50% from 9,000 to just over 6,000. By August 18 it will be down to 5,000.

United action is needed to defeat this threat of redundancy. So far the bosses have picked us off, factory by factory. They must not be allowed to do so again.

For where is there alternative work on Clydeside? In the last period we've seen jobs lost at Singers, Prestcolds, Scotts, shipbuilding yards, etc. Clydeside is fast turning into an industrial desert. There are few if any apprenticeships to be had and all jobs now have to be fought for.

Capitalism cannot provide secure employment into the future. The latest unemployment figures are the worst figures for any month since seasonably adjusted levels were first calculated in 1948.

Normally there is a substantial drop in unemployment as summer approaches.

But this year's May decrease of 13,736 is only about a third of the usual average.

Unemployment hits certain areas hardest. In the inner-city areas of London, Birmingham, Merseyside, unemployment is now long-term. Whole areas of the country face a desperate future. Wales now has 8.4% unemployment, N West England 7.8%.

But as the capitalist recession gathers apace it is not just Britain which is suffering. American car workers are being laid off as national unemployment rises to 7%. Belgium has 11% unemployed, Ireland 9%, Holland 5%.

In this situation it is utopian and reactionary to demand import controls. Instead of fighting the bosses workers would be fighting each other across national boundaries. How would such a demand aid the struggle for socialism?

Would it help Linwood workers in Scotland when retaliation occurs? Or Fiat workers in Italy, where 87,000 now have been put on a 4-day week? Or Talbot workers in Spain, or Peugeot workers in France who are now on short-time working?

Fighting united action on a clear class basis is required to combat the evils of capitalist unemployment and replace it with a socialist alternative.

By
Benny Lynch
(AUEW Linwood Talbot)

ROY CLARKE

The USDAW 'Militant' supporters wish to express their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Roy Clarke. Roy will be remembered in USDAW for his tremendous work in the Southampton/Wessex branch of the union, and the early death of this brother is a sad loss to us all.

His painstaking work has not been in vain. His drive and hard work for the socialist cause is an inspiration to all who knew him.

LPYS LAUNCHES WEEK OF ACTION MAY 31-JUNE 7

"We have got to get every person a capitalist...so that they can start with nothing and end up with something."

That was Thatcher's wonderful promise to working peoples' problems which she offered to parliament two years ago on June 11, 1978. Thatcher's actions over the last year won't comfort many of this summer's 900,000 school leavers.

And what do they end up with? 'The Guardian' recently reported on Maryport, Cumbria, where unemployment is over 13%. "The stench of damp rot and stale urine was everywhere. A naked baby rolled on the grimy carpet. In a chair by the fire slumped a woman of 45 who looked at least 20 years older.

"She produced two fistfuls of pill bottles to show how bad her depressions were...25-year-old daughter with the baby...she was divorced...son and a nephew both unemployed...the head of the house brought home £30 a week."

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS National Chairman)

So with the Tories—you start off with nothing and end up with a bottle of pills!

Now the Tories have declared that they expect unemployment to reach 2.5 million in two years' time. A million jobs will disappear. Steel towns like Consett face 35% unemployment, Corby over 20%.

They are quite prepared to turn the steel towns into ghost towns. A former worker at E Moors steel works has told of the human effect of redundancies:

"A lot of people seem to have gone on (died) since the works closed. They say a bloke of 50 who after the closure used to walk around the works day after day committed suicide."

Unemployment not only hits the steel towns but even

the 'new' towns like Telford where youth unemployment is 50% higher than the national average.

In Birkenhead a headmistress spoke of how "Half the parents of my school children have been without jobs...for a long time...I keep the clothes here...It is not possible to teach a child who comes...without breakfast, shaking with cold, who can't write with fingers that are blue."

Just so they understand that they really will start off with nothing Thatcher has ordered that this summer's school leavers will receive no social security money till September. For parentless school leavers unemployment will mean utter destitution. Perhaps Thatcher thinks they can join 1,300 other people in Britain's remaining work-houses!

The future under the Tories will be more like a Dickens novel unless the labour movement takes action. The Labour Party Young Socialists are campaigning on their week of action (May 31-June 7) to share out the current available work without loss of pay. The TUC leaders must step up the fight for the 35-hour week as part of a programme to prevent mass unemployment and establish that workers will not pay for a



LPYS anti-Tory demonstration last year

crisis resulting from the rotten rule of big business.

Already TUC action to cut hours has so far saved over 2 million working hours per week. The TUC must secure united action of the movement and use the demand to confront the Tories and the

employers.

Fight for:

A 35-hour week without loss of pay.

An £80 minimum wage.

A guaranteed job for all school leavers.

**LPYS START
CHILE
CAMPAIGN**
[Details—P. 11]

WHY FOOTBALL VIOLENCE AT SCOTTISH CUP FINAL?

In the aftermath of the disturbance at the Scottish Cup Final between Celtic and Rangers, accusations of blame have been rife as to the cause of the trouble. Reasons given for the riot are as diverse as the organisations and individuals whose comments have recently dominated the media.

No matter what relative truth there may be in the comments there is little or no comment about the real reasons for the trouble.

At its recent conference the LPYS called for control of football clubs to be taken away from the businessmen and into the hands of the fans, players and local community. For this the LPYS was mocked in the national press. But just look at what capitalist control of society, including leisure activities such as football, means.

Each week hundreds of thousands of working class people go to football. In most cases the stadiums they visit are little more than rubbish tips with turnstiles. Decent seating facilities are very rare.

Toilet facilities often verge on the barbarous and what food is available is often of an inferior quality and variety is virtually non-existent. Overcrowding at big games is not only detrimental to enjoyment but often a risk to safety.

Glasgow is one of the most depressed areas in Britain.



Hampden Park after the Celtic-Rangers match.

Leisure facilities in general are atrocious. There are no cinemas or dance halls in the Easterhouse housing estate which has over 40,000 people.

The police and media have used the Cup Final incident to push support for the Criminal Justice Bill which is having a rough ride in Parliament. Repressive legislation is no substitute for tackling the gross social problems of society.

Mr George Younger, Secretary of State for Scotland, condemned fans' drunkenness. This gentleman is really setting new standards in hypocrisy. His brewery firm Youngers sponsored the event and he won't have a sore conscience when the profits from his beer are counted up.

One point must be made, however. Rangers FC have

throughout their long history refused to sign Catholics. This is big business at its ugliest and should be seen by Scottish workers as such.

Perhaps they feel they will lose support by signing Catholics? Whatever the reason, they are responsible for helping to perpetuate religious bigotry in Glasgow.

Events of this nature will only cease when the thousands of pounds paid by supporters each week is channelled in building proper facilities for fans. This would have to be in conjunction with ample leisure and recreational facilities being provided in places like Glasgow. Only socialism can achieve this, the profit system has had its chance and failed miserably.

By John McNally
(Provan CLP)

No 'Day of Shame' in East Kilbride

On the May 14th TUC 'Day of Action' one of the many events taking place throughout Britain included the Scottish Trade Union Congress morning rally in East Kilbride Town Centre.

The rally was organised on the basis of 'No return to the '30s. Forward to the '80s' and was a direct attempt to encourage local people to participate in the day's events and to demonstrate their total opposition to the anti-working class policies of the Thatcher government.

Despite the hysterical and hostile reaction of the capitalist press to the 'Day of Action' and the absence, in many cases, of a strong, committed trade union leadership at local and national level, the East Kilbride rally was attended by nearly three hundred local people and trade unionists.

The main speaker was Ken MacMillan, secretary of the Trades Council, who spoke of the urgent need to bring down this Conservative government, before its economic policies resulted in even more disastrous and possibly irreparable damage to the living standards of the working people of Britain.

Speaking on behalf of the Young Socialists, Frank White, vice-chairman of the Scottish LPYS, clearly out-

By Stephen Wright

(East Kilbride LPYS)

lined that after one year of the Tories enough was enough and that the labour movement must now demand the return of a Labour government committed to the implementation of a bold socialist programme, initially including measures such as the £80 national minimum wage and the introduction of a 35-hour week.

Also speaking was Tom Berney of the Society of Civil and Public Servants, who made a scathing attack on public expenditure cuts and further emphasised the inappropriateness of government policy and the necessity for immediate and continued action from the entire labour movement.

After the rally the majority of those present made their way into Glasgow to join the 15,000 other people on the main march through the city centre.

The undoubted success of the East Kilbride meeting was largely due to the efforts of the local LPYS in the weeks immediately preceding the fourteenth. Extensive leaf-letting of factories, homes and shopping centres; twenty-five posters displayed on industrial estates and local notice boards; and a large

advertisement in the local weekly newspaper, all helped counter the cries of 'Day of Shame' and 'Day of Inaction' from the bosses' press.

Perhaps the most satisfying and encouraging aspect of the whole rally was that in only one and a half hours 90 copies of 'Militant' and 16 copies of 'Socialist Youth' were sold in and around the town centre, and this clearly illustrates what can be achieved.

The East Kilbride LPYS is currently involved in a series of local 'Days of Action,' several of which are tied in with the National Week of Action against unemployment, and all of which aim to create an even larger and even more active YS branch.

The sales of papers and the enthusiastic feedback from the working people of East Kilbride (particularly the young), clearly shows the vast potential that exists, in terms of building a stronger YS movement, and this of course does not only apply to East Kilbride, but surely to every other YS branch as well.

The fourteenth of May must then be seen in the context of the present rapid decline of British capitalism, as the only first step towards mobilising the labour movement and the working class with its only weapon—socialism.

Banking, Insurance and Finance Union Conference

BANK WORKERS REJECT THE BILL

The new mood developing among bank and insurance workers was shown in the debate on the Employment Bill at their union conference. Seven years ago the union was expelled from the TUC for registering under Heath's Industrial Relations Act, but this year BIFU overwhelmingly rejected Prior's Employment Bill.

The magnificent strike 3 weeks ago by National Westminster messengers, backed by blacking and sympathetic action throughout the country, would have been illegal under Prior's Bill.

By John
Bulaitas

350 delegates attended the conference last week in Folkestone. The union has a growing membership, a big proportion of whom are young women workers.

And the members are forcing the union to turn more and more to militancy and action to defend their living standards and jobs. During the past year BIFU has held more ballots on industrial action than ever before.

Although the banks are raking in super profits (the five big clearing banks alone made £1.61 billion last year)

many bankworkers are on appalling wages, many making up their wages with social security. And there is also the threat to jobs posed by new technology.

Faced with this, conference passed a number of basic demands. They endorsed the latest pay claim in the clearing banks of 25%-30%, called for a £60 minimum wage, increasing with the cost of living and five weeks holiday.

They supported demands for worksharing schemes and a 28-hour week to ensure technology is implemented in the workers' interests and not at the expense of jobs.

However, conference defeated an amendment calling for support for TUC actions (including May 14th) against the Bill. The Executive speakers throughout the conference kept stressing that they

were a 'non-political,' 'respectable' and 'highly respectable' union.

But the dispute of Nat West shows that the lower-grade bank workers are looking for a way out of their conditions and are prepared to fight: 1,300 recruits joined the union in the week following that dispute, and more applications are still coming in.

This figure alone proves that the way to build the union into one that can really serve the interests of banking and insurance workers, is not by making BIFU 'respectable' as far as the employers are concerned, but a fighting and democratic union that is prepared to stand up to the Banks and Insurance companies will win mass support amongst banking and insurance workers.

SOCIALISM WINS VOTES!

Polling Day: Thursday May 15



VOTE LABOUR
Reeves X

- ★ Fight the Tory cuts!
- ★ Bring down the Tories!
- ★ Fight for a socialist alternative!

The election address for Jean Reeves

Last week, voters in Wall End ward in Newham gave an impressive "thumbs up" to clear, socialist policies in a council by-election when Labour held the seat with the majority almost doubled.

Jean Reeves fought the election on the theme that after a year of Tory rule, every by-election counts in the fight-back against the government. She gained 1282 votes, with a majority of 831 over the Tory.

Her address, which spelt out support for the May 14 'Day of Action' and called for a socialist plan of production based on 'common ownership of the productive wealth, the banks and chainstores,' also put forward a clear

anti-cuts position.

Describing the Newham Council's 42% rate rise and 5% cuts as "misguided", Jean Reeves' personal statement said "I believe in no cuts in services and I am against the increase in rates forced on us by the Tory government...what is needed is a mass campaign to force the Tory government to restore the Rate Support Grant to Newham and other areas which have suffered." She also pledged to oppose rent increases.

In the adjoining Central Ward, where Labour fought a more 'orthodox' campaign, Labour held the seat only narrowly against a demagogic "community politics" Liberal.

The Tories get their answer

In 1974, after the first elections to Scotland's new District Councils, 'Militant' wrote that the results marked a landslide for the Labour Party. Yet this year, Labour has done even better than in that year of triumph.

It has won 498 seats, compared to the Tories 232, the Liberals 39 and the Scottish National Party getting only 56. The remaining 285 seats are held by independents. Labour holds a majority in 24 councils, the Tories only in four, the Liberals and SNP in none.

This was a crushing vote of no confidence in Thatcher, Labour not only won back every single seat lost to the nationalists in 1977 but gained from the Tories too.

In the working class areas of Strathclyde and Fife, the swing to Labour was enormous! In the generally more middle-class city of Edinburgh, it was much less marked, and the Tories managed to cling on to control, albeit by the skin of their teeth.

A similar class split could be discerned in relation to the SNP. They were massacred in the industrial areas, in which they had received a protest vote in 1977 from Labour voters discontented with the record of the Labour government. In some Tory areas they have this time received the votes of Tory voters who are fed up with the Thatcher government.



Workers in Dundee demonstrate against the Tories on May 14

Too often in the past, Scottish Labour councils have helped to foster the rise of nationalism, through their inability to make any basic changes in the interests of their working class electorate, and even in some cases through their becoming corrupted, and ending up in court on charges of accepting bribes etc. Such events caused much disillusion and cynicism towards Labour councillors in the past.

Now, the Labour-control-

led councils can spearhead the fight-back against the Tories. They alone cannot of course reverse all the effects of Tory policies, but they can follow the example of the Clay Cross councillors at the time of the Heath government and refuse to let themselves to be used as agents for carrying out Thatcher's anti-working class measures.

There is no other answer to the Tory attacks than defiance, and a campaign needs to be launched now to draw

the whole of the trade union movement, the tenants organisations and the Labour Party, behind the councils, by explaining the issues in public rallies and the local press, and then confronting the government with a movement not just of 498 councillors, but tens of thousands of working class people.

By Pat Craven
(Dundee CLP)

WHEN A 'DAY OF ACTION' HAD TO END

Last Saturday, Bournemouth East and West Young Socialists joined together for a Day of Action on the streets and shopping areas locally.

In the morning, we split into two groups—Winton and Boscombe, and in the afternoon, three of us went down to the centre of Bournemouth, which was packed with Bank Holiday crowds.

Things had been going pretty well with many copies of 'Militant' and 'Socialist Youth' sold, many signatures added to the Labour Party national petition, and several young people showing an interest in the YS. We had a laugh at the expense of the local Constabulary, when a student came up wearing a badge which read: 'Help the police—beat yourself up'!

However not more than ten minutes later (their ears must have been burning), up came a large van, packed full of 'Thatcher's boot boys.' Three of the largest and most threatening of them jumped out, and led by an inspector, came over in a very aggressive manner, told us to clear up and clear off. They gave us a load of rubbish

about obstructing the pavement, but as any of our readers from Bournemouth know, the pavement outside the Westminster Bank is about 20 yards wide!

At the same time, a group of about half-a-dozen punk kids innocently having a chat were told to move on.

So our Day of Action was brought to an abrupt halt. In relation to what the youth of Southall and Bristol have to put up with, these incidents may seem quite trivial. We see them as just a further example of how the police can be used to stamp on any opposition to the bosses and their rotten capitalist system.

By Dave Lovett

(Youth Officer,
Bournemouth East CLP)

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

LEFT and RIGHT

Whilst his paper is attacking workers or the unemployed, Earl Rothermere, owner of the 'Daily Mail', has his own special way of 'backing Britain'—he is a tax exile. So thank goodness for his wife, Lady Rothermere ['Bubbles' to her acquaintances] who is really buckling down to the task of combating the economic crisis.

After all what can a poor girl do, who has an absentee husband with a fortune in excess of £40 million. Spend it all is the short answer. As she explained to the 'Daily Mirror', "London can be so exhausting when one is dining out ever night. Of course my life isn't totally one of glamour. I do lots of charity, and there are always servants, nannies and secretaries to organise."

Off she went with a Mirror reporter for a £100 dinner, which was a bit boring, so night-clubs followed. Then it was one more glass of champagne before she went off to catch Concorde. As she explained: "California will help me get through the next few months."

So next time the Mail calls for sacrifices all round, perhaps our readers could ask Earl Rothermere for a holiday in the States. Because "they keep telling us we are 'one nation', aren't we?" ■

Listeners to the BBC Newsbeat programme last week were no doubt surprised to hear of a new group that has been formed called 'Overspenders Anonymous.' It has been formed by a wealthy young American who became distressed after she bought a £3,000 speed boat that she "didn't really want." It's really a sign of the times when the sun-tanned Martini crowd have to start looking after the pennies! But while workers may agree that they can do without the odd speedboat, it's a different matter when it comes to 'overspending' each week trying to chase ever rising food prices, heating bills and the cost of clothes for their children. The answer is not to join an organisation which stops you spending the few pounds you've got, but to fight for the socialist system that gives a decent wage for all ■

The 'Sun' [15 May] last week in reporting the TUC Day of Action blatantly ignored all the large demonstrations and stoppages throughout the country. Yet it managed to spare two paragraphs to the plight of this poor chap: "a middle-aged businessman in Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffs, was forced to use his brand-new Rover car. But he forgot to find out how to operate its electronically-controlled doors and windows...and was stuck inside for more than an hour before a passer-by heard his muffled screams for help." No comment ■

And while thousands of trade unionists and Labour Party members demonstrated last week, they may have missed a demonstration called outside TUC headquarters by their Tory counter-parts. They told 'The Times' [13 May] that they were demonstrating against the TUC's call for 14 May, because there were "people throughout the country who want some publicity given, for a change, to those who want to work on 14 May" [they obviously don't read the Sun, Mail, Express, Times, Telegraph and the Daily Mirror for that matter]. The massive rally consisted of 15 people. Now before all you Labour people start sniggering, let Margaret Daly, the leader of the group, explain that they didn't want a big demo because they "did not want people to leave their jobs." Mind you, there can be no doubt Ms Daly has no trouble getting time off work—besides being a 'trade unionist', a member of ASTMS, she also just happens to be assistant director of employment at Conservative Central Office ■

After years of telling his flock to give their hard-earned crusts to charity and wringing his hands for the starving millions of the third world, Cardinal Archbishop Giovanni Benelli of Florence must have touched his own conscience. According to the 'Daily Mail' [13 May] he is selling off 400 of his wordly riches, which include "antique Chinese vases, valued at £2,500 each, a collection of ivory statuettes given by the late Chairman Mao, gold and silver Vatican medals and a silver tea tray, said to be worth £700." ■

THE FLEET STREET PROPAGANDA MACHINE

The build up to the May 14 Day of Action saw the Tory press and media launch the most nauseating barrage of hypocrisy, lies and distortions seen for some time.

Any pretence of playing the role of presenting 'news' was dropped and an unashamedly anti-labour movement propaganda machine went into action.

As the 'Militant' pointed out in its editorial last week, the main reason for the limited response to the Day of Action call was the failure of the TUC leadership to give a bold lead—the areas of success can be transposed alongside the areas where local labour leaders took up the campaign.

However, the merciless tirade of lies from the Tory press played a major part, alongside the absence of leadership, in undermining the success of May 14.

The media kept up the pressure for several weeks in advance, reaching a peak on the day before the trade union action. 'Carry on working' screamed the Sun. 'Let's go to work' pleaded the Express. 'The strike nobody wants,' whined the Mail—these and other papers, including the so-called "Labour paper", the Daily Mirror, devoted acres of newsprint explaining that workers would 'defy' the call for action.

George Gale in the Express, under a suitably large headline, warned all that "The bully boys will be out in strength tomorrow. The law will be flouted. The boot, the brick, the cudgel will be flaunted." (!) The paper's editorial regurgitated speeches by Churchill, and drew parallels with 1940!

The Sun sent its hacks scurrying around Madeira aggravating Len Murray. In a bland act of hypocrisy, they tried to cajole their readers into being shocked that a trade union leader should actually take a holiday (however badly timed it may have been).

When William Scott wrote an address to the mine-owners and people of England in 1831, he made the following observation:

"Comparatively few of you know that the pitman, before he can obtain a single particle of coals, has to descend by a rope from five hundred to upwards of twelve hundred feet below the surface of the earth, down a cavern so horribly terrific and frightful that, if all the coal pits in Europe and the entire continent of America were offered to some of those men who claim them as their property—on condition of their having to be looped down by a rope to the bottom of these gulphs of

destruction, their dastard spirits would shudder, whilst they, with ghastly paleness, unhesitating, would reject the offer....knowing that such a descent might bring them too near to home!"

Scott's pamphlet was written in the decade preceding the formation of the first national miner's union, the largest union of its day, and during one of the bitterest strikes the miners of Northumberland and Durham ever engaged in.

The whole decade, in fact, was one of stoppages and strikes, as the miner continued to strive for better conditions and rates of pay. The colliery owners did their utmost to prevent the formation of what they called 'vile combinations of men', in

other words, unions. They saw quite correctly, that a strong miners' union posed the biggest threat to their profits that had so far existed. It remains testimony to the loyalty the unions commanded that, in 1831 the Pitmen's Union (which organised itself only in the North of England) received some £32,000 in subscriptions to be paid out for death, disability, sickness or unemployment. Scott's pamphlet is reprinted in 'Labour Disputes in the Mines', a collection of contemporary leaflets and pamphlets from the days of some of the bitterest confrontations between collier and owner.

By P. Etherington
(Segefield LPYS)

The 'vile' unions



Above—A typical selection of the 'popular press' last week.

By Bob Wade
(NUJ)

of the issue to the workers.

Although the bosses' press has given the impression of shrugging off the Day of Action as a 'big flop', their real horror and alarm at the action can be found in the columns of that semi-official organ of big business, The Times, on May 13, in which its author can almost be heard quaking in his boots:

"But if it has got to this by now, what will it be like when the Employment Bill is actually operating, and the promised second round of union legislation appears?"

"If you do not, you will, of course, not be paid for that day. You will also be in breach of your Contract of employment and I have to point out to you that this will render you liable for dismissal.

"It is most important that you take into account the huge cost of a day's stoppage to the company, as well as to your own future should we fail to produce our newspapers on the above days. Your sincerely, C Westwood, General Manager."

So there we have it! Victor Matthews' freedom to work does not amount to an equal freedom to strike, and with his record in the black-listing Economic League what chance would any sacked worker have for finding another job? And he would have the gall to proclaim in his 'Daily Express' that publication was a victory for "moderation and common sense."

By P. Etherington
(Segefield LPYS)

What 'freedom' means at the Daily Express.

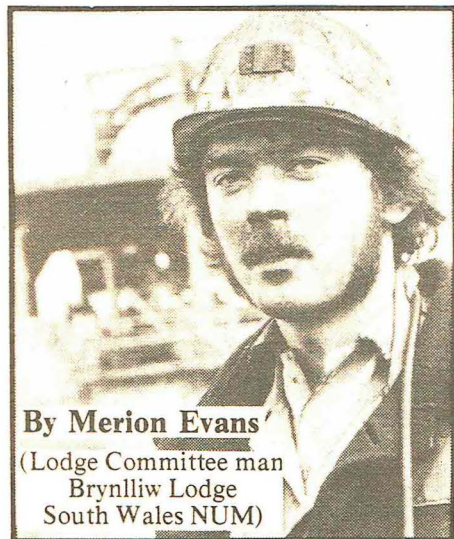
In the run-up to May 14th every trade unionist working for Express Newspapers received the following letter:

"Dear Colleague, You will be aware that it is our intention to publish the 'Daily Express' and 'Daily Star' on the night of May 13 and the 'Evening Standard' on May 14, despite the TUC's desire to stop us.

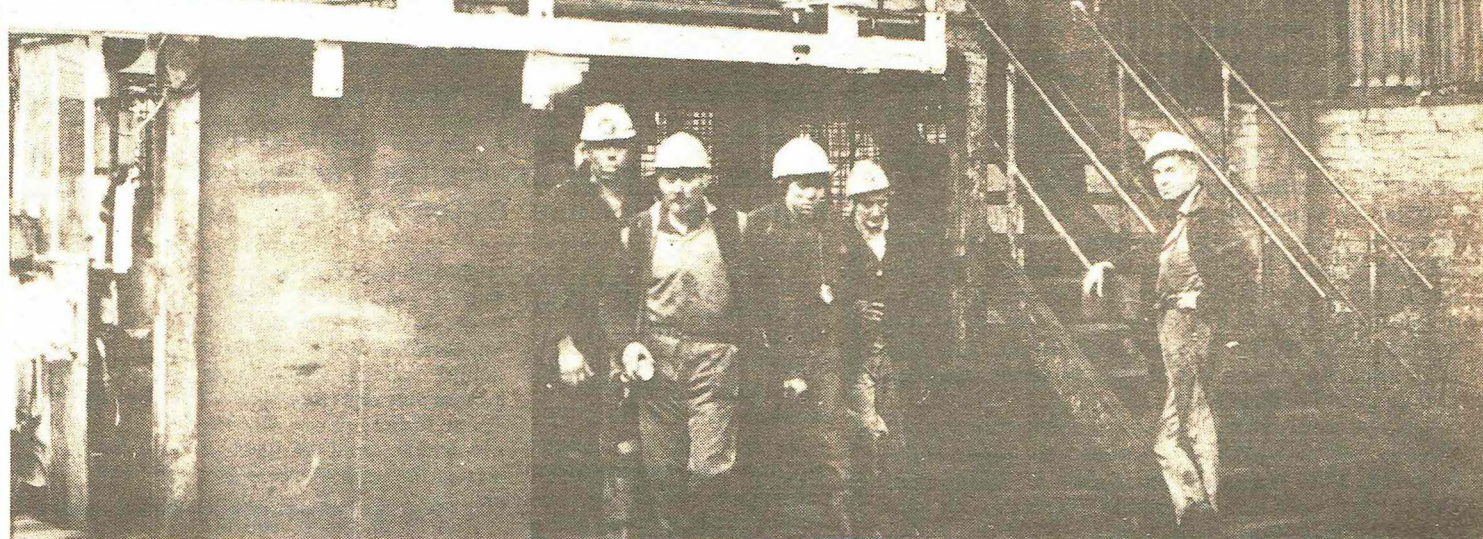
"With regard to any instruction you may have received, the High Court have declared that since May 14 is a purely political strike, every individual is free to work without fear of penalty or victimisation.

"You are, therefore, expected to report to work as usual.

ACCIDENT IN THE PIT



By Merion Evans
(Lodge Committee man
Brynlliw Lodge
South Wales NUM)



I certainly didn't find it unusual, but when I told my wife that a workmate had suffered an accident underground at my pit, and not arrived at the hospital until almost 3½ hours later, she was astounded.

The accident occurred at 6.00 pm on the coal face in the six foot seam. While supporting above the hydraulic chock, a large stone and a fair amount of coal fell from the face, and caught his foot.

The deputy was immediately called to the scene and after an initial examination, the man was manhandled off the face into the roadway, where there was more room to carry out further examinations, and subsequently prepare him for transport to the surface.

By 6.20 pm this had been done. Eight men were then given the arduous but willing task of carrying their workmate. The first 500 yards was downhill, some places less than 4 ft in height, only on three occasions for about 20 yards at a time were the men given the opportunity to stand upright.

Two major obstacles con-

fronted us during this part of the journey, both being full 'journeys'. The obstacles included cut down mine cars laden with supplies of timber, etc. for the face. Our workmate had to be lifted onto the journey, then with men on either side of the stretcher eased slowly along the six cars.

Of course, every man concerned tries to reassure the man in pain on the stretcher; funny remarks are made, jokes told continuously.

One man reminded him of the time he had suffered an injury to his foot also, but by the time he had got to the surface, he had also broken his finger—the stretcher had broken! For two days the manager had two men running around the surface with a man on a stretcher, trying to prove that stretchers don't break, so they would not be

liable.

At the bottom of the road, we came to 20 or 50 yards of slurry. Small coal and water about 8-10 inches deep challenged us, but by hanging onto the sides, we managed to keep our footing through the quagmire. By now everyone had carried the stretcher five or six times and was beginning to feel the strain.

The injured man's foot was still giving him pain, but he maintained that he had made a correct decision not to be given any morphia. We were now 500 yards on the level, alongside the belt carrying the coal; level with undulations, I should say.

If two men were walking in the middle of the road, the other two were either in and out of an 8-inch gutter, or tight to the conveyor structure where spilled collects made it difficult to walk properly. It was much easier travelling along this road because we had no problem with headroom, but once again numerous changeovers took place.

One man asked if a site observation had been carried out. I replied yes. This is the fifth serious accident which has taken place on this face within the last twelve months, all due to the coal falling out.

We were now going along

twenty yards of treacherous roadway in which men slip and slide when walking in. Over this we travel very slowly but sure-footedly. Under a pump and chain conveyor, along some more man-made obstruction we find it easier to allow just two men to carry the stretcher.

While the seven men and now the pit overman proceed to carry the man down a 1:3 incline, I illegally ride the conveyor belt to the next transfer point to tell the operator not to fill any more coal on to the manriding belt, to allow us to use that belt up a 1:4 drift for a length of over 500 yards.

The effect of carrying a man along this length of roadway would be devastating, though it has been done before!

When they arrive at the transfer point, some very tricky manoeuvring takes place to turn 90 degrees, due to handrails on a platform crossing the conveyor getting in the way. (It's ironic that the handrails are placed there for safety purposes, but are a hindrance when carrying out an injured man.)

As we take him under the bunker, we have to tilt the stretcher to about 45 degrees to get him through, but the

man is tied on so he doesn't fall off. He is then placed on the belt and quickly transported to the alighting station.

Later, he's transferred to a trambulance (an ambulance made from a train) and is driven slowly by loco towards the shaft. Even though the trambulance can take some shocks, I don't think it was a very comfortable ride. In fact, if British Rail had tracks like ours, the National Bus Company would be making a profit.

Our last hitch. We have to stop and reverse and wait for a couple of minutes to allow a journey of empties to be landed for coal production to be maintained.

From there to the surface, no problems exist, other than what seems like gallons of water coming down through the roof of the cage onto the workman. For this we were given at the pit bottom a rubber sheet with which we covered our mate, like a shroud over a corpse.

As soon as the cage banks, he is transferred to a trolley and given a cigarette. As he rises up one man shouts, "Don't you dare get off that trolley after us carrying you all the way out."

A few laughs are given and

grateful smiles are on the faces of the weary men; grateful that at 8.10 pm they no longer have to hump and heave, sweat and snort in order to bring their mate safely to the surface.

Now in the hands of the medical attendant, he is wheeled to the medical centre, the cool fresh air blowing into his face. He is stripped slowly and then taken to the shower (they don't like dirty men in the hospital).

8.45. The patient is lying on the couch, the accident report having been filled in. In a few minutes the ambulance arrives. By 9.20 pm he's in the hospital awaiting examination.

He says he doubts if he'll go back onto the face if he returns to work. He's only got 18 months to go before he qualifies under the early retirement scheme; but until we get an agreement with the Board over protected earnings, it's too early to say if he will be back on the face or not.

Having had the experience of carrying the stretcher, I hope I shall never have to write about being on it.

Freedom - Denning style

By Jim Chrystie

Once again Lord Denning has ridden out to do battle with those who threaten his view of 'freedom'. Normally his judgements are welcomed like tablets from Mount Sinai by the capitalist press.

Not this time. From 'The Times' to the 'Mirror', the capitalist press has opposed his judgement on Granada TV as being against the wider interests of the capitalist class.

Denning ordered Granada TV to disclose to the British Steel Corporation (BSC) the name(s) of their informant(s) who had given them papers which showed back-door government intervention in BSC and poor management by the corporation.

In their 'World in Action' programme, 'The Steel Pap-

ers,' broadcast on 4 February, Granada used the documents and questioned Villiers, head of BSC. When BSC demanded the documents, Granada returned them, with identification marks removed, so that the source was not recognisable.

No-one disputes the accuracy of the documents, which showed that last summer British Steel bosses thought a cash crisis would provoke a strike. They were prepared to concede a 14% pay rise, but were prevented by the government from putting it on the negotiating table.

The documents showed how the government was really acting—deliberately provoking a crisis in order to take on a supposedly 'weak' union, the ISTC.

Denning's judgement declared that "Granada's want of responsibility should not enable them to make the damaging attack on the BSC and the government. Protec-

tion (for the media) was only given on condition that they did not abuse their power."

Denning called the conduct of the interview with Villiers "deplorable." Apparently, Villiers was treated with disrespect. He was continually asked difficult questions. Can we expect similar denunciations when trade unionists next appear on the box?

His attitude to Granada's informant is somewhat different. "We have somewhere a traitor in the camp of British Steel," he declared, "and we want to know who he or she is."

Denning's fellow judges agreed with him. Lord Justice Watkins declared: "One or two of (Granada's) servants displayed an attitude to the rights of property of others which was discreditable to put it mildly. The mutilation of the documents before handing them over was a gross interference with BSC's right of property which was totally

unjustifiable. By their act of mutilation of the documents alone, Granada were in his Lordship's view disentitled to immunity."

Denning's ruling establishes a new and highly subjective 'test' for the media—"responsibility," which will be assessed by the courts alone.

This has not been welcomed by the capitalist press. It's one thing to stop workers knowing what their bosses are doing. No capitalist would disapprove of that.

But Denning's new rule goes further than that. It restricts investigative journalism and hides from the capitalist class as a whole the grosser misdeeds of their fellow members or representatives.

It is a necessary safety-catch on the activities of the individual capitalist or state bureaucrats.

So 'The Times' editorial on 8 May attacked Denning's

ruling as putting "a narrow private interest ahead of the public's right to know," and declared that "the courts are far from the best judges of what is responsible journalism." The 'Mirror' called upon Granada to refuse to obey Denning's judgement, even if it meant prison. In this it was supported according to 'The Times' (9 May) by an unnamed Tory minister.

There is no contradiction for the capitalists in their view of the courts. It is to preserve their system. On 9 May 'The Times' editorial praised the Courts for their judgement against trade unions on the question of the Day of Action and proclaimed that "the immunity granted to unions is far too wide."

It is just on the Granada case, for the capitalists the interests of their class has to take precedence over the embarrassment, or discomfiture of this or that section.

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LOCAL COUNCILS

WHERE THE MONEY GOES

The estimates that the Cardiff City Council published a few months back provide an insight into the grip that money lenders can have on one relatively small local authority.

In 1979 in Cardiff, for example, 24,314 householders paid £5,473,215 worth of rent into the funds of the City Council.

Yet £7,533,746 was paid back in debt charges; i.e. the interest paid back on the money borrowed to build the houses in the first place.

Furthermore the city treasurer estimates that in 1981 the total rents collected will be just over £7.5 million, but interest repayments will have shot up to over £11.5 million. So much for the subsidised council tenant.

In 1979 all of the rents paid in Cardiff and almost all of the government subsidy (which of course comes from the taxes levied on working people) were swallowed up in interest repayments to the financial parasites.

Of course the exploitation does not end with housing. The same report shows that rate-payers in Cardiff are still paying interest on the money borrowed to build the Guildford Crescent Baths, first erected during the reign of Queen Victoria!

In the Wales Empire pool built to cater for the holding of the Empire Games in Cardiff in the 1950s, interest repayments were almost as high as the wages paid to the workers who run the biggest swimming pool in Wales.

After years of fighting by local Labour councillors, Ely, the second largest council estate in the city was recently granted a leisure centre, which has proved to be a very well supported amenity.

Again the city treasurer reports that interest repayments were £10,000 greater than the takings in the centre in 1979.

The terrible bus service in Cardiff with its astronomical fares lost £96,000 in 1979. Hardly surprising when £350,571 was paid back to the money lenders. Just as a parting shot the money lenders took over £15,000 in 1979 on the money borrowed for the disposal of the dead in Cardiff.

Readers of the Militant will need little reminding of the events of the last year's 'Winter of Discontent'. Right wing Labour ministers like Owen and Ennals then took time off from praising the virtues of crossing picket lines to explain to low paid council workers that there was no money in the kitty to pay them a living wage.

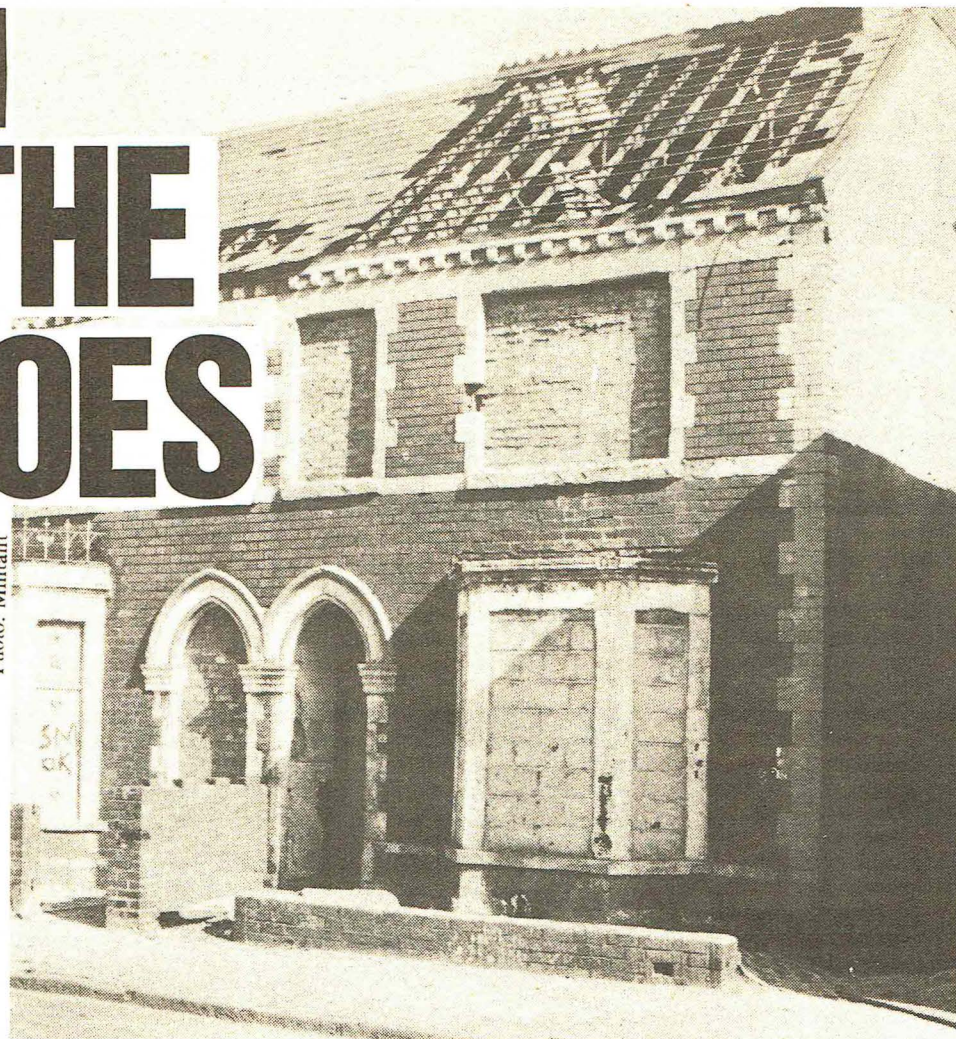
Little wonder that this is the case when money lenders are robbing councils left right and centre.

By
Andrew Price
(Cardiff South East
Labour Party)

And it is Labour councils and working class areas that face the greatest burden in this piece of exploitation. It is precisely run down working class areas where the lowest amount of money can be raised on rates, and the greatest amount of money needs to be spent.

So Labour councils have no alternative under the present

Photo: Militant



How can housing problems like those in Cardiff be solved with moneylenders bleeding councils dry?

system than to go cap in hand to the financiers who bleed them white.

Instead of bowing to the dictates of Heseltine and his well oiled Tory pals and cutting services on increasing rates and rents, the labour movement should boldly declare that the next Labour government will say enough is enough and cancel all local

authority debts to the moneylenders.

Finally it should be spelt out what socialist policies would mean in practice. The nationalisation of financial institutions with direct government finances to local authorities would remove once and for all the crippling burden of interest repayments.

This in turn would lead to a big reduction in rents and rates, better schools, free public transport and leisure amenities at a price people could afford. So much for the right wing argument that socialist policies would lose Labour votes.

And what they cut

The funds of every nationalised industry and public service have been cut by the 'mad axe woman' and her Tory government, and the fire brigades throughout the country are no exception.

As these cuts are only given minimal cover by the local and national Tory press, people are unaware of the dangers they face, as money previously made available to fire brigades, enabling them to save life and provide adequate fire cover, is cut.

The White Paper on Expenditure Plans 1980/81 states in Section 30:

"The planned expenditure will also enable local authorities to increase their provision for the probation and after care service and magistrates courts; and, in the fire service, will enable existing standards of fire cover to be maintained."

This is completely contradictory to the cuts proposed in Essex. In February 1980, Essex County Council agreed that the number of firemen needed in Essex to maintain the efficiency and fire cover of the Brigade was 1,002. This was known as the Establishment Level.

Later, for economic reasons it was decided that the same standard of efficiency and fire cover could be maintained with 68 fewer men, so the Establishment Level fell to 934.

With the previous Establishment Level at 1,002, Essex were 144 firemen short. Bringing the Establishment Level down to 934 still left 76 men officially short.

Money for recruitment was

By
Mark Hove
(Basildon Fire
Brigades Union)

stopped. So by the Council's own figures Essex was not maintaining the standard of fire cover it should.

Then came the proposals for new cuts and shifting the workforce around the Brigade. These proposals are:

A. Reduction in the manning of Turntable Ladders from 3 to 2, 'saving' 28 jobs.

There are five Turntable Ladders in Essex and they are the hydraulic extendable ladders capable of heights of up to 100 feet. For years three men rode this appliance to maintain efficiency. Now the proposal is for two.

B. Reduction in the number of Rescue Vehicles from eight to four saving 28 jobs. These are used mainly at road accidents, carrying special equipment to free trapped people.

Eight was the number needed to maintain efficiency in Essex and were placed at various stations throughout the Brigade. Now they are being cut by half.

C. On this proposal the Fire Brigades Union were given a "choice" of losing a complete fire appliance at Hadleigh or having a new station at Wooden Ferrers operated on a day shift only rather than a full 24 hour coverage, saving 16 jobs.

The FBU opted for the lesser of the two evils. Don't let your house catch fire at night in Wooden Ferrers!

D. The last proposal is perhaps the most petty. Travelling expenses of 75p a day is paid to firemen on duty. This is because their



contract of employment requires them to be available to serve in any station in Essex.

With petrol at £1.40 per gallon, 75p hardly covers the bill, but even this is being removed from any new entrants, i.e. the men on the lowest pay will be the hardest hit, if they are recruited.

These total proposals 'save' approximately £257,000. Now

15 new pumping appliances have been ordered costing a few hundred thousand pounds, which I am told do everything except make toast!

What is the good of having new machines if there are no men available to man them. But remember, people of Essex, these cuts are only this year's ration. In April 1981, even more are due.

IT'S 'ALLOUR FAULT'

David Churchley

(Glasgow Cathcart
Labour Party)

I suppose my time spent at the polls during the recent District Council elections could have been a lot worse, indeed compared to a politician the eye with a blunt sword was paradise!

Not only was I confined to canvassing outside a polling station that the election agent had decided was a 'no-hoper', but for some reason I was left with no leaflets to give out to the prospective voters.

I've never been convinced that you could persuade the electorate on the day of the election with a last minute leaflet outside the polling station, but certainly the prospect of just standing there did not fill me with enthusiasm.

However being the sort of bloke who's never been short of a word or two, I set about my job. I stopped practically every would-be voter and treated them, I thought anyway, to a fitting explanation of why they should vote Labour.

Attempting to introduce at least a bit of humour into confrontations with "true-blues" was a bit difficult.

Undaunted, I challenged the pensioners as to where their next hospital bed was coming from if they or their friends were to take ill. For the office worker, I conjured up a picture of cuts and redundancies, for the youth, the spectre of mass unemployment and no job prospects.

Unknown to me, the opposition, who was giving out Tory leaflets, was the candidate's wife. She was at first mildly amused at the lunatic politely accosting the voters as they made their way to the polling station.

But after a while it began to dawn on her that I was managing to secure first of all interest and then discussion amongst the electorate.

Even the most prejudiced of the true-blues grudgingly recognised my presence. The straw that broke the camel's back was when I stopped a young pregnant mother.

She was wheeling a child in a pram. I stopped her and asked her to consider not only her child's education, but her expected child's access to health facilities.

I went into some detail about the effect and reason for the Tory cuts. This was too near to the bone for the intrepid Tory stalwart.

"Are you married?" she said, or rather demanded. Honest to the end, I said "Why, yes."

"Have you got children?" Again honesty prevailed, 'no'.

"Well there you are then, it's YOUR fault," she said triumphantly. "What do you mean?" asked the woman.

"That's why we are having to close the schools! It's people like him who are not having babies means that we have to make teachers redundant."

All I could reply was "Vote Labour,"

H-BLOCK

Labour movement must fight repression

From 1973 until 1977, 24-year old Maria McLenaghan was held as a Republican prisoner in Armagh prison. During this period she developed stomach pains which went undiagnosed.

Shortly after her release doctors in Belfast's Royal Victoria Hospital discovered a perforated duodenal ulcer and told Maria that she was fortunate to be alive.

Within a few months she was re-arrested and found herself back in Armagh. Only after a long struggle did she gain the concession of a special diet. Then on 7 February this year, following disturbances caused by the warders in the prison, the authorities, as a punishment, denied her this special diet.

February 7th marked an escalation in the situation in Armagh to such a pitch that conditions there now resemble those of the male prisoners in the 'H Blocks' of Long Kesh. Like the H-Block men, the women protesters in Armagh have been protesting at the removal of the special conditions enjoyed by both Republican and Loyalist prisoners prior to 1976.

On 7 February, during a cell search, the women were beaten up by about 40 male warders. Since then they have been locked in their cells 23 hours a day, denied access to toilets and refused changes of clothing. The most vile restrictions have been placed on these women. For example, during menstruation they face a rationing of sanitary towels to two a day for the "lucky" ones.

Already, the forced use of the cell as a toilet has threatened to turn Armagh into another "H-Block". Because women in British prisons can wear their own clothes, the women in Armagh have continued to do so. In "H-Blocks" the men have no garments save for blanket or a towel.

These conditions, which are unimaginably horrific—conditions not fit for the lowest forms of life—have now been endured for four years. "H-Block" protesters are locked up 24 hours a day. They are denied access to newspapers, TV, books, writing materials, and live in cells barren of any furniture save a damp mattress and with walls fouled with human excreta.

The labour movement is

implacably opposed to individual terrorism, and to the policy, programme, and methods of the Provisional IRA leadership.

But equally, the labour movement cannot close its eyes to the barbaric conditions which exist in Northern Ireland. This is an example of the terror of the capitalist state. If they are allowed to get away with their monstrous treatment of the "H-Block" prisoners now, the capitalists could use exactly the same methods against the labour movement in Britain at a later stage.

According to government spokesmen and to the media, these conditions exist solely because the prisoners inflicted them upon themselves. This is totally false. The miserable conditions of these stinking dungeons are primarily the result of the repressive policies of British imperialism. In part, they are also due to the policies and methods of the para-military organisations, particularly the Provisionals.

Prior to 1976, those convicted as a result of the Northern Ireland "troubles" enjoyed what was known as "special status". Specifically, they were allowed to wear their own clothes, were excused prison work, and lived in compounds. When these privileges were removed it was as part of a deliberate policy of repression against the para-militaries, and was intended specifically to break the morale of the prisoners.

Because of the falling away of their popular support, the para-military groups were incapable of mobilising successful resistance to this oppression.

Thus, since 1976 the prisoners have been fighting more or less on their own. Firstly, they refused to don prison uniforms and perform prison work. As a consequence they were denied clothes, were locked up 24 hours a day, and lost a day's remission for each day's protest.

In 1978 this "blanket" protest escalated to the present "no wash" phase. It did so as a retaliation to the authorities and because no alternative means of struggle by those taking up the issue outside the prisons was offered.



Below: Alan Hardman cartoon from 'Militant' in 1973

The labour movement is opposed to the individual terrorist policies of the Provisional IRA leaders. But the terror of the capitalist state must be resolutely fought as a threat to all workers.

Such a situation cannot be ignored by the labour movement. 'H-Block' is not so unique as might be imagined. In 1972, during prison riots in Britain, similar repressive techniques, removal of furniture, 24-hour lock-up etc, were used. If unopposed similar methods—as with every aspect of repression in Northern Ireland—could be used against members of the labour movement in both Britain and Ireland.

But if the labour movement is to take up the issue, it will do so on its own terms. There has been a dangerous four-year silence from both labour and trade union organisations on this question. One reason for this is the understandable fear among workers that this is a sectarian, divisive issue, and that to campaign on it would be to support the Provisionals.

'H-Block', like all aspects of repression, is really a class question. But if the labour movement does not take it up it will be championed by bigots who will turn it into a sectarian issue. Opposition to repression, which is a fundamental duty of socialists, is not akin to support for the Provisionals. To oppose the horrific conditions of the 'H-Blocks' and Armagh is in no way to support the false methods of struggle which organisations like the Provisionals have taken up both in Ireland and Britain.

Restrictions were placed on the use of chamber pots until these had to be emptied in their cells. When the authorities insisted on uniforms being worn for visits to the toilet, the prisoners were given the choice of backing down or else using the walls as a toilet. They chose the latter.

When the excreta and the chamber pots were kicked around the cells by the warders, the prisoners, in the words of one recently released, found that "the only thing we could do to stop ourselves being covered in filth was to smear it on the walls."

Thus the present inhuman conditions arose. And since then the authorities have increased their efforts to break this protest. There are beatings, starvation diet, there is a special punishment for P Block. For the privilege of a visit, the prisoner must endure "strip" and "mirror" searches at which probes of the anus take place, both before and after the event.

Only one word can describe what is going on in the 'H-Blocks'—torture. The labour movement must oppose the torture of any prisoners, no matter whom. Decent conditions should be the right of every prisoner, Republican or Loyalist in Northern Ireland, or any of the inmates of prisons in Britain or the South.

Such conditions include the right to wear ordinary clothes, to exercise, to adequate visits and food parcels, the right to choose and negotiate choice of prison work, training and

study, and the elementary right to trade-union rates of pay. Further, the labour movement should support the right of prisoners to elect representatives to negotiate with the prison authorities on their behalf.

There is nothing special about such elementary rights. A campaign around the charter for prisoners' rights would encompass the main demands of those in Armagh, 'H-Block,' and the remand prisoners 'on the blanket' in Crumlin Road Jail.

However there is nothing 'special' about these prisoners in Northern Ireland. They are people who were arrested under emergency legislation, held for up to seven days in special police torture centres, tried before non-jury courts, and then despatched to 'H-Blocks' and Armagh. Almost 90% of the convictions have been solely on the basis of 'confessions' signed in police custody, despite medical evidence in many cases of the brutal treatment used to gain these 'confessions.'

The labour movement must fight for the scrapping of the entire repressive apparatus. It must also take up the issue of those who have been convicted by the non-jury Diplock courts.



Photo: Eamonn O'Dwyer (IFL)

PHOTOS: Top: Belfast march in protest at the tenth anniversary of the British Army in Northern Ireland.

Below: In September 1978, workers mobilised to free Paddy Kelly, a Belfast dockworker, arrested under the so-called 'Prevention of Terrorism' Act.



But the Provisionals' demand that all of their members in 'H-Block' should be recognised as political prisoners and treated as such. In taking up the question in a non-sectarian class manner, the labour movement could not adopt such a position.

Trade-union activists in Northern Ireland have had to defend the unity of their organisations and of the working class against the activities of some of these para-military, so-called 'political' prisoners.

During the 'troubles,' unpardonable atrocities from both sides have been committed by sectarian bigots who are the enemies of class unity. Such would be the 'Shankill butchers,' cut-throat assassins of innocent Catholics, or those who gunned down quite mercilessly ten Protestant workers at Bessbrook, South Armagh, in 1976.

In contrast to these people are the vast majority of the ranks of the para-military organisations as they were in 1972-73, people who were driven into these organisations because of the lack of any alternative, in response to state repression or sectarianism, mistakenly thinking that they were helping to defend their areas or else fighting imperialism.

Such people, in the main, the labour movement could defend. But it cannot be asked to act on behalf of its enemies. In Northern Ireland there must be a review conducted by the labour movement of the cases of all those convicted on offences arising out of the 'troubles.' On the basis of such a review, the movement should itself decide who should be designated a political prisoner, so as to campaign for that

person's release.

Not the paramilitary groups, but only the labour movement must have the right to take the decision as to who is and who is not a political prisoner. The movement would also have to fight for the release of all those who have been framed or whose convictions have been based on torture. But the labour movement will not campaign for the release of sectarian assassins.

Trade union enquiry

From the point of view of the prisoners and their relatives, it must be made clear that the labour movement alone has the ability to conduct a successful campaign on their behalf. If the trade unions in Ireland and Britain were to take up a struggle on this issue and provide the support which the Provisionals could never provide, the prisoners would not be left to fight alone. On that basis, the need to continue with the present method of struggle could be reviewed.

But the responsibility rests on the shoulders of the labour movement to conduct such a campaign. We are convinced of the facts of our argument.

Letter from 'H-Block' prisoner

But if trade union activists remain unconvinced, the movement should establish a trade union inquiry into 'H-Block.' On the basis of its own findings it would then be equipped to conduct a full campaign for decent conditions for these prisoners.

The health of all those in 'H-Block' and Armagh remains in danger. One other female protester in Armagh, although 5ft 5ins tall, is reputed to weigh little over six stone. A death caused by these atrocious conditions is always a possibility. If that happens, and if the trade unions and Labour Party, have not taken up the issue, the sectarians will be left to capitalise on it. In short, time may not be unlimited for the organisations of the working class to conduct a united class campaign against this brutal repression of prisoners.

I'm sorry I haven't written to you sooner, but it is only recently that I have been able to get a pen smuggled in. Due to the 'mirror search' and 'strip searches', it is very difficult to even smuggle a letter of this size out. [This letter, 420 words, was written on a piece of toilet paper measuring 4½ ins × 2½ ins.]

I am sure you have heard of the infamous mirror search! The only reason for this type of search is to humiliate and degrade the men to such a degree as to break their morale. Along with the mirror search comes the beatings. This is also a policy which is carried out by the warders to break our morale. The beatings usually take place during a wake move, going and coming from visits, and also going and coming from Mass.

We are locked up 24 hours a day, and receive no exercise whatsoever.

As for the food, it is usually cold and uneatable. Also the warders make sure you get only

what you need to keep you alive. The food we don't eat is thrown into the corner of the cell to rot, eventually it becomes infected with death-white maggots and other insects.

The floor is our dining table and toilet. Also the walls and ceiling of our cells are covered with human excreta. Our only possessions are three torn rags as blankets and a three-inch-thick piece of foam as a mattress. During a cell-search [which are quite frequent] the warders throw the urine from the pots around the bedding and tear the blankets.

As you can see, the conditions are very bad. Cardinal O'Fiaich once compared them to the sewer dwellings of Calcutta. Where else in the world would you find men between 18-21 years of age going bald, having heart attacks and suffering from nervous disorders which they will probably have for the rest of their lives?

It is only by building strong support groups

For regular coverage of the labour movement in Ireland North and South, read 'Militant Irish Monthly'

Order from:
75 Middle Abbey Street,
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6 issues.....£1.08
12 issues.....£2.16

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Analysis of the united class struggle of Protestant and Catholic workers in Northern Ireland:

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London E8 3PN

outside that will win us our five demands.

The right not to wear prison uniform.

The right not to do prison work.

Freedom of association among political prisoners.

The right to organise educational and recreational facilities, to have one weekly visit, to receive and send one letter a week, and to receive one parcel per week.

Restoration of full remission.

It is only by the people coming out into the open and making their voices heard that lives can be saved. Maybe you could help build this support, show this letter to your friends or even the students at the University, and ask them to pass it on.

I am sorry I couldn't send out a pass for this month, but next month I will be sending one out for yourself, my mother and brother. I will be able to explain things better then.



TRYING TO STEM A TIDE OF REVOLT

The narrow electoral accession of Karamanlis to the Presidency reflects the growing polarisation of Greek society. Only 183 MPs voted for him in the final ballot. As his own party had 174 MPs, this means he only got 9 votes from the smaller opposition parties.

Since last autumn, Greek capitalists have been faced with a serious economic crisis, and a growing radicalisation of the working class, the peasants and the youth, resulting in further erosion of ND's social support. This, combined with the threat that the left party PASOK could win the next election, forced the ruling class to begin 'preparing' Karamanlis for the presidency.

The result of the Presidential election reflects, in a distorted way, the deep polarisation of society, the serious weakening of 'New Democracy' and the collapse of the 'national image' of Karamanlis himself. It is an expression of the radicalisation of the working class, the peasants and all oppressed layers of society, who, despite the lack of unity in their own ranks and despite temporary defeats, still represent today an enormous potential power.

Despite the demand of both PASOK and pro-Moscow Communist Party (KKE) for elections, so that the new President could be voted in by a representative parliament, the capitalists worked to elect Karamanlis to the presidency and to maintain ND in office. This was made possible because the leaders of the workers' parties gave no lead to the working class militants, and for months refrained from even recognising the importance of this election for future developments.

No attempt was made to connect the struggle of workers and peasants against wage restraint and the cuts in social expenditure with the question of the Presidency and the semi-bonapartist constitution, or to prepare a national struggle to oust the right-wing government.

On the contrary, in the first three months of the year when workers, peasant youth, and even shopkeepers and local

By
Nicos
Remoundos

councils were taking actions against the policies of ND, the leaders of the left split these mobilisations into unco-ordinated attacks which, despite the determination of the strikers, led them eventually into frustration and temporary defeat.

The Bank workers' strike, the most important of these mobilisations, defied the courts and terrified the government and ended after 35 days of national struggle with a compromise, because the workers' parties supported it only with "messages of solidarity". As a result, after making a few concessions on the side to the most powerful unions, the government has managed, albeit with difficulty, to impose its wages policy of 11-15% increases. This, when inflation is increasing at a rate of 24%. It also refused to give in to the demands of the peasants or the local councils.

The KKE leaders maintained that all the hue and cry in the capitalist press about the Presidential election was intended to distract the workers from their immediate problems and demands. So it was not until a few days before the vote that the KKE daily paper suddenly called for parliamentary elections on the grounds that the constitution gives the President autocratic powers.

Andreas Papandreou, (leader of PASOK) did not make clear his party's position, and even allowed leading members of its central committee to maintain publicly that Karamanlis in the Presidency would only be a tame figurehead. Not until March did PASOK's leadership decide to oppose Karamanlis, stating that this parliament should not elect the new President because it was no longer representative, and demanded new elections. PASOK mentioned that in 1975 they did not vote for the constitution and had called for a constituent assembly.

These decisions created fury among the capitalists, who were counting on the support of the right-wing of PASOK. However, even then no action was taken in order to actually mobilise the workers and force the government to hold elections.

Both PASOK and the KKE once again limited their opposition to within parliament. Eventually they simply abstained, without even proposing any alternative candidate. This was at a time when a common candidate of the left could have been a symbol of unity in action, and a starting point for a co-ordinated campaign to oust the right-wing government and to prepare the way for a government of PASOK-KKE, and for a constituent assembly to vote in a socialist constitution

However, every attack made by the "new" ND government on standards of living will create more resis-

tance by the workers, who now sense its weakness, and will push their leaders to take action. In effect, the longer this government of crisis lasts the worse will be the outcome for the capitalists.

This is why the ruling class has now promoted Karamanlis to the Presidency and is also thinking of introducing proportional representation at the next elections, to make sure that PASOK will not get a working majority. Their intention is that Karamanlis, will be able in a 'constitutional' way to block any attempt by a left government, under the pressure of the workers, to take socialist measures that could put in danger the control of the monopolies over the economy and the state.

The deep crisis of capitalism, which has shown the disparity between the high sounding promises and the actual centrist and reformist policies of the leaders of PASOK and KKE has already begun to cause concern among the rank-and-file of both parties.

This is particularly so in PASOK, where the issues of taking power, socialisation of the means of production, workers' management and how to fight the reaction of the capitalists and the imperialists against a socialist government, are becoming more and more subjects of discussion in the local branches.

In the party, which at present claims a total of 65,000 members, the left is now composed of fresh and young elements, who, despite the fact that they are not as

yet organised and conscious of their strength, represent the majority in the local branches and even the area committees of the party.

This development, which is of course a reflection of the processes taking place in society today, is also a vindication of the perspectives of the Marxists in PASOK, who, even during the dark days of mass expulsions and defeat of the left, predicted its rebirth and increased power. The fight for a Marxist programme has begun again in the ranks of PASOK because the battle for power tomorrow means Marxist policies today:

★ Wage increases tied to inflation; a 40-hour week; abolition of all anti-union laws; lower taxes for workers' families; work for the unemployed.

★ Unite the struggle of poor peasants, youth and local government with the workers in a common fight to oust the right-wing government.

★ Build a mass socialist party, based on the organisations of the workers, peasants and youth.

★ Organise against the new President and the semi-bonapartist constitution, for a constituent assembly and a socialist constitution.

★ Fight for the nationalisation of the banks and all the major industries under workers control and management; the monopoly of foreign trade; a socialist plan of production.

★ Campaign for a left government of PASOK-KKE that can open up the way to workers' power and the socialist transformation of society.

MAY DAY IN PORTUGAL



May Day in Portugal showed the strength of the labour movement. In Lisbon and Oporto the size of the marches rivalled those of the mid-1970s. The demands were clear—"the struggle continues, Sa Carneiro must go" and "down with the high cost of living."

In the past period we have seen the fight of the agrarian workers, the strike of workers at petrogal, the post office, bakeries, Lisbon schools, and

the miners. All these struggles need to be brought together in a struggle against the government and for a government committed to a socialist programme.

May Day saw Lisbon's third demonstration in less than a fortnight. And in Oporto the march was over 100,000 strong.

Unfortunately May Day also showed the divisions among the Portuguese workers—the division between the strong Communist-led CGTP and the UGT, which is led by a mixture of members of the

Socialist party, the social-democrats, the Christian-Democrats, and the extreme right wingers. Many socialists opposed the class collaborationist policy of their leadership and participated in the CGTP marches. In Oporto the CGTP march numbered 100,000 whilst the UGT had only about 300.

The UGT cannot be ignored throughout the country. Within it are important unions such as the bank and insurance workers, over 200,000 strong who have threatened to strike against the

Part of the Lisbon demonstration government. In the recent strikes the workers of both trade union federations have shown unity action. But on May Day their leaderships had separate marches and spent a lot of time attacking the other unions.

Marxists stand for the unity of all workers against the capitalists around a socialist programme. That is the best way to take the struggle forward, to build on the spirit of May Day and move towards socialist democracy.

By a Portuguese
YS member

USA—LOST ILLUSIONS



Police arrest New York demonstrator during May Day rally

This land is rapidly becoming a land of depression and despair. Twenty-five million people here have lived on or below the poverty level in a population of over 200 million people.

That left a hell of a lot of people living above the poverty line, and they did very well for themselves in a capitalist society built on the credit system. You flashed your credit card and you got what you wanted.

They never suffered after World War II like the people of Wales and the Glasgow slums. They never knew what it was like to have the bombs drop on their heads during wartime, or see their city go up in flames from the firebombing, as did the Londoners.

They never had to see their child shipped off to strangers in the countryside, to keep them from being killed in the cities. No, the Americans worked double time in the munitions factories and made a lot of money.

After World War II, the American Ford worker doing the same work as the British Ford worker made double the salary of his British fellow worker while the cost of his food in the United States was less than in Britain.

This is now coming to an end. The American honeymoon with the capitalist system (the best of all possible systems) is turning sour, as the American Dream of an unlimited future of plenty is being shattered.

The American Ford workers, the General Motors workers, the Chrysler workers are now without work to the tune of a quarter of a million workers, a total of 25 percent of the entire auto workforce. Plant closures are spreading like an epidemic.

Industry after industry joins the trend in the guise of liquidating "unprofitable" establishments. The unemployment of tens of thousands in those plants coincides with hundreds of thousands on layoff due to the advancing recession.

It is becoming more and

by
Betty Traun

more difficult to distinguish between those on permanent dismissal from those on "indefinite" lay off who are hopefully waiting for a call-back to work, which never comes.

The rubber industry is now in the shutdown march with Firestone closing six plants employing 7,000 workers. Uniroyal Tyres is closing two plants employing 3,300 workers. US Steel is liquidating plants with 13,000 workers.

Construction workers were also dealt a sharp blow as the government reported that construction of new homes tumbled by a staggering 22 percent in one month from February to March, the largest drop in one month in twenty years. Hundreds of thousands of construction workers are already out of work because of the depression in the industry.

The lesson is clear. Big business is driving ahead to make the working people suffer the cost of its crisis. In human terms, it is overwhelming.

Significantly, the current rash of closings chiefly affects those industries with high wage scales and strong unions. Basic steel is rated top in average wages. Auto workers' average wages are close to those of steel.

Among the hardest hit are the construction workers—the largest industry. These sectors of the working class, and those of related industries, traditionally have the strongest unions.

Their wages run at least double or triple those of garment, textile, light-assembly, service and other low-paid industries. Because of their strength they have long felt secure.

From contract to contract they were able to build up improvements on health, safety, vacations, job security, cost-of-living (COLAS) increases, senior rating overtime pay, pensions and other protection. This bred the illusion that they were no longer threatened by insecurity in their lives.

With the shutdowns, their

illusions blew up. Anger and bitterness is increasing rapidly. They will be cushioned for as much as a year with unemployment insurance cheques and SUB (supplementary unemployment benefits) in certain unions only.

Skilled craftsmen may be able to find a comparable job, but minority workers, if they find a job at all, will be forced to accept any work that comes their way at half or less of their former wages.

The club of threatened plant shut-downs, which the employers are wielding with vigour, is putting many unions on the defensive at a time when inflation is cutting sharply into wages.

The current experience demonstrates that the strong-

est unions, the base of organised labour, are far from secure. They have to fight hard to defend the gains they have made, even their very organisations, and the struggle must continue to organise the majority of the American workers who are still unorganised.

Each union seems to be just waiting for the axe to fall, concerned with little else than the closing details. It is reminiscent of the days a half century ago when a do nothing AFL leadership did not move a finger, even opposed unemployment insurance, as plants closed and millions were thrown out of work to starve for the duration of the Great Depression.

Tunisian regime attacks trade unions

The courageous efforts of the Tunisian working class have so far been thwarted in their attempts to defeat Habib Bourguiba, 'President for life' of Tunisia.

Bourguiba (now 76) has been leader of his Destour party since 1934. In the two decades that followed, Tunisia saw large-scale anti-French demonstrations. The imperialists imprisoned many party members including Bourguiba.

Independence was won in 1956, at which time Bourguiba was a hero, and hailed as 'The father of the nation.' After years of poverty and misery Tunisians looked to him to provide jobs and prosperity.

Bourguiba proclaimed himself in favour of 'Tunisian socialism' and schools and colleges were built. Contraceptives and advice on family planning were made available.

Women who had previously kept their faces covered in

veils and had their husbands chosen for them, were now able to vote and have abortions. They were recruited into the civil service and other jobs traditionally held by men.

The refusal to break with the capitalist system however, meant that the poor living conditions of the working class changed very little in the twenty-five years since independence. Now many Tunisian people have had enough of widespread unemployment, rising living costs, and low wages.

The working class has moved into taking action through the 1 million strong general union of Tunisian workers (UGTT). Most sections of the Tunisian working class were involved in industrial and strike action in the mid-seventies including construction, textile, petrochemical, steel, transport, hotel, water, railway and electricity workers. Schools were forced to temporarily close because teachers had been on strike.

As a result the government launched a series of repressive measures against the UGTT including the threats of violence against trade union leaders, and attacks on union headquarters, in order to quell the militant actions of workers.

This did not stop the workers. In January 1978 a one-day general strike took place to protest against the oppressive Bourguiba regime and his reformist policies.

The government's response was to call a 'state of

LPYS LAUNCH CHILE CAMPAIGN

Following discussions with the Chilean Young Socialist Executive member from the Interior who attended the LPYS National Conference, the National Committee of the LPYS passed the following statement at its last meeting:

The National Committee in view of the request for direct aid which the LPYS has received from the Socialist Party and Young Socialists struggling inside Chile, resolves to begin a campaign to meet this request, in line with our unanimous Conference decision.

In our opinion, the Chile Solidarity Campaign has done valuable work in exposing the military regime and in securing safe passage for Chilean exiles. However, it has not concentrated on the now urgent task of giving direct aid to those organisations fighting to rebuild the working class movement in Chile itself.

Therefore, while continuing to participate in CSC's

activities, the LPYS will take steps to provide concrete political and material aid to our fraternal socialist organisations working inside Chile.

To begin this campaign this NC resolves:

(A) To launch a "Chile Socialist Defence Campaign" and empowers the officers to take steps to initiate it.

(B) As a first step, to include regular material in "Socialist Youth" on the situation in Chile today, to publish translations of political statements issued by the Socialist Party and Young Socialists in Chile and to begin a campaign to demand information on the whereabouts of the "missing persons" and to send material aid (including clothing) to the families of those suffering repression.

(C) To maintain contact with the Socialist Party and Young Socialists working inside Chile and send them material aid.

(D) To organise regular public activities on this issue and work towards a large LPYS contingent participating in the September 21 CSC demonstration.

Workers candidate chosen in Indian State Elections

Ram Shiromani, secretary of the United Workers' Committee of the Swadeshi Cotton Mill, Kanpur [interviewed in 'Militant' 7 March 1980] has been nominated as candidate for the Uttar Pradesh state assembly elections scheduled for 28 May, by the unanimous voice of the workers at the mill.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party of India, which is a participant in the Left Front, decided to sponsor his candidature and other left groups are supporting and campaigning for him. He has been allotted the symbol spade and stoker.

The workers of the mill are enthusiastically donating to his election fund, and have formed their own campaign committees consisting of militants of all views. The candidate is being enthusiastically welcomed in the workers' localities, and by peasants in the adjoining villages

of the constituency—Govindranagar [Kanpur].

He is being opposed by a CPI candidate Shishupal, who opposed the formation of the Workers' United Committee in Swadeshi Cotton Mill, and considers such democratic unity at the level of workers and activists to be "an anti-union move."

The CPI candidate is supported by the CP[M] which expelled Ram Shiromani for refusing to dissociate himself from the Workers' United Committee when it was formed in 1978. The workers, however, are solidly behind their united committee and its leader Comrade Ram Shiromani.

No other candidate contesting the election here is even remotely associated with either the workers' or peasants' movement. They rely on middle class casteist and communal votes collected with the easy money flowing freely in elections.

emergency' and impose a dusk to dawn curfew. 130 strikers were shot. Leading trade union leaders and over 400 workers were beaten and imprisoned.

Since this time any attempt by trade unions to organise has been ruthlessly stopped by the government; at the same time expenditure in the armed forces and police has been increased.

In cities throughout Tunisia today the numbers of beggars and prostitutes are increasing. Masses of unemployed Tunisians can be seen sitting outside the iron gates

of the docks in Tunis waiting and hopeful for work.

The working class will soon have to take action again, but this time carrying with them the lessons of their experiences. If they have a clear Marxist programme and Marxist leadership the workers would not only be able to topple a tyrant but begin to transform Tunisia into a country where poverty, oppression and inequality were ended.

By P.R. Harris



**VIEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO:
MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN**

WORKERS TURN TO LABOUR

Dear Comrades

I have just recently done my stint as Election Agent for our Labour candidate in the Baillieston—Garrowhill Ward, Glasgow. This is the first time I have acted in this capacity and I should like to give an insight into our campaign.

The task was made fairly easy for a novice like me by the good hard-working branch behind me and a good candidate who worked ceaselessly throughout the campaign.

We were rewarded: we removed a Tory councillor who had represented the area for 15 years and turned a Tory majority of nearly 400 into a Labour majority of 569.

Throughout the campaign we canvassed streets in each area of the ward and held several street corner meetings. A public meeting, held prior to the election, attracted 45 people, which is remarkable for a district council election meeting.

Feelings were certainly running high over the recent rent and rates increases. A recent protest meeting organised by the Community Council attracted hundreds.

For me, one of the highlights of the campaign was the depth of loyalty and goodwill that still exists towards the Labour Party, despite all the past letdowns. This was especially strong among some of the older people. A bonus was the number of new members who joined and the good spirit created among branch members.

The Baillieston area was one of the cradles of socialism in Scotland and that tradition is very much alive. We are the present custodians of that tradition and our pledge must be to continue pursuing the kind of policies that will see Labour looking after the interests of our class as well as Thatcher looks after the interests of her class.

We have a councillor who will endeavour to do just that.

Fraternally
Jimmy Freil
Baillieston Labour Party

UNITED WE STAND?

Dear Comrades

The civil service is coming under strong attack from Maggie's axe. Over the next few years tens of thousands of our jobs will go.

That's why I would like to see all the civil service unions merge into one, very strong, very powerful union. I think this is imperative: to refer to the old adage "United we stand, divided we fall."

A united civil service union could blunt Maggie's axe. CPSA, SCPS, CSU, IRSF, AGSRO and IPCS should all unite and fight as one.

Yours fraternally
Andrew Williamson
North Fylde LPYS, CPSA

A MODERATE'S NEW FRIEND

Dear Comrades

While 'Militant's' sales have risen rapidly in the Thanet area over the last couple of years, sales of the local monthly journal 'East Kent Critic' have dropped dramatically.

This is due to the fact that 'Militant' puts forward a Marxist solution to workers' problems. The EKC aims at 'moderate' Labour supporters, spending its time blaming the unions for betraying the Labour Party, by for example not backing the 5% pay policy.

The EKC is owned by Derrick Molock, a Labour

councillor, well know for his attacks on 'extremists' in the Labour Party. He has just got a new partner for his 'radical' Labour papers.

His name—Jonathan Aitken Tory MP (nephew of Lord Beaverbrook). On announcing the move the new partner said of Cllr Molock "I share interests and values which transcend political boundaries with him."

Mr Aitken and Mr Molock are now partners. I wonder whether this is the beginning of Thanet's centre party (c/o Tory headquarters)?

PS The first edition did not appear due to the national printing dispute.

Yours
Brian Lewis
Thanet

121 YEARS ON

Dear Comrades

The great English liberal philosopher, John Stuart Mill, wrote in 1859: "The time, it is to be hoped, is gone by when any defence would be necessary of the 'liberty of the press' as one of the securities against corrupt or tyrannical government."

Unfortunately, 121 years later, yet another attempt to gag investigative journalism is taking place, with the result of the court case against Granada TV. The traditional right of journalists to protect their sources is threatened by the jud-

iciary.

Apparently Granada are guilty of "irresponsibility"! I suppose that in the eyes of the ruling class they were irresponsible.

After all they "irresponsibly" revealed the gross mismanagement and bungling of the BSC bosses and the lies of Keith Joseph and the Tories [who were behind the derisory 2% pay offer] at a time when the Tories and Villiers were attempting to blame the steelworkers for all the problems of the steel industry.

If that means that Granada are guilty of irresponsibility, then we need more of it, not less.

Yours fraternally
Steve Davies
Cardiff N LPYS

WORKERS KNOW BEST— OFFICIAL

Dear Comrades

While listening to the radio the other day I heard an item which led me to think for a moment that capitalists aren't so much devious as downright stupid.

Apparently GEC had conducted a live experiment in order to find the most productive method of management. The first method was 'hierarchical', in other words the usual way of running industry, whereby the bosses made all the decisions without consulting the workers.

The second 'co-operative' method meant that the bosses consulted the workers but nevertheless were the sole decision-makers. The third method was given the title 'anarchical' and was run entirely by the workers, who organised production and planning and could consult the 'experts' if they had any problems.

And surprise, surprise, the results showed that the so-called anarchical method was 20% more productive than the 'hierarchical' system, even

though there were only half the number of workers involved.

We all know that this isn't anarchy—it's workers' control! I'm not sure if the workers of GEC were told the results of the experiment in case it put ideas into their heads, but there's one thing I am certain of—GEC needn't have bothered spending the hundreds of thousands of pounds they did on this experiment.

If they read the pages of 'Militant', they would know planning production, and it would only have cost them 15p!

Fraternally
Fiona Winders
Wanstead and
Woodford LPYS

A SAD LOSS

Dear Comrades

Readers of 'Militant' 502 will know of the death of Roy Clarke, a long-standing supporter of the paper. His friends and comrades in the area are deeply saddened by his loss.

We felt that the best tribute we could pay to an outstanding class fighter was to make a collection for the paper he did so much to build. Donations and IOUs have been received from LP members from Southampton, Portsmouth, Dorset, the Isle of Wight and elsewhere. So far these amount to over £200.

Among papers which his mother has given us, we found the following poem which we think Roy wrote just before going into hospital in April:



Our Iron Maiden which art in Downing Street,
Thatcher be thy name,
Thy paymasters' will be done,
In court as it is in the boardroom,
Give us this day our daily cuts
And forbid us our unions
So we can't use them against you
And lead us into World War Three
And deliver us from the Welfare State
For thine aim is the survival of capitalism,
The perks and the profits
—Till we've built the daily 'Militant'.

WORKERS ON THE BOARD

Dear Comrades

One of the main weaknesses in the steel unions over the years has been the widespread incorporation of lay officials into the management's way of thinking on 'viability', productivity and so on. This has been achieved through works' councils and many other forms of management/union consultation.

Re-establishment of 'worker directors' at works level and more recently on the BSC board was the next stage in this process of joint consultation and participation which has very seriously sapped the strength and independence of the steel trade unions.

Management use worker

directors to sell 'painful' decisions to the general workforce. Workers' participation has nothing whatsoever to do with workers' control.

One of the good things that came out of the national steel strike is that works' councils have been destroyed in most areas.

We should also demand a complete withdrawal from the worker director system. We have six 'workers' on the BSC board—we should have none.

For Lynn Walsh, in his article in 'Militant' 502, to argue that union representation on the BSC board should be increased, shows that the bosses' con-trick of pretending that workers' participation is workers' control has regrettably been swallowed by some who should know better.

Yours fraternally
Joe Herbertson
Editor, 'Real Steel News'

DEATH PENALTY FOR THE SICK

Dear Comrades

I would like to solicit support on a subject on which most of us can agree, relating to kidney patients.

More than 1,000 kidney patients died from kidney failure in 1979-80 because the present government would not allocate money to staff idle kidney machines.

In the near future will doctors be ordered to switch off life-support machines of polio victims to save money? I understood we had abolished the death penalty, but apparently not if you are a kidney patient.

Which is more important, saving lives or cutting taxes? I am becoming ashamed of some of my fellow-countrymen for allowing this odious and distasteful attitude of condemning our fellow citizens to death because they unfortunately have kidney disease.

We are always ready to condemn other countries regarding human rights, but we at home are condoning the right of a government to literally murder helpless

people.

Dr Anthony Wing, one of the leading experts on kidney disease, states he and his colleagues are fed up with telling lies to patients: that they would not benefit from a kidney machine when in truth their lives could be saved.

In the West Midlands area, in places like Birmingham and many areas around Britain, machines are standing idle because there are not enough trained staff to operate them. These machines must be used; the cost is irrelevant.

I suggest that we write to MPs or any other organisation to force a debate on the subject in the House of Commons.

Yours faithfully
J A Lester
Blackpool

A NEW COMPETITION

Dear Comrades

I was watching TV and I happened to see Miss Great Britain 1980.

As time passed I became more and more annoyed; it wasn't the sight of those girls prancing round a swimming pool but the stupid hobbies and ambitions shared by the majority of the girls.

Flying hot air balloons, horse riding and parachute jumping were just a few mentioned. The financial award for winning this contest? Only a £5,000 cheque and £5,000 in contracts!

I'd like to see a different type of competition—one for the working woman who can bring up a family under the present Tory government. The winner would be the woman who manages to clothe and feed her family while prices are rising at the astronomical rate of about 20% a year.

You can be assured that her winnings would not be spent on beauty salons or fashionable clothes but to help her family survive in the present economic wilderness.

Yours fraternally
Lesley Hughes
NUPE Handsworth LPYS

Yours fraternally
Jill Hayes
Southampton CLP

Build **Militant**

Area	Received	Percentage of half-year's target achieved	Target half-year	Target for year
Eastern	1368		2,250	5,000
East Midlands	1223		1,710	3,800
Hants & IOW	1200		1,755	3,900
Humberside	443		1,125	2,500
London East	1996		2,790	6,200
London West	1505		2,115	4,700
London South	2251		1,800	4,000
Manchester & Lancs	903		2,295	5,100
Merseyside	1737		2,700	6,000
Northern	1732		3,285	7,300
Scotland East	744		1,440	3,200
Scotland West	1345		2,250	5,000
Southern	1720		2,655	5,900
South West	840		1,440	3,200
Wales East	411		1,260	2,800
Wales West	599		1,395	3,100
West Midlands	2632		4,050	9,000
Yorkshire	1431		3,285	7,300
Others	5670		5,400	12,000
Total received	29651		45,000	100,000

TARGET FOR JULY 12th £45,000 TARGET FOR YEAR-£100,000

WE NEED THE RESOURCES

THIS WEEK £2,480

Inflation now runs officially at a rate of 21.8% annually. The Tories have once more postponed the date of the 'final solution' of the inflation problem.

They now hinge their hopes on directly reducing the wages of public sector workers, including the nationalised industries. This is to be achieved through cash limits, cutting the rate support grant, and placing new restrictions on the financing of nationalised industries.

The aim would be to keep public sector wage rises at least 5% below the rate of inflation.

Of course, attacking the public sector is nothing new, but it reveals the lie of the Tories' repeated denials of their intention to introduce a wages policy. The Tories' intention is quite clear, cut public sector wages to boost private sector profits.

Whether the Tories have been influenced by the swing to the right of the largest civil service union is not clear, but certainly the members of that union, CPSA, are not about to give up the struggle for decent wages and conditions. This was indicated by the magnificent £1,502.19 (after expenses, and IOUs still to come) raised at the 'Militant' readers' meeting at the CPSA conference. The right may control the National Committee of that union, but the support for socialism is growing amongst the members. Thanks also to the delegates at the TSSA conference who donated £38.20.

We have received £128.80 from supporters in the Hampshire area, in tribute to Comrade Roy Clarke, who died recently from kidney disease. We thank all those who have sent money in, to continue the fight for the ideas that Roy believed in. Following the May 14th

By Derrick McClelland

Day of Action, we have received a day's pay from a number of supporters who were paid whether or not they went into work, including Linda Reid, £12. If you were paid for May 14th, or for any reason could not come out on strike that day, why not donate the money to us? A further £22.50 has come in from a May Day readers' meeting in Hull.

Some of the many individual contributions this week include: Dave Beckham, Portsmouth, £5; Jack Dromey Secretary SE Region TUC, £1; Wayne Coombes, Bristol SE LPYS, £16.80; B Sztuka, Wigan, £2.

F Perkins, Nottingham North LP; T O'Sullivan, GMWU convenor PB Cow, gave £1; Andy Blake, Loughborough, £3; Tina Correll, Leicester, £5; R Pocock, Handsworth CLP, £2; J Kreft, Handsworth LPYS, £1; Jim Newlands, Stirling, £4; Knowsley NALGO supporters £12.82; and Len McClusky, ACTTS (Docks) Liverpool, £1.

Eddie Bannon, GMWU Liverpool, donated £1; Rod and Maggy, Selly Oak LP, £7; Julie MacGregor, Kilmarnock LPYS, £15; M Howe, Basildon FBU; Jeff Stockham, AUEW Cardiff, £1; Pete Bennet, Cardiff SE LP, £5; and St Pancras North LPYS members £6.50.

Finally, thanks to the supporters in Swindon who have sent us £100 this week. No details were given, but clearly someone wants to make sure that they continue to get the information and

analysis that only 'Militant' can provide.

We've got the ideas, we just need the resources to put them over with. And that's up to you!

Day of 'Militant' action

The Tories' vain delusion that the Day of Action was a 'flop' has been shown to be a lie. Not only by the magnificent turn out by activists up and down the country but by the sheer volume of copies of 'Militant' that were sold.

Several areas, including the North East and Brighton sold out. Glasgow sold 400. The Hackney/Tower Hamlets demonstration saw over 250 copies sold, similar numbers being reported in Birmingham, Bristol and Liverpool.

150 were sold in Stoke, and 100 in Plymouth. Supporters in Edinburgh sold out of papers, remarking that they could have sold three times as many. The sales of 'Militant' continue to grow and this is reflected in the growth of support of our ideas, a good example of this is that 62 papers were sold at Labour Party Women's conference and over 260 at the CPSA conference in Southport.

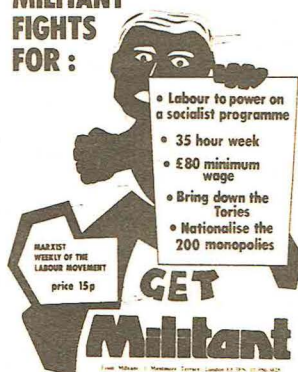
Lets have more 'flops' like May the 14th. Make every day a day of action by selling the 'Militant'.



Make 'Militant' your antidote to Tory press poison

By Dave Farrar

MILITANT FIGHTS FOR:



Militant Readers' Meetings

COME TO THE MILITANT Northern Camp! Whit Weekend Friday May 23 to Monday May 26th, there will be a camp in the Lake District, 2 miles from Keswick at Causeway Foot Farm (A591 to Thirlmere).

Cost £8. Children 6-15 £2.50. Under 6 free. Includes light breakfast, lunch and entry to discussions. All are welcome. Creche and outings available. Programme. 1. Life of Trotsky. 2. The general strike 1926. 3. Reformism. 4. Historical materialism. 5. Southern Africa. Ring Malcolm Lindsay 051-922 2318.

Classified

OXFORD 'MILITANT' TOTE

Draw results—£10 winners
Week 21—M Adkins (117) c/o Oxford LPYS. Week 22—C Ousley (125) Webbs Close, Oxford. Week 23—M Zamorski (155) Warwick Rd, Oxford. Week 24—R Foulkes (128) Abingdon. Week 25—D Lewis (189) c/o St Edmund Hall. Week 26—I Walker (131) 11 Parker St, Oxford.

ads

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

AT LAST! The Plunder Woman Badge. 20p each plus 12p postage or £10.00 per 100 plus £2.00 postage.
Plus many more new designs, and of course our made to order service for badges and tee-shirts SAE for lists and details:— Dept. M, Maprographics, 32 Worpole Road Mews, London SW19.

'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.

May-Day baby Malcolm and Linda Hyde are pleased to announce the birth of Stacey Denise on May Day. Another class fighter!

MILITANT MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL June 27th-29th

COURSES ON:

- Introduction to Marxism** Speakers: John Pickard and Brian Beckingham.
- Marxism and the Trade Unions** Speakers: Brian Ingham and Bob Faulkes.
- The Life of Trotsky** Speaker: Ted Grant.
- China: History and Perspectives** Speakers: Peter Taaffe and Lynn Walsh.
- Marxist Economics** Speakers: Brian Beckingham and Rob Jones.
- PLUS:**
- Debate: The Lessons of Chile 1970-73.** Speakers: Lynn Walsh (Militant) Mike Gatehouse (Communist Party).
- FILM: The Battle for Chile**

At: Goldsmith's College Students Union, Lewisham Way, London SE14.
Cost: £3.00 whole weekend, £1.50 Saturday or Sunday only, £1.00 Friday evening only. Half price School Students and Unemployed. (Cheques payable to 'Militant').
BOOK NOW! Send bookings to, or for further information: Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Summer T-shirts. Colours—white, yellow, sky blue, dark green, navy and black. All with red motif. Styles—round neck, and short sleeves or cap sleeves (state which one you prefer) sizes—children's 24, 26, 28 and 30 inch chest. £2.50 each.

Adults'—Small—32-34. Medium—34-36. Large—38-40. Extra Large—42-44. £3 each.
Both costs include postage and packing.
Please indicate, colour, style, and size preferred. ALL PROCEEDS TO THE FIGHTING FUND.
Cheques and postal orders made out to R. Harris. Send orders with payment to: R. Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 1UR.

LONDON TRADE UNIONISTS' DAY SCHOOL
Saturday 7 June 10.00am—6.00pm.
John Cass School, Stepney Way E1 [Aldgate tubes]
The Tory 'Employment' Bill and the Tory attack on trade union rights'

Main sessions on 'The Employment Bill and Tory Economic Strategy' and 'Militant trade unionism and Marxism.' Seminars on 'Workers' Control', 'Democratising the Labour Party and the Trade Unions', 'What Kind of Nationalisation?', 'Effective Picketing', 'The History of Trade Union Legislation', 'The Tory Attack on Working Women's Rights', 'The Fight Against Redundancies', 'The Role of the Police in Industry', 'The Fight Against the IR Act 1970-74', 'Lessons of May 14', 'The General Strike of 1926.'
If you are interested in the MILITANT London Trade Unionists' Day-School and wish to receive further information and leaflets for distribution to fellow stewards, members etc, please contact: Peter Jarvis, June 7 Day-School, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

CPSA CONFERENCE-

The Civil and Public Services Association, Britain's biggest civil service union, now has an executive committee on which the extreme right-wing so-called 'moderate' group have a crushing 25-3 majority. This replaces a 21-7 majority for the left.

The election marks a major set-back for CPSA, when the union is facing its gravest threat.

The Tory government intends to dispose of 70,000 more civil service jobs. A fighting leadership is vital to defeat the challenge posed by the Thatcher government.

The right wing were able to gain their majority following a decision at the 1979 conference to end the traditional voting procedures under which votes for the NEC were cast by branch delegates at conference after discussion at branch mandating meetings.

The new voting procedures based on individual balloting was sponsored by an assortment of left groups in the CPSA, including the Communist Party. But it gained majority support at the 1979 conference only because of the support thrown behind it by the union's right wing and union officials.

'Militant' supporters stood out as the only identifiable group within the union to favour retention of the old system. But no 'Militant' supporter was allowed to speak in last year's debate. No opposition was heard at all.

'Militant', however warned of the danger inherent in separating discussion on union policy from discussion on the candidates to carry out the policy. We argued for the collective unity of the branch which is now broken by each individual casting his/her own individual vote in branch or workplace meetings.

The millionaire press conducted a vitriolic campaign of

abuse against the left during the election, exactly as we predicted.

Attempts to extend the new system of voting to officer positions in union sections were, however, defeated this year. That vote would almost certainly have been much higher if—before delegates had been mandated—the results of the NEC elections had been known.

All TUC delegates—elected under the long-standing system—were on the left. This is a clear indication that under the old system the left would have retained a decisive majority in this key moment of CPSA history.

Instead, by means of what Bernard Levin ('The Times') described as "tactical blunders on the part of the Broad Left," power has been handed on a plate to the right wing.

Despite the set-back conference, however, took steps to prepare to defend CPSA members in passing a whole series of crucial motions.

Pay Research is the system of bargaining under which the pay of civil servants is compared with low paid clerks in private industry. This system has been repeatedly trampled over or unilaterally tampered with by governments.

By Kevin
Roddy

(DHSS Section
Executive, CPSA)

LEFT WING POLICIES



CPSA conference in 1979. This year's elections are a set-back for civil servants in their fight for jobs

RIGHT WING LEADERSHIP

Now the union has decided to have a special conference to examine the whole question of pay, including possible alternatives to pay research.

The conference also decisively turned its back on diversionary pay demands, preferring instead to concentrate the full power of the union behind the struggle for a decent wage for all members. Demands for large town allowances were turned down by the conference, so too were demands for special payments for sectional interests, eg. departmental allowances.

Common struggle for one and all was the keynote of the pay debates. With British capitalism in decline and a reactionary Tory government Conference recognised that no other alternative was possible.

The conference also took steps towards greater CPSA democracy by voting in favour of the election of full time officers and instructing the executive to prepare a report spelling out how a system of electing the full time officials

could operate. This report will be put to CPSA conference next year. Also a new campaigning union journal is to be launched.

Union members can now call a special conference if one quarter of branches demand one. The conference can now be held four weeks after calling it as opposed to a ridiculous 14 weeks under the old rule.

Supporters of 'Militant' played a key role in all these debates. And, having fought against CPSA withdrawal from the women's TUC a few years ago, 'Militant' supporters were pleased to see that decision reversed.

Another important decision at Conference was the full support given to a campaign to defend Phil Cordell, an activist from Dept of Employment in Brixton who has been sacked for union activities. Even the new right-wing executive promised support on this issue.

Union members will want to see that promise honoured. They will want clear, bold

leadership on this and all other questions. If the right wing hangs back and fails to support CPSA members, or if it indulges (as in the past) in witch-hunts against left-wingers, then even under the new voting arrangements their stay in office will be short-lived.

In debates on the wider issues of the day, a number of advances were secured. A motion was passed calling for support for the Labour and Trade Union Group and groups opposing sectarianism in Northern Ireland.

Outright opposition to the Tories' attempts to shackle the unions through new legislation was expressed in a motion passed without visible dissent. Conference gave a firm no to government money for ballots.

Labour Party affiliation was defeated, but it was evident that support for affiliation has increased substantially since it was first discussed two years ago.

The left wing must redouble their efforts in the

next year, attempting to take their ideas and policies to the broadest possible layers of the union in order to work for a left NEC at the earliest possible date. The active layers are now solidly on the left. They must convince the members at large of their programme and policy in the next year.

The new voting system has handed power to the right-wing—so-called 'moderates'. They will do their best to frustrate the policies of this Conference. They must not be allowed to get away with this. The contradiction of a right-wing leadership and left-wing policies must be overcome by the left gaining control at every level of the union in the years ahead.

This conference also showed the growing support for 'Militant' among the left. A 'Militant' public meeting attracted up to 200 delegates and visitors who contributed the magnificent sum of £1,370 to the 'Militant' fighting fund.

NATFHE- Our fight is a political fight

The Tories' first year in office has been a continuous onslaught on our education services. This is the stark challenge facing the annual conference of the National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education.

As the NEC report points out, the cuts already imposed on the Manpower Services Commission have had a serious effect on further education courses and the cuts the MSC will make in 1980 will have a more drastic effect in the academic year 1980-1. The swingeing increases in overseas students' fees will have a similar effect in jeopardising a number of valuable courses.

In the field of higher education, the government

limit on the financial pool for advanced courses will, as the NEC report rightly points out, have "disastrous consequences for public sector higher education."

On the pay front, contrary to the exaggerated claims of the Tory press, most teachers in further and higher education gained very little from the Clegg settlement. In fact NATFHE members will have to wait until September 1981 before they have had a year's salary as agreed by Clegg. This is from an agreement on our 1979 salaries!

Clegg has failed to restore the salaries as outlined by the Houghton settlement in 1975, except for a small number of

badly-paid teachers, and has enormously increased pay differentials.

Last week the final insult came when Clegg reported that he had 'miscalculated by 4 per cent'. It is doubtful whether management will try to claw this back; almost certainly they will try to take it from the 1980-1 claim.

Conference should draw up a balance sheet from this particular experience and the union must resolve never again to be caught in the trap of comparability deals.

All this reinforces the urgency of the pay settlement of 1980-1. With the present high rates of inflation, the NEC has estimated that any settlement below 20% will represent a devaluation of Clegg before the members have received it.

The support for a half-day strike in the recent branch ballot on further sanctions should negotiations break

down, is a positive indication of the discontent on pay. Members now expect action to secure a 20% settlement.

As the struggle against Thatcher's policies become more intense, NATFHE members have been forced to recognise the need for political action. As the ATTI, NATFHE was the first teachers' union to affiliate to the TUC. It should now set the lead amongst teachers by affiliating to the Labour Party.

The Socialist Education Association will be holding a fringe meeting as the start of a campaign for NATFHE affiliation, a campaign which should be fully supported by the membership as a whole. Only by posing the socialist alternative to the free market madness of Thatcher and Joseph, can we secure a decent education system for our members and the youth of Britain.

Klein's - 'We want a union'



NATGW members in action

It is now 12 weeks since workers set up a picket line outside Klein Brother's clothing manufacturers in Salford, for recognition of the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers. The 12 weeks' of bitterness erupted last week in scuffles between pickets and scabs.

The full effect of solidarity action by USDAW and other trade union members is now being felt. Last week at management's request, talks were held between union officials, management and ACAS in an effort to resolve the dispute.

This is a step forward for the pickets, who have seen the management climb down

from their 'no compromise' position. Pickets are adamant that they will not go back without union recognition now.

Confidence amongst pickets is running high, especially after last week's magnificent show of solidarity on May 14th, when over 1,000 trade unionists marched from Klein's to a mass meeting in Manchester. The sacked Klein workers headed the procession with a banner bearing the message 'We want a Union'.

Help on the picket line is still urgently needed: donations and inquiries c/o NUT G&W, 409 Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester.

NUPE - FOR A FIGHTING UNION - FOR SOCIALIST POLICIES

Low pay is still the main issue to be debated at NUPE conference.

Despite our industrial action and the Clegg award, with prices rising at 20% and rent and rates going sky high, we cannot live on our pay. Our experience of pay 'comparability' should serve as a warning to other workers—some of our lowest paid members are now being forced to repay the 'on account' payments made before the settlement!

The bitter lessons of this and of our fight for a decent wage are reflected in the 29 resolutions and amendments submitted to this year's conference.

The Tories are determined to cut public spending and restrict our wages, although we can barely keep our heads above water as it is. The campaign for a national minimum wage—a reasonable living wage—is a burning necessity. Some branches also point out that a minimum wage must be linked to the cost of living, to protect living standards against inflation.

Unless we can fight an effective campaign against cuts in public spending, however, we won't have any jobs at all. The Tories are hell-bent on destroying the public services and the welfare state itself. Our members will pay the price both in jobs and in the destruction of the health, education and social services that we, along with other working class families, rely on.

Composite resolution 6 calls on the Executive Council to launch a national campaign against the cuts, linking up with workers in the private sector and putting Labour councillors under

By Alistair Tice
(Delegate,
Hull Hospitals
Central branch)

pressure not to implement Tory cuts. It also calls for a one-day general strike to be organised by the TUC.

The May 14th Day of Action was a tremendous demonstration of workers' anger. But how much effective it could have been, with a clear lead from the TUC leaders.

What is needed is not simply another demonstration, but a clear strike call to the entire 12-million strong trade union movement—the Tories and their media friends would find it very hard to distort that! For as the composite concludes, "the only way the cuts can be successfully fought and restored is by defeating the Tory government and by the election of a Labour government committed to real bold socialist policies."

The Tories have recognised that their onslaught on living standards and jobs can only succeed if the major obstacle—the trade union movement—is swept aside. Resolution 56 from Camden General calls on the Executive Council to vigorously campaign against the Tory legal shackles on the trade unions and to "refuse to abide by these restrictions on our activity."

Mass opposition by trade unionists made Ted Heath's Industrial Relations Act a meaningless piece of paper, and we can do the same with

the Employment Bill.

The Health Service management obviously feel emboldened by the election of a Tory government, and with the DHSS's reactionary 'industrial relations' guidelines to back them up, they have used scandalous heavy-arm tactics in closing hospitals and victimising union activists. These attacks must be fought, with the Executive taking the lead and defending any victimised member.

With growing economic problems forcing members to fight in defence of jobs, wages and trade union rights, we need the biggest, most powerful union organisation possible. Our daily experience shows that we need to build and strengthen an effective stewards' organisation, particularly in the areas facing immediate attack, such as school meals.

Tower Hamlets General, in their rule amendment, have also proposed that conference should in future last four days. We have an annual conference as well as special sectional conferences, but it is still impossible to fit in all the necessary debates. The amendment should be supported to give us an opportunity to discuss thoroughly the crucial issues and the tactics and strategy the union should adopt.

In the 'political affairs' section of the agenda, resolutions call for increased union involvement in Labour Parties at local level. Conference must also reaffirm its support for the decisions made at last year's Labour Party conference to increase democratic control. The union must back up these decisions at the special recall conference on 31st May and in submissions to the Commission of Enquiry.



NUPE members on the TUC's anti-Tory demonstration in London, 9 March—new layers of activists have pushed the union to the fore in fighting cuts.
Photo: MILITANT

The call for democratic control over full-time representatives is also raised, under rules revision, in relation to our own union, with many branches calling for the election of all full-time officials. This should be supported as a further step in democratising the union—members should be given the right to elect and control our officers, as we do our Executive Committee and our shop stewards.

Our members recognise the enormous contribution many full-time officials and national officers have made to the growth and development of the union: no union official

who does their job properly has anything to fear from regular election.

The proposal to rule 18 calls for workplace meetings to decide on wage offers. This is the way to strengthen democratic decision-making. The amendment calling for secret postal ballots, on the other hand, must be rejected: it would force members to take decisions in isolation from the debate and discussion at work, leaving them

vulnerable to all the propaganda of the Tory press.

The dispute of 1979 has thrown up many new activists and stewards. The conference agenda reflects these changes, and contains the seeds for a more democratic union and a fighting socialist policy.

NUPE has a militant tradition. We must build on that to lead the way in the fight to remove this Tory government.

SWALES - LIVERPOOL

In the recent national dispute, the National Graphical Association secured a shorter working week and an £80 minimum wage.

Ex-president of the Newspaper Society, Swales, has decided on reprisals against NGA members producing the 'Liverpool Weekly News' by declaring his intention to close printing operations and just use the facilities for publishing.

This would have meant the loss of 120 printing jobs—80 of them NGA. Liverpool NGA branch decided that this was totally unacceptable.

In order to underline the determination to save jobs, we decided to take possession of the plant. Thus on Friday 16 May NGA members, well organised and disciplined, entered the plant,



Tony Mulhearn, spokesman for NGA members occupying Swales.

surprising the management present on the premises.

They took possession of the plant and declared the intention of not returning it until all the NGA members were reinstated.

Branch secretary Ray Williams, along with Rod

Photo: MILITANT
Elliot FOC, travelled down to union headquarters at Bedford the same morning to discuss the situation with national officials.

Swales' management declared in arrogant fashion that they would not enter into discussion while the plant was

occupied and that they intended to take out an injunction against the workers in occupation.

The official spokesman, Tony Mulhearn, has issued a statement on behalf of the workers in the plant, stating that they will remain in occupation until a successful conclusion is reached.

He also declared one thing certain—no scab paper would be printed at Swales, Merseyside.

We call for the full support of the Merseyside trade union movement.

By Jimmy Carter

(Liverpool NGA)

ADWEST-Strike gaining strength

As the strike for basic trade union rights moves into its third week at Adwest in Reading, support for the 38 sacked workers is growing all the time.

Despite increased propaganda and intimidation from management and the local gutter press, another 21 workers on the night shift have joined the strike.

Local AUEW and TGWU officials are now throwing their support behind the sacked workers and are organising a joint meeting between themselves with a view to negotiating with management for reinstatement of the workers.

The workforce inside are becoming increasingly sympathetic as they realise what conditions will be like without their trade unions. [One young lad has now been sacked "for not working hard enough"!] Management is becoming increasingly paranoid. Stickers calling for the reinstatement of the sacked workers are "mysteriously" appearing inside the factory.

Machinery is constantly breaking down for some "unknown reason" and the workers have accepted management's offer of extra overtime because of the dispute, but have told them

that all the overtime money they earn is going to sacked workers.

There is enormous sympathy from those still at work but no leadership left on the shopfloor. Last Thursday pickets collected £40 from workers entering the factory gates.

It is essential now the strike is made official so as to draw the rest of the workers out, particularly as management have now served a writ on members on the picket line to have them removed from outside the factory gates.

On May 14th a large delegation of Adwest pickets showed their solidarity with the Chix strikers by joining their picket line. Chix workers will be showing their working class solidarity by doing the same.

The local LPYS are playing an active role in supporting the workers on the picket line and in raising support and financial aid in the local labour movement.

Show your solidarity by sending messages of support and cash to Danny Broderick, Flat 4, 46 Berkeley Avenue, Reading.

By Steve Morgan
(UPW and
Reading South LPYS)

RIVINGTON - WIGAN

Workers at Rivington Reed Carpets, Wigan, are occupying their factory after the shock announcement by the parent group that 11 of their factories are to be closed.

The closure was announced on Friday May 16th when a private firm of receivers was sent in by the textile group, Rivington Reed, and shop

stewards were asked to pick 100 out of 179 workers to be made redundant.

This they refused to do and the receivers were shown the gates which were then locked behind them. The workers occupied the factory.

The managing directors of the factory had been negotiating with the group man-

agement to buy the factory and were about to complete the deal after six weeks of negotiations when the closure was announced out of the blue, 24 hours before the contracts were signed.

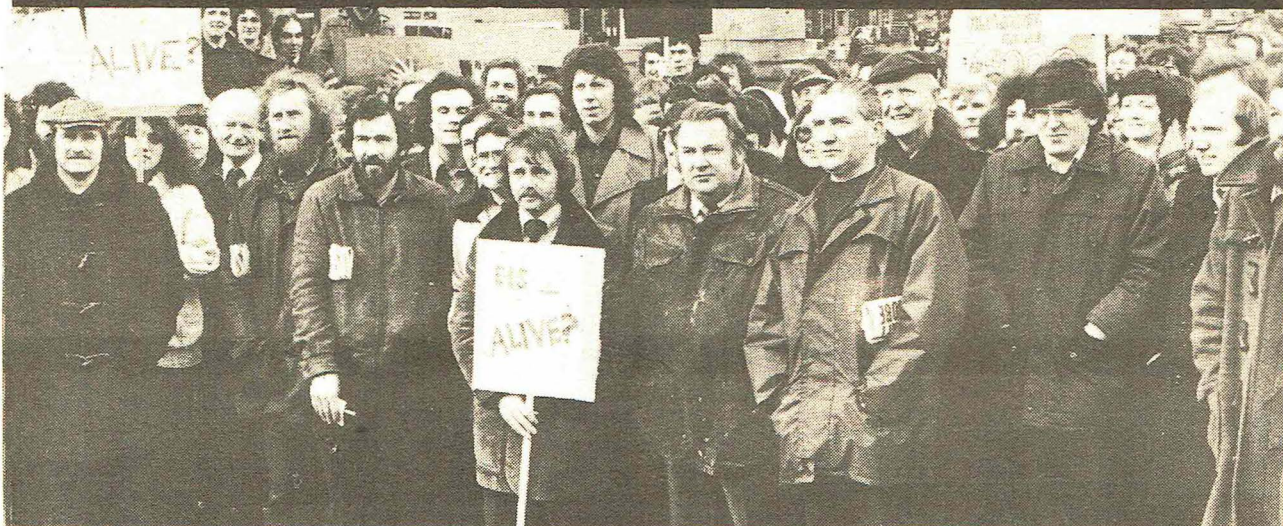
Last year the plant made around £330,000 profits and at the moment the order books are full, overtime being

worked even up to the closure announcement.

The workers intend to carry on working as normal, the only difference being that the products will not leave the factory until their jobs are saved.

Report by Mick Slater and Mick Egan
(Wigan LPYS)

SCOTTISH TEACHERS



Scottish teachers demonstrate for wage rise in January

Photo: D. Williams

GMWU - A Democratic Labour Party - The only alternative

Before congress even started last Sunday, the General & Municipal Workers' Union hit the headlines—over the Isle of Grain lagers' dispute and the general secretary's attack on the Tory press coverage of the TUC's Day of Action.

By the end of the second day of congress, resolutions had already been passed taking a radical stand on the issues of working hours, a £75 minimum wage, new technology and a campaign for equal pay, with the full agreement of the executive.

Action and an alternative policy to mass unemployment and rip-roaring inflation are urgently needed, however. Appeals from our leaders for import controls, a revival of the National Enterprise Board and a bigger share of oil and bank profits will do nothing to break the disastrous stranglehold of the Tories' big business backers over the economy.

The EC's Special Motion to be put to congress on Wednesday, offered no clear alternative to the Tories' policies. David Basnett declared that, in answer to the Tories' unwillingness to do anything to solve our problems, "no attempt will be made by us to restrain wage increases."

Clare Doyle
(G&MWU)

What about under a future Labour government? How will Labour's policies be drawn up and fought for?

The lengthy document outlining proposed evidence to the Labour Party enquiry was only given to delegates after they arrived at Congress, leaving little or no chance to study all its important implications. If accepted, these proposals would represent a rejection of the decisions of last year's Labour Party conference to extend Party democracy.

The debate on a policy for fighting the Tories, promises to be the stormiest of the congress.

The system of regional mandating of delegates prior to Congress, showed its undemocratic nature yet again. In spite of widespread sympathy for many crucial resolutions, the vote was a foregone conclusion, as regional delegations are already mandated to reject them.

Free votes in the regions must become the rule, rather than the exception, so that delegates can weigh up the merits of all sides of the argument.

THE FULL CLAIM - AND NO STRINGS

Over five thousand teachers demonstrated through the streets of Glasgow last week, as part of the one day national strike called by Scotland's largest teaching union, the EIS.

The solidarity on the streets was matched by virtually solid action throughout the schools. Most schools closed and all were affected in some way.

The official action, in support of this year's 20% pay claim, follows weeks of unofficial strikes by classroom teachers angry not only at the Clegg Commission's failure to recommend an award for Scottish teachers, but also the EIS leadership

for the way it has handled negotiations both over Clegg and this year's claim.

If the union leadership had been more directly accountable to the ordinary members an effective campaign of strike action could have been launched weeks ago, when it would have hit hardest.

The formation of Reps. committees, with the Reps. annually elected in their schools, would be a step forward in democratising the union. These committees, structured along the lines of shop steward bodies, would provide an avenue for the classroom teacher to play a more active role in directing the policy of the union.

Last week's strike has

shown many members the potential strength of the union. United action is essential if this year's claim is to be won. The leadership must be made aware that nothing less than the full claim, without strings, is acceptable.

The fight must also be taken up elsewhere. The chairman for the management side is a Labour councillor for Strathclyde. Labour was elected in Scotland to fight the cuts not to carry them out.

It is not the job of Labour councils to impose wage cuts on any section of public employees, and this point must be hammered home through the Labour Party.

By Larry Flanagan
(EIS)

PRICES

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

of working class youth. Things like washing machines, music centres, cars, and other consumer goods for which big business spends millions in advertising, are rapidly becoming luxury items for working-class families.

The Labour MP for Norwood, John Fraser, explained at a recent meeting how the average family [with two children] were losing £15 a week as a direct result of Tory cuts [see Table].

The Tories, to the applause of big business, will no doubt start resurrecting the old myth that wage rises cause inflation. Already, Howe is hinting at future Tory wage curbs.

The bosses will plead 'poverty' when faced by angry trade unionists desperately trying to keep their heads above water in the sea of rising prices. But the truth is, the multi-national giants are still raking in massive profits.

The giant bakers, Rank Hovis McDougall made pre-tax profits last year of £32½

£s lost per annum from the average family's income through Tory policies

	£s
Loss of Rate Support Grant	100
Rent/mortgage increases	100
Health cuts and increased prescription charges	33
Increased school meal charges	50
2½ % drop in 'production' [i.e. redundancies and lost job opportunities etc.]	500
Total	783

million! Tate & Lyle made £14½ million clear profit, a rise of £5m over 1978. Bass, the beer manufacturers, had a rise in pre-tax profits last year of nearly £10m, to a staggering £89m!

As the decline of British capitalism continues the bosses are forcing down the workers' wages, and any

gains won by the workers in hard fought battles are being clawed back by the bosses as they push up prices.

The Tories claim they are fighting inflation, but this is absolute hypocrisy—they have not introduced one policy to this effect. Rather, they are giving the bosses a


free rein.

The capitalist class talk of inflation as though it is some freak event, like a snow storm in July. In reality, it is an unmistakable symptom of capitalist crisis. It is not only ravaging Britain, the sick man of western capitalism, but also the capitalist monoliths such as the US and Germany, and Japan.

However, the policies of the last Labour government, of wage restraint and ineffective 'price control' are no solution—they end up as just a different way of attacking workers' living standards.

The only solution is the socialist planned economy, which can plan production and control prices. A national minimum wage of £80 must be introduced, linked to the cost of living. But this is only possible when the commanding heights of the economy are nationalised under workers' control and management.

Only then will industry, and the manufacturing and food industry in particular, be geared to the needs of society, and not to the profit motive of big business at the expense of workers' living standards.



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