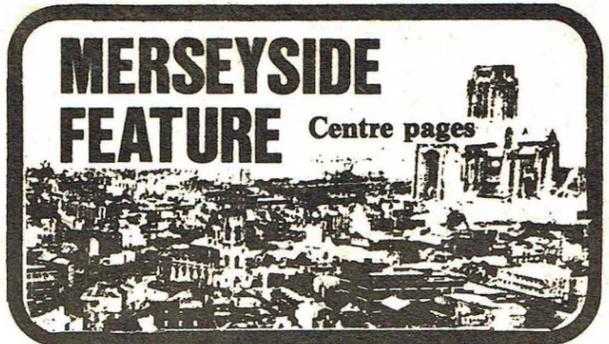


Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 530
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15p



2,162,874 out of work..... AND RISING!

BRING DOWN THE TORIES!

The magnificent demonstration against unemployment in Liverpool must be the first step in a campaign to bring down the Tories.

Eighteen months of Tory rule has seen the devastation of jobs in Britain. What will be left if they are allowed to stay in power for their full five years?

Unemployment now stands, officially, at 2,162,874, yet another post-war record. The papers of big business, 'The Times' and 'Financial Times' glibly speak of three or four million out of work within a few years!

The Manpower Services Commission forecast that 560,000 under-19s would be jobless by January 1983 including one in three of the previous summer's school leavers. Can here be a more graphic illustration

of the grim future facing youth if the labour movement fails to kick out the Tory government?

The Tories have done nothing to stop the loss of jobs: in fact they have actively encouraged unemployment to try to scare workers into accepting low wages and bad conditions—all to boost a sick profit system.

Do these Tories have to suffer unemployment and low pay; do they have to put up with education

or health services slashed to ribbons?

Not on your life. But to save their profits and their crazy system they are prepared to inflict this future on us.

This Tory cabinet is estimated to be the richest since 1822. Lord Thorneycroft, Tory Party chairman and the man who defended millionaire tax-dodger Vestey, is chairman of the international rubber monopoly Pirelli.

Chancellor Howe has had long involvement with the huge EMI combine, who have sacked workers despite enormous profits. Keith Joseph was a director of his family firm Bovis, the giant building contractors.

Employment Secretary Prior himself is not only a farmer but was a director of United Biscuits. Heseltine was chairman of Haymarket Press. Whitelaw has a massive estate in Scotland.

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE



On May 4th 1977, under a Labour government, unemployment stood at 1,341,700. Mrs Thatcher, speaking in a Tory Party political broadcast said "If we'd had this level of unemployment we would have been drummed out of office."

Gardners- workers struggle beats bosses

By Matt Wrack

"If people stick together they can defeat this government. I hope that other factories follow our example."

Jimmy Sharpe, a worker at Gardners' diesel engine factory at Eccles was, like other workers who have occupied their

factory for seven weeks, jubilant at winning their battle.

Management have been forced to withdraw 590 redundancy notices. The occupation began on

3rd October, after negotiations with management broke down. The workers held a mass meeting which voted in favour of action. The intended redundancies included the convenor and several shop stewards.

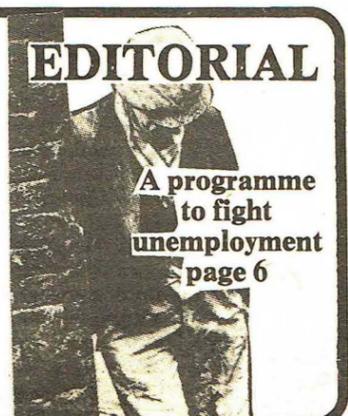
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**LABOUR TO POWER ON A
SOCIALIST PROGRAMME!**



**SUPPORT
THE
FIREMEN**

See page 14



EDITORIAL

A programme
to fight
unemployment
page 6

Robin Hood in reverse

Seductive promises of tax cuts was one of the tricks used by Mrs Thatcher to pick up votes in the last general election.

Predictably, the lion's share of income tax cuts went to the rich and the super-rich.

Now, after a disastrous year and a half, the Tories are proposing increases in tax for ordinary workers and tax concessions for big business which we will have to pay for through further cuts and higher prices.

The promised tax cuts were a fraud through and through. In last year's Autumn budget, it's true, Howe handed out £4,500 million in income tax reductions. But 34% of this went

By Lynn Walsh

to the top 7% rich tax payers.

The bottom 10% of tax payers, clearly those most in need of tax concessions, got a mere 2% of the Tory hand-out. Taking into ac-

In the General Election, the Tory manifesto promised "substantial cuts in income tax at all levels." This week they increased taxation by way of National Insurance contributions.

count cuts in the 'social wage' and VAT increases,

only a tiny handful of rich tax payers were better off at all.

This week, with the government's borrowing requirement and the money supply way off target, the Tories have announced proposals to increase workers' National Insurance contributions by up to £4.36 a week, next year.

This will have exactly the same effect on workers as an increase in the base rate of income tax, more than wiping out this year's paltry concessions.

This form of tax increase,

moreover, hits hardest at workers on average or below

average earnings.

The Low-pay Unit estimated that 'the poverty

stocks, which will generally have increased since they were purchased.

"The programme of the next Conservative government is an honest one. We will look after pensioners and protect them."

—Patrick Jenkin now Tory Social Services Minister, in election campaign, 23 April 1979

trap' will be made worse now for an extra 50,000 families. Those earning between £41 and £74 will now lose 87p for every extra £1 earned.

At the same time, however, the government has announced changes in company taxation which will give big business a £300 million to £750 million tax windfall this winter.

Because many firms are allowing their stocks to run down during the slump, many are now becoming liable to pay previous deferred tax on the value of these

It is now proposed to change the Inland Revenue regulations to "write off" this deferred tax liability.

This is not all, however. The regulations will henceforth let companies allow for inflation over the next period, thus greatly reducing their tax liability.

But if the Treasury is going to lose this tax, it will have to be made up elsewhere. This means further cuts in public expen-

diture—or increases in taxes, like VAT, which fall heaviest on the working class. And further tax increases are undoubtedly in the pipeline.

At the same time, the new rules on stock appreciation tax will mainly benefit manufacturing industry, and hit the big retailers who have gained most from the existing system.

"The person who will have to pay for them (the tax changes) in the end," commented the finance director of Tesco supermarkets, "will be the consumer."

While industry is being allowed a massive index-linked tax concession related to inflation, Thatcher is attempting to limit the firemen and other public sector workers to 6% increases, when inflation is running at an annual rate of 15%.

Denning rages against democracy

That renowned defender of democracy and freedom has struck again. Lord Denning has turned his mature 81-year-old brain to the threat to democracy posed by the next Labour government.

Contemplating the likelihood of Labour taking steps to abolish the House of Lords, Denning has concluded that the judges will have to restrain such an undemocratic body as Parliament, elected only by the whole of the population.

Denning's reflections were made on this year's TV 'Dimpleby Lecture' [last year it was Roy Jenkins on the need for a Centre Party]. He called for judges to have the final say on whether legislation was constitutional.

The consequences would be far-reaching; the judges would by now have totally outlawed so-called "secondary picketing". The Court of Appeal tried to restrict picketing, but was overturned by the Lords. But referring to this, Denning reveals his real concern: "It made the trade union lead-

By Derrick McClelland
(Putney CLP)

ers judges in their own cause," he said.

Denning is also concerned about the undermining of law and order by Britain's "irresponsible" capitalist media. When the Law Lords ordered Granada Television to reveal its "mole" to British Steel recently, the 'Times' said of that decision "It was restrictive, reactionary and clearly against the public interest." In reaction to the 'Times' comment, Denning said "To my mind these attacks by the newspapers on the judges are an abuse of their power."

Denning doesn't trust the electorate, the unions, Parliament, or even the Lords or the media. But surely someone must be trusted? "Let it be the judges," says Lord Denning.

This is just the first indication of the measures the capitalists will use to try to maintain their system. But the labour movement



Photo: A Wiard (Report)

Steelworkers protest against Denning's ruling last winter that private steelworkers should not be called out on strike

has other ideas. And here's one just for Denning: we won't only abolish the Lords, we'll elect the judges as well.

We don't need self-appointed, non-elected octogenarians lecturing us on democracy, let alone deciding our laws!



The master race gather together to hear the incoherent rantings of would-be Führer, Michael McLoughlin, in a sealed-off back street in London last Sunday

Photo: MILITANT

Police protect Fascists

Despite protests from the local labour movement and black organisations, the government and police last Sunday allowed the fascist British Movement to march through Paddinton, an area with a large community of West Indian and other ethnic minorities.

A counter-demonstration numbering over 1,000 and consisting of Labour Party members, Anti-Nazi League, LPYS and black and white youth from the area was sufficient to stop the fascists marching on their proclaimed route through the centre.

But whilst the police shepherded the fascists to their back-street meeting, they harassed the counter-demonstrators. In one incident Sam Brown of

Streatham LPYS was arrested and charged with assaulting a police inspector.

After their meeting the police let fascist gangs roam the streets. Carrying clubs and other weapons the fascists attacked individual blacks. This was the first national demonstration of the British Movement, who have picked up the more thuggish members from the disintegration of the National Front.

It is vital for the labour movement to mobilise to drive these thugs off the streets. Mass demonstrations of youth, of black and white workers with well organised stewarding and clear direction can stop the fascists.

Gardners

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

The workers understood clearly that this would be just the start and made a bold stand in the defence of jobs. "This is a victory" said Tommy Macafee, the convenor. "I'm absolutely delighted, this is the first time any factory has said that redundancies will not happen."

"We said enough is enough and we have received mass support. We've got exactly what we wanted from the start."

A mass meeting on Tuesday 25th November voted to

accept the new offer, which also included the scrapping of a bonus scheme which management wanted to introduce.

Shop steward Steve Wittaker has played an active role in the strike. "I'm very pleased, in fact I'm overwhelmed," he said. "It's been very hard out on strike. My wife was pregnant and has just had another kid, and we had problems with strike pay and so on."

"I'd like to thank anyone who supported us, without

them and without their support, we would have collapsed."

Although there will be some voluntary redundancies, Tommy Macafee said, "I don't believe it is the job of trade unions to arrange or encourage voluntary redundancies."

"We had problems with the AUEW who have been slow to pay out strike pay and also with the Social Security, however, we have received magnificent support. We must have raised over £40,000."

"Everything in the factory is intact, and ready for the

return to work. It has been a war of attrition to get the 590 redundancies dropped and we won!

"If we want to stop the decline of industry, then the rank and file in the factories must fight against redundancies and closures."

The leaders of the labour and trade union movement must lead the fight against redundancies and the Tories with the same determination as the Gardners' workers have shown in their long struggle.

**Paper distribution
Liverpool, November 29**

**Extra supplies of 'Militant'
will be available in Sefton Park
near the LPYS lorry**

Labour's Youth Fight to Dump the Tories

The last two home matches at Arsenal have been interrupted by shouts of 'Maggie, Maggie, Maggie—out, out, out!'

By
Kevin Ramage

(LPYS National
Committee)

And is it any wonder when even the south is now suffering terrifying levels of unemployment.

At a recent meeting of Tower Hamlets LPYS, Tony Saunio, the LPYS member on Labour's National Executive, told the 26 young black and white workers how the 21% unemployment rate in Poplar was leading to huge problems. Already a 16 year-old unemployed lad had committed suicide. On the Isle of Dogs alone, the number of jobs has declined from 8,000 in 1976 to 1,000 today. London now has 200,000 out of work.

In Bournemouth, another so-called prosperous area, 10,678 are on the dole. 750 young people are chasing 43 vacancies. Here 15 LPYS members staged an all-night protest vigil outside the local Tory club.

It wasn't that necessary. Even the patron of the club was anti-Tory and gave the Thatcher guy they took along a terrible beating. So pleased were people to see the LPYS that £9 was raised for more campaigning.

Cambridge LPYS report that their branch has mushroomed since 1,000 people went on the Eastern LPYS region march against the Tories earlier this month. 25 people turned up to hear 'Militant' speaker Bob Edwards call for Labour to adopt a programme to abolish capitalism and thus eliminate unemployment for ever.

But it is the north which is still facing the brunt of the problems, with up to two-thirds of school leaver still without jobs. Just one LPYS branch, Newcastle North, has 17 unemployed school leavers going on the Labour Party march.

A day of action in nearby Blyth when 54 papers were bought showed the anger against this government. That anger must be given political expression and that is why the establishment of Redcar LPYS is welcome. Teesside area now has an LPYS branch in every constituency.

Nor has LPYS activity been confined to the issue of

unemployment. 30 attended a YS meeting in Stafford to hear Dave Campbell speak against nuclear arms. The main issue was how to get the USA and the USSR to disarm and Dave explained that the working class could do so by taking all power out of the hands of the bosses in the West and the Stalinist bureaucracy in the East.

Andy Bevan, the LPYS National Secretary has just completed a tour of Scotland, the highlight of which was a Young Workers Conference in Glasgow attended by 80 people. Duncan McNeill of the Lower Clyde Joint Shop Stewards Committee told the young workers how on one Youth Opportunities Programme trainees handle trays of pies, but money is deducted from their wages for every one they drop.

The wages are so low that anyone who drops a full tray loses a week's wages. In his area, Greenock, the unemployed had been helped by the shop stewards to get organised and 70 people attended a public meeting to set up a group linked to the Transport Workers Union.

Ron Brown MP lambasted those in the labour movement who defend the profit system: "They may call it the 'mixed economy'" he said, "but it's still capitalism. Capitalism stinks whether you call it Chanel No.5 or any other name."

Andy Bevan explained the need for the LPYS to help arm youth in the factories with the Charter for Young Workers—a programme of action for improving the conditions of life for young people. Andy spoke to a meeting of 25 in East Kilbride and in Edinburgh to an audience of 45. The following week Edinburgh South LPYS held a debate with the Young Tories.

Throughout the country the LPYS is moving into action. Come and join us in a fighting struggle to get rid of the Tories and replace it by Labour that this time is committed to socialist policies.



Part of the recent Bristol march organised by the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment

Photo: Militant

DEFEND LPYS

The outstanding success of the Labour Party Young Socialists in mobilising for the Liverpool demonstration on 29th has been marred by a set-back for the LPYS on Labour's National Executive.

At last Wednesday's NEC meeting a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee, which recommended an increase from £1,500 to £10,000 in the budget for the YS for recruitment, was referred back by 13 to 10. This was evidently the result of a well-orchestrated attack by the right-wing.

There was also a victory for the LPYS when the minutes of the Staff Negotiating Committee, which included objections to the proposal to make the National Youth Officer's position (now held by Andy Bevan) an elected position, were referred back. This was clearly a set-back for the right, especially for NULO, the Labour Agents' organisation, who have been trying to block this step towards democratising the Labour

Party apparatus.

Nevertheless, the NEC's reference back of the whole of the minutes of the LPYS National Committee's last meeting indicates that this move may well be the opening shot in an all-out right-wing attack on the LPYS.

This is an act of spiteful revenge by the right. They suffered a devastating defeat at the conference in Blackpool, they are preparing to split from the Party, and they have reportedly been offered £15 million from big business to finance a new "centre" party.

So now they are hitting out at Labour's youth, who have demonstrated their ability to build the party and win support for socialist ideas.

This must be energetically countered by a campaign throughout the membership of the Labour Party and affiliated trade unions, explaining the vital role of Labour's youth organisation and pointing out the enormous campaigning work that it has done in the recent period.

There can be no doubt that it has been LPYS members who have been most active throughout the

country in organising support for the Liverpool rally. They have managed to arouse enormous enthusiasm from trade union branches, as well as from workers generally, including unemployed youth who will be brought along to the rally.

A million leaflets have been distributed by the LPYS (costing £4,000), and in Liverpool alone 200,000 leaflets have been sent out.

If the right wing are allowed to cripple the youth by cutting off its finances and attempting to hobble it with new restrictions, they will seriously impede the growth of the Labour Party into a mass socialist organisation. For a healthy Labour Party, an active, democratic, campaigning youth organisation is vital.

This is already recognised in the movement, where there is an enormous fund of sympathy and admiration for the Young Socialists' energy and activity. This support must now be drawn on to ensure that the right's latest moves—which, if successful, would be the prelude to new attacks on the left generally—are defeated before they can get off the ground.

Walking for Unemployed Centre

The campaign by Kings Lynn Trades Council to raise cash for an Unemployed Workers' Centre has got off to a good, if somewhat tiring start! Three members of the campaign, Dave Foulkes, Cliff Lawson and Roger Duckham, completed a sponsored march from Kings Lynn to Labour Party HQ in London last weekend. Following the route of hunger marchers of the thirties, they have raised nearly 2,500 towards the centre.

One of the marchers, Dave Foulkes, said "The Young Socialists were marvellous to us en route, especially at Ware. Young Socialist Dave Herrinx deserves credit as he joined us for the last 25 miles—he really kept us going when we were beginning to flag."

Dave Foulkes was particularly impressed by the 'Militant'. At a 'Militant' supporters home in Ware, there were 200 back copies of the paper in the room and it was the first time Dave had a chance to read the paper. "Despite being so exhausted, I couldn't put the paper down, because it was so interesting. I fell asleep with a pile of the papers around me!"

At Labour HQ they were met by Labour MP Frank Dobson and his family who congratulated them on their action. The marchers also gave a thank-you to Doug Grieve, of the TUC's general council for the work he did in organising the final part of the march from Cheshunt to London.

Trades Council fight for Unemployed Centre, article, page 7

Shopworkers Union Supports Electoral College

Last week the Executive Council of the shopworkers' union, USDAW, decided to support the left-wing proposal for the electoral college to be decided at the Labour Party's special conference in January. The Executive are recommending that the union delegation casts its 429,000 votes for an electoral college of 40% trade

unions, 30% constituency parties and 30% MPs.

In the past the Executive has sided with the right wing. Clearly this decision reflects the pressures being put upon the USDAW leadership from below and marks a step forward for the union and the movement as a whole.

Paper Sales Victory

On Tuesday Southall magistrates dismissed the charges against five LPYS members arrested for selling socialist papers in the streets.

This victory came after four Court appearances and considerable mobilisation of the local labour movement. Yet this success should not blind us to the increase in police harassment of Labour Party and LPYS members. They fear the growing support for the ideas of socialism.

According to the 'Sunday Express', the British secret police convened a special Joint Intelligence meeting following the Labour Party

By
Laurence Coates

(LPYS National
Chairman)

conference. The subject—the left in the Labour Party. The conclusion? Reselection would mean that right wing MPs may be ousted and Labour would swing dramatically to the left. MI5 and MI6 should be congratulated on their perception, but should be warned that the capitalist state will not succeed in trying to drive Labour activists off the streets.

In Liverpool, Merseyside LPYS secretary, Jimmy Ho-

gan was arrested outside Anfield while petitioning for cheap prices for the unemployed. The charge of obstruction (of 20,000 fans entering the ground) was dismissed. Two LPYS members in Lewisham out canvassing for the Labour Party were arrested on 'Sus.'

The farcical nature of some arrests can't however disguise the concerted attack on our rights. LPYS members in particular are urged once again to inform their National Committee representatives of any cases of harassment they have faced recently as we intend to stage a national protest on the issue.

One-day strike to fight rail cuts

A most serious crisis now threatens the jobs and living standards of every single railway worker and his or her family.

Massive problems have been accumulated in British Rail as a result of years of government and management incompetence.

The latest circular from the rail union ASLE&F Head Office gives details of services and facilities to close, the actual dates, and numbers of workers involved. BR plan to reduce the number of yards from 79 (plus 109 local sorting sidings) down to 60 (plus 74 terminal complexes) by the end of 1982.

British Rail management have also decided to withdraw from the collection and delivery (C&D) parcels services altogether, by June 1981.

This will mean the loss of 6,000 jobs at a stroke. Passenger line closures are planned with the withdrawal of the Huddersfield—Clayton West, Huddersfield—Sheffield and Glasgow Central—Paisley Canal/Kilmacolm services.

The situation around the regions gives a vivid picture of the crisis. On Eastern Region, a heavy loss of freight traffic, especially steel, is taking place. Fifty-five wagon-load services were withdrawn in October and five depots face large scale redundancies.

On the Midland Region, 61 drivers are already surplus to requirements due to 'limited' freight and passenger service reductions.

The Sheffield Division is in danger of being wiped off the railway map. Tinsley and Wath marshalling yards will be closed by the end of 1982 if management have their way.

The only freight facilities that BR plan to leave in Sheffield is the Grimsthorpe Freight Terminal. Despite massive opposition, they aim to close the Manchester, Sheffield, Wath route by June 1981.

Scottish Region manage-

By Martin Elvin
(ASLEF, Stratford)

ment plan to review all freight and parcels services, close marshalling yards, withdraw all freight turns which currently stand suspended and close freight only lines, such as the Brechin and Forfar branches.

In Western Region, management aim to eliminate 500 train crew jobs (10%) before the end of 1981. Margan depot has lost nearly 25% of footplate staff since January 1980.

The Cardiff Division which accounted for 25% of BR's freight revenue from the coal and steel, has taken an astronomical cut in traffic. "The immediate future is one of unrelieved gloom," to quote the circular.

It is now the duty of all the rail union leaderships to explain the full implications of the crisis, and prepare now for a battle to prevent further closures, cuts or loss of jobs.

Quite correctly ASLE&F have called upon branches to form local action committees in all areas, linking up with the other rail unions, the Labour Party and the Trades Councils. No doubt this call will be taken up enthusiastically.

However there is a growing mood among railworkers that far more action is needed, to involve the membership. The call is now being mounted for a 24 hour strike throughout the rail industry.

★ No cuts, closures or further services withdrawals.

★ 24 hour national rail strike, as a first step in the campaign.

★ Massive increase in public spending on transport, to run services, and pay for a living wage and shorter working week.

★ No redundancies.

★ Bring down the Tory government.

[See campaign article, p.10]



Fewer trains, fewer lines, closure of many depots—these are the plans of British rail management

Photo: MILITANT

SUPPORT GROWS FOR SRI LANKAN WORKERS

"British trade unionists have responded tremendously to our request for moral and financial support."

By Brent Kennedy

(London agent, United Federation of Labour)

This was the conclusion of Gunasena Mahanama, General Secretary of the Government Clerical Service Union, after two weeks' tour of the country speaking to trade union leaders and public meetings.

Brother Mahanama was arrested during the recent general strike in Sri Lanka and thrown into a cell for 45 days, where he was beaten, on a charge of "misleading his members".

His own members, who comprise 17,500 out of 22,000 civil servants in Sri Lanka, didn't feel themselves to be "misled" by the country's best organised trade union, however, and campaigned for his release. Their campaign spread to Europe, where hundreds of labour organisations from Sweden to Spain, from Ireland to Cyprus, demanded an end to this anti-union repression.

The High Commissioner in London was particularly flooded with protests.

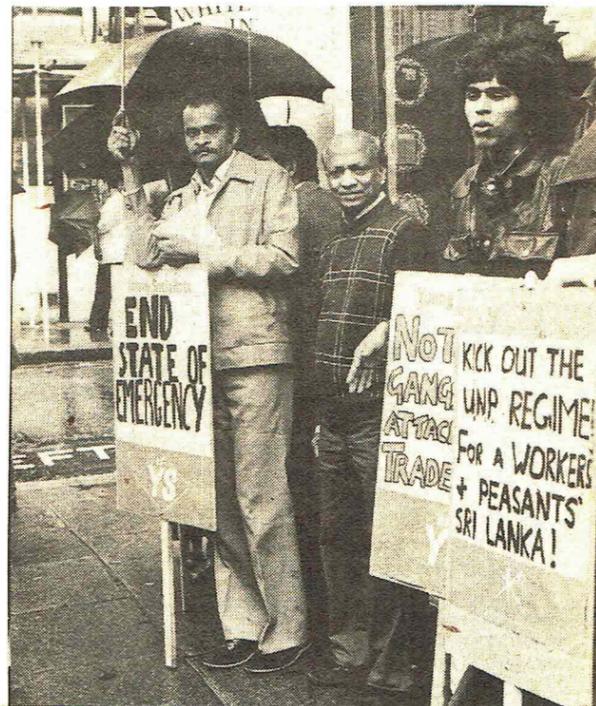
They have had their effect and most of those arrested have been released on bail.

But they still face trials and a possible 20 years in prison for the crime of withdrawing their members' labour for a wage rise of £5 a month and reinstatement of victimised shop stewards. Over 80,000 public sector workers are still locked out and have lost their jobs.

Along with Siritunge Jayasuriya of the United Federation of Labour, Brother Mahanama is currently visiting leaders of the British labour movement to press for further aid to those facing trial and sackings. The Union of Communication Workers leader, Tom Jackson, promised further support.

Lawrence Daly, General Secretary of the Miners, discussed additional plans for assisting our campaign. This week we will be meeting with leaders of unions representing about 3 million workers as well as former Minister of Overseas Development, Judith Hart MP.

On Saturday Siri and Maha will be marching with the Labour Party on its demonstration in Liverpool where they will address a rally on Friday night.



Picket outside Ceylon Tea Centre during July General Strike

Photo: T Howat (IFL)

Meanwhile, all readers are asked to send messages of support to the UFL, 17 Barrack Lane, Colombo 2. And demands for the drop-

ping of charges to: President Jayawardene, Presidential Office, Queen Street, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka.

[Trial begins, article p.11]

Don't move south

Unlike many working class areas, the labour movement in Dagenham has not had big public traditions in the recent past.

So when Dagenham LPYS took to the streets to recruit, we decided we would have to have a lively approach. We nicked Salford LPYS's questionnaire where the answers showed that if you weren't rich, then you had no interest in Thatcher's Britain and should join the fight to get rid of the Tories.

We also did an exposé of good old chief tax dodger, Lord Vestey (who also was a big hit man in destroying jobs in the docks with low paid unregistered ports).

The best reponse has come from young people between 11 and 18. In one case we got five applications after less than two hours work.

The story of the 80s is very different from that of the 30s in Dagenham when industry jobs and population grew rapidly in the South Essex area, as many unemployed were forced to go to the South East for work. Now unemployment is rising here as redundancies have been made in some industries.

Last week my father had to go on the Unattached Register as they closed Dagenham docks.

Although it's on the cards that the world's biggest oil refinery is to be built on nearby Canvey Island, new employment will be minimal. The outlook is bleak so don't waste your time and move round here.

By Lee Waker
(Dagenham LPYS)

Fascists invade Labour Club

Early in November, fifteen National Front supporters stormed Croydon Central Labour Club, smashing banisters, cabinets and windows. Since then, several more incidents have taken place. Labour councillors have received threatening telephone calls, with one being told that "We are going to get you and your kids you socialist B..."

What makes these threats so frightening is that the case of the local UCATT shop

steward these threats have begun to be carried out. A couple of weeks ago one UCATT shop steward received a punch in the face outside his home.

Last week his windows were smashed and bricks thrown through them. Now a National Officer of UCATT who lives in the area has received threats over the telephone, so much so that he has now had to make his telephone number ex-directory.

Similar attacks to this

occurred in 1978 with knives being drawn on Labour Party members. Then these rats were driven into their holes by the local labour movement mobilising a demonstration against the fascists. Now the labour movement must do the same again.

The Trades Council has organised a demonstration on Saturday 6 December as part of the Southern Region TUC month of action. This must be fully supported. But it is not enough.

The LPYS has called upon Croydon Central Labour Party to form an action committee to organise a campaign with a demonstration early next year. This must involve all local Labour Parties, the Trades Council and the labour movement as a whole, in a struggle not just against the fascists as such, but the conditions which breed such movements.

Labour Clubs have increased their membership substantially this term. Our links with the organised labour and trade union movement are crucial in the struggle against the Tories.

DEFEND STUDENTS RIGHTS

By Alan Watson (Labour Students)

The Tory proposals to change the method of financing student unions must be vigorously opposed not only by students but also by the organised working class. If the proposals are implemented student unions would have to compete with every college department and facility for finance.

Also student unions would

be under enormous pressure to drop any political campaigns they are involved in or any campaign against the decisions or policies of the college authorities or they would face losing their grant etc. The National Union of Students' demonstration on 28 November should be seen as just the start of the campaign.

The Tories have made a political attack and a political response is crucial if we are to stop the proposals being implemented. It is no good just asking for a year's grace, the proposals must be defeated entirely.

A campaign must be taken up to link our struggle with that of the trade union movement. NUS must fight to

win support for our struggle while at the same time offering the facilities of student unions to workers in struggle.

Labour Clubs have increased their membership substantially this term. Our links with the organised labour and trade union movement are crucial in the struggle against the Tories.



Forget footballers like Kevin Keegan and pop stars such as Blondie or Sting of the 'Police'. The Tories have new idols for you. Baroness Young, who is in charge of State education has called for teenagers to adopt industrialists as their new idols. So can we expect the concert halls and football terraces to echo with the chant and screams of "Arnie Weinstock" or "Micky Edwards"? It would seem unlikely, to say the least. For aren't these tycoons the same people who are sacking workers and preventing teenagers from finding jobs? The Tories lack of touch with reality seems to have invaded all their mental processes.

The following letter from a Mr T.F. Foss appeared in the 'Guardian' [July 28]; "I was recently browsing through 'Monty Python's Big Red Book' published in late 1971. In it I came across the following: "Support the Silly Party. The only party that is publicly committed to: 1. raising prices, 2. destroying industry, 3. causing inflation, 4. ruining the economy." Should we not admire M. Python for his amazing, perspicacious gaze into the future to tell us what sort of government we should have, nine years after he had written this?"

The EEC is a gentlemen's club for big business, which seems to do nothing but absorb vast sums of money in order to create mountains and lakes of wasted food. But Enoch Powell, renowned for his xenophobic racialism, has much more sombre objections, as a defender of that 'sovereignty' so meaningful and dear to every worker's heart. People dissatisfied with the laws or decisions of their own country are apparently "crossing the sea in droves to appeal to a foreign institution"—the European Commission and Court of Appeal. Before you take it into your head to jump on the ferry, all set to appeal against your exploitation or sue the Tories for broken promises, however, be warned: "There is a name," says Mr Powell, "for appealing over the head of the Crown to an authority outside the realm, and that name is treason. The word may be disused but the thing is not."

The pathetic attempts of the capitalist class to point the accusing finger at any one but themselves and make ridiculous excuses, become intensified as their economic system collapses around their ears. The 'Telegraph' gave a graphic example of this in its editorial on Monday. As unemployment figures soar skyward again, they tell us the figure is 'grossly overstated'! Apparently, "in many parts of the country vacancies for skilled and unskilled alike co-exist with high unemployment figures." Perhaps the 'Telegraph' could publish where these 'many parts' are? The unemployed would desperately like to know. Their editorial also goes on to say that many on the dole are there because it is a life of luxury, and they are 'unenthusiastic' about working as 'the gap between earnings and indexed-welfare benefits narrow' [their answer being a cut in dole payments]. But when they go on to make the ritual attack on strikers, they let the cat out of the bag. You see, striking workers "destroy wealth, not create it." Whoops. The 'Telegraph' slipped up there. They shouldn't go around letting on that workers create the wealth of society, rather than the bloated parasites the 'Telegraph' represents. Workers might get the idea that if this is so, then they should own and control that wealth for the benefit of society.



The National League for the Blind and Disabled, affiliated to the TUC since 1902, demonstrate against the Tories

Photo: MILITANT

DON'T FENCE OFF THE DISABLED

Next year is the United Nations' 'International Year of the Disabled'. For those trying to cope with low pay, inadequate housing and the dole, as well as physical handicaps or disabilities, in Thatcher's Britain every year is a year of struggle.

Michael Higgins, of Bromsgrove LPYS, describes how capitalism's philosophy of 'weakest to the wall' stigmatises and cripples the disabled throughout their lives.

A pregnant middle-aged lady on a rough sea crossing from Liverpool swallowed "the very latest in seasickness capsules: guaranteed in 99.5% of cases to calm the stomach."

Six months later her son was born. When I was eight weeks old they discovered I was blind.

What the label on the bottle had failed to say, because the drug company had "failed" to find out, was "one in a million pregnancies may result in a visually or physically handicapped child if the drug is used."

The company, having fulfilled all the requirements, had rushed its new product onto the market, wasting no precious time—or money—on further, more detailed research. A competitor might beat them onto the lucrative market,

already over-run with rivals.

For the disabled, demoralisation often begins at the age of two or three, in a 'Sunshine Home'. But my determined parents and family brought me up to cope with society and to be independent, despite the advice of numerous well-meaning qualified officials.

Eventually, however, the competitive society sent me to an institution. It costs the government too much to educate the disabled together with ordinary kids, they say; besides, "the handicapped couldn't cope with ordinary surroundings."

Up to the age of eight, despite all attempts to put me away, I was educated in an ordinary school with able-bodied children. Against all the predictions of the professionals, I coped, integrated and made friends—they had all been my friends since we were about three months old, and they could see about as much as I could.

Thus my 'disability' be-

came nothing more than an inconvenient handicap. But the staff couldn't teach me braille or touch typing. A boarding school for the blind, 250 miles from home, was the answer.

One hundred and fifty blind children played, learned and slept in the same building, week in, week out, most seeing their parents for less than ten weeks a year. This common practice for the majority of handicapped children deceives many handicapped people into believing they are different from the rest of the world.

Mostly they are not taught 'O' levels or CSEs, although there is no difference in the mental capacity of most disabled people. Instead, the sheltered workshop and the dole queue for the great majority; the minority become audiotypists and telephonists—likely to be the first to lose their jobs when new technology is introduced.

An even smaller minority become poorly-paid piano

tuners and pianists or, if they are extremely lucky, lawyers, physiotherapists social workers.

Society at large is introduced to the disabled when they come of age: if prejudices—on both sides—disappear at all, most people take generations to learn and relearn what, as children, they wouldn't have thought twice about.

While governments perpetuate a competitive class society, while it remains easier and cheaper to isolate any group in society—blacks, working women or 'mis-fits' of any type—the ruling group will divide them off.

Yet fully integrated, comprehensive educational establishments with a few extra staff to help the handicapped with any initial difficulties would be a much more sensible and fair system. Under such a system no false barriers would be set up—but perhaps that's why it isn't done.

A Glimpse of what's possible

The advent of micro-electronics has opened up enormous potential for transforming the lives of millions of the disabled: making communication possible, using new technology to do such basic tasks as switching on light and heating, ending the struggle to turn the pages of a book, and offering a wide field of employment to many, including the blind, in computer-processing, data control etc.

Word processors con-

trolled by foot or mouth, connected to equipment producing visual or braille display; printed text converted by a camera-scanner into electronic signals, 'read' by touch or translated by a synthetic voice; a recording braille on tape; press-button communica-

tion via an ordinary television screen: these are just some of the developments already available.

With more resources set aside for research, new technology would offer endless possibilities for transforming the lives of millions of the disabled, ending their segregation in special homes and work-places.

Unless you can afford the thousands of pounds to buy such equipment, however, at present this remains a pipe-dream.

Capitalism has no motivation for developing these possibilities on a scale large enough to meet the needs of the handicapped. They are not willing to invest in basic industries! No humanitarian consideration is allowed to over-ride the rule of profit.

But new technology, once again, gives us a glimpse of the possibilities which will open up when the strait-jacket of capitalism, the stranglehold of the monopolies and financiers, is broken.

By 'Militant' reporters



PHOTO: Workers have demonstrated their anger at Tory policies on numerous occasions. What is needed is a programme to remove them



A programme to WIPE OUT DOLE QUEUE MISERY

Unemployment in Britain is rising at the horrifying figure of 100,000 a month.

There are over 2 million people on the dole. Yet capitalist experts calculate that there will be 2½ million, 3 million, and even 4 million unemployed in the next few years.

Editorial statement

year over 20 million tons of steel were produced in Britain. This year it is expected that the combined output of the state and private sectors together will not exceed 11 million tons.

This is the lowest level of steel production since 1938, when 10.6 million tons were produced. Overall, it is expected that the output of the economy could drop by over 3% this year in real terms, an even greater drop than anticipated earlier this year.

It is these brutal facts of Britain's capitalist decline, and not just the personal whims of Thatcher, Joseph, and company, which explains the savagery of the present Tory government.

Behind the scenes, it seems, Thatcher's opponents in the cabinet, the so-called "wets", contemptuously refer to her as "Tina"—"There Is No Alternative." And yet on a capitalist basis, there is, in fundamentals, no alternative to the present policies of the Thatcher government.

Reviving the methods of the nineteenth century and the 1930s, this government has carried through a policy of savage deflation. They are out to cut into the living standards of the working class. Their aim is to boost the profitability of big business.

The profits of manufacturing industry are no more than 3% at the present time. However, as far as her Tory opponents and capitalists are

concerned, Thatcher has carried through these cuts in a brutal and unskilful fashion. She threatens to light the "conflagration" which Joe Gormley has warned about.

Moreover, her measures have aided finance capital—especially the banks, which have made super-profits—but have crucified manufacturing industry. It is this which explains the opposition of the CBI and the so-called Tory "wets", not at all the over-all programme for cutting living standards.

Thatcher's Tory and big business critics want to achieve the same ends, but by more piece-meal measures and over a more protracted period of time. Theirs is a programme of Thatcherism, but on an instalment-plan basis. For working people there can be no relief, not a glimmer of hope on a capitalist basis. This has been made clear by Thatcher and her acolytes.

She recently promised years of "falling living standards." The whip of mass unemployment, together with the 6% limit in the public sector, is aimed at reducing real wages even further.

In support of Thatcher, the "Financial Times" recently declared: "it will take not just months but years of low pay settlements for British industry to regain a competitive position." In other words, the poverty wages of British workers must be driven lower in order to revive ailing British capitalism.

Cutting the share of the wealth going to working people—wealth produced by the workers' labour—may boost the profitability of big business. But at the same time, it cuts the market for the capitalists' products.

With this further shrinking of the market, therefore, when there is already "excess

capacity" because industry is working at only 70% of its capacity or less, there is no possibility of British capitalists re-investing back into industry.

This is especially the case in the context of a world economic crisis. It would take a massive re-investment in industry, which the capitalists are not prepared to undertake, for British capitalism merely to compete with its rivals on the world market.

There is no future for working people on a capitalist basis. This fact, as well as the opposition and hatred towards the present Tory government, should be driven home by the labour movement over the next period.

The basis of this campaign must be a fighting socialist alternative.

The labour movement and the working class do not want to go through the upheavals and the effort that will be required to shift this Tory government from power only to see a repeat of the measures of the last Labour government.

That Labour government, with its policies of watered-down Thatcherism, paved the way for the present Tory government. The rejection by the organised workers in the Labour Parties and trade unions of the policies presided over by Wilson and Callaghan was reflected in the radical policies and the reforms on party democracy enthusiastically passed at last October's Labour Party Conference. It is also shown by the recent election of Michael Foot as leader of the Labour Party.

The movement wants a Labour government to replace a Tory government, but a socialist Labour government which is prepared to take hold of the levers of economic power. This would involve the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies, with minimum

compensation on the basis of proven need.

Reflecting the fear of the ruling class that the labour movement would embrace such a programme—consistently advanced by the "Militant"—the "Financial Times" recently commented: "It is improbable that he [Michael Foot] would either promise or threaten nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies with or without compensation."

Yet without such a programme a new Labour government, as with the last one, will become a plaything of the monopolies. If it attempts to operate within the framework of British capitalism, it will be compelled to do the bidding of these monopolies.

Not reforms, but counter-reforms, will be demanded of a future Labour government by big business—and in a far more ruthless fashion than between 1974 and 1979.

Take the demand for a useful programme of public works to solve the problems of unemployment. This is the central plank of the programme of the "Tribune" tendency, which "Militant" fully supports.

But how can it be carried out? Taxes for public expenditure come from two sources. The government can either tax the working class through income tax, VAT, etc., or it can introduce a wealth tax, corporation tax, etc., against big business.

If the income of the working class is cut, this will merely cut the market and therefore cancel out the measure of increased public expenditure. If, on the other hand, there is a cut in the profits of big business, this could result in a further "strike of capital", a withholding of investment, which would in turn cancel out the benefits of increased public expenditure.

If, however, the government resorts to the printing press to produce pound notes which are not backed up by the production of goods and services, this will merely fuel the fires of inflation.

Therefore, reforms of this character, reforms like a shorter working week of 35 hours, even if achieved in the short run, will be cancelled out by the capitalists in the long run.

But if a Labour government took over the monopolies which control 80% to 85% of the economy of Britain, it would be possible to introduce a socialist plan of production—which would "at a stroke" eliminate unemployment.

A recent report of the Manpower Services Commission has estimated that the cost of unemployment in terms of lost output is about £10,000 million at 1979 prices. The cost to the Exchequer in terms of public expenditure and lost tax revenue is about £4,000 million. This probably underestimates the loss in wealth resulting from unemployment and from capitalist anarchy in general.

But if the unemployed were put to work this would, at a minimum, give every family in Britain at least £16 a week extra income.

So while fighting against mass unemployment and for the removal of this Tory government, the labour movement must at the same time campaign for a new Labour government to take over the commanding heights of the economy through an Enabling Bill. This would then allow the introduction of a socialist plan of production, based on committees of trade unions, housewives, shop stewards, etc.

Only such a programme could eliminate the scourge of mass unemployment for ever.

- DUMP THE TORIES!

35-HOUR WEEK

Two and a half million workers are unemployed. Yet a quarter of all manual workers are forced to work more than 48 hours a week.

The Department of [Un]Employment recently revealed a scandalous fact—57% of all manual workers have to do more than 40 hours a week.

They have to do this back-breaking overtime which damages their life and rules out many social and recreational evenings, to make up 23.8% of their earnings and provide an essential part of their income. Meanwhile others are driven to suicide because they are denied a job.

A job for every worker can only be achieved by the activity of the working class movement to secure the sharing out of all available work without loss of pay.

The employers are sacking labour because of the recession and the belated introduction of new technology, to cut labour costs, but if technological progress or shrinking markets means less work to go round, then it should be shared out amongst all willing hands rather than used to make millions idle.

The Trades Union Congress has shown the introduction of a 35-hour week would mean the creation of a million extra jobs. This must be done without cuts in wages, otherwise workers will only be forced to supplement lost wages with additional overtime. Over

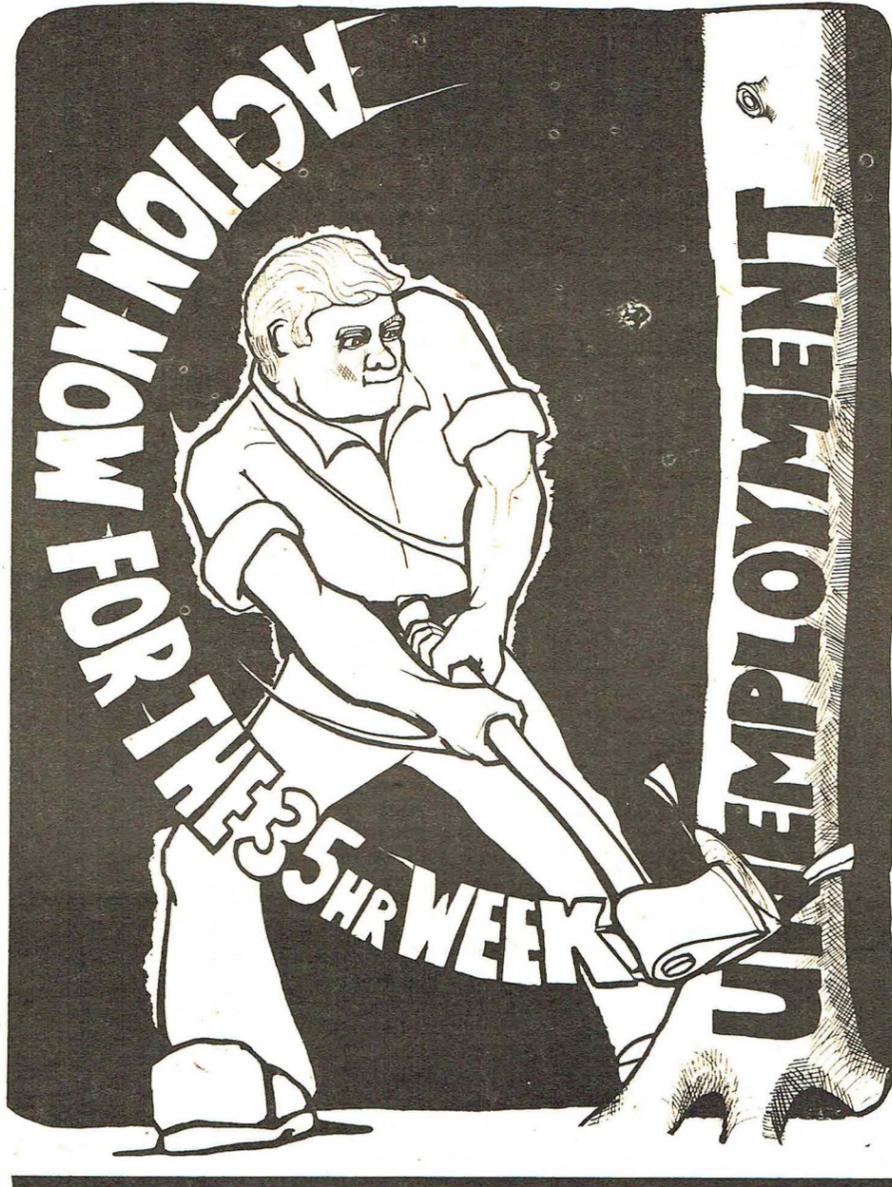
four million workers have so far won cuts in hours over the last two years.

The employers have resisted fiercely, claiming that a cut in hours without wage cuts would lead to higher costs. They would have to suffer the burden of lower profits. The trade union leaders must ensure that the bosses are forced to implement work-sharing.

If they refuse and threaten bankruptcy, then the employers' accounts should be opened to inspection by the trade unions. Threatened bankruptcy must be met with nationalisation of the firm. There is no other way of protecting jobs except through engaging in resolute struggle to end the employers' right—the arbitrary and brutal power to throw human beings on the scrap heap.

The TUC, representing the working class, must unite all individual separate struggles of the workers for shorter hours by coming out in favour of united action for a national maximum 35-hour working week, and a national minimum wage; currently this should be a minimum of £80 per week.

By Phil Frampton



All new technology should be introduced under trade union control, with no redundancies. Let science work for the people and be used to improve the lot of the workers.

If the TUC leaders and the Labour Party spell out the fact that new technology if introduced in a planned way could rapidly bring a two-day working week and undreamed of increases in

living standards, they could win the enthusiastic support of millions of workers and their families. For the ending of capitalist anarchy and the introduction of a socialist plan of production.



Unemployed Workers Centre

Unemployed Workers Centres, run by the trade union movement can help break down the isolation felt by so many unemployed and act as a focal point for united struggles between those in and out of work.

As an unemployed lorry driver, I've been trying to get one established in my area. The Tory council of course don't want to know. When we asked for use of a building, we were told that it might be possible if it was run by the local Chamber of Trade and local Tories.

Our Trades Council know now that we can only rely on our own organisations. It is vital that the trades unions help organise the unemployed into their ranks. And centres can play a vital role in this.

Newcastle has got a full-time centre, and one will shortly be established in Tower Hamlets in London. These centres can provide important practical help on form filling, welfare rights, etc., and just a place to drop in for a chat. But most vital of all they can act as a mobilising centre for a united struggle for jobs.

By Tim Webb

(Secretary, Kings Lynn Trades Council)

Open the books

Trade unionists want a clear strategy to save jobs. The capitalist media bombards workers with lies and half-truths about the causes of redundancies.

Bosses plead poverty, and blame the "industrial recession" as if it was something coming from the heavens and not the man-made product of their system. An essential part of the struggle to save jobs is a trade union campaign to force open the company books.

The closure of Bowaters, Ellesmere Port, which has turned 1,600 workers into statistics on the "Money Programme" is an example of the methods of these parasites, and confirms the need to expose their business secrets to the eyes of the whole labour movement. Bowaters' managing director praised the

workforce earlier this year.

On 10 April he stated that "great credit is due to all employees at the Ellesmere Port mill for further progress in developing co-operative working relationships and the productivity increases these have brought about." Four months later, these same directors declared that "after prolonged consultation with the Government and newspaper publishers, and in the face of increasing losses, the decision has been taken to cease operations at Mersey paper mill."

That was the reward for fifty years of daily toil by local workers, for workers who boosted productivity by 17% last year and who listened to the bosses' pleas of poverty and accepted a low wage settlement this year. The employers consulted with

By Richard Venton

their secret company accounts, consulted with their Tory government, consulted the publishing bosses and then threw chaos into 1,600 workers' lives.

The only people not consulted about the closure were the ones who have produced the wealth and profit over the years—the workers. The first demand of the trade unions should have been to see Bowaters' accounts.

Lord Errol of Hale, chairman of Bowaters, had the audacity to call the mill a haemorrhage bleeding the company dry—fine words from a professional leech, sucking profits out of workers and then tossing them aside at will.

The bosses would resist trade union inspection of the accounts as it would expose the fabulous wealth of the

captains of industry; people like Doctor Lenton, chairman and chief executive of Bowaters' UK who has now become a managing director and deputy chairman of the whole of Bowaters Corporation. For the workers though Bowaters sang the familiar tune of "we cannot afford to provide jobs."

Apart from being a total condemnation of their own capitalist system, this also hides the truth. On the day the closure was announced Bowaters' shares rocketed and they sought new investment from the USA.

In the first half of 1980, Bowaters' profits in real terms rose by about 10%. They expect £95 million profits in 1980 compared to £91 million in 1979. They plan to invest £71 million in a new Grimsby tissue mill—courtesy of government grants. Despite these profits, Bowaters conned the trade unions into a joint trade union-management campaign for more government aid, pleading that the company was a helpless victim of government hardship with the same interests as the workforce.

The trade unions should have demanded inspection of

the books to see where all the previous grants and subsidies went. On 31 December 1979 the declared government investment grants came to £12½ million. Even more outrageously, Bowaters have rejected massive aid in their determination to withdraw from Ellesmere Port.

In a desperate attempt to 'pass the buck', the Tories have revealed that Bowaters in effect have been offered £36m: £14.4 million government investment grant, £18 million Common Market loans, £1.8 million per year concessions from the Coal Board and a £2 million discount on energy and raw materials.

Bowaters' Doctor Lenton screamed blue murder when this was revealed. He was terrified the workers would see a glimpse of the company's real intentions behind their honeyed phrases about management and unions having a joint approach.

The trade unions should have demanded access to the accounts of the whole multinational Bowaters corporation—not just the branches of it made bankrupt by its owners. This would stop them juggling figures to suit their

story and expose how multinationals invest to maximise profits for a few big shareholders, not according to the social needs of workers in any country.

If the trade unions knew the full facts, it would greatly strengthen the class solidarity of a threatened workforce and give trade unionists the first element of control over their industry. It would destroy some of the bosses' most malicious weapons in forcing through redundancies—rumours, lies and false promises. It would expose who the real enemy is and give workers a clear vision of the needs to rely on their own strength as trade unionists.

If trade unions discover a company is bankrupt, and the capitalist bosses cannot run industry then it should be nationalised under workers' control and management. In that way socially necessary work could be organised by the working class themselves. If the company is viable but the bosses threaten jobs what better proof is there for the need to take industry out of the capitalists' profiteering hands and put it in the hands of society as part of a socialist plan.



'WE WANT TI

Militant looks at Merseyside, a ci

Report by Bob Wade

Photos by Julian McKitrick

A group of boys playing in the street told an old Merseyside joke: "We're going to be artists when we leave school—we're going to draw the dole."

To look at industrial statistics for Merseyside, you would think the area had just been through a war. Factories lie derelict. Others have been 'rationalised'.

The ever-decreasing number of workers still with jobs create an eerie scene as they work in what appear to be oversized factories: factories that were built in the days of capitalist boom and once bustling with workers producing goods for all the world.

Now the bosses are rapidly abandoning Merseyside, as they pull out in the forlorn search for greater profits. And the dole queues lengthen.

The list of closures and redundancies over the past few years seem endless. 1,200 jobs gone from Bird's Eye in Kirkby. Jobs lost at Plessey Communications and Tate and Lyle. The closure of Leylands at Speke, the gradual run-down of the docks. And still the closures keep coming. Over 1,600 jobs to go at Bowaters, 190 jobs threatened at Ross Foods, and 350 to go at BICC in Prescot. The Tories are also attempting to close down the whole southern section of the docks, which would mean another 1,600 jobs lost forever.

For the workers of Merseyside this means an unemployment figure of 107,000; who can imagine the deprivation this brings?

In some areas it has reached intolerable levels. Kirkby reached the figure of 50% unemployment over two years ago, and the situation at the Woodchurch estate near Birkenhead fares little better, with unemployment at 33%.

Five unemployed from the Woodchurch estate. Mark White, Ross Waters, Micky Barry, Billy Leonard and Martin Murphy told 'Militant' what they face.

"When the nearby steelworks shut down that was it. It was always bad around here, but when that went...

"The only job at the job centre was at an ante-natal clinic, but you had to be a girl. I think I'll try for Santa Claus!"

Some of them had jobs before, such as apprentice gardeners. Mark was on a one-year training course. "To give you an idea of how bad it's got, last year 14 were on the course and 13 got jobs. This year there were 12 of us and none of us have got any work."

With the exception of Micky, who gets earnings related, the rest get £18.50 a week dole. "That's just enough to live on. We usually

go out on a Thursday and Friday night, but you can't do much after that.

"There's no facilities for youth here. You can go to the park and walk around for a bit, watch the ducks, but the novelty of that soon wears off.

"We used to go to West Kirby by the sea a lot in the summer, but it's not much of a place to go in the winter. It costs about £1 to get there and back anyway, so you can't do that too often.

The cul-de-sac of long-term unemployment had taken its toll amongst the youth. Many in desperation are driven to crime, vandalism or to drink. A recent report from the Council for Alcoholism, showed there had been a sharp increase in drinking in the Merseyside area, alongside the rising unemployment. This year, the report said, at least 15% of its cases were a direct result of unemployment. Suicides have also increased.

"A lot of people get demoralised—they just ask, 'What's the point?' Last week a girl, 22 she was, threw herself off the ninth floor of a block of flats. Another guy recently slashed his wrists and killed himself.

"You get a lot of gang fights, mainly the 15 and 16 year-olds, between the different estates. Some of the younger kids are really crazy. On bonfire night they made a great big fire, and when the fire brigade turned up they started stoning them."

Ross, like the others, understood the only solution was a clear break with capitalism. The exasperation of workers with past Labour governments that tried to prop up the capitalist system can be understood. Even

under the last Labour government, there were 70,000 on the dole in Merseyside in 1978; a further 53,000 jobs were being kept going by government grants. Now the Tories have returned, their way to election victory paved by the failings of the right wing Labour policies.

As Micky commented, "When people around here saw that nothing changed under Labour they voted Tory. Now they're thinking of voting Liberal. It's just like changing deck chairs on the Titanic."

Ross saw the need for socialist measures: "You've got to nationalise all the big industries; this is what it is all about. The Lords and the monarchy and all that lot must be kicked out too!

"We'd let them stay in the country, though. They can live in one of the flats around here.

"Yeah, next to the bins in summer."

Living in the 'Spine Block'

As if mass unemployment isn't enough, Liverpool, like all inner-city areas of Britain, has a chronic housing shortage. At present there are between 15-20,000 families on the council waiting lists.

Many of them are homeless. Others desperately need to transfer out of the dilapidated houses and flats that are totally inadequate to house a family with children.

Built quickly and cheaply with basic design faults and

cheap materials, they have become the slums of today. The cutbacks in local government housing maintenance, mean they have fallen further into disrepair.

One of the worst examples in the area is the 'Spine block' on the Bell Vale estate. The few remaining tenants there have one basic demand: 'rehouse us and pull the place down.'

The Spine block is a three-storey set of maisonettes. The original idea was to get away from the isolated flats found in tower blocks, by building a concrete walk-way to join up the flats above ground level.

This is little substitute for a proper garden with grass and flowers. But it is typical of the barrack type boxes hundreds of thousands of workers are expected to live in, by the capitalist class.

The design has serious faults, as tenant Ray Scofield explained: "When it rains, which it does quite a lot in Liverpool, these walkways fill up with water. The drainage is bad and you end up with a virtual pond around the flat."

This adds to the general problem of dampness afflicting the Spine block and many like it in the area. In some flats, walls are black with fungus.

His wife Patsy said, "On this floor, only eight of the twenty flats are occupied. People get out as soon as possible, and we'll follow them if we get the chance.

"These places are dangerous. None of the lights on the outside stairways work, so it's very dangerous at night. And the flat itself is a fire hazard—there's only one door to the walkway and the stairs to it are made of wood. If a fire started there, we would be trapped. I'd like to get the architect who dreamed up this dump and make him live here."

Outside a group of school children play among the wrecked empty flats. They are cheerful: a couple of them have just moved out of the block.

"Where I am now is much better, it's got play areas which you haven't got here. We moved out last week and there's a couple with a bairn squatting in our place already. They must be desperate if they want to move in around here."

For Mick McQueen and his wife, the main problem is the lift, or lack of one. "These flats were built seven years ago, and in all that time the lift is known to have worked only once for a week." They have to carry their baby everywhere, because they can't use the pram, unless Mick's mate helps him get the pram up and down the stairs.



The bins are overflowing, and the rubbish is strewn about the ground by packs of dogs. They roam the estate, subjecting the area to a continual barrage of barking. The many flats left empty are vandalised and filled with rubbish.

Ray said, "They've only got six plumbers trying to cover this whole area—this block alone would need 20 working on it for a few months to put it right. They've cut back the Direct Works department so much it just can't cope now. It's the same with the dustmen—they haven't got the staff to cover properly."

Vandalism and robberies are a major problem on the block. "Problem families and people who have just come out of prison are put into these houses. There's no chance of work, they get demoralised, desperate, so they start looting just to survive."

Vandalism is rife. But a pensioner living on the ground floor, who only recently had a door thrown into her garden from the top floor, pointed out, "If people are expected to live like animals, you can't really be surprised if they begin to act like them."

Fighting to save what we've got

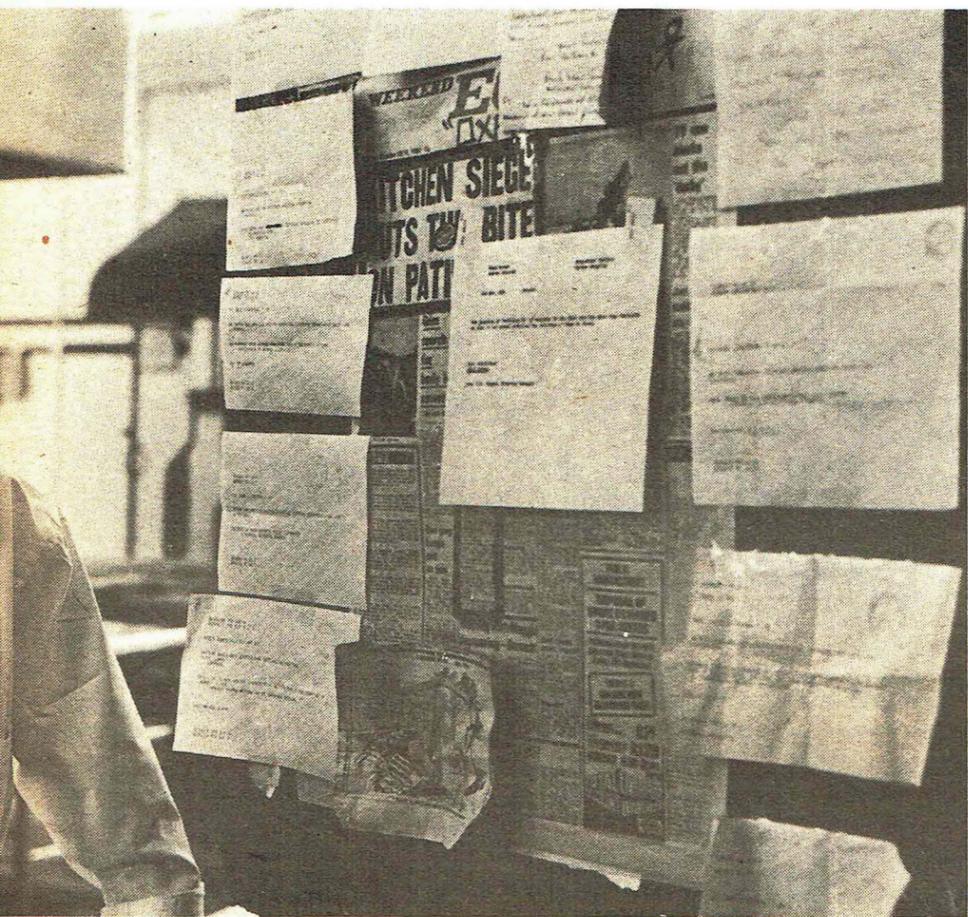
Mass unemployment, miserable living conditions and poverty ravage Merseyside.

But it would be wrong to paint a picture of working people here cowed and demoralised by the situation.



THATCHER OUT'

City area devastated by capitalism in crisis



The local labour movement have had defeats inflicted over closures and redundancies, with workers browbeaten by the bosses into selling their jobs. However, there have been continuous upsurges of the militancy that the Merseyside workers are famous for.

The fight on the docks is one example. Despite seeing jobs gradually eroded away for years, the dockers scored a major victory in the Temporary Unemployed Register dispute, with their united and firm action.

Similarly, workers at one of Liverpool's hospitals under attack from Tory cutbacks are fighting off attempts to cut their bonuses.

When management at Walton hospital attempted to take on the kitchen staff, the workers held a work to rule. Their pay was stopped, so they occupied the kitchen and canteen.

They kept up a 24-hour occupation, cooking meals for patients only, on £12.50 a week strike pay. The occupation is over for the moment, with the workers scoring a partial victory over bonuses, but with negotiations still going on (see industrial news).

During the occupation I talked to the workers' shop steward Pete Ballard. "If we'd gone out the door management would have brought in contractors—we're in here to keep them out. In here, we also know what's going on."

"Ninety per cent of the staff are women and they have been terrific. Many of them have got children but they haven't backed away from doing their share of shifts during the occupation."

Solidarity with the struggle was expressed by other work-

ers in the area through collections and telegrams. Pete said, "We've had lots of telegrams—we've got them pinned on the wall. They're terrific morale boosters. We've had some great donations too. I was really choked by Dunlops over the road, who had a whip-round and gave us £10—and those workers are on a one-day week!"

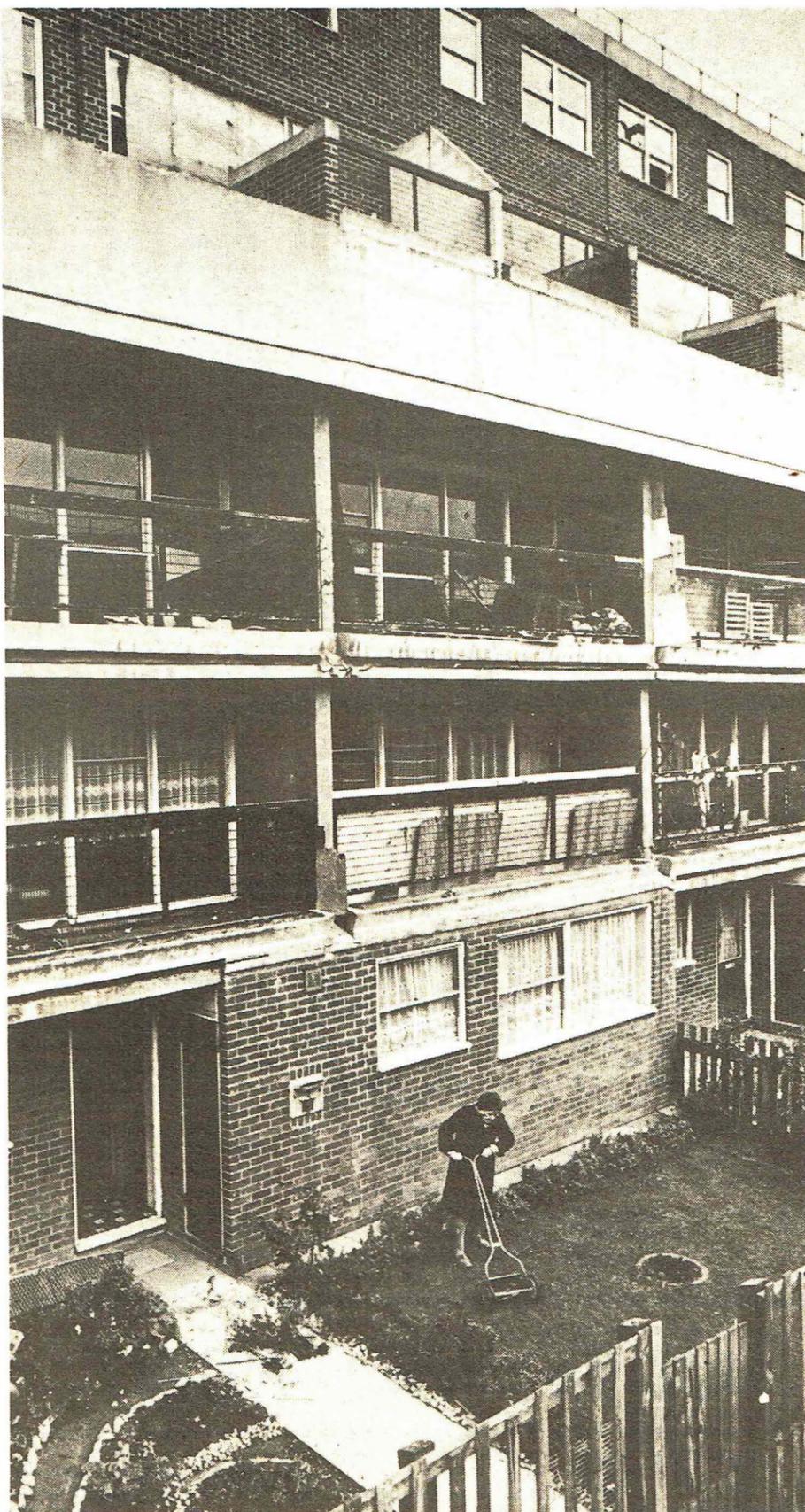
The struggle at Walton, like that at Newsham hospital (reported in 'Militant' recently) is an essential fight. The attempts by the Tories to take away what was won by the labour movement over years must be resisted. Otherwise, the consequences are more suffering for the workers, while the bosses reap the profits.

If the Tories got their way with the closures at Newsham hospital, there would be only 46 of the 600 beds left for the care of geriatrics. This would be devastating for the old people of Liverpool: there are 82,000 old people living in the city, 42,000 of whom are over 70 and live on their own.

The Fire Brigades Union on Merseyside is organising a conference of all public sector unions against the 6% pay limit. This will be an excellent opportunity for public sector workers in the area to organise a fight-back, not only against wage cuts but against all cut-backs.

If the Merseyside public sector workers show the determination of the women occupying the Walton canteen, the Tories will be in for a fight: "We're getting 6%, yet the management have just got a 14% rise. Now they've got the cheek to try and cut our bonus rate, and change round the shifts."

Pictures: Left—Mark White, Billy Leonard and Martin Murphy from the Woodchurch Estate. Above—Pete Ballard with the many telegrams and messages of support for the Walton hospital occupation. Right—a pensioner does her best to make her home in the 'Spine Block' habitable. Above her, ruined flats are left to rot.



"We've got to nationalise all the big industries. The Lords and the monarchy must be kicked out too. They can stay in the country though. They can live in the flats around here. Next to the bins in summer."

—unemployed youth on the Woodchurch estate

"A lot of us have kids and can only do certain hours, so they know that by moving us around it is effectively forcing us to leave, and you can bet they wouldn't replace us."

"I've worked here seven years and there've been lots more management and assistants and so on taken on. Yet they reckon we're overstaffed. But when you think of all the extra hours we work when someone's off sick, and all the bank holidays, Christmases and so on we've worked, we're the ones who need more staff."

"We'll be there on the 29th. We want Thatcher out. But the trade union leaders aren't doing enough. They're there to do a job, but when are they going to do it?"

"The miners and people with the industrial muscle should be getting these Tories out. It's not as if we're fighting for a pay increase or something, we're fighting for our jobs. We're trying to save what we've got."

FIGHT FOR JOBS

- ON THE SHOP FLOOR

Unity to fight rail cuts

By J McLelland
(ASLEF Corkehill Branch)

The first meeting of the new Scottish Rail Broad Left met recently in Glasgow, to discuss ways of fighting the proposed attacks on jobs and wages.

Left-wingers, including 'Militant' supporters, from the three rail unions (National Union of Railwaymen, Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, Transport and Salaried Staffs Association) heard J Walker, organising secretary, ASLEF, give an outline of the crisis facing British Rail and calling for the Broad Left to get down to the task of uniting rail workers in the coming struggles.

It was agreed that a pamphlet will be produced and distributed, and that resolutions should be passed at all branches and district councils calling on the Executive Committees of the three unions to begin a national campaign against the cuts, involving industrial action, and to link this to an immediate fight for a 35-hour week as part of the coming wage round.

It was also put to the meeting that due to lack of

national leadership and the short time before the cuts begin to bite, that a local campaign—involving a 24-hour stoppage on Monday, 5 January, as part of a series of action—was necessary if we are to stop the closure of the Kilmacolm line and halt the other cuts planned in every sector of our industry.

Closure of the Kilmacolm line will be seen as a 'test case,' and other subsidised lines will be in jeopardy all over the country if we lose this fight.

All activists should involve themselves in informing and mobilising the rank and file, and put up resolutions at branches and at district committee level calling for a stoppage on 5 January in the Scottish region.

Such an initiative could spur on a national campaign. Activists in all regions should support any action by any section of the railworkers who take up the fight, putting on pressure at all levels for joint national action—which would be the beginning of the end of the big business policies of Thatcher and Co.



Gardners' diesel engine factory in Eccles where workers' resistance to job losses forced the bosses to climb down

Photo: C Wolfenden

Convenor Tony Cairns explains how shop stewards at International Harvester, Bradford, have prepared for a fight on jobs.

In American industry, workers are generally laid off through the summer. This used to be applied at International Harvester in Bradford, right through to the end of the 1960s. Every summertime redundancies were announced with a week's notice.

In 1970 however, building on the good communications developed in the factory, a combine committee was formed with Doncaster, and management were for-

ced to work through the committee if any redundancies were in the pipeline.

The union work in the factory took a step forward in 1976 with the election of Tony Kinder as convenor. Communication between the shop stewards' committee and the shopfloor were made a priority, with regular mass meetings to get the backing of the membership and information sheets circulated on important issues. To avoid 'two factories'

being created, this approach is taken on night as well as day shift.

This has built unity in the factory. In 1978 the management announced redundancies, and a mass meeting agreed to an immediate walk-out. This had the effect of knocking down the redundancies at a stroke.

A mass meeting did not object to volunteers going down the road, however. The shop stewards' committee blacked all these volun-

teers, in line with Bradford AUEW District Committee policy, and they are still blacklisted in majority AUEW plants.

The prolonged burden of the 1979 confed national action, rather than a short sharp fight which we would have preferred, led to a threat of lay-offs by management. For the first time the shop stewards' committee won on the question of lay-offs at a mass meeting and a four-week strike took place.

The red-tape delaying strike pay did not help us but the workforce stayed united. When management wanted some men back in work, a mass meeting took a position of all back or none back.

The position now, with the recession, is difficult. We agreed to voluntary early retirement at 60, with increased benefits, earlier

this year but there is still a 'surplus', according to management. Our policy is no overtime and to share the misery around.

Forty voluntary redundancies were rejected by the workforce and instead we have worksharing; from a 3-day week we now work a 2-day week, which is topped up by the government supplement. By all being in the same boat it has kept us united.

We have got as far as we have through communication and with this in mind we have formed a sub-committee of the shop stewards' committee to discuss getting propaganda around the factory explaining that the only way to fight redundancies is to keep your job. The shop stewards' committee is united in maintaining that if a closure is threatened, we'd fight it right down the line.

Postal workers

By Bill Murray

The recent Annual General Meeting of the Edinburgh UCW outdoor branch was one of the biggest for a long time. The average attendance is normally fifty to sixty at the most, but on Sunday 26 October well over 200 members, many not usually seen at branch meetings, were present.

The reason for the large turn-out was the productivity deal being presented to members of the Union of Communication Workers (formerly the Union of Postal Workers) which would mean loss of jobs in all sections of the Edinburgh postal district and in other parts of the country.

In the discussion we heard of other places losing jobs with the new working methods, brought about by the introduction of new technology.

Members expressed their anger at the UCW leaders' acceptance of the deal and spelt out the need for more jobs, not less, in the postal service. Those who spoke pointed out that productivity deals have led to thousands being paid off throughout industry.

We are still one of the few sections who work six and even seven days a week. In some districts the amount of overtime is deplorable in a time of high unemployment; with a living basic wage, the extra work could be shared out to create more jobs. Postmen and women go out every day in all weather, and even on health grounds alone, the excessive overtime must take its toll.

With jobs in outside industry disappearing with every passing week, the time has come for a fight for a shorter working day and week.

AUEW: WHAT NOW?

The re-election of Terry Duffy as president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers is a sharp set-back.

In the next period, more and more engineering workers will come to see this, as the warnings of the left are borne out.

Only days after the ballot, Duffy gave a prop to Thatcher's government by accepting an 8.2% wage offer. This negotiated minimum time rate of £79 will mark a dramatic drop in members' living standards.

The sacrifice in engineers' pay, it was argued in the past, would find its way to the low paid. We can see the Tories' plan today! They are using the 8.2% for organised engineering workers to bludgeon the low-paid into accepting a derisory 6%!

The lack of leadership has resulted in a lowering of wages, coupled with the extra blow of many workers being made redundant. The Gardner workers have demonstrated that the battle for jobs will be started in spite of the present leadership.

Yet it is the short-time working and redundancies raining down on engineering which played a major part in the election result. Under such conditions, the stewards were faced with a doubly hard job in making sure there was a big vote and in trying to inspire a fighting mood.

The victory of Duffy with 126,135 votes stands as a temporary consolidation of the right wing in the union, one which will need a fight to overcome. However, the position of the right wing is not 100% stable. Some 106,870 members voted for the seven opposition candidates, with Bob Wright gaining 58,826

votes. A million members of the union did not vote.

Left candidates, however, held their positions at local, district and regional level, gaining also a national organisers' position with a massive vote for Harry Hewitt-Dutton. These lesser results were achieved away from the limelight of the press, but stand as a corner from which the left has now to fight back.

The level of votes cast for the left was only achieved through the energetic and colourful intervention of the 'Campaign for a Fighting AUEW Leadership.' Meetings (which in previous campaigns mostly were only discussion circles or socials) were this time conducted as engineering workers' rallies, held in all the major engineering centres of Britain.

The campaign was taken to the factories, with regular leafleting at the gates and discussions with stewards and

By Jon Ingham
(AUEW)

members inside. There were very successful rallies of 200, 300 and 400 engineers at factory gates. Above all, many Broad Left organisations were set up or revitalised. The campaigning centred on wages, hours and the defence of jobs, whilst raising the need for the socialist planning of engineering and industry in general.

The Broad Left must now take over these campaigning methods. The 'low profile' of the left in previous years reduced its effectiveness as a national opposition. When Hugh Scanlon and Jack Jones advanced the 'social contract' which held back wages under the Labour government, the Broad Left lost its independence and failed to campaign to defend engineers' standards.

Similarly the Broad Left has held back from linking industrial demands to the fight for a clear socialist programme and the removal of the Tories.



SRI LANKA CHINA EL SALVADOR

Sri Lankan Workers Trial Begins

The 12 Sri Lankan trade union and political leaders who were given bail on September 18th after nearly six weeks in detention are now appearing every day in the Colombo Harbour Court.

The 14 charges carry sentences of up to 20 years; clearly the government is making a determined effort to behead the most militant section of the Lankan working class. There is no indication as to how long this preliminary hearing will last as 298 witnesses are expected to testify.

Vijaya Gunaratne, a well known criminal lawyer, and Sarath Vidanapathrana are defending Vasudeva Nanayakkara (United Federation of Labour President), Vickramabahu Karunaratne (Nava Sama Samaja Party General Secretary), and G.I.D Dharmasekera (People's Democratic Front leader). Alavi Moulana (Sri Lanka Independent Trade Union Federation General Secretary) is

By a Special correspondent in Sri Lanka

defended by Mangala Moonasinghe and Gunasena Mahanama (Government Clerical Service Union General Secretary) by Edmund Samarakkody.

Already several significant objections to the charges have been raised but overruled by the court. As the entire prosecution appears to centre around the use of a hand bomb and because the government is seeking to establish common liability of all the accused on the basis of unlawful assembly defence counsel Vijaya Gunaratne objected to the government analyst's evidence.

Gunaratne argued that the analysts' evidence was not admissible because the evidence (parts of a hand bomb

and a damaged car) had not been duly forwarded to the analyst for analysis by the police. Counsel further argued that if the investigation was under regulation 61 of the Emergency Regulations it would not suffice in a trial under the normal law, where evidence had to be forwarded under Section 116 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Vijaya Gunaratne's objections were however over-ruled and the analyst's evidence admitted.

In fact a Ceylon Transport Board driver who testified on October 22 for the prosecution in the case admitted under cross examination that though he did not participate in the strike the demands were very reasonable, that he did not join the strike through

fear of dismissal, and that whatever demands were granted he stood to benefit.

Consistently defence counsel has been developing the defence that this case is really an attempt to intimidate the working class of the country by victimising trade union leaders. He further submitted that a spontaneous demonstration of protest by a massive crowd of about ten thousand persons belonging to various trade unions and political complexions could not be construed as an unlawful assembly resulting in common liability for acts that the individuals did not commit.

In fact on October 22 the CTB driver mentioned above admitted under cross exam-

ination by defence counsel for Vasudeva Nanayakkara and others, that even workers who did not belong to any trade union participated in the satyagraha (demonstration). In his opening submission Vijaya Gunaratne stressed that workers with genuine grievances assembled in large numbers to stage a peaceful protest. The police in various ways harassed and incited them into lawlessness.

The damage which occurred was not premeditated or expected by any of the accused. It was the result of "the just feeling of frustration arising in the mind of any normal man denied a sympathetic hearing."

It is important that the international labour move-

ment maintains its struggle to secure the dropping of these charges. International pressure helped secure the release on bail of 10 of the accused in September. At the beginning of November J.D.Silva (Government Sector United Workers Federation President) was also given bail, and efforts are still being made to secure bail for Dharmasekera who is still in prison.

As there are still over 80,000 workers locked out since the July General Strike the Lankan workers still require international solidarity to help them beat back the attacks of their reactionary government.

Solidarity Campaign see page 4



Workers demonstration outside the Magistrates Court as their leaders come to trial

Is this Socialism?

First the 'Gang of Four' planned to attack Mao's train with flame-throwers and bazookas. Then they were going to dynamite the railway bridge, bomb the train from the air and blow up the nearby oil depot. And if Mao somehow survived this mayhem they would kill him when he got to Shanghai!

That is just one of the charges levelled against the former rulers of China, who were overthrown in a 'palace coup' four years ago by the Deng Hsiao-ping bureaucratic clique. It has taken Deng four years before he felt confident enough to stage this show-trial, reminiscent of Stalin's trials of the 1930s.

Clearly the trial is a frame-up for the 'Gang of Four' came to power after Mao launched the Cultural Revolution and had no wish to murder their benefactor.

The 'Gang of Four' are now being charged with every mistake, corruption and inefficiency of the bureaucracy, which has hindered development in China. No crime is too fantastic to be laid at their door. They are accused of being 'Fascist counter-revolutionaries' who murdered 34,000 people and tortured three

By Jim Chrystie

quarters of a million.

But even if these crimes were partially true, what anyone would want to know, is how is it that such people came to be in power? On that there is a deafening silence from China's current rulers.

If explained at all, it is hinted that it was a series of mistakes. But China is supposed by the Communist Party to be a "socialist democracy." How could such a situation of mass persecution and murder arise?

The reason for the silence is because a true explanation would undermine the power of the Deng wing of the bureaucracy. It would show that the overthrow of the corrupt capitalist-landlord regime of Chiang Kai-shek was not followed by a society of workers democracy. Instead a planned economy was introduced on the basis of state ownership of the means of production, but power rested in the hands of a bureaucratic elite, not in those of the workers and peasants.

Periodically during his rule Mao tried to curb some of the worst privileges of this elite to

stop a potential explosion from below which would have threatened the rule of the bureaucracy itself. Recognising that the perks and privileges of the bureaucracy impeded the development of China towards a world power, Mao unleashed the Cultural Revolution to cut Deng's wing of the bureaucracy down to size. But he did so without undermining the system itself.

And over the last few years the Deng wing has re-asserted its power, particularly since the death of Mao. There is no fundamental difference between the Deng group and the 'Gang of Four,'—both wish to keep power in their hands and not in those of the working people.

Just as Stalin's trials in the 1930s the verdicts and sentences have probably already been decided. One difference is that in the Russian trials the main accused was not in court. Trotsky and the ideas of workers' democracy which had inspired the 1917 Revolution was a nightmare which haunted, and still haunts the Stalinist rulers of Russia.

Such a programme is the only real, socialist alternative to either wing of the Chinese bureaucracy.

The Heel of the Jackboot

By Vivienne Sookhdeo

"Since January 8,000 people have been murdered in El Salvador and a further 3,000 vanished without trace after arrest by security agents.

"There is not a day that passes without the discovery of bodies of men, women and children—the majority of them tortured and mutilated beyond recognition." This was the chilling introduction to the recent TV documentary on El Salvador. The catalogue of atrocities, bomb outrages and acts of naked terrorism by the forces of reaction in El Salvador, so often just warranting a mere few lines in the pages of the press, became on film, a harrowing and frightening reality.

Such is the contempt that the military rulers feel towards the rest of the world that they allowed the camera team not only to travel with "the security forces" but also film them indiscriminately shooting down unarmed students. The tragic and poignant farewell

from a dying student—shot in cold blood—to his comrades will haunt all those that watched. There followed horrifying scenes involving trade unionists. My family wept unashamedly as the fascist 'White Hand' organisation descended on the homes of trade unionists and wrenched husbands away from pleading wives and wives from husbands.

The cries of anguish, the resigned looks as they were clubbed into waiting lorries and at the interrogation centre, the sound of the heavy thud of metal against flesh followed by blood-curdling screams of those being tortured—will remain indelibly in my mind.

For all socialists engaged in struggle, the film provided many lessons. Apart from the use of the repressive state apparatus and the open connivance of the army

tops with fascists the film exploded the myth that the generals in the armed forces are neutral to politics. Demonstrations by the middle class were guarded by the army and low flying aircraft. Delegations from the demonstration were met by generals and given assurance they would continue to rule and ruthlessly crush all opposition.

Moreover, the army stood by as the landlords used their armed thugs to murder striking farm workers. We saw farm workers on strike. Moments later the bodies of the same workers were laid out for the cameras. After they had been massacred by the army on instructions from the landlords.

How long this civil war will continue was not clear from this film. But even such vicious repression will be unable to contain the revolutionary movement of the ordinary people of El Salvador for long.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Lunacy

Dear Comrades,
It is a complete and utter outrage that Thatcher's government has done little or nothing to correct the ever increasing unemployment.

This Tory government totally and blatantly disregard that redundancies affect not only the individual but his family and dependants. It is lunacy to allow schools to be wasted. It is diabolical to do nothing to correct the situation.

Given the right leadership unemployment can be turned. A Labour government can give that leadership, with a committed trade union movement behind it, on a socialist programme. We must all fight towards this end before Thatcher ruins our country.

Yours fraternally,
Don Barnard
Braintree TUC

Football politics

Dear Sir
Now that the football season has started, people's minds are directed to the problems of hooliganism and vandalism, by the Tory press. The police committee of South Yorkshire County Council (a supposed bastion of socialism) recently devoted two hours, during which elected members and magistrate members could air their views.

Some of your readers may be forgiven for expecting a Labour-controlled authority to look at the underlying factors and frustrations that manifest themselves in this type of behaviour. They may be upset to learn that this left-wing orientated body could come up with nothing more than photographic identification of supporters, moving football matches into the 'dry' periods of Sunday afternoon and vigilante committees for tenants living near grounds.

All this, of course completely misses the point. Every act of this insane government, hell-bent on throwing as many people out of work as possible, can only generate the wrath and anger of young people, who give vent to their feelings at football matches on a Saturday afternoon.

The only way to cure this is to tackle and solve the inadequacies of our housing, educational and social services, and to inject capital into employment tasks that are beneficial to the working class.

To institute identity cards would be a capitalists' dream—think of the profits that would accrue to some 'enterprising entrepreneur'! However, South Yorkshire Young Socialists believe that one way to combat the miseries and traumas of unemployment is for football clubs and all other avenues of entertainment to cut their admission prices for those who the capitalist system has thrown on the scrap-heap. In this way, we will be taking a small, but significant, step to redress the inequalities of our society.

Yours faithfully
M. Smith
Member of South Yorkshire Police Committee



Non-illegal means...

Dear Comrades,
The Vestey affair proves beyond all doubt that the press and the judiciary are instruments controlled and used by the ruling class for the defence of their own interests.

The law lords sanctioned the tax-cheating of the Vestey family, and their

associates in the press added their support. Echoing the views of the law lords, they claimed it was the inviolable right of any group of people to maximise their personal income by the use of any non-illegal means.

How many trade unionists will receive the same support this winter in their struggles to maintain and protect their living standards by the use of non-illegal means? The best

defence that the labour movement has is its own strength and all workers can be certain that the hypocrisy and lies of the press will be more than answered in the pages of this paper and full support given in their resistance to money grasping capitalists such as the Vestey's of this world.

Fraternally,
James Gardner
Cambridge LPYS

Photo: MILITANT

Fight fire with fire

Dear Comrades
I feel I must reply to Judy Blackwood (issue 527) on giving freedom of speech to the fascists.

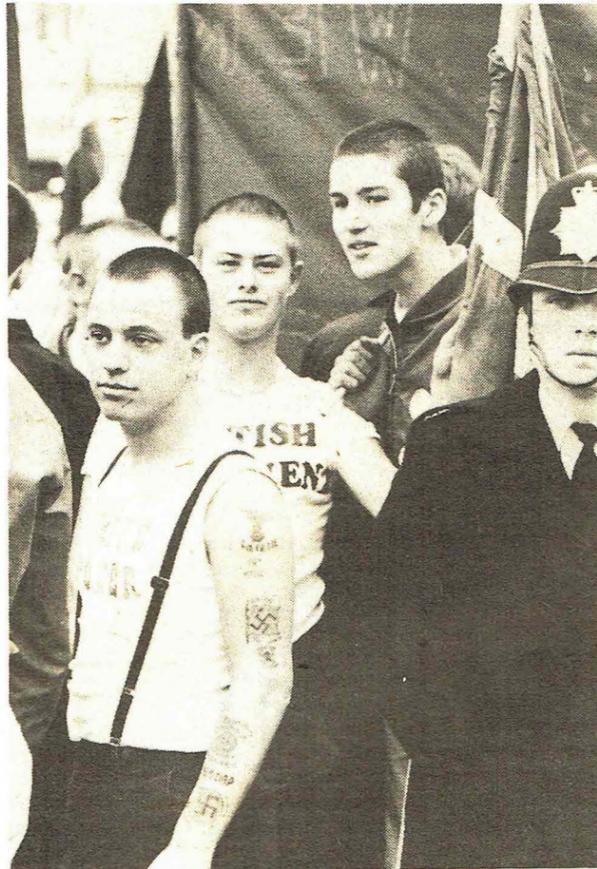
Fascists themselves do not pretend to give freedom of speech to anybody but themselves. Did Hitler or Mussolini allow free speech? No!
They tried and succeeded in breaking the working class movement with any means at their disposal, by murdering and sending trade unionists and leading socialists to prison camps.

The only way to beat the fascist thugs is to fight fire with fire. We must ban their filthy propaganda from the papers, TV etc. If need be meet them on the streets with counter demonstrations and be prepared for the inevitable trouble coming from the fascists.

These are a few points on beating fascism, obviously not a complete plan. But the softly softly approach put forward by comrade Blackwood did not work in Germany or Italy.

We must remember fascism is socialism's biggest enemy, so we must fight it with any means at our disposal.

Yours fraternally,
Gary Cantwell
Perth LPYS



British Movement make no pretence of supporting freedom of speech for anyone but fascists

Any bias?

Dear Sir
The article concerning 'Radio 4's "Any Questions"' reminds me of my own experience of that programme some years ago.

When Mrs Thatcher, as Minister of Education, axed free school milk, the subject was raised on "Any Questions." In its companion

programme "Any Answers" the following week a string of letters was read out expressing agreement with and praise for Thatcher's action; not one single condemnatory letter to be heard!

I felt that the BBC must have received at least one such letter—as I sent one myself! It is of course

possible that mine was the only letter condemning Mrs Thatcher and that it got lost "somewhere along the way," but that explanation does seem to stretch credulity a little!

Yours faithfully
John C Limister
Childwall Ward
Labour Party

Parliamentary pickets

Dear Comrades,
The picket of that feudal relic, Black Rod, by Labour MPs following an attempt by the Tories to smuggle rent increases into parliament by underhand measures, met with anger and frothings of at the mouth by the Colonel Blimp brigade both inside and outside of those hallowed walls.

The attitude of Tory St John-Stevas, spluttering ab-

out "thug tactics" and the sanctity of parliament did not surprise working people, but the news that Labour MPs David Owen and Bill Rodgers have written a letter to Michael Foot, claiming that the picket "obstructed the procedure of the house and caused offence to Mr Speaker" will have caused not a little anger among trade unionists.

Evidence of the real mood of working people towards this action came at a rally held in Plymouth against unemployment when Alan Fisher (General Secretary, NUPE) commended those MPs, stating that sometimes parliamentarians are too cut off from what is happening on the shop floor. David Owen, sharing the platform with Fisher and myself, could only sit glumly as those comments were drowned in applause and cheering from the 200-300 present.

The "gang of three" like to prattle on about being in line with the views of ordinary working people, so perhaps now Owen will publicly refute the contents

of his letter and instead congratulate the picketers?

This small incident showed the real mood of the rank and file and indicated that Labour Party members and trade unionists want to see MPs who are prepared to fight against the Tories in and out of Parliament, instead of trying to convince them that their policies are "morally and socially wrong" over a glass of whiskey in the Commons bar.

Fraternally,
Robin Clapp
S.W. Regional LP E.C.

Someone on my side

Dear Comrade
After reading your paper, I agree more than ever before, especially on the prison conditions. I agree also on the Irish Labour Party's policies (see last issue—Ed).

The Tory Party in power is destroying our jobs; making our lives unpleasant with the mass unemployment in Britain.

The prison conditions, especially in H-Block should not exist. We should have more rallies, more demonstrations outside the prisons to show what we mean!

I agree with stopping the censorship of letters—it's not nice to know that someone is reading them. Altogether I might as well say wipe out oppressive conditions of the capitalist system. We must protest

quickly to get anything done; the conditions are inhuman.

We ought to get rid of the police system. Our laws would be equality for both blacks and whites or any other colour. End all immigration laws: the capitalist system is destroying the system of equality.

Being brought up in a socialist background, I've become aware of difficulties blacks, Asians etc have in Britain. Being chucked out and deported back to another country which they've never been to in their lives before. It's ridiculous.

At college in my group I'm the only socialist. Nobody sticks up for me. In Blackpool is there an organisation I can join? Then I'll have someone on my side.

Yours faithfully
Lesley K Slimon
Blackpool

Still fighting at 26!

Dear Comrades
Recently I attended my Constituency Labour Party as a union delegate for the first time and not from the LPYS. Part of the business included the selection of an LPYS delegate to the Scottish Conference of the Labour Party.

A delegate moved me—but the first duty of a Marxist is to tell the truth (however unpalatable to himself or his class). I pointed out that I was now, unfortunately, too old for the YS.

This was greeted with well-meaning comment and laughter from the delegates that included the MP saying 'I've waited a long time to hear that, I was beginning to think I would never hear that from you,' again in the same good-natured vein.

However what most of the delegates understood and he shall soon learn is that some of us don't change when we reach a certain age or station in life—the fight goes on.

Yours fraternally
Jim Newlands
Stirling.

Space-age technology

Dear Editor,
In a recent 'Buck Rogers' TV programme, a planet was being mined for some incredibly powerful mineral by an inter-galactic tycoon.

When approached by a miners' representative concerning bad working conditions and long hours, this futuristic Michael Edwardes set his psycho-kinetic triplets on him and they zapped him against a wall, presumably killing him. Fearing further trouble from the miners, he kidnapped Buck's robot 'Timeleie' to protect his super profits.

British miners needn't fear being sent to slavery by the National Coal Board on some distant planet today, however, because on the basis of capitalism, man is not able to satisfy his basic necessities, never mind travel to some distant star.

Joe Kreft,
Handsworth LPYS

A real gang of three

Dear Comrades,
While hurrying to an appointment yesterday evening I passed some young children in the street apparently discussing school bullying. The comment of one young girl really made me prick my ears up—"My mam," she said, "says that they are a real 'gang of three'!"

One can imagine the sort of feelings aroused in working-class homes up and down the country by the manoeuvres of the Labour Party's right wing.

They have no place in the Labour Party, as they are not prepared to abide by its decisions and want to use it for their own ends. They have no basis for their policies amongst the rank and file—only in the pages and reports of the bosses' press and media.

And these "bullies" will be sent running by a mass democratic Labour Party committed to socialist policies.

Yours fraternally,
Dave Brown
Bridlington LPYS

ads

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SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY

SALFORD Marxist Discussion Group Ireland: Divide and Rule
7.30 pm, Thursday 4 December
Phone 061-793 5808 for details

Birmingham Labour Party Young Socialists
Public Meeting

'FIGHT TORY PAY CUTS —BACK THE FIREMEN'
—BACK THE FIREMEN'
Speakers: Terry Fields (Executive Committee, Fire Brigades Union), Maureen Hinks (NUPE shop steward)
Monday December 8, 7.45 pm, Carrs Lane Church centre, Carrs Lane Birmingham

CROYDON Labour Party Young Socialists. Open meeting "How to fight the Tories"

Speakers: Andy Bevan [Labour Party National Youth Officer], Joan Maynard MP
Tuesday 2 December, 8.45 pm at Cedar Halls, Ruskin House, 23 Coombe Road, Croydon.

WORLD BOOKS

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 - ★ **The Marxist Theory of the State—Grant**
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- Send for free comprehensive booklist to:
World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Manchester City Labour Party Conference

"Policies to fight the Tories"

11.00am to 1.30pm. Saturday 6th December 1980.
Room RC2, Reynolds Building. Umist, Manchester.

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS IN 'MILITANT'

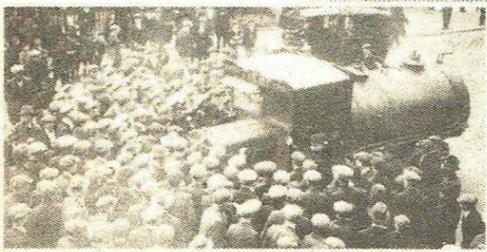
Send greetings to the labour movement in the New Year's edition of 'Militant'.

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Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target for year
Eastern	3736		5,000
East Midlands	3388		3,800
Hants & IOW	4145		4,600
Humberside	1579		2,500
London East	5366		6,200
London West	3030		4,700
London South	4649		4,700
Manchester & Lancs	2866		5,100
Merseyside	3833		6,000
Northern	4398		7,300
Scotland East	2241		3,200
Scotland West	4011		5,000
Southern	4546		5,900
South West	2186		3,200
Wales East	1591		2,800
Wales West	2923		3,100
West Midlands	6517		9,000
Yorkshire	4339		7,300
Others	10247		10,600
Total received	75591		100,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£100,000

HELP US FIGHT THE TORIES

A year and a half of Tory government is a year and a half too long. Almost every day, new cuts and new attacks by Thatcher and her crew make this more obvious.

Millions of workers see the need to get rid of the Tories now. The question is, how?

Militant's programme provides the answer, but still far too few people know about it. We expect that many people will be reading Militant for the first time this week, and we would make the following appeal to you.

Take out a regular order for the paper (by subscription or through one of our thousands of sellers throughout the country); consider selling the paper each week (please write to the Circulation Department for full details) and finally make a regular contribution to Militant's Fighting Fund!

Militant started from nothing sixteen years ago, it has been built to what it is today purely by the individual donations of workers. We would like to be able to produce a more frequent paper, to cover all the developments, disputes, and events in the mounting struggle for socialism, but we are limited by our resources.

This week we have received £1153.49, taking us to £75,590 so far this year. We really need £3,000 per week if we are to match up to the possibilities now presenting themselves. We are confident that this can be achieved, but don't leave it to chance, send us your donation now!

By Steve Cawley

The following letter from an Edinburgh LPYS member came with £70. The comrade writes "...My job was 'thatcherised' a couple of months ago and I've just received a refund of super-annuation contributions. There is no more positive way of spending money than to help to build the best workers paper in the country..."

How much that reader and others look forward to seeing their Militant every week can be gauged from this and other donations such as the £40 from J Molyneux (Poole), £20 from S Gunning (Erith LPYS) for a sponsored swim, C East (Thornton Heath, £17) and £16 from M Dick of Glasgow Pollok LP.

Thanks also to A&B Cruden (also Glasgow), G&M Darvell (London), C Knight (Tunbridge Wells), J Mennell (Canterbury), W Robinson (GMWU York), J Holmes (Tyneside), T Burgess (SLADE, London), B Lamb (Penistone) and Essex supporters P Fay (Grays) and J Twedell, M Osborne and M Lynch (Basildon).

Each week we receive quite modest amounts from regular discussion groups, and most weeks there are

THIS WEEK £1,153



Photo: MILITANT
contributions from new areas. Thanks especially this week to comrades in York and Barnsley.

Bazaars are being run in

most areas in aid of the Militant, and there's the added advantage when purchasing your Christmas shopping that you know where the surplus is going! Thanks to Brighton comrades for an excellent £150, and to London supporters who've paid in nearly £100 this week from jumble sales.

But it doesn't need a massive effort to collect 'extras' from change in selling the Militant, or to sell the many attractive badges available. For example, £9.25 came in from Bedwellty from these sources.

We will reach the £100,000 target and thus ensure the expansion of Militant next year only if we can persuade all our readers to help us financially now. Times are not so good for some of us, but the certainty is that they'll be much worse for all of us unless there's a political alternative!

We urge everyone selling the Militant—after reading this page draw it to the attention of every reader. Ask them what they're going to do to assist our effort. One cut we can afford less than any other is a cut in the production of our paper!

MILITANT WINTER HOLIDAY DRAW

Win a winter holiday abroad for two worth £500—can be taken any time mid-January to mid-April!

Second prize: a weekend for two in Paris! Eight other prizes include record tokens and a portable TV.

Tickets only 10p from your 'Militant' seller. All proceeds to the 'Militant' fighting fund.

Industrial

FBU-The fight is on

Terry Parry, General Secretary of the Fire Brigades Union opened the recall conference with a call to firemen "to fight as they have never fought before."

He went on to say that the fight was not about percentages, but about the honouring of our pay formula. The TUC, the trade unions and the Labour Party were solidly behind the firemen.

But, he added, if firemen wanted that support they must first take action and lead the way. Whatever course of action the FBU embark on, it is going to be 100% solid. The first one shift strike would be a day shift—9 hours—and 24 hours' notice would be given.

The first strike will be some time next week, thereafter no notice will be given. This will have the effect of keeping the troops on permanent standby at a cost of about £1 million a day, to local authorities.

The executive council will be organising a lobby of parliament and large advertisements will be appearing in the press.

But the possibility of a lock-out cannot be ruled out. The General Secretary wound up by saying that the firemen should keep their nerve, and serve united under one leader. He called for unanimous support for the EC's recommendation.

In opening the conference, the President, Phil Deal, said there may be delegates who felt differently to the EC.

Some delegates believed the action did not go far enough. The Essex delegates said that they supported the EC, but some of the tactics were too weak; the one-day action should be stiffened up.

Northern Ireland supported the EC, and went on to say they would settle for nothing less than the pay formula. Merseyside supported the EC, but added that if this didn't work, an

By John Allington

(Chairman, Merseyside Brigade, FBU)

all-out strike should be called; 'this is the language that the Tories understand.'

They demanded the TUC call a national one-day public sector strike: An indication of the attitude of some employers was raised by the last speaker, Cambridge. He explained, had threatened to put firemen on half pay if they continued to work to rule. But in reply, Terry Parry warned the Cambridge local authority, if they did this they would be responsible for a national all-out strike.

After Terry Parry wound up the debate, a vote was taken, and it was unanimous in support for the EC's recommendation.

Firemen must realise that the one-day strikes are only the first steps, and an all-out strike is the only way to draw the trade union movement around us.

The question of a one-day public sector strike could be co-ordinated by the TUC and is important. It would shake the Tories rigid, and serve as a rallying call for the whole of the movement.

To help achieve action such as this, rallies of public sector workers such as the one organised on Merseyside should be arranged.

This time we must be prepared, and start to organise in the Labour parties, trade unions and trades councils. This has already started on Merseyside. The FBU delegates in local Labour parties are moving resolutions and we are sending out speakers to the local trade union branches.

The only way to beat the Tories is to organise in the labour movement, and be as prepared for the struggle as we possibly can.



The firemen are paid a pittance for a dangerous, dirty yet highly skilled job—they must be paid in full
Photo: J Woulfe (Militant)

MERSEYSIDE

Although firemen are willing to fight the employers, we realise that this is just what the government wants.

Thatcher has made this clear, announcing the 6% limit on the eve of our wage agreement, and by the subsequent mobilisation of the army. She would like to force us into a strike and break us as an example to other unions.

But the fight is not just with us; the 6% applies to the whole of the public sector, and the whole of the public sector must unite, with the Public Service Committee of the TUC taking the lead.

Working together the public sector unions can ensure maximum effectiveness. The government do not have the resources to step in and replace firemen, water workers, power work-

ers, people in the health service, and all those other services which are essential to the public. They can call on the whole strength of the armed forces and scab volunteers, but to take on such an enormous task would be impossible.

United we have the power to win this battle. At the same time we can show the real power of working people and take a giant stride forward to socialism.

By a member of Wigan CLP and Merseyside FBU

BRENTWOOD

The year ahead for firemen is a tough one. Not only must we help fight against the 6% but also against redundancies.

In the next round of cuts, in April '81, under the present standards of fire cover it's been estimated 4,000 jobs will go.

The government now wants to introduce laws reducing the present standards of fire cover, which has been revealed in a government report entitled 'Review of Fire Policy'. If the standards of fire cover are reduced, and they will be if firemen don't take action against them, an estimated 6,000 jobs will go.

This would mean a less efficient Fire Service with loss of life to both firemen and the public, with the only reason being to save money.

But a protest by 38,000 firemen is not enough. The 6% cash limit involves all public sector workers and nationalised industries, while cuts in the Fire Service involves everyone. It's up to the unions representing the public sector, up to 5 million workers, to take joint action.

Mark Howe, Brentwood Branch FBU delegate

BARBICAN

"The firemen at Barbican feel very bitter over the employers' offer. We have had bad times at this station since the last dispute, with one lad killed and another out of the job because of injuries received at work.

"After the strike we were promised that we had been taken out of the industrial and political arena as far as strikes were concerned.

"Now the Tories and employers have broken the agreement. One thing is certain, that we can never believe what they say again. It is this betrayal that hurts most. Even more than the low offer itself.

"This one-day action may only be the thin end of the wedge. The lads are angry just as in 1977, but with that experience behind them, they are better prepared this time.

"Also the National Association of Fire Officers have issued a statement supporting our case this time, and the London Salvage Corps will join the strikes.

"If the Tories keep to the 6% policy, and if all local authority workers get together to fight, the same thing could happen to this government as happened to the Heath government in 1974, and we'll be there in the front line."

Dick Beedie [FBU rep for Barbican fire station] talked to Keith Gow [Westminster South Labour Party]

BRISTOL

Bristol and Bath firemen put the blame for the dispute firmly on the Tories. It is clear that as part of a general war on working people the Tories are organising a vendetta against the public sector.

The Bristol firemen have agreed to send an FBU speaker to Bristol NE LPYS branch to explain their case, and discuss how the movement can help if a strike is called.

The key issue will be class unity to make sure that the firemen do not become isolated in their struggle, but instead beat the government and score a victory for the labour movement.

HARLOW

Joint LPYS/firemen meeting at Harlow, Wednesday, December 3rd. Speakers: Bob Morrison [Chairman, Essex area FBU] and YS speaker. 8pm at Advice Centre, Harlow Town Centre

ISTC CONFERENCE

The proposal for a 'Triple Alliance' of the steelworkers, miners and railwaymen to fight against further cutbacks in their industries was greeted with enthusiasm by delegates at the one-day ISTC conference on Saturday.

Calls to build the alliance on the shopfloor as well as at top level, were coupled with the demand for united action by steelworkers in both private and public works, to end further clos-

ures. The general secretary of the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation, Bill Sirs, said the lessons of Shotton, Consett and Corby needed to be learnt.

But it was Ray Davies, from Llanwern, who attempted to analyse the previous struggles and lay down a programme to fight.

"The way we fought closures needs re-thinking. In the past we kept quiet, hoping we wouldn't be affected and they might close elsewhere. This happened for two years so that a cloud of chloroform gathered over us—when the time came we had no fight.

"The TUC always blame

the workers for taking the pot of gold, but not the generals for not giving a lead. The dockers showed the way. They repelled the attack on them by the threat of national action.

"We must throw down the gauntlet and say no more closures or redundancies. The executive are the only ones who can do this."

This call for a national mobilisation to defend jobs was backed by Tom Brennan, of Ravenscraig, who called on the TUC not only to defend the steel industry but to end the wider devastation of industries.

Unfortunately, without resolutions only discussion on a seven page report was

allowed, so a planned strategy for action could not be made. But the mood of anger of the delegates at the Tory onslaught was summed up by a delegate from Birmingham—"let's stand together and fight".

British Steel announce their corporate plan on December 12—reports say BSC is looking for another 25,000 redundancies, and rumours about closures at Scunthorpe, Port Talbot and Llanwern are rife.

These workers especially will be looking for a categorical assurance from the ISTC leaders that local plant battles will receive full and immediate national official backing, combining all the strength of the union, and will wage the united fight that was called for at conference.

ROSS FOODS

Workers at Ross Foods in Liverpool are fighting the company's plans to close the factory down.

After a recent meeting with management, a spokesman for the unions involved said: "The trade union representatives were of the opinion that a number of answers given were not the right ones, and they requested complete analysis of all units within the Ross group. "Due to a hold-up in negotiations, union representatives requested an extension of the 90-day closure notice.

"After the meeting with management, a mass meeting was convened and a report-back was given to the

workforce regarding the anomalies that exist.

"The general consensus was that no stone should be left unturned on negotiations. The work force then substantiated a previous mandate to the action committee and the full time officers, to fight tooth and nail to conserve these jobs at the factory."

The shop stewards are calling a mass meeting this Friday, which will be addressed by Eric Heffer MP and other Labour Party members.

By

Lesley Holt

Reports

Longbridge at boiling point

By Richard Lewis

(T&GWU shop steward, Longbridge)

Management provocation at Longbridge has just gone too far. Having got the workers to accept their wage offer, they think they can just push the workforce around.

But last Friday, workers' resentment reached boiling point. With no seats to install, the Metro workers were laid off. Angry that they would yet again lose money due to management incompetence, they marched through the park.

secured the agreement of the works committee for the introduction of 1,000 sets of seats from Callow and Maddocks, Coventry. But then the company, without agreement, brought in another 5,000 seats.

When these were delivered, they were blacked. The following day the Metro was laid off again; and all hell let loose! The seething frustration after the disappointment over wages burst through. As one Metro picket put it, "it's bad enough accepting the 6.8% but if you're not working a full week either....."

As the track stopped running the workers marched on management's offices demanding payment for all the time they were losing, and an end to the 'out-sourcing' of work.

Whatever damage was done was entirely due to the callous arrogance of Leyland management who treat the workforce like galley slaves.

At first the management locked the doors to keep the men at bay, but finally Mullet, one of the plant managers, gave in and attempted an explanation. But he still refused to budge an inch on the workers' demands.

Employ more workers!

By the beginning of the following week, pickets were out and the Metro was still idle. The joint shop stewards on the Monday pledged full support to the workers blacking the seats.

The meeting agreed to unfreeze the 5,000 seats on the condition there'd be no more contracting out of work, that management man up the shops and allow in union officials to investigate the standards set.

Its becoming clear that the Longbridge workers have recovered from the attacks on their organisations over the last year and are now fighting implementation of the new working practices foisted upon them. There should be no contracting out of work, for after seats what next would be put out to tender?

If not enough is being produced then let Leyland employ more workers. The speed up, the arbitrary lay-offs must be fought, and Edwards and company shown that they cannot walk all over us.

Five minutes warning only for lay-offs

The Metro and Mini workers came out in sympathy and by the end of the day, production was at a standstill. At time of writing if management refuse to budge, an all out strike is possible.

Lay-offs on the Metro have become a way of life over the last few weeks. But since the imposition of the 92 page document working practises, there hasn't been the two hour notice that we used to get.

For example, at 10.55pm on Monday November 17, the Metro line was told "you're laid off from 11 o'clock." Unless you live nearby, how do you get home, especially if you live outside the city boundary? One Metro worker living in Kenworth 20 miles away, had to send his wife an SOS to get their young child out of bed and drive over to collect him in the middle of the night!

A few workers tried to stop around the factory but were told to get off the premises. The bosses couldn't care less about the disruption they cause whole families; they only want to know you when you are on the track.

The Metro workers were given 5 minutes notice of lay off at 4pm last Thursday, and then again at 9 o'clock on the Friday.

The lay offs are because the Tretham trim shops cannot produce enough seats for the Metro. Even in September before the Metro was launched, there were 2,500 vehicles without seats lying around the factory. The company has undermanned the trim shops and set the workers there impossible production standards: since the 92 page document, work study decisions are not negotiable.

With the bottle-neck they have created, management

LIVERPOOL HOSPITALS

By Jimmy Hackett

(Newsham Action Committee)

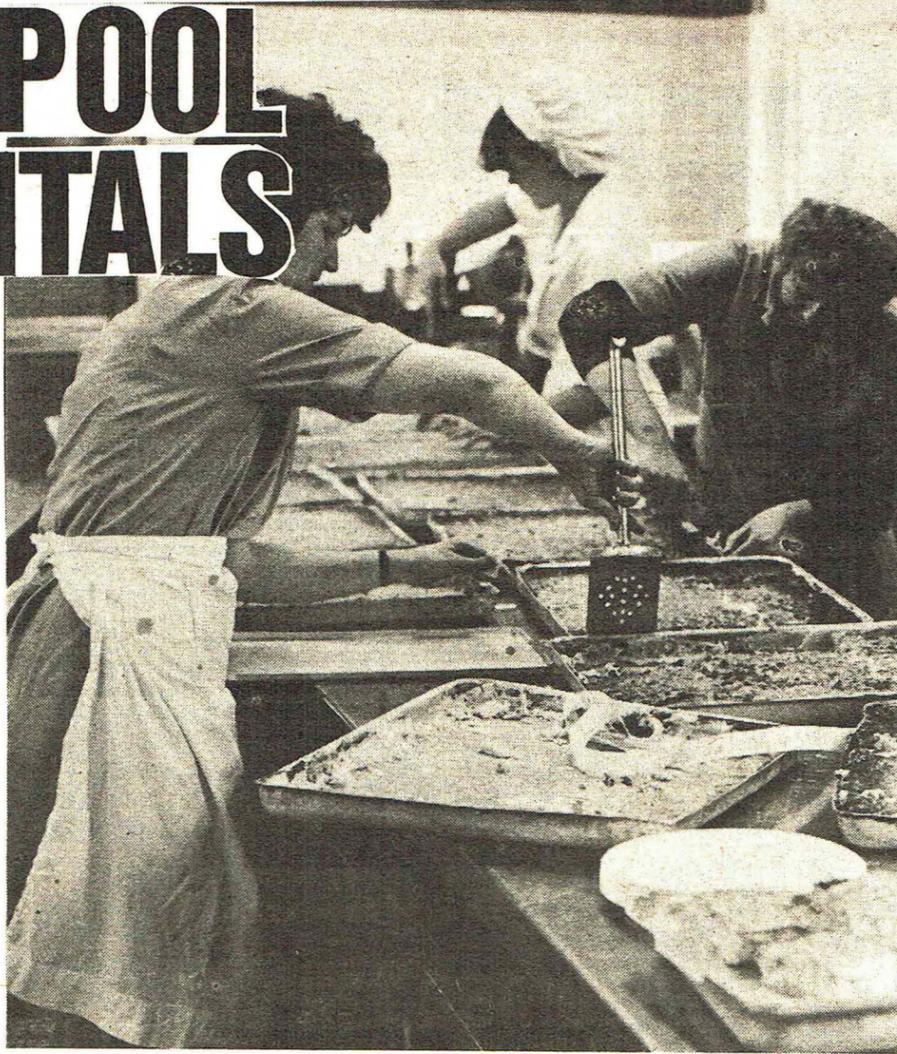
The struggle continues at Newsham hospital in Liverpool.

The latest ploy by management has been to send a letter to the Action Committee complaining not only about the prevention of patients being removed, but also about 'Keep the hospital open' stickers damaging the building's paint-work! It is clear from this that the campaign is affecting the morale of management.

The Action Committee have visited North West MPs and Stanley Orme at the House of Commons, who have given them full backing in their struggle.

The MPs promised to pressure Vaughan, the Tory minister of health, to keep the hospital open with its full complement of beds. However, we must rely on our own strength.

Meanwhile at Walton hospital, the workers who occupied the canteen have scored a partial victory. Management, who tried to



Women work in Walton hospital canteen occupation to feed patients only, without pay [see centre pages]

take away a bonus system, have now agreed on a new system to be introduced, although to be reviewed in January. It is still a reduction on the previous bonus level, but nearer in line with

original union demands.

But the decisive action by the Walton canteen workers must be a lesson to the workers at Newsham. With a bold stand they forced the management to retreat (if

only temporarily). If the hospital workers stood united throughout Liverpool's hospitals under threat from cut-backs, the Area Health Authority could be forced to back down.

UCW Conference

By Bryan Beckingham

Union structure is not normally the most controversial issue for a conference.

However, on Monday at the Union of Communication Workers conference, Tom Jackson had to stop his reply to one debate, as conference erupted against his crude 'red baiting', and accusations that delegates who stayed to the end of the meetings "with their bottoms glued to their seats" were somehow not genuine delegates. But the chairman had to call Jackson to order during this debate.

The issue being discussed surfaced earlier on Sunday, over the lack of time allowed to get to section 6 on the agenda (the political and social issues), and in particular the question of democracy in the Labour Party.

The statements giving support for the right wing of

the party against re-selection of MPs, the electoral college etc, have annoyed many rank and file delegates.

At last year's conference in May, a resolution on re-selection was placed by the standing orders committee as a top category resolution. But this was never reached.

Not enough consultation

Tom Jackson said today (Monday) that the executive wanted the issues discussed and the membership consulted. In view of their own position today we have to ask what sort of consultation they mean.

On the electoral college, the union leadership have been 'consulting' their members by issuing a circ-

ular giving branches only ten days to call a meeting and to comment on the executive's proposals—they want 50% of the college to come from the MPs, 25% from the trade unions, and 25% from the CLPs.

The branches can either reject the suggestion, or make comments only on it. As many of the delegates pointed out, some consultation!

However, a significant event at this conference was the public meeting held by the newly formed Broad Left.

The Broad Left's statement of aims, has been distributed and received with enthusiastic support from many delegates, who are under increasing pressure on jobs, wages and conditions.

The mood is present for a large growth in support for the Broad Left, and the planned national meeting

on January 18th in Birmingham, which has been advertised here, should get excellent support.

Details of that meeting, which will be open to all UCW members, can be obtained from the Secretary of the Broad Left, Pete Dodd, 80 Lynton Road, Chorlton, Manchester.

MILITANT PAMPHLETS

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Re-instate Eileen Crosby

Over 5,000 teachers and trade unionists marched through Nottingham at the weekend in support for Eileen Crosby, the sacked nursery teacher.

Eileen was sacked by the county council when she refused to teach a class of 40 under-fives, after one of her two helpers was cut because of public spending cut-backs.

The mood was clear, reinstate Eileen Crosby now! But large sections of the

By Kevin Slattery

(Notts NUT)

membership, while applauding NUT general secretary, Greg Jarvis, stating the continued determination of the union to fight dismissal, expressed their concern at the leadership.

The executive had seemed unwilling to call action on a wider scale throughout the dispute, and there was widespread feeling that there should now be definite and uncompromising strike action, even a national strike on the basis of a national levy.

The message is plain. Support of the membership is there on a national scale, with teachers all over the country pleading to be allowed to take part in the

dispute.

That there were many non-teaching trade union banners on the march, illustrates the potential support for the issue throughout the trade union movement.

The executive must now take up this support and immediately put it into action, with a plan which will win the dispute, involving the full strength of our union and the labour movement.

FIGHT EVERY CUT! DUMP THE TORIES

This week, the Tory government has meted out more vicious punishment to the low-paid, the unemployed and the sick—the hardest-hit victims of the bosses' crisis.

Last Monday, as cuts of over £350 million came into force, one-parent families and pensioners, backed by civil service workers, protested outside the Department of Employment in Newcastle.

By Eileen Short

On that day, about £125 million had been 'saved', by holding back pension and child benefit increases for two weeks.

The other £225 million of the savings are being borne by 740,000 jobless not yet claiming supplementary benefits; 650,000 invalids; 550,000 people on sickness and injury benefits; and 120,000 claiming maternity benefits.

Over recent years, these benefits have been increased more or less in line with inflation. This time they have been increased by 5p to 9p in the pound less than necessary to keep up with inflation.

"Thatcher won't listen," exploded one old-age pensioner. Angry and frustrated at the brick wall of callous indifference the forty demonstrators occupied the local Social Security office.

The same day, Chancellor Howe announced in parliament that benefits have gone

up too much this year—so pensioners, the sick and the poor will lose one per cent of next year's rise—part of a plan to cut another £66 million off spending.

Thatcher claims that price rises have recently been held down to 4%. But there is no denying that the annual rate of price rises is still over 15%.

Any revival in the economy, moreover, will undoubtedly set the inflationary spiral going again. If the slump continues or deepens, there will be even more unemployment, short-time working, and cuts for millions of workers to cope with.

These latest Tory cuts will mean unimaginable deprivation and suffering for millions. The changes in the supplementary benefit rules, for example, will cut out most "extra payments", mainly for clothing, footwear and other urgent necessities for children.

There are already about 13 million children on or below the poverty line. These cuts will have a terrible effect on



Parents and teachers occupied Gayhurst School, Hackney in June to protest at staff cuts

Photo: MILITANT

the health, well-being and future prospects of the young.

It is obviously going to be harder to claim supplementary benefit. The Tories have already ended earnings-related supplement for unemployment pay from the beginning of next year.

But this is far from all. Last Monday, the Tories announced yet more cuts.

Trying to force the ailing economy into their strait-jacket of monetary targets, the Tories are cutting central government spending by an-

other 2% in all areas except health.

Essential services already pared to the bone, including government funding for education and local councils, will be vandalised still further. Meanwhile, defence spending, instead of growing by 3% as last year, will 'only' rise by 2½% this year and next.

While millions are squandered on bombs, missiles and other lethal toys for the army chiefs, the health service—supposedly exempted from

cuts—will have to find savings of £25 million through "better use" of pitifully inadequate resources.

Local authorities, in some cases struggling to maintain the bare bones of essential local services against inflation and the last round of cuts, are being ordered to reduce spending still further in 1981-82.

For the Tories, this represents the economic desperation of the mad-house. Recession and cuts mean growing unemployment, less

wealth produced, less tax paid and increasing dole claims. So to finance even the present meagre benefits they announced—more cuts.

For capitalism it is a vicious circle with only one aim: boosting profits at the expense of poverty wages and a return to the regime of the poorhouse.

For workers, this is a battle for survival. Every cut must be fought. The Tories must be sent to join their election promises and their economic policies—on the scrap-heap.

BRING DOWN THE TORIES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Now these people have come up with two cosmetic schemes, in a cynical pretence at tackling unemployment.

For the long-term unemployed, they have introduced a "Community Enterprise Programme" with places for 25,000 people. This is a drop in the ocean. Four times that number were added to the dole queue this month alone!

There are also plans for a Youth Opportunities Programme for 440,000 young unemployed. These are not jobs, these are not even training programmes—they are simply 'work experience' for 16-17-year-olds. Is this the nearest young people can get to a proper job under the Tories?

The "allowance" (not wage) for this programme has been frozen at £23.50 a week, a 0% increase—just what the bosses would like for the working class as a whole. "Employment" Minister



Fight alongside the LPYS for a socialist alternative to unemployment

Photo: MILITANT

Prior called it a "New Deal" for the young unemployed. New 'deal' maybe, but we're being dealt the same rotten capitalist cards—unemployment, cutbacks and low pay.

Labour MP John Tilley pointed out that in his South London constituency, Lambeth, youth unemployment

has trebled since May 1979. What is the point of taking young people off the dole for a few months if we are going to be dumped back on it again afterwards?

The potential already exists for a better life for all workers. Loss of production through unemployment alone

costs every family in the country £16 a week.

Are there no jobs to be done? Look around Liverpool—or any working class area. How many homes are unfit for habitation? New houses could be built if needs and not profits were the motive force in society—under a socialist plan of production.

If the labour and trade union leaders led a fight against the Tories, against redundancies, against the bosses' system as a whole, with the same determination as the workers at Gardner's, the Tories would not be able to reduce Britain to an industrial desert. They would be out on their ears.

There is no alternative to this fight. Join us, in the Labour Party, the Young Socialists and the trade unions, fighting to arm the labour movement with socialist policies. We must end the rule of the Tories and their rich backers.

At a recent LPYS meeting, a young workers from Kirkby described his job, earning £28 a week for all the hours there are. He is "lucky"—he has a job in a town where 800 youth over the age of 18 have never worked.

"The likes of us have to get involved in the fight to change society," he told us, "there's no other way out."

Stop the rail cuts
 Pages 4 and 10

Liverpool hospitals resist closures
 page 15
Longbridge at boiling point
 page 15

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