

DESTROYED! 8,000 JOBS A DAY

Welsh workers demonstrate against Thatcher



Photo: MILITANT

Tories condemn one in two school leavers to dole

In just one month, unemployment figures have leapt by an unprecedented 237,000. 8,000 jobs are being lost every day.

With 1,896,634 officially on the dole, the highest since 1936, the Tory election promise of "good jobs and good prospects for the future" is a sordid mockery. There is one job vacancy for every fifteen people out of work.

Young workers are bearing the brunt. 295 thousand school leavers are jobless, an increase of 105 thousand in a month. Government ministers warn of half a million unemployed school leavers by next year; one in two!

While angry workers in Swansea protested at the disastrous effect of Tory policies, Mrs Thatcher, speaking to the Welsh Tory conference, blames working people.

Workers should show greater willingness to move to other areas for jobs, she said. But where, Mrs Thatcher?

Driven from towns like Consett, devastated by your government and your class, where can we go?

In the post-war boom years, the population of Coventry doubled as workers from the North East and South Wales came seeking well-paid engineering jobs. Today unemployment in the area is above the national average, and wages below it.

Of twenty firms in 'The Sunday Times' list of employers introducing redundancies, seven were

in the West Midlands. Corby too attracted thousands of workers from Scotland in the fifties. Where should they go now?

New towns proliferated. Now towns like Peterborough are reeling under massive redundancies. In South London boroughs, 27 school leavers are chasing every vacancy.

There are no areas to
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PAGE TWO

By Roger Shrivs

Swansea-Angry workers confront Thatcher

By Dave Warren
(Swansea LPYS)

The air was filled with the usual cries of "Tories Out" and "One more cut, Maggie's throat." "That would be useless," one woman remarked, "she's got no blood."

Last Saturday Swansea saw the biggest political demonstration ever in the city to give a warm 'welcome' from Welsh workers to the Welsh Tory Party conference—and in particular to Margaret Thatcher. Her visit was the

incentive for 10,000 people to march through the city centre or to line the city streets. They included workers from all over South Wales who arrived in their coach-loads all morning. The protest was or-

ganised by the Wales TUC and Labour Party. South Wales miners, with the threat of closures in their industry to the forefront of their minds, were particularly well represented.

As the mile-long march came through the city it was applauded by on-lookers. Many people, enthused by the size and the mood of the march,

joined in themselves.

The organisers had planned a rally some 200 yards away from the conference hall, but the main body of demonstrators preferred to stay near the entrance to "greet" Thatcher with their chants.

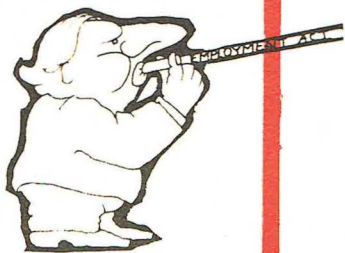
Their sentiments reflect the bitter mood evoked among wide sections of the working class by this

government's policies. The occasion was marred only by the divisive behaviour of sections of an alternative demo organised by Plaid Cymru, the Welsh Nationalists, who jeered at trade unionists on the main demo.

But overall the mood was one of class anger and militancy against Thatcher and Co., reflected in the sale of over 600 'Militants' in the course of the morning.

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Militant

'NO QUEENSBURY RULES'

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Jim Prior, the architect of the new Tory anti-trade union laws, has issued a desperate appeal for harmony between workers and bosses.

With only two weeks to go before his so-called 'Employment Bill' becomes law, Prior has pleaded that: "The time has come to break out of the trench warfare mentality which has wrought so much havoc to our industry."

Few workers will be lulled into passivity by these soothing words. On the contrary, the Tories are provoking an unprecedented revolt.

Prior's plea for a truce between the classes reflects the dilemma of the capitalist class as a whole as they wait fearfully to meet the workers' wrath. In order to carry through their onslaught against the working class, big business and the Tories must savagely undermine the power and strength of the trade unions, but they are fearful of making a rash or premature move lest they provoke a reaction among trade unionists which they are unable to contain.

As they wrestle with this dilemma, bitter splits and divisions are appearing in their ranks; accusations and

counter-accusations are hurled, even at the highest government levels. Prior is in a class of his own: he even contradicts himself! His call for class harmony is directly at odds with both his attack on the working class through the Employment Bill and with his latest effort to limit picketing to a maximum of six.

Prior hopes to avoid any conflict under the Employment Bill, by using the civil courts. His latest picketing restrictions will not be enshrined in law: they will merely be clauses in a 'Code of Conduct.' Nevertheless, the Employment Bill, when it is law, will before long be used by some employer, and those restrictions on picketing will provide the guidelines for the Tory judges. The police will also take the new restrictions as a green light to step up harassment and arrests of pickets, for instance under the arbitrary laws of 'obstruction'.

Prior has also acted as the front man in efforts to attack the rights of the unemployed and use them as strike breakers. He called for the unemployed to be put to work in essential services. Typically, he then quickly retreated in face of the storm of protest from the trade unions. Where his own junior minister, Lord

Gowrie, talked of 'coercion' on the unemployed, Prior stressed that such a scheme would be entirely voluntary.

But neither Prior or Gowrie spelt out the strike breaking implications of this scheme. That was left to a parliamentary exchange between Tory MP George Gardiner and Thatcher. Asked whether she recognised a desire on the part of the unemployed to act as strike breakers, thereby "keeping essential services like hospitals running in the event of strike action by those who do have jobs," Thatcher replied: "I agree with you very much that large numbers of school-leavers are anxious to give service to the community, including voluntary work, and that they expect to see essential services kept going. If the time came when they were not, young people would be the first to lend a hand."

Behind all the parliamentary cant lies the sinister threat that the young unemployed will be compelled to scab, or lose their benefits. Pickets in Manchester, Liverpool and other areas have already experienced attempts to use the unemployed as strike breakers.

This shows the direction in which the Tories would like to move, wielding a

mass reserve army of unemployed as a battering ram against the trade union movement, to undermine wages, working conditions and trade union rights. The organised trade union movement will at its peril neglect the recruitment of the unemployed into the trade union movement and a united fight against the cancer of unemployment.

The Tories are considering other plans for strike breaking, however, quite apart from their cynical schemes to use the unemployed. There is a secret cabinet committee called the Civil Contingencies Unit [CCU] which exists specifically to prepare detailed proposals for defeating major strikes. This body has been discussing with ministers and representatives of local authorities the feasibility of building a civilian volunteer force which would act as a permanent army of scab storm troopers.

Such a force is reminiscent of the Organisation for the Maintenance of Supplies [OMS] which was used in 1926 during the general strike. The fact that the government is attempting to create a modern equivalent of the OMS is a vivid indication that the Tories and big business realise that struggles of 1920s propor-

tions are now imminent, possibly unfolding even as early as this winter.

The capitalist class is far weaker than in the 1920s. The development of industry has enormously enhanced the power of the working class. 'The Times' revealed, for instance, that "the armed forces, let alone untrained civilians, are no longer capable of running power stations."

Thatcher has not grasped the class realities of life. While she glibly talks about strike breaking, Derek Jackson, director of the reactionary National Association for Freedom, felt compelled to add a note of caution to the idea of volunteer strike breaking units. "Unless this proposal is handled very carefully," he advised, "it is a recipe for disaster."

The senior civil servants in the CCU agreed. According to 'The Times', "The planners judge the use of civilian volunteers in industrial disputes to be a far greater provocation to the labour movement, and a more potent trigger of sympathetic strike action by workers in other areas, than the application of military labour under the Emergency Powers Acts 1920 and 1964."

Thus we catch a hint of the discussions taking place

in the circles of the ruling class. They are hesitant, at odds with each other, frightened of moving too far too fast, but they are all nevertheless aiming ultimately in the same direction: the destruction of the trade unions in order to try to rescue British capitalism at the expense of the working class.

In an editorial approving Keith Joseph's new strike beaking powers against postal workers, it was again 'The Times' which threatened: "there are no Queensbury rules in industrial disputes."

The labour movement must take heed. This government is preparing for all-out class war. It will not be defeated by polite tête-à-têtes. Any sign of weakness on the part of the trade unions will only further embolden the Tories.

The trade unions must launch an intransigent struggle to defeat each and every Tory attack. That struggle must be linked irrevocably with the fight to throw out the Tories and replace them with a Labour government committed to repealing every reactionary Tory law and to implementing the thorough-going programme of socialism.

TRIDENT - the cost

To keep a kidney patient alive for a year costs £10,000. Tory health cuts mean that this year, 1,000 kidney patients will die.

Last week the government announced the astronomical expenditure of over £5,000 million on more nuclear weapons. The new Trident submarines will be insignificant compared to the arsenals of the USA and USSR, but the Tories are immersed in the fantasy that capitalist Britain is still a major power capable of taking on the Soviet Union.

Trident, which will replace Polaris in the 1990s, will mean extra expenditure on top of the increase of 3% per annum to be spent on NATO every year until 1986. The £5,000m is undoubtedly an underestimate.

The original estimate was £4bn to £5bn for four to five

By Bob Wade

submarines. It has risen to £5bn for four submarines, with the option of £600m for a fifth submarine later. One leading defence expert, David Greenwood, has already cast doubt on the current estimates, as unrealistically low.

Trident will be dependent on US computerised satellite information for pinpoint targeting. Without that information, the missiles can only

Callaghan vetoed Labour decision



Photo: MILITANT

cepts of 'mutually assured destruction.' The next Labour government must scrap the Trident, Polaris and Cruise systems and close down all nuclear bases in Britain.

The only way to guarantee peace, however, is to link such policies to the socialist transformation of society, eliminating the super-power rivalries with international federation. Unfortunately the last Labour government's failure to break with the dictates of capitalism was reflected in their decision on nuclear weapons.

Wilson and Callaghan refused to implement the Labour Party manifesto commitment to abandon plans for a new generation of nuclear weapons to replace Polaris.

Callaghan secretly set up a special Cabinet sub-committee to discuss other policy options. This decided to give Polaris the new Chevaline warhead, which prolonged its active service until the 1990s, when Trident will be ready to take over.

Instead of propping up British capitalism at home and abroad, the next Labour government must introduce socialist policies to end a system which cuts back on health and education in order to build horrific weapons of destruction.

be launched against general area targets. So much for claims of an 'independent' nuclear capacity, aimed against military targets.

World armaments expenditure now runs at \$10m an hour. This monstrous waste cannot be justified, except by the lunacy of the military strategists, with their con-

DESTROYED CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1



no solution. What jobs will they be training for?

The TUC have said they will fight the horrific rise in unemployment. Words must be translated into action. The labour movement must fight against all redundancies. The introduction of a 35-hour week with no loss of earnings would mean the creation of probably a million jobs.

A guaranteed job for all school leavers should be a top priority. The labour movement must fight for a programme of useful public works, the building of houses, hospitals and schools.

The Tories and the millionaires they represent say they can't afford it. Our living standards, our jobs are being sacrificed—to increase their profits. Workers cannot afford the Tories or their system.

The fight must be stepped up to kick out the Tories and return a Labour government committed to a socialist programme. The nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies under workers' control and management would make possible a plan of production, using the skills of the working class, now squandered on the dole queues; using the idle machinery.

A socialist plan could eliminate unemployment and poverty totally. The grim alternative: growing dole queues, poverty and misery.

escape to.

Thatcher says we should 'stand up to our union leaders', tell them that 'pay demands must be moderated to ensure jobs'. British workers are already the lowest paid in Western Europe and to make ends meet they work the longest hours too (see page 6).

The Tories have not denied the strong rumour, repeated by Labour leader Jim Callaghan at the weekend, that all South Wales steel making is to close down. The future, under a Tory government, is grim.

Prior's promise that every school leaver will get a place on a training scheme by Easter, even if true, would be

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During the August holiday period 'Militant' will be published with a reduced number of pages [i.e. for issues of 1st, 8th, and 15th August], and there will be no paper published on 29th August [Bank Holiday weekend].

'Militant' will be back to its normal 16-pages with issue 517 on 29th August [which will cover the TUC, meeting in Brighton from 1st-5th September].

LPYS say - Scrap Thatcher's contract

The government has an economic "contract with reality" claims the Iron Maiden. For hundreds of thousands of youth up and down the country their only contract will be with the dole queue.

In Avon, 8,000 youngsters are unemployed, chasing only 141 vacancies. South Wales and Merseyside are disaster areas for school leavers. Of 123 boys leaving

By Kevin Ramage

[LPYS National Chairman]

Duffryn Comprehensive in Port Talbot, 53 have no job to go to. With Joseph's axe hanging over the steelworks the future is even grimmer. It's not so bad the whole world over! At £3,000 a year Marlborough College, the careers master estimates "only 2% of leavers will be unemployed and in certain cases it may be voluntary."

2% of 180 represents 3 or 4 pupils. That's the real meaning of Tory "equality of opportunity."

One school leaver in Port Talbot summed up the feelings of many: "It's Maggie's fault. She's making all this unemployment." The Labour Party Young Socialists call on all youth who want to see an end to

the government of Thatcher and Joseph and the big business system they represent to join us in the fight for socialist policies as the only alternative. We demand:

- ★ A guaranteed job for every school and college leaver.
- ★ A 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

★ No cuts! A massive expansion of useful public works!

If the Tories and the bosses claim that they can't afford these elementary demands then the only alternative is to scrap their system—to fight for the replacement of capitalism with a socialist society.

LEICESTER

Fighting for Jobs

"I wish Margaret Thatcher would come to my door, so I could give her a piece of my mind. I'm really worried for my children—by the time they leave school there won't be any jobs left."

Leicester South LPYS members were selling the LPYS paper 'Socialist Youth' on a council estate. We also had a petition against unemployment in general and youth unemployment in particular. The woman we quoted above was typical of many people we spoke to.

The response to our petition condemning unemployment, calling for the downfall of the Tory government and the return of a Labour government committed to socialist measures, was overwhelming.

Over 90% of the people we asked agreed to sign, a telling answer to those in the Labour Party who think socialist policies would lose support!

"I'll sign anything if it's against the Tories," said one bloke and an OAP commented "I'll sign it—I've got grandchildren growing up and they'll be unemployed if something is not done about this government."

Since the General Election, the mood on the estate has changed dramatically. From one of apathy and disillusionment towards the Labour government and politics in general, there is now a seething anger against Tory policies.

After all, what future is there for school leavers in Leicester? For the 12,500 leavers there are only 500 job vacancies, the textile industry is in collapse, and engineering firms are laying off hundreds of workers in the area.

One man told me that he had applied for 50 jobs in the last 12 months without any response. "It's very demoralising," he told me "I even went down to the job centre for an interview and by the time I'd been seen, my motor-bike had got a parking ticket." However he promised that he and his wife would come to the next YS meeting.

Another older man told us that he'd read Socialist Youth entirely the previous night and agreed with everything. "If I was younger I'd be out there fighting with you for jobs" was his parting comment as he filled up a Labour Party application form.

Overall 26 copies of 'Socialist Youth' and 'Militant' were sold, 165 signatures were obtained, and six people agreed to join the Labour Party.

All this in about 2½ hours work. Now the task for all the YS branches is to build on the anti-Tory mood. Build the LPYS branches and play a real part in defeating the Tories and fighting for a socialist society.

By Don Finlay and Di Walters
(Leicester South LPYS)

NEWHAM YOUTH ORGANISE AGAINST RACIALIST MURDER



Photo: Militant.

Newham youth protest at racist murder on July 19th.

Outrage was the reaction in East Ham to the murder of a young Pakistani man in broad daylight on the afternoon of Thursday, 17 July. He was stabbed to death, apparently by a single lunge with a long-bladed knife, in East Ham High Street.

Some local people who witnessed the crime intervened to prevent further assault—but too late. Four skinhead youths—2 boys and 2 girls—who had been seen assaulting the dead man were recognised by some local youngsters who denounced them to the police. Within half an hour, four arrests had been made.

By 6 pm. that evening, an angry throng of over 150 Asian youths had gathered at the scene of the murder. As darkness fell, they marched to local police stations demanding information about the identity of the dead man and charges being brought.

From this spontaneous beginning, the following night the 'Newham Youth Movement', made up of young blacks and Asians, sprang into existence, elected a committee and delegated tasks for a rally and march on Saturday 19th to protest against racist murders. At 24 hours' notice and entirely by word of mouth, over 1,000 local people rallied at Plashet Park. The vast majority were young Asians and West

Indians, but most officers of the local Labour Party were there and the Labour Party Young Socialists distributed a specially produced leaflet expressing solidarity with the Newham Youth Movement.

The rally was followed by a four-hour march around the borough with prolonged stops at Forest Gate Police Station, where 23 arrests took place, and again at West Ham Police Station.

Significantly, an emergency meeting of NUT members at Plashet School, East Ham took place on Friday 18th demanding that the culprits be brought to justice and that no whitewash take place in the light of the racist and disruptive activity of the four arrested skinheads, in and outside the school. The four youths concerned appeared at the Magistrates' Court on Monday, charged with murder and have been remanded in custody pending a full trial.

The LPYS leaflet distributed at the rally stressed that it would be a scandal if Asian and black youth are left to tackle the threat of racist attacks unaided. It called clearly for the Labour Party and trades councils to undertake a mass campaign to isolate the racists and to rally support among working people for decisive socialist measures which would solve the social problems on which racism feeds.

By a
'Militant' Reporter

N Ireland hunger strike protest

Two prisoners in Long Kesh, Martin Meehan and Seamus Mullen, are currently on hunger strike.

Meehan, after more than sixty days without food, is now also refusing liquids. It is possible that one or both of these men could be dead by the time this article is printed.

Both men are protesting their innocence. They claim that their separate convictions were a "frame up" based on paltry and contradictory evidence.

In Northern Ireland, Martin Meehan is well known as a republican. 'Militant', has always fought for working class unity and socialist policies as the only way forward for the Northern Ireland working class. The activities of the Provisional IRA, with whom Meehan's name is associated, have served to divide the working class and set back the cause of socialism.

They have given the ruling class the excuse to step up their oppressive methods. Individuals like Meehan have been the victim of these policies.

The labour movement nevertheless has a responsibility to oppose oppression. What

has happened to Meehan demonstrates the methods the ruling class would be prepared to use against trade unionists in Britain in the future.

At the end of 1975, Meehan was the last internee to be freed. Since then he has been arrested and held for seven-day detention periods in the interrogation centre at Castle-reagh police station, on no less than 12 occasions. He was charged with organising the burning of the Long Kesh camp in 1974—until it was discovered that he had not been in the camp at the time of the burning.

Meehan is now serving 12 years for conspiracy to kidnap. The severity of this sentence is in marked contrast to the recent one-year suspended sentence on a number of RUC men convicted of kidnapping a priest and of causing an explosion and injuring by gunfire the doorman of a pub they were attacking.

The case against Meehan was presented to a non-jury Diplock Court. The entire evidence against him was based on the word of the man kidnapped in this case.

At the hearing this man confessed to being a paid army informer. He also admitted that, while working as an informer, he had been shown photographs of Meehan by the police and had been asked to carry out surveillance work on him.

During the trial a witness gave evidence to the effect that he, not Meehan had driven the car in question, and that this car did not, as he had been led to believe, belong to Meehan. The hirer of the vehicle corroborated this evidence. Yet this confession was dismissed by the judge on the grounds that the man was "partisan."

The conviction of Seamus Mullen was based on the no-less flimsy evidence of a voice identification, despite the testimony of voice experts disputing this evidence.

The labour movement cannot afford to ignore such blatant manipulations of so-called "justice." These cases must be taken up as must those of the other prisoners who have been convicted purely on the basis of police evidence or through "confessions" signed while under interrogation in Castlereagh and other police stations.

The movement must fight for the quashing of the convictions of both Meehan and Mullen by demanding an immediate retrial before a jury court. This is the last hope that these men have.

(Northern Ireland prisoners—see page 7.)

By Peter Hadden

(Northern Ireland, Labour and Trade Union Group)

'Militant' Irish Monthly

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CONSETT

THE TOWN THAT FIGHTS BACK

Consett steelworks is scheduled for closure on 30 September. Like Jarrow in the '30s the bosses are intent on murdering an entire town.

By Tom Hogan
(South Tyneside NALGO)

Hundreds of steelworkers and others from the town descended on London on 9 July in protest at this wanton destruction, which would mean the loss of 3,700 jobs in the steel works alone and 40% on the dole in Consett.

Despite a two-hour delay on the train from Durham, spirits were high as the march to Parliament got underway, with LPYS and Militant supporters prominent outside Kings Cross station.

Everyone on the train had been allocated an MP to lobby, and stewards had earnestly briefed the marchers on what to say: "Tell them we've done everything the government has asked—including making a profit—and in return they're closing us down."

But some had different ideas: "Do you get to meet the Tories in a room on your own?..."

As the march moved along Fleet Street, there was a rare opportunity to answer the Tory press, and shouts of "Maggie out!" resounded. At the end of the march a deputation went to Downing Street to deliver a petition, while the rest of us made our way to the House of Commons.

Thornycroft—Chairman of the Tory party—was spotted getting into an extremely posh car, and was instantly harangued by angry steelworkers. You could tell you were getting near Westminster by the number of Rolls Royces and pin-stripe suited gentlemen passing by.

At the Commons, we queued up and were eventually allowed into the Lobby. Surrounded by statues of distinguished Tories, we waited for MPs to meet us. I had drawn an obscure Tory from Devon in the raffle, and—like most Tories that day—he was nowhere to be seen.

So we went to the Grand Committee Room, arriving in time to hear John Lee, Secretary of the Consett Campaign, warning that the steelworkers' restraint would end unless something was done quickly.

He was followed by Stan Orme MP, who told us that it was necessary to make the government "change its policies." But how?—by reasoned argument and pelting them

with cotton wool balls, presumably.

Dennis Skinner MP spoke next and unequivocally stated that we had to get the Tories out of office. He warned that nothing that took place in Parliament would save Consett, but only action which was taken in Consett itself.

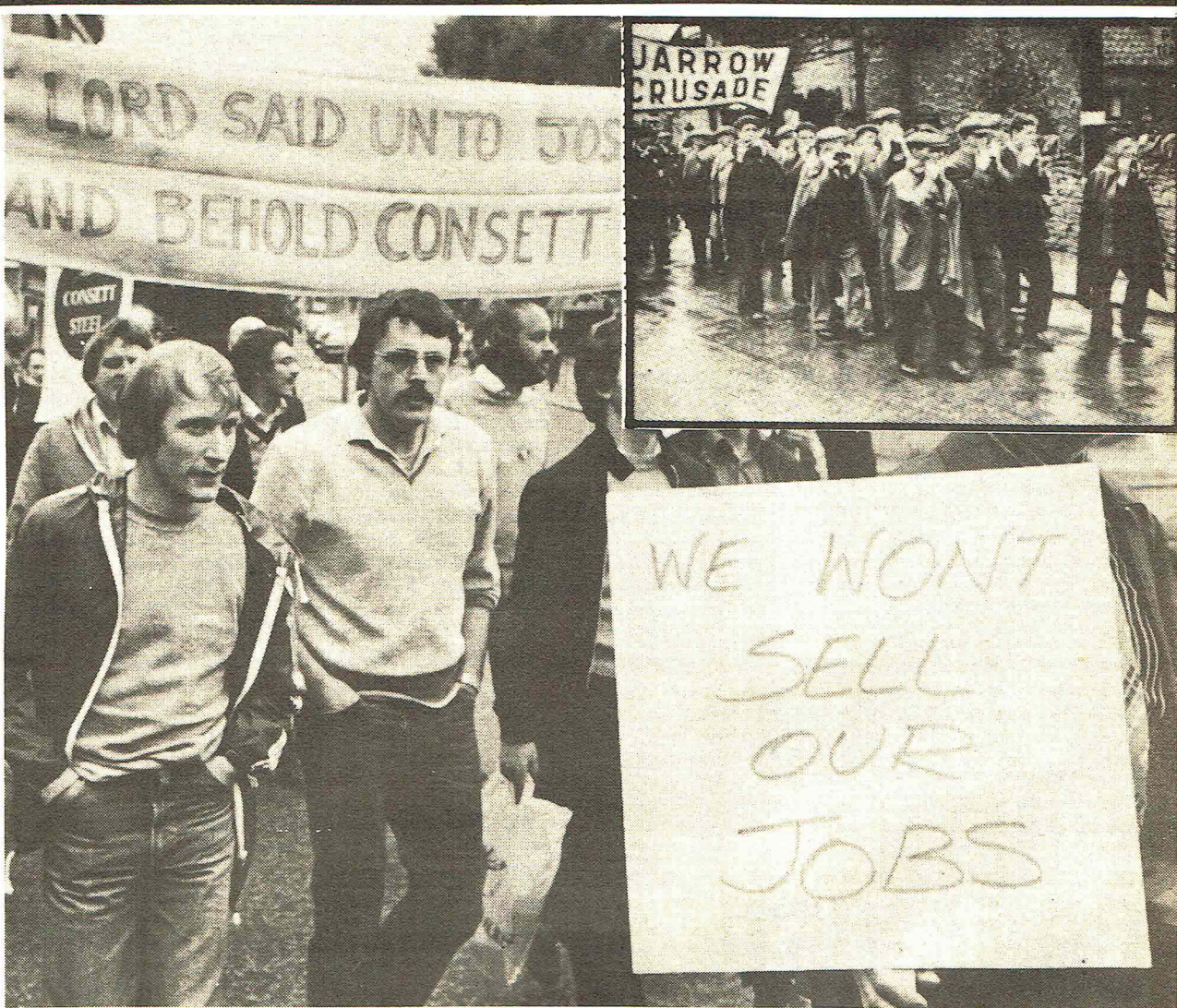
It was necessary to absorb the lessons of the struggle to save Upper Clyde Shipbuilders under the Heath government: the support of the entire trade union movement and the Labour Party must be won, and occupation of the plant considered as one possibility.

Finally, he pointed out that it was easy for Labour MPs in opposition to make fighting speeches, but we should remember that it was a Labour Cabinet that set the steel closures in motion. He was drowned out by applause.

On the train back home, everyone reflected on the day's events. Had the march and lobby achieved anything more than the Jarrow Crusade in 1936?

Or would Consett inherit the title of "the town that was murdered?" At the time of writing, McGregor has reiterated that the Consett works will close.

At least in Consett the battle has started before the closure. If we build on the support in the labour movement, Consett can be saved.



Consett workers protest in London at the butchery of their town. They do not want to return to the days of the Jarrow marches [inset]

Photo: MILITANT

DANGER - POISON DWARF

'The poison dwarf' is how one placard described Keith Joseph, on his visit to the North-East on Friday.

He came to open a new extension to the Plessey factory in South Shields. Despite the impression given on the evening news, most of the factory had walked out.

Many of the workers, mainly women, gathered in front of the building, along with local authority workers facing redundancies and a contingent from Consett steel works, carrying the banner just returned from London.

Most of the 300 demonstrators wore specially produced badges, with the cryptic message "Maggie the strident siren." When Sir Keith arrived, it was to a continuous

barrage of abuse and cries of "Tories out!"

This is the second time a leading Tory has been in the region. Maggie Thatcher got the same hostile reception when she visited Killingworth. The same hatred poured out against the government, idly standing by while tens of thousands rot on the dole and whole towns are condemned to death.

South Shields has an adult unemployment rate of 20 per cent. If Consett closes, the town will face 44 per cent unemployment. As one of the workers put it, "for every factory he opens, he closes another five."

By Jeff Price

Don't do the Tories dirty work

The Tory government may have been able to push the Labour-controlled Manchester City Council into doing its dirty work by implementing £15 million cuts.

But the labour movement in the Manchester area will not give up the fight to maintain jobs and services.

Between 450 and 500 local authority workers representing at least five unions, including NALGO, NUPE, and UCATT, demonstrated outside of Manchester Town Hall on Tuesday 15 July against the proposed £15 million cut in the council's budget.

This follows a picket by 200 Labour Party activists of the Labour group the previous evening.

If implemented, it has been estimated, the cuts would mean about 4,000 job losses as well as severe cuts in all areas of social and educational services provided by the City council.

Although the group has said there will be no compulsory redundancies, the City Housing Director, Mr Graham Goodhead, told the "Manchester Evening News" that his department needs to find "savings" of £3.5 million on direct works. "Such cuts," said Mr Goodhead, "will be absolutely devastating on the service and, of course, must affect the manpower of direct

works." By Christmas this year, 500 jobs will be lost in Direct Works and a further 1,000 by the following Christmas. However, if this many jobs go it would mean that the whole of Direct Works would have to close down.

Mr David Murphy, the convenor for the Direct Works Department told the "Evening News," "If any more jobs go beyond that figure we would have to close down because as a department carrying the overheads we do, we would not be viable."

Even if there were no redundancies it would mean that a further £1.5 million in cuts would have to be found.

The right wing majority of the Labour group, at a group meeting on the Monday night (14th) had decided to ignore this policy of the City Labour Party, as well as the wishes of 6 out of 8 of the City's CLPs and the town hall unions. They would succumb to pressure from Heseltine and push through the £15 million cuts.

However, the mood on the picket and demonstration today, and within the City and constituency Labour Parties, is such that they will not be implemented without a fight.

This will prove to be just the beginning of the struggle to save Manchester's services and jobs.

By Malcolm Clark

(Ardwick CLP)

'WE NEED THE CENTRAL CLUB'

Young West Indians in Reading, members of the Central Club, have been in the front line recently in the fight for decent facilities for young workers and unemployed.

Two months ago, the lease for their council premises ran out, but the council, who had known about it for four years, had done nothing to find alternative premises.

Only two petitions, a march on the town hall and a protest sit-in sparked the Tory controlled council into action.

Ben Raynor [Reading LPYS] spoke to Joseph, Rocky and Dave at the Central Club

Afraid of Bristol-style riots in Reading, they were only concerned to keep young blacks off the streets.

So much so that they tried to persuade the youths to move straight away into an old police garage—with grease and tyre marks still on the floor, as the police had left it.

Naturally, the club members refused—£100,000 would be needed to make the garage suitable but so far the council

have only promised £40,000.

Meanwhile they are forced to move temporarily—for up to a year—into a terrapin. But even here local traders, concerned about profits, are trying to prevent them from moving there.

Even the local press has had to admit that there's no such thing as leisure facilities in Reading. Without the Central Club, the black youths would have nowhere to go.

Just another sign that as long as society is run for profit rather than need, there will never be adequate leisure facilities for young people of all cultures.



A GOLD FOR HYPOCRISY

■ It must be conscience time for the upper class again, as they recently held a charity ball for the Mountbatten Memorial Trust. Not that these debs made any real sacrifice—held at the exclusive Berkely Square Ball it cost £50 for a double ticket. And for their money they pigged themselves through 2,500 bottles of jolly old champers, 3,000 kidneys, 300 lbs of salmon, 100 lobsters and 800 lbs of raspberries. But for the likes of me and you who find this sickening extravagance nauseating, the 'Daily Express' [4 July] has nothing but praise for these 'dedicated folk'; "Out there somewhere 1,500,000 are unemployed, but the show must go on." If this miserable capitalist society is no more than a show, then hopefully it will soon draw to a close, and it will be curtains for the bosses.

■ The Fleet Street press and their friends in the Tory party seem to have been totally stunned by the fact that three skinheads would actually help fellow working people who were in trouble; in this case trapped in a crashed tube train. But it wasn't just because the three blokes who carried out this humane act were skinheads that the Tories were amazed. Tory GLC chief Sidney Clack told the 'Daily Express' [July 16], "They were an example to other lads, regardless of the fact that they were skinheads and UNEMPLOYED."

■ 'Militant' supporters in the LPYS and Labour Party have always stressed the need to take up a bold campaign when canvassing for elections, both locally and nationally. Eric Allcock, standing for election in the Blackpool area, however, did not agree with this. The local LPYS, despairing with his kind of leaflet that just gave some of his personal details, produced their own, which outlined the class society we live in. Mr Allcock objected, saying, "That 'Tories out' part at the bottom should not be on it, because this is a sensitive area and people might get upset about it." Previously he had objected to red flags on birthday cards because "people might get the wrong idea." Needless to say, Labour, with Mr Allcock's lead, trailed behind both Tories and Liberals in the election, with Labour's vote dropping by 300 to 488!

■ The Young Conservatives are no doubt alright for a few bob. In Brentwood, Essex, they appear to have circulated every 'youth' in the town with a printed letter [unlike the local LPYS branch who have to scrape together enough money for a few hundred duplicated leaflets and then endure a hard foot-slog around the estates to deliver them. The introductory letter gets off to a good start by declaring: "Contrary to popular belief, we are not a bunch of well heeled snobs and do not talk politics all the time." It goes on; "If you are concerned about such things as radical groups attacking the very foundations of our society, eg. law and order, and the role of police in maintaining them, we would like to meet you." It ends up "We are quite a friendly bunch and would be pleased to see you." How this bunch of well heeled young snobs—for that is all they are, as any worker in Brentwood will tell you—can describe themselves as 'friendly' is interesting. No doubt, they support to the hilt the capitalist system which means 1,000 people dying a year because no staff are available to operate kidney machines, which means Mrs Mary McCloy, a pensioner, had to die on Christmas day 1972 after choking on a piece of cardboard she was trying to eat because she had no food in the house; or the system that means millions of pounds worth of resources are directed towards nuclear and germ warfare instead of cancer prevention. This bunch are not 'friends'—they are the enemy.

It has been said that the British ruling class are the masters of hypocrisy. With Thatcher's demands to boycott the Olympics because of the Soviet Union's intervention in Afghanistan, this is certainly true, but with American Imperialism and the western capitalist classes as close contenders.

I thought it might be interesting to find out what they were doing themselves at the times of the previous games. I really wanted back issues of daily newspapers but these are not immediately available in Hackney, so I went along to our local Library to see what I could find.

I settled down with publications new to me—The Annual Register and Keesing's Contemporary Archives.

Not forgetting the 1936 games when America and the west participated in Hitler's grand spectacle in Nazi Germany without batting an eyelid, we move on to the first games held after the war. The venue was a blitzed London (thanks to the hosts of the 1936 games!) and the year 1948: the cold war was in full swing, and Argentina was laying claim to the Falkland Islands and (together with Chile) to the Antarctic.

Helsinki 1952. Britain and America were waging an imperialist war in Korea with US losses reported at 126,845. Anti-colonial battles, on a smaller scale were taking place in Malaya and the then 'Far Eastern French Territory of Vietnam.'

Melbourne 1956. This was the year of the 'Suez crisis'

By Myrna Shaw

(Secretary, Tower Hamlets Health District JSSC)

and the Anglo-French intervention, with British paratroopers invading Egypt.

Rome 1960. Not so many imperialist invasions to mar this year's Olympics, but then the capitalist nations were having serious trouble with their own 'countrymen'! In Sharpeville, South Africa, 69 workers were massacred when police opened fire on a peaceful demonstration against the notorious pass laws.

In the USA the black Civil Rights movement was growing momentum, and in Britain a task force of 800 police evicted tenants' leaders from their barricaded flats during the St Pancras rent strike. The Home Secretary declared a State of Emergency in St Pancras, and over a thousand police were drafted in to protect the Town Hall after an angry demonstration of tenants, striking railwaymen and builders.

Tokyo 1964. The British ruling class could be excused from not being able to watch the games as they were having quite a busy time. There was the Cyprus crisis, 10,000 British troops were in Malaysia 'sustaining' the Borneo Federation, and 600 troops were landed in Aden to suppress anti-colonial movements. British troops were also being called upon by the Ugandan Prime Minister to help prop up his regime.

In Rhodesia Ian Smith became Prime Minister, and promptly threw Nkomo and other nationalist leaders in jail.

Misery on the Dole

Nearly two million unemployed and rising. This is the situation facing working people today, and youth particularly suffer. But what is it really like?

What do the statistics which slip off the politicians' tongues so glibly really mean to individuals sentenced to a life without a job. An insight into the abject misery and effects of such an existence can be obtained by reading Walter Greenwood's book "Love on the Dole".

The book charts the life of a working class family in an individual town which slips into the slump of the 1920s and 1930s. It is graphically written capturing the grey, dull futility of its characters' existence.

However, the parts of the

book having most impact are those describing the effects of being on the dole has on the central characters.

Harry Hardcastle, a youth full of hope and enthusiasm of the young, serves his apprenticeship with the local industrial giant and on its completion is promptly made unemployed. He had planned to marry when on a full wage, but his dreams are smashed.

The consequences of protracted unemployment on his character are frightening. He becomes shadow like, crushed and cowed by his situation, trapped, unable to find any escape from his miserable lot. His physical appearance, due to his severe poverty, is a perpetual reminder and embarrassment to him, so much so that he will not go out until it



American imperialism at work in Vietnam—yet did we hear cries for a boycott of the '68 or '72 Olympics from the Tories?

Also, the US announced it was sending 20,000 'military advisors' to South Vietnam, and no doubt in the interests of world peace, announced they had 750 intercontinental ballistic missiles, 540 nuclear bombers and 192 polaris missiles to play around with.

Mexico 1968. During the games itself, away from the stadium Mexican police opened fire on demonstrating students killing hundreds. The horrors of Biafra and the Nigerian civil war were rampant with the British government supplying arms. In Derry, Northern Ireland, the Civil Rights marches began, with hostile reaction from the police and the 'B' Specials.

The Vietnam war of national liberation was in full swing, and US forces—mainly conscripts—totalled 510,000 in Vietnam. And another 15,000 US troops flew into West Germany after the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia. There was also a military coup in Panama.

Munich 1972. The year of 'Bloody Sunday' when British paratroopers opened fire on Civil Rights marchers in Derry killing 13. The conflict in Vietnam was still on, with US imperialism using napalm and saturation bombing of the civilian population. There was also the Israeli-Arab conflicts and the Indi-Pakistani war. Martial law was still in effect in Greece (although at that time it was proposed as a 'neutral ground' for future games!).

Montreal 1976. British troops were still in Northern Ireland. The CIA was sending \$25m to aid the opponents of the MPLA in the Angolan civil war. In Soweto, South Africa, hundreds were shot down and killed by police during demonstrations against apartheid.

And now Moscow 1980. Twice US imperialism's dodgy computers have nearly sent nuclear hardware hurtling towards the Soviet Union, although their dodgy helicopters saved Teheran from a bloodbath after their adventure to try and rescue the American hostages turned into a fiasco. And British troops are still in Northern Ireland.

But if all this is not enough to expose the hypocrisy of the capitalist leaders in their condemnation of the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan it must be remembered that most of the capitalist classes to this day give aid to or trade with the dictatorships of Guatemala, El Salvador, Chile, Brazil, Uruguay, Bolivia, Argentina, Liberia, Zaire, Malawi, Sudan, Chad, Guinea, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, Korea, Taiwan, to name a few.

Using the logic over their stand on Afghanistan there would be enough issues here for boycotts aplenty!

The hands of America, Britain and the western capitalist classes are dripping with blood. For Thatcher and 'John Boy' Carter to dare, actually dare, to point their fingers, they must get the 'gold' for hypocrisy!

But we can be sure that we will never have peace in this world until Britain, USA, and the rest of the capitalist world, and the Stalinist bureaucracies in the East, are established as true workers' states. Anyone who thinks otherwise is living back in the times before the Olympic Games started.

By Mark Homer

(Yardley LPYS)

society has given him, his pride gone, virtually dehumanised.

The book tells us what the dole is really like, maybe slightly less horrifying now, but how can you have relative misery? Forced long term unemployment represents mass murder of people's personalities and their destruction as human beings.

Read it and if you're not a committed socialist now, you will be after. If you're a socialist already, still read it, and have your resolve to fight for socialist policies strengthened tenfold.

Love on the Dole by Walter Greenwood. 95p. Available from World books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. [Add 10p p&p]

You're only claiming your rights....

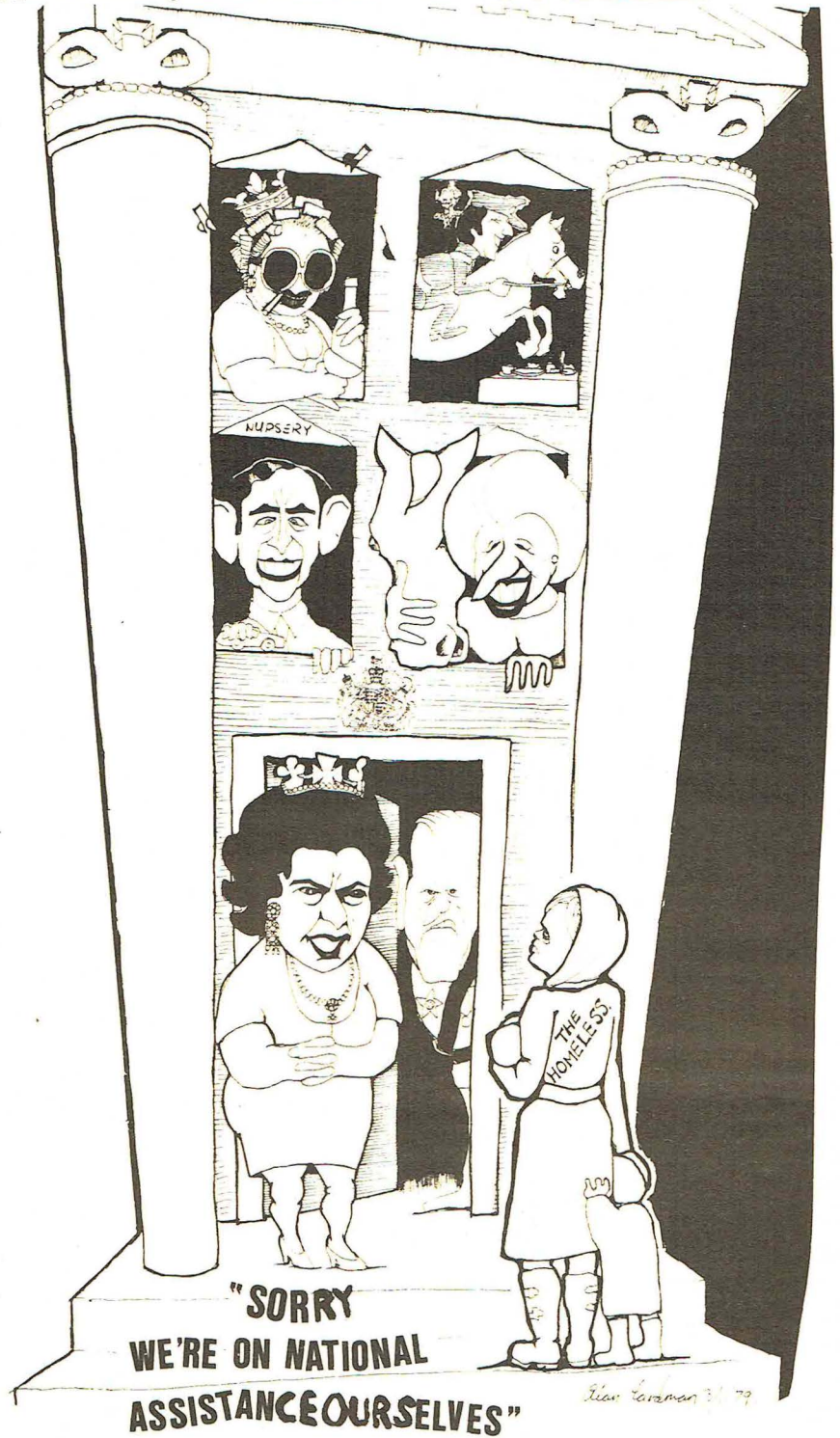
"Interviews like this happen every day in Social Security offices," writes a Bristol CPSA member. "Often they are much more heated, but this is just the bare essentials of what happens to a claimant, and that's just what Supplementary Benefits are—the bare essentials."

"Mr X, Box 3 please" says a voice over the microphone: the claimant makes his way to booth number 3 and sits down.
 Clerical Officer: Do sit down Mr X. I'm afraid you can't pull the chair up any closer, it's nailed down—occasionally claimants have been known to throw them at us... Anyway, it's... Mr X of 31 Green Street, is that right? (Claimant nods). What I'll do, Mr X, is take a statement of your circumstances and then we can decide how much to pay you.
 Claimant: When will that be?
 I've got no money at all and this bill came today (pushes a red electricity bill under the glass partition).
 CO: I'm afraid there's nothing we can do unless you have young children...
 Clt: We've two—they're six and seven.
 CO: Unfortunately they have to be under five before we could consider any help with the bill, and that's only if there's a risk of you being out off.
 Clt: Well there is.
 CO:...But as I said, Mr X, there's nothing we can do unless your children were under five. (Pause). Anyway, I'll take a few details, Mr X. Have you ever claimed Supplementary Benefit before?
 Clt: No, never. I never thought I'd see the day that I'd be down here...
 CO: Don't worry about that Mr X. You're only claiming your rights. Now, what is your normal occupation?
 Clt: I'm a semi-skilled mechanic.
 CO: What were your wages in your last job?
 Clt: About £65 including overtime.
 CO: And why did you leave your last job?
 Clt: Well it was the wages, actually. We just weren't managing on what I was bringing home and I was there all hours what with the overtime. You know what it's like bringing up kids these days—always growing out of clothes, school uniform and

everything...
 CO: Yes, I see...and have you brought your last two wage slips?
 Clt: (leaning forward) Sorry, what was that?
 CO: Your last two wage slips. I'm afraid these glass partitions don't carry the sound very well.
 (Claimant pushes two much folded wage slips under the partition).
 Right...this looks like the final one. Looks as if you had some holiday pay with it. Is that right?
 Clt: Yes, five days I think they said. Why? Will it make any difference?
 CO: Well normally this amount would count as a week's money: your holiday pay is more than we would pay you for one week, but as you left your job voluntarily, I'm afraid we're going to have to stop some of your money for six weeks.
 Clt: But that's what they told me at the labour exchange. That's why I came to you.
 CO: You are entitled to Supplementary Benefit Mr X, but we'll still have to stop some of your money for six weeks unless there is special hardship...
 Clt: What's that for heaven's sake?
 CO: I'm afraid you don't fit into the Department's category of hardship, Mr X. If your rent was exceptionally high, for instance, or you hadn't been in your last job long enough to have a decent regular income coming into the house... Anyway, if we can go on. Can you give me your wife's name?
 (Claimant provides names and dates of birth of his wife and two children).
 CO: Thankyou...and have you brought in the Child Benefit book?
 Clt: Oh God, I forgot to get it off the missus before I came down—she never lets me anywhere near it as a rule!
 CO: Yes I see. Well, if you could send it or drop it into us—here's a stamped envelope.
 Clt: You'll still be able to

pay me without the book won't you?
 CO: I'm afraid we can only give you an interim payment until we get proof of the children. It's no reflection on you personally Mr X, but our fraud section has got very keen on this sort of thing—you know—couples claiming for children they don't have and that sort of thing. It's part of the recent anti-fraud drive encouraged by the government.
 Clt: If I bring the book in later on this morning, can you send me some money today? I'm absolutely skint to be honest.
 CO: I'll try and get a giro out to you by tomorrow but I can't promise anything. We're even busier than usual at the moment, what with all the school leavers coming in as well as the usual number of claimants.
 Clt: (reluctantly) OK then, is that it?
 (CO asks further questions about savings, part time earnings and rent and asks Clt to sign the statement as true and complete. CO says she will deal with the claim as soon as possible and bids the claimant goodbye. She returns to the office where a mug of tea stands waiting for her from 20 minutes ago. After a few gulps (there are no tea breaks) swallowed and while getting the papers for the next interview she returns to the counter and calls over the microphone: "Mr Y, box 3 please").

The above claimant will receive supplementary benefit of the following: During the first six weeks when benefit is suspended as a result of the claimant's "voluntary unemployment": £26.90 plus rent. After the six weeks: £34.20 plus rent.
In 1979 the value of the basic rate of supplementary benefit was 39.4% of real earnings.



a nasty shock

WORKERS NOTEBOOK

■ There has been a significant speeding up of progress on shorter working hours. 306 new hours agreements involving nearly 4 million workers have been signed from January 1978 to March 1980 [59 of these at national level] according to the Labour Research Bargaining Report.
 The most important national agreements were the engineers' 39-hour week, which comes into effect in October, as a result of the strike last Autumn, and the Post Office engineers' 37½-hour week, also resulting from industrial action. Workers in major supermarket chains, construction workers and nurses also have reductions in the pipeline.
 There is still a very long

way to go. The New Earnings Survey shows that male manual workers had an average basic week of 39.8 hours in 1979 but low wages forced an average of 6.4 hours overtime, adding up to 46.2 hours a week actually worked. This is higher than in 1976. Female manual workers worked longer hours than male non-manual workers—an average 38.5 hours plus 1.1 hour overtime.
 British workers now work longer hours than anywhere in western Europe. In 1972, the working week in France, West Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg was longer than in Britain. Now they have all reduced hours below those in Britain. There is a crying need for a trade union campaign

for a 35-hour week with no loss of earnings and an £80 minimum wage, in order to cut down the need for overtime and reduce the dole queues.
 ■ In recent speeches, Tory leaders Thatcher and Howe have taken up the hint in the recent Bank of England quarterly bulletin, that a 5% drop in real take-home pay "may be necessary."
 While the Department of Employment claims that average earnings rose 21.2% in the twelve months to April 1980—0.6% less than prices—the CBI reveals that half of the settlements in private industry were for below 15%, less than two-thirds the rate of price

increases. In the six months to April 1980, average male earnings increased by 10.6%. Subtracting tax and national insurance increases and allowing for family allowances, in real terms, after inflation, earnings have actually fallen.
 Average living standards, in fact, dropped 1½% in the first three months of 1980, compared to the last quarter of 1979. These figures for real personal disposable income include the income of the self-employed and dividend payments to shareholders [after tax]. Undoubtedly the average fall conceals vast divergences, with wage and salary earners, pensioners and social security claimants suffering a far greater drop in living standards.

As if life is not hard enough on social security, you have to cope with unaccounted-for shocks.
 Two days after moving into a new flat I got a letter from the electricity board informing me that I have to pay a £50 security bond in case I leave without paying my bills. I tried telling them that I didn't have £50, and that I was only receiving social security.
 They were adamant: "it is not our problem," they said. "find the £50 by July 14th or your electricity will be cut off!"
 My second shock came today (July 11th). I received my social security payment for 3rd to 17th July. I made my claim on June 27th. When I went to the local office to explain they replied "oh you applied on Friday 27th, one day late. Our week starts on a Thursday so you lose the whole week."
 "I've had to borrow money to live on and pay my

rent during that period, money which I must pay back," I said.
 "You can appeal if you want," came the retort.
 "O.K.," I said, "How long will that take?"
 "Oh weeks and weeks."
 "Meanwhile, I must starve then?"
 "Yes," he said, "there is nothing we can do."
 Perhaps this is some ploy by Thatcher to 'encourage' people to find work. The problem is, in Sunderland for every vacancy there are 18 applicants and that doesn't include school leavers.
 Still, I'm not too despondent. Our turn will come and we will throw the Tory system out. Then no one will have to go through such demeaning procedures as social security—except the millionaire Tories of course!

By
Ray Physick

NORTHERN IRELAND PRISONS

Labour Party Executive barred from H-block

When Labour's National Executive Committee endorsed the resolution condemning the barbaric conditions in Northern Ireland prisons last month, the press barons whipped up a frenzy of vitriolic denunciations and distortion, calculated to throw dust in the eyes of British workers.

Despite the NEC's declaration that it was "implacably opposed to the programme and methods of terrorism," the Fleet Street hacks slanderously accused the party leaders of acting as attorneys for the IRA.

The government and their journalistic spokesmen maintain that accusations of torture and brutality are fantasies, dreamed up by disgruntled terrorists. What are the facts?

Several studies and reports, some by prison employees themselves, have produced mounting evidence of brutality and repression by the security forces in Northern Ireland.

Amnesty International, for example, points out that in November 1977 a meeting of 30 solicitors handling cases before the non-jury Diplock courts stated that in their opinion: "ill-treatment of suspects by police officers, with the object of obtaining confessions, is now common practice, and that this most often, but not always, takes place at Castlereagh RUC station and other stations throughout Northern Ireland."

This seems to be confirmed by figures from the Law Department at Queen's University Belfast, showing that 94% of all cases before the Diplock courts resulted in a conviction. Of these a shattering 70% to 90% were wholly or mainly based on admissions of guilt obtained while in police interrogation.

By Tony Saunois

(Labour Party National Executive, writing in a personal capacity)

The Bennett report commented, "...clearly great caution is called for in dealing with prisoners' complaints, if unsupported by other evidence. Unhappily in some instances, there is such evidence." (my emphasis)

By April 1977, things were so bad that even the Association of Forensic Medical Officers wrote to the police authority expressing concern at the condition of prisoners who passed through Castle-reagh interrogation centre. They were followed later the same year by the Police Surgeons Association, who sought a meeting with the Chief Constable to express their concern.

Alleged beatings of the stomach, ears and head, together with hair pulling, wrist bending, cigarette burns, extremely lengthy interrogation sessions and threats to a prisoner's family, have been documented.

Amnesty report one case, taken from medical reports, of a man released from Castle-reagh and admitted to hospital where he was recorded as having: "inner aspect of right upper arm: 7 nip-like bruises; left iliac crest: abrasion 1in. by 1in.; left loin: abrasion 3ins. by 1in.; right shoulder: abrasion and left iliac crest: 4ins. by 2ins. bruising."

The shocking reports from Northern Ireland's prisons are indisputably based on fact. Labour Party members and trade unionists cannot ignore them, however deep and

justifiable the revulsion at and hostility to the policies and methods of the Provisional IRA.

That British imperialism has been able to maintain such a brutal regime in the prisons is a shameful indictment—and a sombre warning.

Part of the responsibility rests with the Provisional IRA themselves. Their methods have alienated and horrified British workers, and this has been exploited, diffusing opposition to the introduction of draconian state powers, systematic harassment and repression.

Nevertheless, the working class will turn its back on this issue at its peril.

I was able to visit a prisoner in H Block myself. Any member of the labour movement seeing the prison would be convinced that it houses a horror story.

Relatives and friends, as well as prisoners, are subject to humiliation and suffering. Entering the compound in the visitor's bus is enough to make even the toughest apprehensive.

Passing through a turnstile, you are eyed up and down by a prison guard. As soon as you enter the room to register and show identification, from behind the screens come the voices of warders singing offensive songs.

Without identification, your journey is wasted. While I was there a young girl of 16 or 17 who had forgotten hers, was refused admission to see her brother. Once accepted, you sit in rows, males on one side, females on the other. When your turn comes you go into a small room occupied by two warders. One moves behind you and shuts the door. The other asks if you object to being searched. You accept or are turned away.

I was warned before-hand to be polite to the warders, or they take it out on the prisoners.

After being searched and asked to leave your identification and other personal belongings behind, you join other visitors in a larger room. A short wait and the name of the prisoner you are visiting is called.

We climb into a van, with all its windows frosted out and the view through the windscreen blocked by a wooden panel. From the rear

ventilation window, it's possible to catch a small glimpse of what's outside.

I saw watch-towers with two-way mirrors, corrugated iron fences with barbed wire on the top and alsatian dogs at the side of the road. There are ramps across the roadway.

After a few minutes the van slows and turns. Gates open and the van stops. A warder looks in. Another gate opens and the van drives on a short distance.

The doors open and this time, everyone gets out. Through another turnstile and into yet another room, watched all the time by warders.

The name of the prisoner being visited is read out. Escorted by a warder, we are shown into a hall full of cubicles separated by wooden partitions. Within seconds another warder comes into our cubicle and sits at the end of the table—for the duration of the visit.

A few minutes later the prisoner was brought in. We shook hands and he sat down.

What do you say to someone in these conditions? He looked about 35 (I learned later he was much younger). He was thin and clearly had been beaten. I had 15 minutes: I wanted to tell him of our work in the labour movement and to ask of the conditions and morale of the other prisoners.

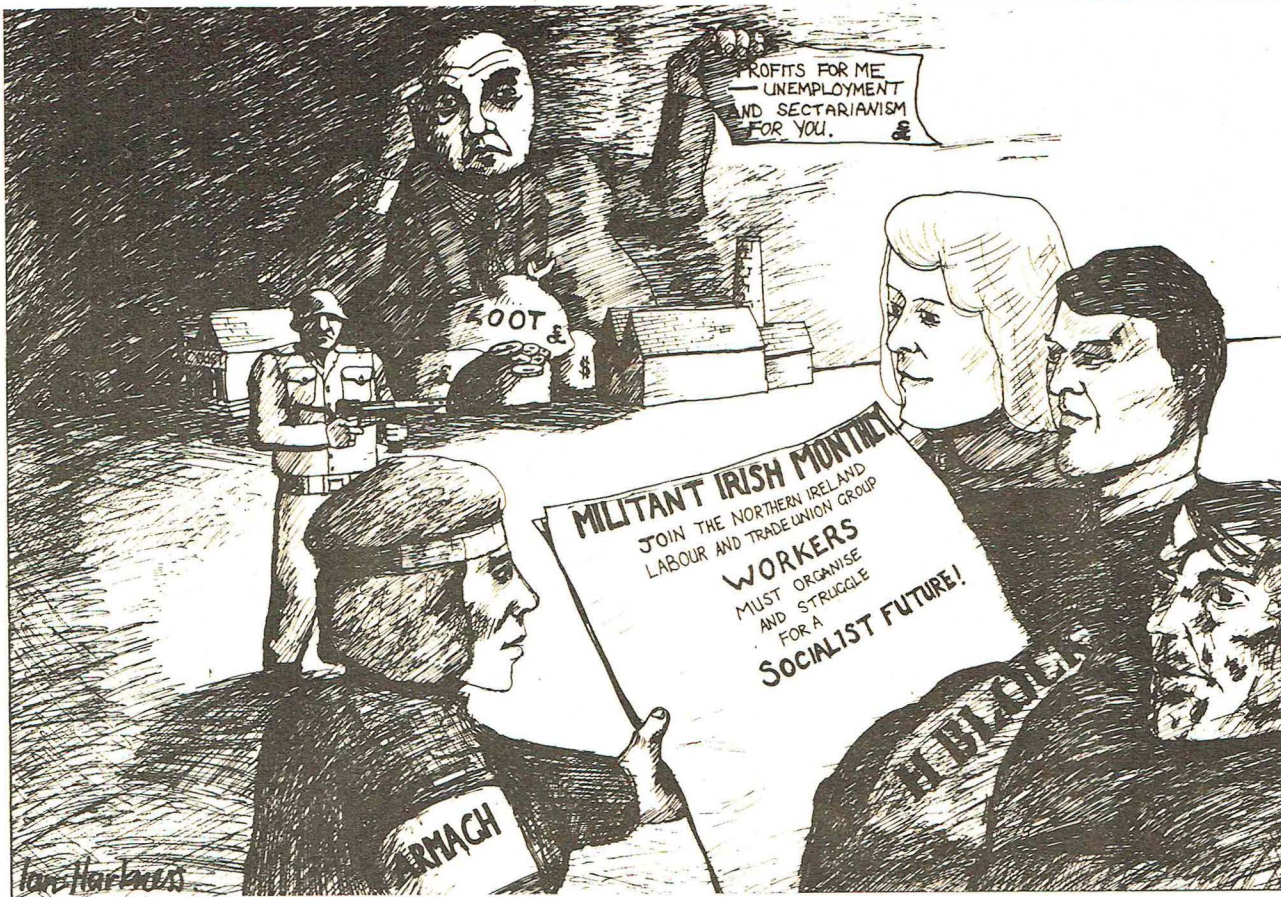
He told me that he had been beaten and mirror searched before seeing me and the same would happen to him after I had gone. Looking at him there was no reason whatsoever to doubt he was telling the truth.

I then explained that the NEC Home Policy Committee had carried the resolution on prison conditions (later endorsed by the NEC). I told him that the Labour Party Young Socialists were raising the issue in local Labour Parties and trade union branches.

He explained that each evening discussion groups were held on the history of the labour movement and politics.

Suddenly another warder came in; "time up." We shook hands and wished each other well.

These conditions are barbaric. They must not be tolerated by the labour move-



ment. It is essential that a campaign is launched against the prison conditions in Northern Ireland and for the repeal of all repressive legislation, including the non-jury Diplock courts.

Workers in Britain have been ringed by the media's wall of silence surrounding events in Northern Ireland, broken only by horrific reports of sectarian violence and outrages. Some, even among our readers, will ask "didn't these prisoners bring it on themselves?"; or attempt to dismiss the shocking accounts of conditions in the Maze, H-Blocks and Armagh prisons as 'exaggerated'.

As we will show in future articles, this is, at the very least, debatable. For every thinking worker, the mounting evidence of state repression will sound a warning. The only conclusive way to determine the truth is through a genuinely independent investigation, carried out by the labour movement, to cut through the web of secrecy and propaganda.

If, as Northern Ireland minister Atkins claims, there is nothing to hide, why were the Labour Party NEC delegation to Northern Ireland refused entry to the Maze prison? Are we seriously expected to believe that this top security prison was 'inadequately staffed' for such a

visit?

It is essential that the NEC resolution is thoroughly discussed by every Labour Party and union branch. The demands for elemental rights guaranteed for all prisoners, must be supported:

1. The right of all prisoners to wear their own clothes;
2. Prisoners to be allowed full access to newspapers, television, books and writing materials, with no restriction on letters;
3. Prisoners to be allowed the minimum of two unsupervised visits and two food parcels per week;
4. Prisoners to have the right to negotiate the choice of work, training and educational facilities;
5. Prisoners to be paid the trade-union rate of pay and to have the right to trade union membership;
6. Prisoners to be allowed to elect their own representatives to negotiate on their behalf;
7. The scrapping of the non-jury 'Diplock' courts and the closure of the special police interrogation centres.

This initiative must act as a catalyst for a campaign throughout the labour movement for an end to the inhuman treatment of prisoners in Northern Ireland. We cannot afford to ignore this systematic repression—in Chile, South Africa, or Northern Ireland.

H-BLOCK LETTER

Extract of a letter from an H-block prisoner.

"...Three or four prison officers come to your cell door; they call your name out. You leave your cell with nothing but a small white towel around your waist: as soon as you go out the door you are grabbed by the hair and arms and run from your door to a place where a small mirror is on the ground.

The mirror measures about 16 ins x 8 ins. When you arrive here you are told to remove the towel so that you are left standing naked amongst ten prison officers.

They proceed to search your hair, ears, under your arm and feet and run their fingers inside your mouth. After this you are told to spread eagle over the mirror, which we do. But then they ask you to squat down

so that your back passage is about 6 inches from the mirror.

This we refuse to do because it's inhuman and degrading. They then start slapping and punching you in an effort to force you down. After a period of time they grab you by the hair and arms and kick the backs of your legs.

When you fall to the ground you are held down so that your face is nearly touching the ground at an angle, another prison officer puts his hand on your backside so they can look up your back passage.

At times men's back passages have been probed with fingers gloved and ungloved, pens and other metal objects...."

TRADE UNIONS

The trade union movement is preparing a massive counter-offensive against the Tory attacks on jobs, living standards and union rights. That is the central message of this year's trade union conferences.

The conference season has been brought to a close with a direct challenge to the Tories from the National Union of Mineworkers, the union which inflicted two historic defeats on the Tory government of Edward Heath.

In 1972 the miners lifted the morale and fighting spirit of workers throughout the trade union movement. Their famous victory marked a watershed in the struggles against Heath's government. It was followed in 1973/74 by the struggle that resulted in Heath calling a panic election in which he was thrown out of office.

The miners could play a similarly important role against the onslaught of Thatcher.

At a time when the rate of inflation is soaring above 20%, the Tories are hoping to impose wage increases of around 10% (or less) on workers throughout the public sector, including miners. The NUM has now responded to this provocation by unambiguously demanding increases of 35%: a £100 a week salary for surface workers, with appropriate differentials.

This fighting stand by the miners will increase the determination of other workers to fight cuts in their living standards.

The government is inciting confrontation, especially with workers in the public sector. As a result, a fight could develop in almost any part of the public sector. The battle lines are being drawn!

It may well be the Post Office Engineering Union which forces the government to retreat. Against the advice of their EC, delegates to the POEU conference passed a motion calling for a 37% increase in pay. This was the first time ever that a POEU conference has overturned an EC recommendation on pay!

All the authority of Bryan Stanley, the union's general secretary, and taunts that the resolution was "unrealistic" failed to win the day for the POEU leadership.

Certainly there will be those on the right wing in the union leadership who will attempt to quietly abandon the motion, but they will have to overcome

the rank and file members who will be keeping a vigilant eye on negotiations.

The POEU conference stipulated that action must begin by 4 August 1980, unless the claim is met by Post Office management. POEU members have every reason for confidence: they have become increasingly aware of their powerful grip on the economic and commercial arteries of Britain. They will not lightly accept any hesitation or double-dealing by their leadership on this claim.

It is not only in the public sector that the pay challenge is mounting. The UCATT conference passed a demand for a 50% increase for building workers, again, despite pleas from their general secretary, Les Wood.

Even in the engineering industry action on pay is possible, though in all probability the right-wing leaders of the AUEW will avoid being pushed into a national struggle this year, now that they have succeeded in pushing through the AUEW National Committee an innocuous call for a "substantial increase", which was later accepted by the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions as the claim for all engineers.

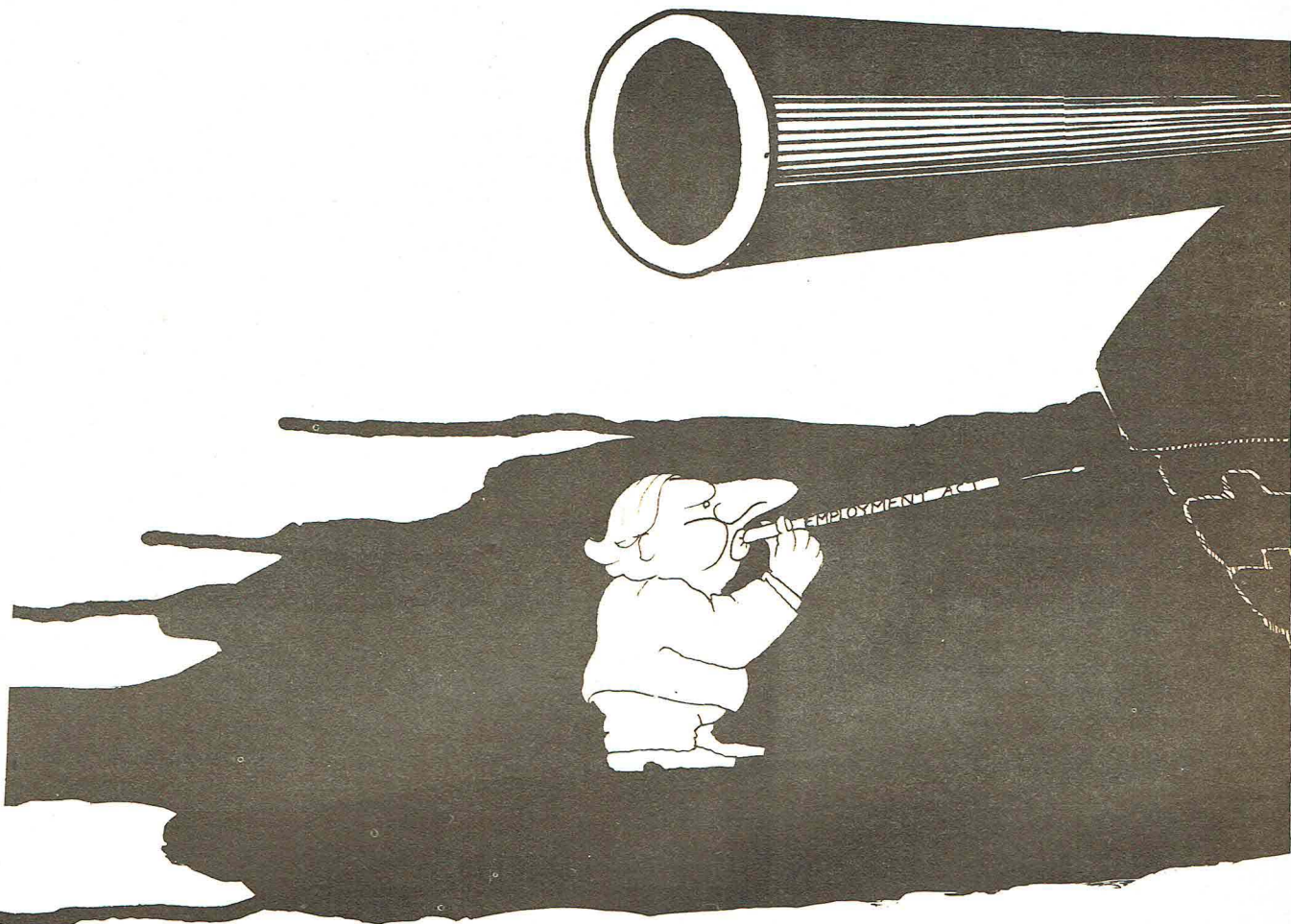
The AUEW leadership has been compelled to say that this means an increase of at least 20%, to compensate for inflation. If the engineering bosses return with a derisory offer, the AUEW right wing could find—despite its majority on both the AUEW EC and NC—that it has no choice but to organise some kind of action.

A more likely outcome, however, is that the initiative will be seized by engineering workers themselves and that battles will rage throughout engineering around factory claims to protect living standards.

Some bosses, tempting providence, are—at the moment—actually gloating about how the working class is subdued. They are in for a rude awakening!

Following the steel strike there have been relatively few clashes on wages. This is reflected in the official strike statistics. 29 million working days were lost due to strikes in 1979, a post war record. In the first quarter of this year the rate of strike activity increased still further. But in May the tide of militancy tended to recede. This does not mean, as some cynics even in trade unions suggest, that the working class is now finished as a fighting force. Far from it!

In May there were still 96,000 workers involved in no



THE BATTLES ARE DRAW

less than 130 separate disputes. Official figures always understate the real situation. For instance, two years ago when the Department of Employment was claiming that only 2% of factories had experienced a strike in any one year, a detailed survey unearthed the fact that from 1976 to 1978 no less than 50% of factories had witnessed some form of industrial action, and one third had undergone an all out strike.

Nevertheless, there is a certain pause on the industrial battle field. We are in a period of watching and waiting. The steel strike, the engineering strike, and local pitched battles, such as the protracted dispute at Hopkinsons in Huddersfield, have all hammered home the message that any dispute today can rapidly develop into an all-out trial of strength. This is true even with disputes originating around purely secondary issues.

Workers seldom enter battle lightly. But many workers feel that a sober appraisal of the balance of forces is more critical than ever today, in view of the avalanche of redundancies rained down on them in recent months: 150,000 were declared in the

five months from January to May! Short-time working is also widespread. The sudden shock of this new situation has for a moment understandably numbered many workers, reinforcing the present particularly cautious approach to industrial action.

The bosses however, are far from confident. Recently, in the "Financial Times," the journal of big business, one personnel director of a leading Midlands engineering firm boasted that "the employers already have the power over the trade unions." But that individual conveniently preferred to remain anonymous, no doubt through fear of reprisals on the shop floor!

The bosses are probing the combativity of the working class, unsure as to how far they can go before they are sent scurrying into retreat. They had their tails up after Leyland and the capitulation of Duffy, but since then the National Graphical Association won a key struggle which ended in the Newspaper Society scrambling for cover with its tail between its legs.

The situation in industry today is like Mount St Helens in America where massive volcanic eruptions have altered the whole of the landscape.

There is hardly a group of workers which has not been involved in an important struggle in recent years. Now the mountain of labour smoulders while underneath the surface the next explosion gathers force.

Despite difficult procedures for electing delegates, elaborate compositing arrangements and all the other bureaucratic obstacles which exist in most unions in order to stifle the genuine voice of the rank and file, at this year's union conferences, the mood of anger and outrage developing throughout the trades union movement found reflection over and over again in concrete demands for action.

Militancy was not only expressed on wages. Major decisions for action were also taken on the issues of redundancy and cuts in government expenditure. NALGO, for instance, passed an important motion which called upon the Executive to "promote and approve action, including industrial action, to fight cuts in services, whether there is a threat to NALGO members' jobs or not."

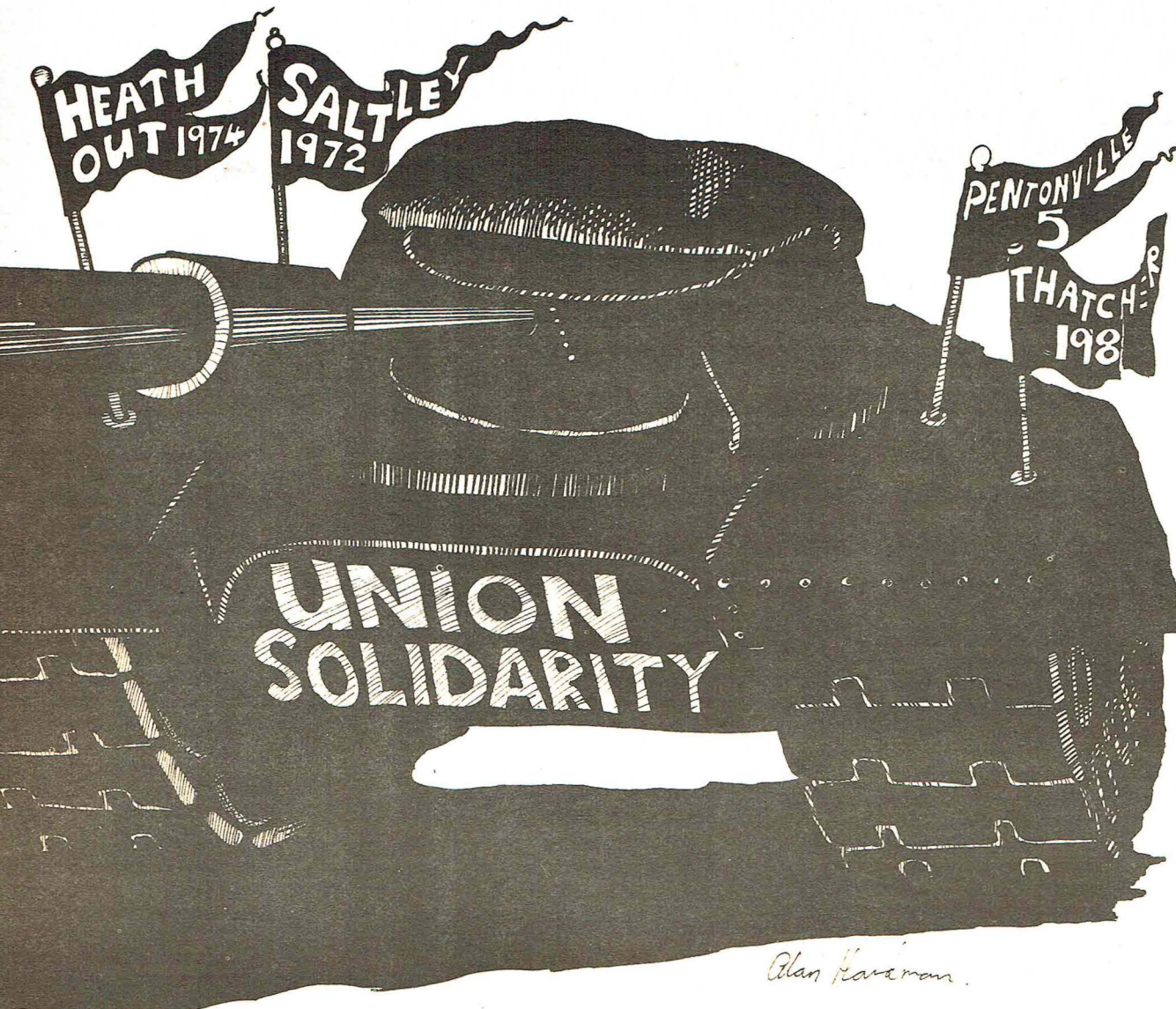
Geoffrey Drain, the union's general secretary, has said that this decision means that

"if members decide to take action they will have the backing of the Executive Council." It will not be long before NALGO members—buoyed up by their success in the recent comparability struggle—remind Geoffrey Drain of those words!

The conferences of NUPE, CPSA and other public sector unions also demanded action against the cuts. But on the issues of redundancies and cuts in government expenditure it is the miners again who could well provide the rest of the trade union movement with the inspiration for a long over-due and concerted fight back.

Welsh miners have endorsed the South Wales leadership in the call for industrial action to stop pit closures for reasons other than proven exhaustion or safety, a stand which received backing from the NUM national conference where a pledge was made for national action against pit closures.

Big business and the Tories know it will not be long before a tidal wave of revolt confronts their policies. That is why they are hell-bent on pushing through parliament their anti-trade union "Emp-



E LINES N

By Brian
Ingham

CLASS CONFLICT ON AN UNPRECEDENTED SCALE IS WRITTEN INDELIBLY ACROSS THE FUTURE LANDSCAPE OF BRITISH SOCIETY

loyment" Bill. Yet on this also they have been warned. Practically every trade union conference has come out in opposition to this Bill, most demanding active opposition! The Bill is riddled with attacks on the historic rights of the British trade union movement. It seeks to undermine drastically the closed shop, picketing rights and maternity rights, etc. Prior, the 'wet' (as he is fondly referred to by his Tory friends), included in this Bill the idea of state payments for union ballots, hoping thereby to make it acceptable to some trade unions—and thus divide the opposition of the trades union movement.

Scandalously, at their National Committee, the AUEW right wing indicated that they may hold out their hands for this contaminated money. Should they dare pursue this line at the forthcoming Trades Union Congress, they will undoubtedly face a crushing defeat! Even the right wing leaders of the G&MWU felt compelled to call for a ban on the use of this money, a position which must be adopted by the TUC as a whole. Any union taking this money and therefore assisting the Tory attacks must face expul-

sion.

This Employment Bill is designed to assist the bosses' onslaught against jobs and living standards. But like Baron Frankenstein, Prior is clearly afraid of the potential monster he is creating. He realises that the use of Tory legislation against the trade union movement, especially during a key struggle, could provoke a massive reaction against the Tories, before which Thatcher's government would crumble, as Heath's did when faced with the prospect of a certain general strike following the jailing of the 'Pentonville 5' dockers.

Prior has therefore steered clear of attacking union funds directly, and he has put the onus on individual employers to claim damages through the civil courts.

But however clever Prior thinks he has been in holding off the more rabid section of the Tory party, some particularly reactionary employers will be straining at the leash to "have a go" at the unions through this legislation. They will be playing with fire! Class conflict on an unprecedented scale is written indelibly across the future landscape of British society.

The right-wing trade union

leaders are aware of this, and panic stricken. They abhor struggle. They are frightened of the power of the trades unions, especially when that power begins to find expression through rank and file spontaneity and initiative during industrial action.

The right wing leaders wish to keep their members under firm control. In order to forestall possible future struggles, they are therefore making frantic appeals—open and thinly veiled—for collaboration with the Tory government. In anticipation of such collaboration they are preparing for a series of joint discussions with the bosses' union, the CBI.

Speculation is rife around a possible deal between the right-wing trade union leaders and the Tory government over the introduction of another incomes policy.

However, right-wing leaders of unions such as the NUR who this year were able to persuade their annual conference to support an incomes' policy could only do so by specifying that such a deal

would have to be struck with a Labour government.

The Tories were, of course, meant to take such resolutions as an invitation to drop their strict monetarism in favour of wage restraint, a change of policy which, for the working class, would be like the gas chamber being abandoned in favour of the electric chair!

The Upper Clyde Shipbuilding workers forced Heath to capitulate. After that he performed a complete policy somersault. It would take similar pressure to force this Tory government into the now almost universally anticipated 'U-turn'.

An incomes policy operated by Thatcher or any other Tory prime minister (if and when she gets the boot) would almost certainly have an extremely short life. The right-wing trade union leaders would not dare to openly support such a policy. They would merely reluctantly acquiesce, and even then, not for long!

Any new incomes policy has been given the kiss of death, in advance. For instance,

motions in support of incomes policies have in the past received overwhelming support at USDAW conferences, yet this year—along with other unions—USDAW has decided to "oppose all forms of incomes' policy." Such motions will soon be translated into action if and when the Tories adopt policies of wage restraint.

That USDAW conference motion is symptomatic of the dilemma facing the right wing in the trade unions, who see the ground shifting from under their feet. The left emerged stronger than ever from this year's union conferences. BIFU (the bank workers) and the Bakers' union both registered under the Industrial Relations Act. Both were in fighting mood this year—and the Bakers now have a 'Militant' supporter as their general secretary.

In USDAW, the Broad Left not only emerged strengthened, it won a majority of the seats on the USDAW delegation to the TUC. The left also marched forward in the POEU, gaining two extra places on the union's executive, one of these going to a 'Militant' supporter.

Only in the CPSA and the AUEW did the right make any significant gains. In the CPSA, though the conference witnessed a whole series of

motions in support of incomes policies have in the past received overwhelming support at USDAW conferences, yet this year—along with other unions—USDAW has decided to "oppose all forms of incomes' policy." Such motions will soon be translated into action if and when the Tories adopt policies of wage restraint.

At this year's union conferences, the right wing demonstrated their nakedness once again. All they are able to offer is a return to the pro-capitalist policies of the Wilson and Callaghan Labour governments.

This year, as in other years, supporters of 'Militant' came together with others on the left in order to help build the Broad Left alternative to the right wing. Within the left, 'Militant' supporters continued to put forward a clear, distinct and rounded-out socialist programme. This programme was more warmly received by the conference delegates than ever.

At almost every conference there were substantial increases in sales of 'Militant' and of 'Militant' pamphlets, donations to the fighting fund, and in numbers of delegates and visitors attending the 'Militant' public meetings.

At this stage a majority of the left in the trades unions identify with the "alternative strategy" of the 'Tribune' and the Communist Party. In fact support for this "strategy" grew this year, reflecting the general shift to the left.

Unfortunately, this programme is merely concerned with trying to fiddle with and manipulate capitalism in the vain hope of making it work in the interests of working people. Lip service is sometimes given by the left union leaders to the idea of a socialist society, but the need for socialism is not seen as the most burning question facing the working class.

Unlike the supporters of 'Militant', the left leaders do not attempt to drive home the irreversible decline of capitalism, and the impossibility of any lasting reforms on the basis of capitalism. The capitalists are trying to snatch back the reforms of yesterday!

The left trade union leaders should demonstrate the impossibility of divorcing the day-to-day struggle on wages and conditions from the struggle for socialism. The two must be linked indissolubly!

In the course of the bitter struggles that lie ahead it will be brought home to countless thousands of workers that any strategy which is based upon attempts to fine-tune the capitalist system is doomed to failure.

The only viable programme for the working class is the programme of socialism. The Bakers' union have sent a resolution to this year's TUC which spells out that message.

"This conference recognises the vicious attempts of the Tory government to make the working class pay for the crisis of capitalism and agrees that the TUC should give the lead to all affiliated unions and their members by mounting a campaign jointly with the Labour Party against the cuts in social spending and the anti-union legislation.

"This campaign should clearly aim to bring down the Tory government and bring to office a Labour government pledged to the socialist policies contained in Clause IV part 4 of the Labour Party constitution."

That is the way forward. Armed with the programme of socialism the trade unions will be invincible.



BRAZIL WORKERS FORM OWN PARTY



The Sao Paulo metalworkers are the backbone of the new party.

The right wing military dictatorship in Brazil is suffering splits and divisions as the economy goes through the worst crisis in its history.

Inflation at 99.2%, unemployed or partially unemployed at 30%, 70% of export earnings eaten up by servicing foreign debts—the Brazilian economic miracle has turned into disaster for the ruling elite.

When the generals are not attacking the workers, they turn on each other, with accusations of rigging, corruption, the sackings of generals and behind the scenes manoeuvres.

The military regime has been made aware that they cannot ride out this crisis by robbing the workers. Such has been the militancy of the workers' struggles that even the Pope on his recent visit had to openly give support to the workers' demands.

Now in order to contain

and channel the mood of anger, the generals and their big business friends have allowed a restricted right to form political parties 'providing they show no class bias.' They have also ensured that their own Social-Democratic Party is in a majority.

To give the illusion of democracy while holding on to parliamentary power, the official opposition has been split into four official opposition parties. What they did not reckon was the workers amending the rules and establishing a fifth!

Out of the heroic struggles of the metalworkers, has come an independent party based on the workers' movement. The Partido Trabalhadores (PT), the Workers Party, recently held its founding congress and despite the difficult conditions for industrial militants under the dictatorship it can already

boast of 26,000 members and branches in 22 states.

The PT originated primarily from the metalworkers of Sao Paulo. These workers were the first to enter the struggle in recent years on a mass scale. 100,000 came out on strike in May 1978 and there were further strikes in October 1978, March 1979, and April 1980. The movement bypassed the 'official' trade union movement and elected its own leaders.

The rise of the PT marks a major break with the past when the workers followed behind the big business dominated populist parties and demagogues who climbed on the backs of the workers and peasants proclaiming the united national interests of the workers, middle classes and Brazilian businesses. Luis da Silva (Lula), a leading member of the Workers Party and leader of the Sao Bernardo metalworkers explained in June 1978.

"Workers have ceased to believe in many things that deceived them for a long time. The worker had believed (prior to the 1964 military coup—PF) that the political leadership was elected to do something for his benefit, even though it was not composed of workers but of managerial people and other members of the elite. Today the worker does not believe in that anymore."

Bitter experience has taught the workers that they must rely on their own strength and, at least, the advanced workers have learned that they must be politically independent of the ruling class. Prior to the 1964 coup many workers followed behind the populist Brazilian Labour Party (PIB) which was led by the rich landowner, Goulart and by Lionel Brizola.

But even while Goulart was in power he did nothing to change the old fascist inspir-

ed labour laws and when the workers demanded arms to fight the threatened coup in March 1964 he turned them down.

During the generals rule the illegal PTB's credibility was partially restored but since his return Brizola has done everything to destroy this by accommodating himself with the generals. When he was criticised for discussing a proposal from the military, for some of their MPs to enter his Parliamentary party, he replied that Lenin used a German big businessman to get back to Russia in 1917! He declared his conviction that the generals "should fully participate in the democratic process."

The peasantry on which the PTB relied upon in the states of Sao Paulo, Pirana and parts of Rio Grande has largely disappeared during the boom. The growth of industry has gone ahead in all sectors eg. vehicle production has risen from 174,000 in 1963 to 858,000 in 1974.

With that has gone an increase in the social weight of the working class, doubling in the last 30 decades so that it is now 40% of the population. It is a primarily a young working class, looking for a way out of the problems it faces.

While the advanced workers have been repelled by the antics of Brizola they have not rushed into the Communist Party, because the CP leaders have also gone on all fours before the generals. They advocate workers' support for the 'liberal' opposition party which is led by businessmen, generals and other gangsters made rich by the regime.

Salles, a spokesman for the CP has declared, "the 'armed forces must have a fundamental role of defending national sovereignty and democracy!' Perhaps this explains why the now-gagged CP General Secretary, Prestes openly accused Salles of being on drugs. The CP leaders even called for the dictatorship to nominate an assembly to draw up a new constitution.

Every corner of Latin America is stained with the blood of those who have been led to believe in the so-called democrats of the military and

big business. Yet still the CP fail to recognise that the ruling elite's are fundamentally opposed to granting democratic rights where this is a danger that this would open up the road for the workers and peasants to overthrow capitalism. Democracy means nothing to the oppressed but a means to end their impoverishment—the last thing the Brazilian capitalists can afford.

These stark lessons of the history of Brazil, of Chile and Argentina will not be lost to many in the ranks of the Workers Party. Already Lula's attempt to restrict the party to a voice in the Congress is under attack. Other leaders of the party are emerging to give it a socialist voice realising that the strength of the working class, can be mobilised to lead the workers, peasants and small farmers towards the overthrow of capitalism.

The very prospect for the growth of the PT was indicated when 8 deputies and one senator were prepared to go over to the Workers Party. The working class has shown itself ready to take up the struggle. Whereas for the years between 1973 and 1977 the average number of labour disputes a year was seven, 1979 saw one hundred and forty major strikes.

The workers have witnessed the criminal deception by the employers. It was even revealed that by manipulating the official prices index through which wages were fixed, the government robbed the workers of 34% of their wages in 1973/74! 96 million people out of 120 million still live on an average income of less than £2 a week.

Even those with regular jobs for Ford, General Motors and the other international monopolies are often forced to live in the shanty towns of wooden and cardboard shacks. The regime replies by lifting the ban on the film 'Battleship Potemkin' but the workers will not be content to merely watch others' revolutions; their conditions determine that they shape their own.

Chile Brazil

Army coup in Bolivia

To prevent a reformist centre-left coalition from coming to power, the Bolivian military has staged a coup. Last week they stormed the trade union [COB] headquarters, killing one workers' leader and arresting others. Leading politicians, including the country's interim President, were detained.

Bolivia's new junta were scared of what would happen after the UDP, centre-left coalition, took office in August. They would be under enormous pressure for Bolivian peasants and workers for real social change.

In June's general election the UDP had gained 34% of the vote, double its nearest rival the MNRA with 18%. When the UDP vote is added to the Socialist Party's 7%, and some dissident opposition members, it was clear that UDP's leader, Hernan Silves Zuazo, would have become President.

UDP's support came primarily from the working-class. Recent electoral surveys showed that 59% of blue-collar workers and 40% of white-collar workers backed UDP. They were demanding change. A government commission recently estimated that the average Bolivian family needed 6,800 pesos a month just for the basic necessities. But 60% of Bolivian workers earn less than 3,000 pesos.

The demand for a living minimum wage was being vigorously raised by the Bolivian trade unions. And the economic situation is deteriorating, —inflation 30 per cent and rising.

In an attempt to throttle the growing demand for change, the military reactionaries of Bolivia have stepped in. Coups and military rule are not unique to Bolivia's history, but the only reason the military relinquished power in 1978 [after 12 years rule] was because they were unable to govern. Such is the growing class polarisation in Bolivia and in Latin America, they will be incapable this time of sustaining their rule for very long.

CHILE: MILITARY 'DEMOCRACY'

The military is to restore democracy in Chile. Was that really the recent announcement of the regime?

Well not quite. Democracy it seems to have certain 'limitations'. In the first place all workers, socialist and Marxist parties will be banned. No one will be allowed to propagate doctrines "of a totalitarian character or based on class struggle."

We can assume though that this 'limitation' will not prevent any capitalist party putting forward a programme of action against the workers. Restrictions will just be against anyone who advocates socialist change. Tougher security measures will be instigated against 'terrorists'

i.e. anyone who disagrees or argues against this new dictatorial constitution.

The new constitution proposals were drawn up by a government Commission, in an attempt to dampen down criticism of the military's rule. They want to establish a capitalist dictatorship on a sure footing. There will be no elections for five more years, as the people are not deemed to be ready for universal suffrage.

Chile's new "institutional order" would be developed gradually to avoid disruption, Pinochet announced. The military dictators of Chile who viciously murdered tens of thousands and crushed the workers' movement have not really changed their spots.

Strikes shake Polish regime

For the third time in a decade Polish workers are resisting the Stalinist regime's attempt to introduce food price rises.

When the regime announced a 40%-60% increase in meat prices, factory after factory came out on strike.

By Jim Christie

They don't call them strikes though. The Polish Stalinists have a special way to trying to hide reality. They have coined the euphemism "temporary weakening of production dynamics."

But strikes are what they are. Strikes for higher wages, for a withdrawal of newly enforced production schedules and in some instances for an end to the mismanagement of the economy.

It is the lack of workers' democracy which has prevented proper socialist planning. The Stalinist bureaucratic elite who hold power cannot effectively plan and the economy is on a mess. Even *Polytika*, one of the government's magazines admitted earlier this month:

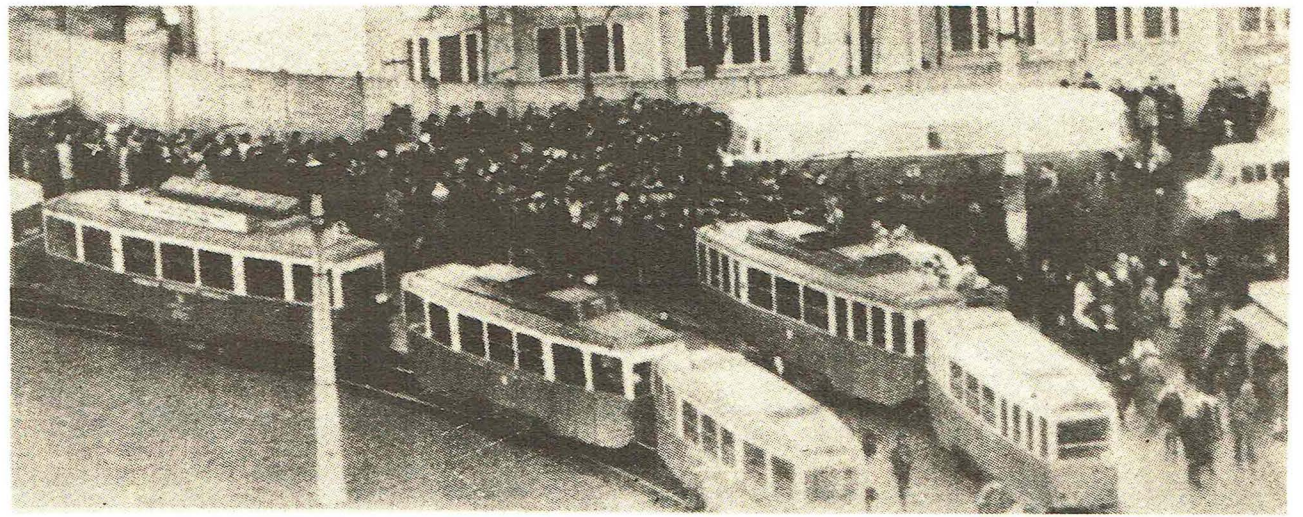
"National income fell last year by 2%. Management mechanisms are ailing and

sometimes functioning in the most illogical way. Statistics are manipulated. Work discipline is getting worse.

"Hundreds of thousands of workers go and come as they please. The construction plans for new housing are not implemented. Production of pork and beef is not getting better and it is not only at the butcher's shops that the queues extend."

The bureaucracy blindly gropes for an answer. In the early 1970s they tried a leap for growth by borrowing from the West. That has now rebounded on them. Imported inflation ravages the economy, and Poland's debt to Western bankers and government now totals a massive £8,125m.

Something had to give. The obvious answer was to cut meat subsidy, which accounts for a massive 40% of the



The current strikes are only the latest protest against the regime. [Above] Danzig workers demonstration in December, 1978.

£1,300m food subsidies. This subsidy has grown because previous attempts to raise prices in 1970 and 1976, had resulted in massive explosions of anger by Polish workers.

But by early July the regime clearly felt it had no choice. So they raised the overall price of meat by between 40% and 60%.

Workers immediately moved into action. Within ten days at least 33 factories were out on strike. 20,000 Warsaw car workers demanded a 10% wage increases and won.

Textile workers at the Zyrardow plants have called for an investigation into the way raw materials at the plant are wasted.

Workers Unions

The movement bypassed the official Stalinist trade unions. The only time they entered negotiations, was when management brought them in as part of their team.

Polish workers have learnt from past struggles, when the

regime victimised leading militants after the strikes had died down. In some plants this time workers rotated their negotiating team, to prevent individual victimisation. At the Ursus tractor plant, workers got a written assurance from the management that there would be no victimisation.

These pieces of paper may not count for much, when the present struggles ebb. But what will matter is the development of an independent workers' movement.

Already in these and in the past struggles one can see the nuclei forming.

The Polish ruling bureaucracy has tolerated the recent wage negotiations, because it is frightened of precipitating such a movement. But their nightmare will not vanish. They and the Russian Stalinists will not be able to stifle the aspirations and strength of the Polish working-class, in the struggle to create a real workers' democracy in Poland and throughout Eastern Europe.

FRENCH WORKERS MOVE INTO ACTION

A new wave of industrial action has hit France. In recent months growing militancy has meant massive dislocation of French industry and services.

The power workers, in the forefront of these battles, have carried out five one-day national strikes since the middle of May causing the blacking out of 40% of national electricity supplies.

The power men, angry at the government's attempts to restrict, and even remove their right to strike at nuclear plants, see this as only the first step to take away their right to strike. The whole of French society is in turmoil. Even formerly 'moderate' sections have been forced to defend themselves against the attacks on their rights and living standards by the French capitalists.

Students demonstrating; doctors being attacked by truncheoned police during a march against an increase in health charges; lawyers and magistrates demonstrating in protest at government plans to impose stiffer penalties for damage to property; nurses, firemen, metal workers etc. have all been involved in action of some form against the government.

The French ruling class is in a dilemma. Faced with increased militancy on one hand and with enormous economic problems on the other, it is striving to contain the situation by means of tough economic measures against the working class, and

By George Williamson
(Hackney Central LPYS)

repressive laws. They want to make the French working class pay for the economic crisis.

And the economic crisis is getting worse. Set against the background of an international slide into recession, all the economic indicators show decline. In 1979, France attained a growth rate of 3.4%. Last week the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) forecast it would be down to 2% this year.

Living standards in France, on average, fell for the first time in many years in 1979, with the average working family suffering a drop of 1.4%. This is the reason for the increased militancy from a working class used to increased living standards in the past, and not prepared to accept lower living standards now.

Unemployment is at 1.4 million, and inflation at 13% and both are still rising. The trade deficit of \$1.3 billion of 1979 is forecast by the OECD to be \$7.3 billion by the end of this year. The effects are felt throughout the economy, e.g., a 23% drop in the French vehicle market in May, has led to widespread redundan-

cies at Citroen. The economic situation is beginning to slip out of control.

The French ruling class face problems in the political arena too. The Presidential elections are now less than a year away, and they fear a victory for the left given the plummeting support for President Giscard D'Estaing.

The Socialist Party has yet to choose its candidate, but if they won next year, it would open up a Pandora's box of troubles. Workers would expect a socialist President to improve their living standards. In such a situation the position of the French capitalists would be even more threatened and the problems they now face would pale into insignificance by comparison.

The trade unions are, increasingly being pushed into defending their members living standards and rights. They have been particularly opposed to the government's bill the "Penal Code Amendment." This would give the ruling class stronger penalties to deal with factory occupations, industrial action affecting train services, and allow them to repress strikes and demonstrations affecting national 'security'.

Clearly this is an attempt by the government to shackle the unions with legal restrictions and render industrial action ineffective. So intent is the opposition however, that the government may be forced to retreat on many, if not all issues before the bill passes through parliament.

It is on the industrial scene that the unions are making the biggest impact. The power workers have caused enormous disruption throughout France on their one-day stoppages, causing many other sections of workers to join them. The employers though are still fighting and

have broken off discussions on a shorter working week because of the strikes.

The lorry drivers' union held one of the most effective forms of industrial action at the end of May in Paris, when they carried out 'Operation Snail'. In the early morning, the drivers, in their thousands, blocked every major road into Paris with their vehicles, causing absolute chaos as every road in all directions was brought to a standstill.

The French working class is in a particularly buoyant state at the moment. They have demonstrated that they are not prepared to see their living standards eroded, simply because the bosses' economic system is in difficulties. But so long as the capitalists control the government and industry the attacks on workers living standards will continue.

Political struggle

Clearly the workers require a political solution to their problems. The Presidential election next year will provide a golden opportunity to all workers to rid themselves of the bosses' puppet D'Estaing. It is up to the workers' parties to ensure that this is achieved, as a first step to eradicating all the economic hardships facing workers.

It is vital that the Socialist and Communist Parties agree on a workers' candidate, and on a joint socialist programme to mobilise the workers and get rid of capitalism. The election of a left President would mark an enormous step forward for the French workers. Such a victory would considerably encourage them in their struggles. A common programme and a fighting leadership would ensure that the aspirations of the workers in France are attained.



The steelworkers protest of last year [above] has now been joined by other workers.



IEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO:

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Despair

Dear Comrades

Last week in a small town on the outskirts of Glasgow a teenage youth attempted suicide as he couldn't find a job.

What a horrific testimony to the despair and desperation felt by many young people in society today.

It turns my stomach to listen to the cant and hypocrisy of Tory spokesmen when the reality shrouds our society like a death veil.

If hate is a progressive factor then we are half-way there already.

Yours fraternally
Larry Flanagan
Pollok LPYS

Bailing out the bosses

Dear Comrades

What do the capitalists do when their profits are threatened by inefficiency and out-dated machinery? One company in the South West seems to have found a solution—and it doesn't involve investing money in research or improvements.

Instead Avon Rubber company of Meltham in Wiltshire get their employees to do it on the cheap. They've just given 'rewards' totalling £10,000 to four workers at their factory. This generosity is understood better when you understand that in return for their handsome gifts, the workers have saved the Avon shareholders £270,000 a year.

For instance two rubber cutters received £3,000 for redesigning their templates to save the company £280 a week—in other words management will recoup their bounty in eleven weeks!

Another worker has designed a machine which will do the work done by four machines at present; this has the advantage that not only will management be able to take out a patent on a valuable invention which they had very little part in producing but they'll be able to throw yet more workers onto the dole.

The fourth worker received £3,000 for redesigning the factory's whole production system.

This example answers decisively the dismal Johnnies in the labour movement who refuse to believe that under socialism workers will be able to run industry better than capitalist 'managers'!

The only difference being of course that under socialism the understanding that workers have of industry will be used to benefit the whole of society not just the spivs of Avon Rubber Company and the like.

Paul Moorhouse
South Gloucestershire
LPYS

BSC—painting the kerb stones

Dear Comrades

The Tories hope their latest and most expensive "signing", Ian McGregor, will do for British Steel what Sir Michael Edwardes is doing at British Leyland—sack thousands and close plants.

Two steelworkers told me about the frantic preparations for McGregor's re-

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MXX1014
(16-18)

The guilty few

Dear Comrades

A recent encounter while leafleting a Manchester job centre about the LPYS demonstration serves as a graphic illustration of the frustration and desperation experienced by millions under this rotten system.

Literally shaking with anger, an unemployed worker thrust a job advert into my hands. "Put that in

your paper," he said. "£30 for general workers—what kind of a wage is that?"

"You're expected to take a job like that, and then you're trapped: if you leave, they won't give you any dole for at least six weeks, and you'll probably never find a better-paid job round here anyway."

The job of the LPYS and the 'Militant' is to clearly turn such burning anger upon the guilty few—the

bosses and their Tory agents. Then we can sentence this gang of robbers, parasites and vandals to a life of watching the rest of us enjoying the benefits of socialism.

Bosses and Tories beware—the LPYS are on the march!

Yours fraternally
John Hunt
Moss Side LPYS

A right, not a privilege

Dear Comrades

I received a letter today telling me all the items I would be needing for my college. I totalled them up and it came to £124 and that was just for my catering equipment, not including my entrance fee.

I will be hard pushed to find the money, but it's not only me. There are thou-

sands of other young people in exactly the same position who would like to go to college but just cannot afford it.

I feel that everybody has a right to a good education and that right should not be sacrificed for the Tory government to spend the money on nuclear arms.

The working class of this country pay taxes towards education but as we see, not all that money is going towards education. We

should fight this because the education of the working class is the basis of socialism.

I feel it is important to fight the education cuts so that there would be no long term effects upon the labour movement.

Mark Dytall
Norwich LPYS

Marxist school—an education

Dear Editor

As a student to your recent Marxist Weekend School in London I should like to congratulate all those responsible for organising the event.

The film, 'The Battle for

Chile', was a remarkable curtain-raiser, whilst the sessions I attended on 'Wage, Labour and Capital', 'Will there be a slump', and 'The role of a Marxist as a shop steward' were tremendously educational.

I think that my future work in the movement will benefit from that weekend

and most of the people I spoke to virtually made the same comment—that they had learned more in that weekend than they would normally have done in six months. I hope these schools will develop in future to every region of the country.

Fraternally
Eddie Phillips
CPSA Glasgow

Abusing the NHS

Dear Comrades

"A standard charge of £5 for every emergency ambulance call," suggests A B Cross (Consultant) in the British Medical Journal. He feels that this minimum charge would act as a deterrent to people who he claims are abusing the system by calling out ambulances for such cases as a needle lodged in a finger.

Indeed, why stop there? Why not install meters in ambulances and monitor

the rising pulse rates of motorway accident victims as the pounds and pence ring up?

No doubt A B Cross feels that by cutting down on these so-called abuses, more ambulances could be made available for real emergencies. All honourable stuff, but doesn't he realise that far more harm is being done by this government's vicious attack on the health service?

With the forced closure or part closure of many accident and emergency departments an even greater strain is being placed on an already over-stretched am-

balance service, with the result, an increase in the death-rate of accident victims.

If A B Cross is true to his ethics, and puts patients before pennies, then he should unite with other health service workers to fight the cuts instead of putting his name to articles which only serve to strengthen my resolve to see the complete nationalisation of all health services under workers' control and management.

Comradely yours
P Lavery
Cathcart CLP

cent visit to Sheffield. Local managers, fearing their plants could be picked out for closure, spent tens of thousands of pounds cleaning up and trying to make the plants look new, shining and super-efficient. Weeds that had been growing for ten years were pulled up. Even kerb stones were painted!

Shortly after his flying visit, the River Don works, which is under threat, cancelled its annual day trip to the coast for its retired

workers—saving just over £4,000.

One of the men went on last year's trip as a first-aid man. He said the pensioners really enjoyed the day meeting their old workmates. It was one of the highlights of their year and they really looked forward to the next one.

These pensioners have given a lifetime's work to the steel industry but are no more use to the stony-faced tycoons who are running down BSC [not one of whom

has ever made an ounce of steel in his life]. It's high time McGregor and the rest were pensioned off and workers' control and management established. Then past, present and future steel workers would all be far better off.

Yours fraternally
John Dale
ASTMS

Defend union fighters

Dear Colleague

The whole labour and trade union movement is under attack by the Tory government through their monetarist policies resulting in vicious attacks on our living standards. Central to their plans to increase unemployment and destroy the Welfare State are their assaults on the unions through the introduction of anti-union laws.

In the past, many of our brothers have suffered physical and financial distress at the hands of the authorities as a result of their trade union activities to protect their jobs and living standards. Des Warren is one such trade unionist who served nearly three years in ten prisons after being charged under the 1875 Conspiracy Act. He now suffers from Parkinsons Disease which has been diagnosed as being drug induced as a result of the authorities' misuse of drugs in prison. He is unable to work.

The Blyth and District

Trades Council, at their June meeting, carried unanimously the following resolution.

"The Blyth & District Trades Council is concerned at the financial distress of many of our brothers like Des Warren, and calls upon the trade union and labour movement to set up a trade union activists' aid committee with the object of assisting our brothers and sisters who have been injured or who suffer financial distress as a result of fighting for trade union rights."

It is vital that we press through our organisations, Trades Councils, union branches, local Labour Parties etc for the TUC and the Labour Party to set up a trade unionists' aid committee to defend our members who could soon be faced with heavy fines and jail sentences if the government, by use of the Employment Bill, succeeds in making criminals of workers trying to defend their jobs and living standards.

Yours fraternally
Gordon Smith
Secretary,
Blyth & District
Trades Council

Whose man at the BBC?

Dear Comrade

With unemployment soaring towards 2 million, it's a struggle for most people to find a decent job. Not so for everybody! One man who has done alright is Mr George Howard, who has recently been appointed Chairman of BBC.

Mr Howard, who owns a 10,000 acre estate in Yorkshire and one time chairman of the Country Landowners Association, takes up the position—only part-time of course—with the modest salary of £17,316 a year. No doubt he will find time to fit in another part-time job or just potter about down on the estate.

It seems he also has excellent credentials for the job; most prominent is the fact that he is a 'close friend' of Mr Willie 'short, sharp shock' Whitelaw. But, rather defensively, he claimed in 'The Sunday Times', "I think those who appointed me know that I've got a pretty independent mind" and "I'm nobody's yes man."

Answer for young and old

Dear Comrades

Reading the article 'How they Rob the Old' by TA Hare of BPTUAA, we are also campaigning in the north against the government's shameful delay in paying the increase in pensions.

I am a member of the Pensioners' Association, which is affiliated to BPT UAA, and a few of us got on a local television programme, where there was a pre-recorded (!) interview with Linda Chalker. Her comment on the delay—believe it or not—was that it was the pensioners' contribution to the economy!

The pensioners there were furious. Five pensioners were asked to comment on

the statement, all were very critical, except one who said he was quite satisfied. Everyone shouted, 'You must have two pensions'. They were also asked where the extra money would come from, and one pensioner shouted "Stop spending money on armaments." Talking to pensioners in this area, over the past few months, the phrase 'something has to be done' has been used time and time again. The same phrase was used during the 1926 strike, I remember.

What is needed is clear leadership and a programme of complete nationalisation, advocated consistently by 'Militant' over the years. It is the only solution for young and old.

Yours comradely
Daisy Rawling
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

WE JUST CAN'T AFFORD COMPLACENCY

Readers and supporters of 'Militant' have made a tremendous effort to get us ahead of target at the half-year.

We cannot afford to be complacent though. And we cannot afford many weeks like this week's total.

The summer period tends to be a bit slack (though there's no excuse this year, we haven't had any summer!) Also after an all-out push like last week's, the short-fall is quite understandable.

There are still a number of examples that comrades can emulate, however—John Moore, an ex-Shotton worker made redundant has given us £100 of his redundancy pay. Members of Dagenham LPYS have sent in over £65 from the Dagenham Town Show, where the comrades collected over £86 before expenses. Phil and Lesley Barnard from Milton Keynes (the town, not the economist) sent us £50!

Jim McEwan writes, "Please find donation of £20 from Littlehampton LPYS. We would like to have matched the £75 we sent in last summer, but with money going to other causes such as Chile and local campaigns we are not in a position to do so. However, we hope to be able to help again in the future."

The social where the draw was held netted us £52 after all expenses and comrades in the Lambeth area of London made it up to £88.

Three 'Militant' sellers charged tourists 50p to take their photos selling the paper. This is a very good initiative, which could be copied, if you can find a tourist.

Thanks also to the mem-

bers of Braintree Labour Party who heard Brian Ingham of the 'Militant' Editorial Board, and who contributed an extra £4 for his expenses, which of course has gone into our fighting fund. Over £22 was raised at a Reading 'Militant' Readers' Meeting, of which £6 came from the Advest Strikers' Committee. Many thanks.

Besides meetings, such as those in Grimsby, York and Leeds we've had money from Huddersfield readers (£27) and £32 from Hull (sources include sponsored walk and Cllr D Brown). Yorkshire supporters are doing their best to give the third quarter a good send-off—make sure this pace is kept up, comrades!

Socials in Leicester, Shipley and Rochdale helped our funds considerably, as did the raffle of the bottle in Birmingham.

Tenners this week came from I McEwan (AUEW Cleethorpes), and C Hodson (Cardiff), whilst J Whyte (Dunfermline LPYS) sent us a fiver. £4.45 came from M Robb (Nottingham) and £4 from the McCartney family (Glasgow).

Thanks also to C Conaghan (CPSA Branch Chairman, London) for £3, to S Brightman (Heath Hayes, Staffs) for £2.25, and to two Austin and Pickersgill shop stewards (Sunderland) M Dodds and P Callaghan for £3.50, one of the frequent donations we get from shipyards in the area. Other readers to have contributed include J Kelly (Patchway), H Shields (Birmingham), and J Johnson (AUEW Esher).

By Steve Cawley

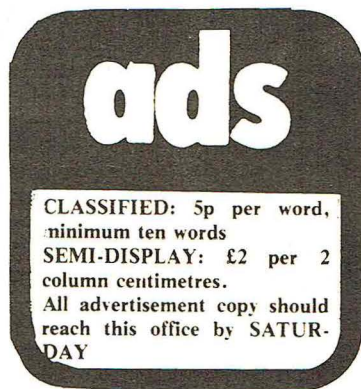
Build **M**ilitant

Area	Received	% of 3rd qtr target achieved	Target 3rd qtr	Target for year
Eastern	2323		3500	5,000
East Midlands	2155		2660	3,800
Hants & IOW	2061		2730	3,900
Humberside	928		1750	2,500
London East	3572		4340	6,200
London West	2039		3290	4,700
London South	3244		3290	4,700
Manchester & Lancs	1699		3570	5,100
Merseyside	2787		4200	6,000
Northern	2942		5110	7,300
Scotland East	1117		2240	3,200
Scotland West	2308		3500	5,000
Southern	2697		4130	5,900
South West	1546		2240	3,200
Wales East	1064		1960	2,800
Wales West	1011		2170	3,100
West Midlands	4189		6300	9,000
Yorkshire	2623		5110	7,300
Others	7820		7910	12,000
Total received	48125		70,000	100,000

TARGET FOR OCTOBER 11th £70,000

FOR YEAR- £100,000

THIS WEEK £897



EAST MANCHESTER Militant Readers' Meeting: 'Militant: What we stand for'. Speaker: Dominic Byrne, AUEW-TASS, Treasurer, Ardwick CLP (personal capacity) Thursday 24 July, 7.30 pm in the 'Dog and Partridge', Denton.

BADGES made to order: SAE for details from Dept P, Maprographics, 32 Worple Rd Mews, London SW 19.

MANCHESTER 'Militant' Readers' Meeting: 'Will there be a third world war? A Marxist analysis'. Speaker: Ken Brownsey, Withington CLP. Sunday 3 August, 7.30pm, 'Star and Garter', Fairfield Street, behind Piccadilly BR Station

GREET LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

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Due to demand there will be a delay of a further fortnight for delivery.

'Militant' Summer Camp

August Bank Holiday, Friday 22-Monday 25 August. Horton, near Swansea. Creche and snacks provided; bring own tents. Cost; [week-end] £6. Children £2,

Political programme: Under-5—free. Day-trippers £1 per day. Introduction to Marxism, The General Strike, Stalinism, The threat of world war, Marxism and the Labour Party. To book or for further details, contact: Rob Sewell, 99 Penderry Rd, Penlan, Swansea. Tel. 584 542.

'Militant' Weekend School

Come to the Danville Hotel (on sea-front) in sunny Margate On Saturday/Sunday August 30/31

Saturday 11—1: 'An introduction to Marxist economics'. Ted Grant.

2.30—5.00. 'The Socialist Way Forward for Labour'. Ray Apps. 8.30...Social at hotel (with food)

Sunday 10.00—1.00. 'Chile—Lessons of '70-'73 and the Way Forward'. Sunday afternoon...sunbathe on beach.

Bookings and queries to K Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Margate, Kent. Tel. (0483) 291293. Cost: only £7.50 (including bed & breakfast at Danville Hotel). Children: half-price.

AUEW - THE BURNING NEED FOR DEMOCRACY

At a recent quarterly shop stewards' meeting of Braintree Hoverhill and Halstead district AUEW, Brother Laird of the AUEW executive was the speaker, giving a comprehensive talk on the rule changes and proposed amalgamation, and what a great job our leaders were doing for the membership.

During question time, however, the following observation was made: "Taking into consideration that a very small percentage of tribunal hearings on unfair dismissal cases are ruled in favour of the employee and an extremely small percentage of these are reinstated but are

By Don Barnard
(AUEW Convenor)

offered meagre compensation, how does the speaker

CAMPAIGN FOR A FIGHTING AUEW LEADERSHIP PUBLIC MEETING
Hear:
Bob Wright (Candidate 1980 AUEW presidential elections)
John Ingham (Leeds AUEW)
Chairman:
Tommy Bore (shop steward, Vauxhall, Ellesmere Port)
Tuesday 26 August, 7.30pm
Municipal Annex, Dale Street, Liverpool

justify the capitalistic attitude of our executive over the dismissal of brothers Edward and Hughes [who were sacked from the AUEW research department after compiling an election document for Bob Wright—in their own time—

and have taken their case to an industrial tribunal]. I feel that the executive's attitude is completely wrong and has given a lead to bosses to follow suit, especially as in this case, the tribunal chairman decided there had been

no 'gross misconduct', and that the procedure adopted for dismissal had been inappropriate."

The reply was far from satisfactory as far as many of the members present were concerned, with Brother Laird justifying the dismissal and fully supporting John Boyd's decision.

If this is the attitude of one or more of our leaders then it is time that all AUEW members became active to bring back democracy into our union again and change them.

From recent reports of Mr Duffy's comments in the capitalist press, it seems we are all right-wing 'moderates' or so he would like to believe.

Are we? Demoralised after the shambles of last year's one and two day strikes, maybe. Moderates—no way! It is time we changed things, and as a start we must get resolutions passed through shop stewards' committees, branches and district committees for the reinstatement of brothers Edward and Hughes.

And we must fight in the coming presidential elections for the election of a left winger, to end the dead-hand domination of the so-called moderates over our union, and begin its reconstruction returning it to its traditional aims and to make sure it represents the aspirations of its rank and file members.

Fight closures, Fight redundancies

The recent NUM conference issued a direct warning to the Thatcher government over its vicious anti-working class policies.

It was forcibly pointed out that "the trade union and working class movements will not tolerate a return to those days of poverty-stricken misery and will take whatever action is necessary to prevent it." The resolution was passed unanimously.

Emlyn Williams (S Wales area) thanked the delegates for their support last year over the threat to close the Deep Duffryn pit in S Wales. They forced the NCB and government to back down. Unfortunately they were defeated by mother nature.

Emlyn stated that "the policy of the government is the deindustrialisation of the Welsh nation."

"We face a situation now whatever happens of the loss of 7,500 jobs in the next 14 months; 50% of our manpower will be declared redundant overnight!"

"This is a crisis of survival," he told delegates. "We must never return to the 1960s where the name of the NUM was in the gutter when we had no fight to take on the government over pit closures."

"Today when we went to the membership out of 27,000 miners, we have not more than 100 against taking action over jobs."

Delegates constantly heckled Derek Ezra as he presented his report and Gormley was forced to intervene on his behalf several times.

Conference was in no mood for a cover up by the NCB chairman who denied that a plan had been drawn up to close down pits.

Another significant step forward for the union was the acceptance of a resolution from South Derbyshire which declared the urgent need to involve the youth of the industry in the union.

Although the proposal was



The Tories' plans of deindustrialisation for Wales—a disused pit head at Ebbw Vale steelworks

left very vague, it is up to the NUM activists themselves to take up the initiative in the areas to press the NEC into establishing a youth section on the lines of TASS and the sheet metal workers' union. This will be vital for the future of the union and has much sympathy amongst broad layers of miners.

By Rob Sewell

Colchester Lathe

Members of the AUEW, TGWU and EETPU at Colchester Lathe are working only four days a week with an overtime ban in a fight against enforced redundancies.

Colchester Lathe are planning to lay off 400 workers out of a total workforce of 1,200. Through lack of orders, lathe production, kits and parts had dropped off by 20% over the last few months.

The redundancy cycle, in machine tools is on an approximate five-year cycle. Last time a similar drop in orders cost less than 100 jobs, this time 400, 288 in the hourly grades. 140 workers immediately accepted voluntary redundancy, and some more have joined them.

Now the company wants up to another 70 to go. Enough's enough, and the stewards met

Bob Edwards (Harlow LP) spoke to Colchester Lathe stewards

management. They were prepared to accept a big cut in bonus to stop enforced redundancy, but no go. The stewards were prepared to work a shorter week to stop redundancies, again no go. Management wanted the full cutback. The stewards were suspicious, why so many jobs this time? Why the intransigence?

Rumours had been floating around for some time about new technology, robot production. Was this an attempt to cut back so that none of the benefits in terms of shorter hours would be passed on?

The stewards led, and recommended working a four day week, and overtime

ban. After the first week the men held a mass meeting in the Town Hall, the room was overflowing, some doubts were expressed. Was this the best way to fight? Wasn't redundancies inevitable? Weren't we just further wrecking the company?

The stewards argued back. The management were giving no lee-way, the buck must stop somewhere, if we don't fight now we soon won't have enough strength to fight back with, we are sick of mismanagement and their false promises. The mood changed—the vote was put and it was five to six votes for every one against.

So every Monday the workers will be out, enforcing a four day week. No redundancies, work sharing with no loss of pay, let all workers make the stand.

Ansells

"You don't close a brewery, you wind it down, and we're not going to let them whittle away at manning levels whilst they do that," said Mat Folarin, a shop steward at Ansells in Birmingham.

The workers at Ansells came out last week after the management made an offer to them of £10 per week, plus £5.50 per week over a two-year period if they accepted 130 redundancies.

The men at the picket line were angry. "They're trying to get us to sell our mates' jobs for 7p per week," said one

picket. The mood of the men was so determined that the management at Ansells backed down just one day after the strike began, and agreed to settle the wage demand, and to negotiate about redundancies separately. This means that the real battle is yet to come. The fear is that there will be a shift in production away from Birmingham, to Burton, without even increasing manning levels at Burton.

This plan is a far cry from the "well-done" message given to the men at Ansells just a few weeks ago from Sir Derek Oldham Brown (Vice chairman of the Board)

thanking them for making 37% of Allied Breweries £113 million in profit last year, and informing the men of a profit-sharing scheme.

The men at Ansells are adamant: "Never before have we had to struggle over conditions, it has always been a question of redundancy," added Mat Folarin. "The majority of men believe it is time to take a stand against redundancy."

Mat Folarin spoke in a personal capacity to Yasmin Barry and Jim Hooker

Blackhall Colliery

Within a fortnight of the Venice conference where Thatcher agreed with the other leaders of major capitalist nations to double coal output, the future of a Durham pit is being questioned. Blackhall colliery employs

over 1,300 and it is planned to transfer 500 to other pits. The number of faces will be reduced from five to two, with one stand-by. The pit's entire future will be reviewed later.

The NCB say the reason is because water is rushing into the pit. The problem of water

exists, but there is a feeling that the decline in demand for Blackhall's coking coal has affected the NCB's view.

At this stage there are no redundancies planned, but recruitment has stopped in Durham. The main employer in Blackhall is the pit, and it

will be another road to employment that has been blocked off for school leavers. As one miner said, "I've worked for 42 years, but it is the young ones I worry for."

By Bill Hopwood
(Thornaby Labour Party)



TASS members picket the GEC headquarters in London

Photo: MILITANT

REINSTATE TYNAN NOW!

Edwardes' attack on Derek Robinson has opened the flood gates for more major manufacturers to attack trade union activists.

The latest case is the victimisation of Ken Tynan (AUEW-TASS) who is the lay executive com-

mittee member for the North West region. This attack has been shrouded under a redundancy campaign at GEC Fusegear, in Merseyside.

Our only way to defend the rights of any activist is by organising a fight back through every GEC

plant in Britain and by the leadership of the union swinging its full resources into action. To date, the only material produced has been through the North West GEC shop stewards advisory committee.

The EC of TASS must

use the journal and leaflets explaining the case to the full, and sending them to all shop stewards committees.

By Reg Sidebottom
(Vice Chairman, TASS,
Office Committee GEC)

B & B Caterers

Workers at B&B Caterers Ltd, contracted to Liverpool Airport, have been forced into dispute by the management, in the face of demands for trade union recognition.

By striking in support of shop steward Laura Cross, the 22 women were cynically sacked by management who proceeded to take on scab labour comprised of family and friends of scabs who remained in work.

Latest concessions by management include trade union recognition, without reinstating rights, and reinstatement of two women for two remaining vacant positions, if they choose to re-apply.

MAKE ACTION BITE

The two G&MWU area officials we were able to talk with were seemingly reluctant to recommend a clear directive to G&MWU members [who comprise a large proportion of airport staff] to refrain from crossing the official line. No inter-union communication seems to have taken place towards recognition, that it is in fact an official dispute.

Indeed the officials expressed concern over the possibility that the dispute may escalate and refused our promptings that full and immediate mobilisation take place to assist the seriously depleted and inexperienced

picket line.

We were even taken to one side [out of earshot] when we offered our support, explaining that the women were becoming demoralised by the effects of poor leadership, extreme provocation by security personnel and police and were in danger of being forced to capitulate to management offers of compensation for loss of jobs.

Obviously this is a situation which cannot be allowed to exist for a day longer and we call on trade unionists on Merseyside to mobilise support for the picket line.

A clear leadership is required in pursuing this matter

to a successful conclusion. That leadership can only come from trade unionists prepared to give up some of their time with a view to closing Liverpool Airport, until the 22 have been reinstated without conditions and restored trade union recognition with full rights to negotiation.

The women have declared they are willing and prepared to struggle if only support was forthcoming. Do not let them down.

By Steven Vase
(National Graphical
Association FOC)

Beat the Barbican bosses

For the past month or so, Drake & Scull electricians along with the men on five sub contract companies have been applying a work to rule and a strict appliance of Health and Safety regulations plus a withdrawal of good relations with management.

This arose out of management's refusal to recognise the shop committee because it was made up of half Drake & Scull men and half from the sub-contractors. Also they refused to recognise a steward elected by the men because again, he worked for a sub

contract firm.

Eventually, through a technicality in the rule book the shop steward stood down and a Drake & Scull man was elected, but management have still refused to negotiate with the sub contracting members of the committee on anything

except what is directly related to them, sackings, lodging allowance, etc.

"This is not acceptable to the shop," I was told. "Our whole idea is unity not divisions—we implemented a basic 38 hours working from 24 June as a protest."

However, on 27 June 79 of the sub contractors working for Bleakdale's, one of the sub contractors, were sacked. Each man was given a letter at 11 am telling them to be off the site by 12 o'clock and paid up to 3.30 pm.

The men are not accepting this. A meeting was called on Monday 30th, with many of the sacked men paying their own way down (Glasgow, Liverpool etc.) to be there. The shop have decided for the moment to reinforce their 38-hour working week until management have reinstated the sacked men.

The feeling is that these are false redundancies. I was told that at least six months' work exists for all the labour force. If this wasn't bad enough

most of the lodging men are staying down in London as it's virtually impossible to get work in their home towns.

Some have applied for work on other firms and at first were accepted and then refused later. The feeling is that they were "checked out" and found that they had worked on the Barbican.

However, more shop meetings are planned. I was told, "we feel these men are being sacked unfairly and with unemployment already high we are determined to get their jobs back."

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KING HENRY PIES

'We're out till we win'

The management of King Henry Pies, Levenshulme, Manchester, might have been fooling themselves into thinking that the strike by members of the BFAWU would blow over in a few days.

After last Thursday's 6 am picket, it was obvious by the way they were answering back to pickets that they're not so sure. Representatives of the Bakers Union from all over the North West, local trade unionists, LPYS and Labour Party members from Manchester joined most of the 30 strikers to make up a 60 strong picket.

No-one expects victory overnight but this was a step nearer. One young worker who had started on Monday was applauded by pickets as he joined the strike. A Rentokil van and a delivery of silver foil both turned back. With this and the support on the picket line from other trade unionists the mood is even more determined than before.

The second week of the strike had seen a number of developments although management have not moved at all on the basic question of union recognition.

The call for blacking has already had a good response particularly with deliveries going out. Liverpool dockers halted all deliveries to the Isle of Man. A university canteen has stopped taking King Henry pies and various other deliveries should be blacked this week. Stopping supplies has been fairly successful although there have been setbacks, with cowboy firms taking on some deliveries.

It is clear that blacking is an essential part of winning this strike. As the union's call goes out through the official and unofficial channels of the movement this will tighten up. Trade union and Labour Party members, particularly in the North West should find out if King Henry products are being sent to shops, cafes, works canteens etc. in their area, inform the Bakers Union (address below) and take any steps they can themselves.

The union is also planning to picket King Henry shops in the area and have produced a leaflet explaining the situation for this.

Money is the other vital factor. The Executive Council of the BFAWU voted £2,000 to the strike fund—a reflection of the feeling of the union about ending sweated labour in this industry and its development as a fighting union in the last few years.

The spirit of the recent BFAWU conference (Militant 507) is shown to be carried into action. From the meeting with Liverpool dockers, pickets returned with £200. Salford and Manchester Trades Councils have both backed up support with cash as well as a growing number of trade union, Labour Party and LPYS branches.

This support is seen as only the start but already strikers and officials are needed to speak at 2 or 3 meetings a day usually. By the time other labour movement organisations have been met the list will be a lot longer and the funds healthier. The strikers expect to be practised public speakers by the time they win!

On the picket line itself there are several new faces of workers who have joined the strike. There are also several new faces going through the picket line—mainly youngsters who have been sent as part of a 'work experience' scheme on £23.50 paid by the government! This not only shows up the dangerous nature of such schemes supplying scab labour free of charge but also indicates future problems for the trade union movement if the latest of Tory minister Jim Prior's ideas was taken up.

While the management use the system when they can, they're not adverse to breaking the law if necessary. Some workers under 16 years old have been there without the necessary permits—though since the strike begun there has been a good deal of form filling for permits under management orders!

Ardwick LPYS are arranging a meeting with speakers from the Bakers Union and the Tailor and Garment workers union involved in the recent Kleins dispute. The experiences and lessons of Kleins will be useful support to the Bakers Union here.

The strikers have already learned a lot through their own experience. With their determination and continuing financial and blacking support from the movement victory seems certain.

Please send donations, messages of support and useful information to: BFAWU District Office, Room 4, George House, 30 Dudley Road, Manchester M16 8DE.

After 8 months—Benedict's Occupation Picket
30 July, 6.00-7.00 pm

Mass picket, front gate, Church Lane, Tooting
Food available

Public Meeting, 7.30 pm, Tooting Co-op Hall,
180 Upper Tooting Broadway

[between Tooting Broadway & Tooting Bec tubes]
Speakers:

Alan Fisher [Gen. Sec. NUPE]

Dave Williams [Ass. Gen. Sec. COHSE]

Arthur Hautut [Chairman, Benedict's
Occupation]

Carl Brecker [Fightback]

Dai Dawe [Reg. Off. RCN]

Frank Faulkner [NUPE steward, Bolingbroke
Hospital]

