

MINERS FIGHT IS OUR FIGHT

By
Ian Isaac

(Secretary St Johns NUM
South Wales)

The South Wales Area have taken the first historic step in the struggle to defend miners' jobs against pit closures and compulsory redundancies.

The news that the Area Executive had endorsed the rank and file call for immediate strike action was received with tremendous applause from all at Monday's conference in Bridgend.

South Wales miners are confident that with the help of other mining areas in Britain they are going to win this battle. It is anticipated that the Kent area will immediately follow the South Wales area and that the Scottish area will be giving the strike call on Friday.

The anger felt by many
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Miners must win

Editorial

The miners must win! This is the feeling of workers throughout the country now that an all-out national miners' strike to save jobs seems certain.

Victory for the miners will lift the confidence of the whole labour move-

ment in the struggle to save jobs and stop the Tory wreckers in their tracks.

The miners must receive the maximum possible assistance from all sections of the trade union and labour movement.

The cynical calculation that extra money would help lure the miners into
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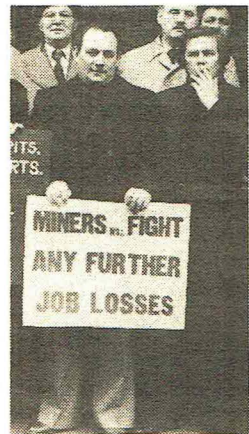
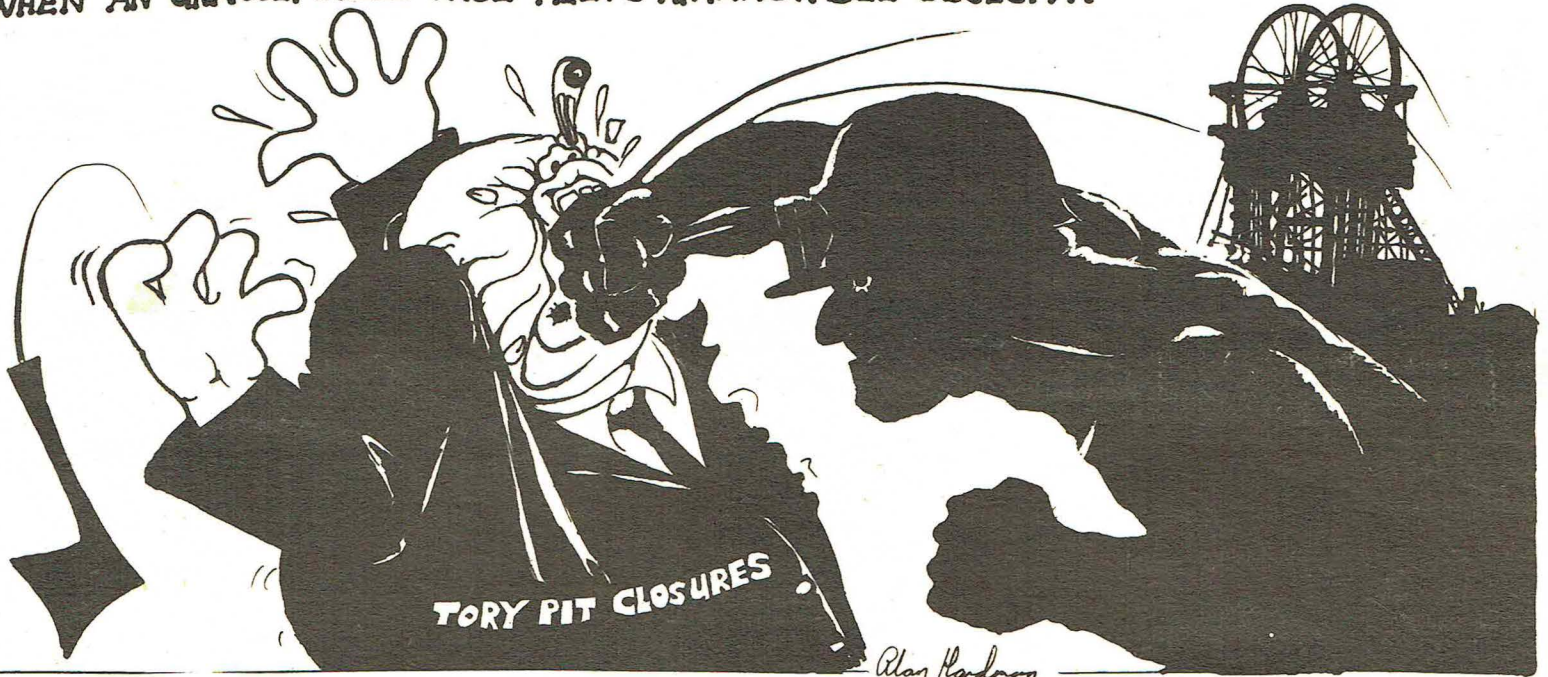


Photo: Militant

WHEN AN UNACCEPTABLE FACE MEETS AN IMMOVABLE OBJECT...



LINWOOD

Sack Tories Not Workers

The gloves are off in the fight to save the Talbot car plant at Linwood.

At mass meetings last Thursday the 4,800 strong workforce voted, almost unanimously, in support of a campaign to save the factory.

The decision demonstrates the cautious optimism now amongst the membership at Linwood. The question being asked is "can we win?"

Jimmy Livingstone, the T&G plant convenor at Linwood, pulled no punches in an interview with the 'Militant'. "We believe industrial action will

By
Benny Lynch

(AUEW, Talbot
Linwood)

be necessary to save the factory and any measures will be discussed at future plant meetings."

Obviously sickened at
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LABOUR TO POWER ON A SOCIALIST PROGRAMME!

Militant

Socialist Programme to End Unemployment

Unemployment shot up by 66% last year. Official statistics show that 2.4 million workers are presently on the dole.

The TUC, however, reckons that there are almost 3½ million jobless, if one takes into account those who do not register as unemployed. This represents one in ten of the labour force.

But behind these bare statistics lies the misery detailed in our centre page reports.

Moreover it is not just in the traditional areas of Scotland, Wales and Merseyside that unemployment has returned to haunt working people. The West Midlands has experienced the most rapid growth in unemployment in the past year.

Coventry, which was an escape route for workers from the 'depressed areas' in the 1930s will have an unemployment figure of 15% in the next period. Telford, a post-war 'boom town', will soon have an unemployment rate higher than Belfast because of the recent sackings announced by GKN Sankey.

Moreover, 12% of the current unemployed have been made redundant twice in the past two years. And if any of them are looking for relief in the projected 'boom' predicted for the end of this year or 1982, that is now shattered by the latest predictions of the capitalist economic experts.

The Charterhouse Group, in its latest economic review, describes expectations of a 'boom' as a 'false dawn'.

They forecast that manufacturing output will "fall substantially greater than during the 1929-33 slump."

Production could fall by a staggering 20% over the three years up to 1982 compared with just under 12% fifty years ago! Unemployment will therefore probably increase to 3 million by the end of this year.

The responsibility for the calamitous decline of the British economy and the devastating effect it has had on the lives of millions of working people lies squarely on the shoulders of the present Tory government and the capitalist system which it defends.

Only by savagely cutting living standards, through a policy of deflation, cuts in the social services and holding down wages while prices go up, could the rate of profit of big business be increased. This, combined with the attempt to squeeze inflation out of the system, is the essence of the Thatcher government's monetarist policies.

However, by cutting the

working class' share of the wealth which it produces the Thatcher government has also cut the market. Moreover this has been at a time of a world recession and the existence of 'excess capacity' in all the major capitalist countries of the order of 20%. Therefore there has been no incentive for the capitalists to re-invest in industry.

Intoxicated by the 'monetarist' Milton Friedman, Thatcher has, just as her predecessors did in the 1930s, cut public spending in order to boost 'private industry', i.e. the monopolies.

But she forgot one little trifle: since the 1930s the working class has forced the capitalist state to pay bigger welfare payments, dole pay, etc. Thus one of the effects of increased unemployment through cuts in public expenditure was to massively increase public spending!

Thatcher is like a nurse, to use her favourite analogy, who prescribes amputation for a patient with pains in the little finger. Her policy is now in ruins.

Whilst mobilising against mass unemployment through demonstrations in Liverpool and Glasgow the labour movement must also clearly advance a programme to completely eliminate unemployment.

The TUC has proposed a 35-hour week and a £6,000m increase of public expenditure.

But this only goes part of the way to restoring the

savage cuts in public spending carried out by both Labour and Tory governments.

'Militant' supports the demand for a useful programme of public works to solve the problem of unemployment.

But how can this 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, against big business.

If the income of the working class through increased taxes is reduced this will merely shrink the market and therefore undermine any measures to increase public expenditure. But if the capitalists are taxed this will cut their profits even further, with the danger of them going on a 'strike of capital', refusing to invest in industry, which would in turn cancel out the benefit of increased expenditure.

On the other hand if the government should resort to printing pound notes not backed up by the production of goods and services this would merely fuel the fires of inflation. This is what the Tory government did in 1972 under Chancellor Barber. It would cancel out any benefits gained from increased public spending.

Capitalism can no longer afford lasting reforms. This is the only conclusion we can draw from the experience of the labour movement under

this Tory government and the previous Labour government.

But if a Labour government took over the 200 monopolies, with minimum compensation on a basis of proven need, which control 80% to 85% of the economy of Britain it would be possible to introduce a socialist plan of production and end the scourge of unemployment.

The cost of unemployment is £7,600 in lost production and lost taxes for each unemployed worker in Britain, a total of £18,000m: if the unemployed were put to work this would give every working class family in Britain at least £20 a week extra income.

Therefore while fighting against unemployment and for the removal of this Tory government it is necessary for the labour movement to put squarely before the working people of Britain that the only solution in the long term to the cancer of unemployment is 'the socialist transformation' of society which Michael Foot spoke about recently.

In concrete terms this would mean the nationalisation of the monopolies under workers' control and management with a democratic socialist plan of production, implemented by committees of trade unionists, shop stewards, housewives and small businessmen.

Profit came before lives in Dublin fire

"This is what war must be like..." This was the anguished cry of one young person who escaped the holocaust in the Dublin Stardust disco which left 48 young people dead.

Many of the dead were burnt beyond recognition, having choked to death on poisonous fumes. With the entire country in shock at this, the greatest fire tragedy in its history, the government has set up an investigation into its causes.

Whatever the precise cause of the fire the reasons for the extent of the tragedy can be seen without any enquiry. The building was constructed with the most inflammable of materials.

The fire was out of control within three to five minutes. Reports claim that only two of the five fire exits were open; the rest were chained and locked.

Windows were barred and many of them were too small for an average size person to get through. The entire construction was based on greed for profit. The concern of the owners, that no one should get in without paying, was one of the main reasons they could not get out.

There were no emergency lights despite local authority regulations. An 'Irish Times' investigation showed that it was not only the owners' greed which must be held responsible. Government cutbacks and obstruction by

By John Throne

(Dublin Labour Party)

senior civil servants prevented the implementation of safety recommendations.

Most of the findings and recommendations of a major report on the Fire Service in 1975 have still not been implemented. Draft regulations on highly combustible materials in buildings are still "under discussion" after four years.

The same 'Irish Times' report claimed that two fire chiefs who highlighted the dangers were "forced out of the service for their efforts." One fire officer commenting on this negligence by the owners and senior department officials said bitterly of a recent hotel fire: "Ten deaths are not enough."

The tragedy which left 48 young people dead who each paid £3 to attend this disco should never have had to undergo this horror. There must be an end to cutbacks and pennypinching by government departments, which leads to inadequate fire inspection. We must end a system which puts the drive of profits above peoples' lives.

Never again should young peoples' bodies be piled high behind locked exits and barred windows. The entertainment industry must be taken out of private hands and placed under the control and management of the labour movement.



Photo: MILITANT

Part of the 1,000 strong demonstration organised by Manchester Labour Party against the Nationality Bill last weekend. Speakers at the rally included local MPs, Bob Lee [PNP Youth] and Anwar Ditta. For reports of other meetings, campaigns and analysis of the British Movement and why the Tories appear to be investigating the fascists, see articles p6.

FIGHT RACIST NATIONALITY BILL

Kick out the Tories

SOUTH EAST LONDON
Youth March Against Unemployment
Saturday 21 February
Assemble 12 noon
Welling Corner [near Welling BR station]
March to Woolwich, General Gordon Square
Leading trade union and LPYS speakers
Bring your banners!

BIRMINGHAM
Youth March Against Unemployment
Saturday 7 March
Assemble
Chamberlain Square
Birmingham City Centre
before 12 noon
Rally 2.30 pm at Ladywood Comprehensive School
[Ladywood Middle Way, Freeth Street]
Speakers:
Sam McCluskie
[Asst. General Secretary, National Union of Seamen]
Tony Saunio
[LPYS representative on Labour Party National Executive Committee]



Part of the 10,000 strong LPYS contingent on the Labour Party march in Liverpool last November
Photo: Militant

Get organised with the LPYS in the fightback

Thatcher always proclaims that there is no alternative to her policies.

The LPYS is fighting for the only real alternative to the disastrous measures—a clear socialist programme to end the anarchy of capitalism once and for all.

We believe that the sooner the Tories are kicked out of office the better. The Labour Party Young Socialists, the largest youth organisation in Britain, is an organisation of young workers, unemployed, school and college students.

We are active campaigning on the streets, and in the Labour Party and Trade unions—the mass organisations of the working class. We are fighting for the power of those organisations to be mobilised to bring the Tories down—as the miners forced Ted Heath out in 1974.

For what can the Tories offer us? Over half of

By Kevin Ramage
(National Chairman,
Labour Party Young
Socialists)

to-days unemployment are under 26 years old—that's nearly double the worst years of the 1930s. 'Last in—first out' in the factories, the virtual ending of apprenticeships, 6 month long 'Youth Opportunities Schemes' then back on the dole—that's all they offer.

Perhaps it'll get better in the future? Not unless the Tories are removed from office. Nearly every report is predicting over 3 million out of work for your 1981 Xmas 'present'.

Some reports talk of 3½ or 4 million out of work by the mid 1980's as the bosses use automation to replace workers jobs rather than shorten the working week. One right-wing Tory MP, Nicholas Ridley, welcomed the brave new Tory world—mass unemployment was

useful; it was a 'reserve' for future production—youth could be thrown in or out of work like yet another raw material.

New technology, computers, etc could mean a society of abundance, the ending of poverty, and a massive shortening of the working week. But not as long as the factories, are owned by a small handful of millionaires only interested in their profits.

Youth face a grim future, but we are fighting for the alternative. We don't only want to see the Tories out, but also the coming to power of a Labour government this time committed to a clear socialist programme to transform society.

If you think you can no longer sit back and let the Tories destroy jobs,

If you want to get involved in the fight for an alternative to three million unemployed

Then join the LPYS and the Labour Party now.

Write to Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, Labour Party, 150 Walworth road, London SE17.

Closed shop sackings: One they didn't report.....

In recent weeks in the West Midlands we have been subjected to a double-dose of propaganda, from both the local and the national media, on behalf of certain "victims of the closed shop".

I have been unemployed for nearly four years now; I was sacked from my last job because I was in dispute with both management and union. They, too, had a closed shop.

After my case had been heard—and rejected—by an industrial tribunal, a young man approached me, saying that he was from the local 'rag'.

By Jim Parkes
(Walsall)

He said, "Hard luck, chum—I was with you all the way!" But not a word about my case appeared in that 'rag', although they often reported as many as four or five industrial cases in one edition.

Why the difference in treatment?

Perhaps it was because I was complaining that the officials of this "closed shop" union had collaborated with the bosses in violating certain elementary trades union practices, e.g. the worker's right to paid holidays!

The 'victim' who has

attracted the most attention and support from the 'freedom fighters' is unmarried, has a wealthy farmer, and has already been offered another job.

I am a married man, with no wealthy family and I very much doubt whether I shall ever work again.

Firstly, because of my age; secondly—well, can't you just imagine employers scrambling to obtain the services of a man who took his former employers before an industrial tribunal!

I am well aware that my case is not unique; that all over the country hundreds of 'militants' have been winkled out of their jobs by the bosses and their 'moderate' collaborators in the union bureaucracies.

...and didn't tell about another

The sacking of Joanna Harris by Sandwell Council for refusing to join a union has been trumpeted loudly by the Freedom Association and Mrs Thatcher. These apologists for big business have the nerve to claim to stand up for workers.

Interview with Sandwell Councillors

She was sacked in accordance with a legally binding contract with NALGO (the local government union). We have a union membership agreement with local unions which was entered into after four years of negotiation.

There was a ballot of trade unionists on this issue and it was clearly the wish of the overwhelming majority to have this agreement. Surely it's the right of people who work in a place to

decide who they want to work with?

The press reaction to this issue reeks of typical Tory hypocrisy. In recent months within Sandwell, when workers were in dispute over joining a trade union where were the press? Take Tandy's as one example.

What about the workers individual freedom to join a trade union and have it recognised! Where was the Freedom Association then? If they cared so much about people losing their jobs why aren't they fighting for the individual rights of the three million unemployed to work and have a decent standard of life. 9

Next weekend: Come to Scottish LPYS Conference

Tens of thousands will march against Thatcher this Saturday in Glasgow. Thousands of young people especially will protest against Tory policies that offers them little or no future.

But demonstrating is not enough—young workers must get organised, to defend their interests and work out an alternative to Tory policies.

The Scottish Labour Party Young Socialists Annual Conference takes place on the

28th February/1st March. The LPYS has over 50 branches in Scotland.

Our Conference will discuss resolutions on unemployment, housing, leisure, education and much more, hammering out a socialist alternative to the Tories' policies.

We will be drafting an LPYS 'Charter for Working-class Women'. The Conference will have an international flavour with a document

on 'What is Happening in Poland?' and a fraternal speaker from the Northern Ireland Young Socialists.

Dennis Skinner MP will be guest speaker from the National Executive Committee, and to top it all off we'll be 'Rocking Against Thatcher' at the YS disco.

We call upon all youth who are against the Tories to come along—bring your mates—hear the socialist alternative.

SCOTTISH LPYS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Saturday February 28th—Sunday March 1st
Partick Burgh Halls [beside Partick Station], Glasgow
10am — 5pm All Welcome
For further details contact: Willie Griffin 041-774-9196

Building a united movement

One of the best and most important initiatives taken by the LPYS in the recent period has been joint meetings with trade union youth.

Some highly successful weekend and day schools have been held. Two recent such schools involving the bakers (Lancashire) and miners (Yorkshire) have been important steps toward building a mass socialist youth movement.

25 LPYS and 12 Bakers union members attended the weekend school on February 7-8. There were discussions on the Labour Party, lessons of Chile, and the role of youth in the trade unions.

Reports by Matt Reid [Ellesmere Port LPYS] and Martin Hill [Sheffield Park LPYS]

used to help establish an LPYS section at his workplace. Strong links between the union and the LPYS were forged, which will be built upon in the future.

In Yorkshire, the LPYS had a similar success at a school held at the NUM's Worthey Hall, (the former residence of a mineowner!). This was not the first LPYS-NUM joint weekend school and it helped deepen the links.

In the battles ahead it is important that these ties are developed throughout the trade union movement to assist in the united struggle to bring down this disastrous government.

The 'dirty dozen' and their friends

While Shirley Williams and Co pack their bags and get ready to move off, we are beginning to see just what sort of characters they are going to attract.



Photo: MILITANT

By 'Militant' reporters

Labour Party members in Hayes & Harlington breathed a sigh of relief when their MP Neville Sandelson said he would stand as a social democrat in the next election.

Speaking at a ward meeting (the only one in his constituency which will still invite him to speak despite his outrageous remarks about the party) he said he was 'sad' to go, but that the Hayes Labour Party had become a bye-word nationally for "all that is rotten and corrupt in political organisation."

The Campaign for Social Democracy has formed a branch in Nottinghamshire, with its inaugural meeting addressed by William Rodgers.

But this 'happy news' hasn't pleased some of the right-wingers in the party. An ex-regional official has dissociated herself from CSD. And the chairman and treasurer of the right wing Campaign for Labour Victory East Midlands branch has resigned because of CLV's connections with the 'gang of four': as he said, "I was duped!"

The CSD branch will now be led by lecturer Stuart Thompstone, who has a pathological hatred of Marxism, and is known to YS members in the area for his attempts to sabotage the setting up of Newark LPYS a couple of years ago.

Carlton East Labour Party has responded to these shenanigans by demanding candidates in the coming elections pledge to stay in

the party—some of the county council candidates signed the CLV's 'gang of thousands' ad in Labour Weekly in October. The party now wants to know where these people stand.

In Sussex the 'gang of three' (or 'dirty dozen' or 'unlucky 13') have found a new friend. The CSD's impact on the local Labour Party has been minimal, but Tory MP Tim Renton has been quite impressed!

At a meeting in Kingston he told the audience "If you can't bring yourself to join us then join the gang of three and the social democratic party." By your friends may you be known?

Leading CSDer Mike Thomas, MP for Newcastle East has written to all his constituents for their views (that must have cost a few bob!) on whether he should stay in the Labour Party. But he now says if a majority say he should stay, he'll disregard their advice anyway! So much for democracy.

Three leading members of the National Union of Students—two of them members of the Communist Party—have said they will join CSD! Sue Slipman, a former NUS president, and more significantly, a member of the Communist Party's executive from 1975 to 1979, says although she's joining CSD she's not a right-winger!

In the coming 'Centre Party' she'll be rubbing shoulders with Labour rene-

gades, Liberals and wet Tories—but then Sue, like the other two, was a champion of 'broad based' campaigns in their time in the union. This might be an embarrassment for the NOLS leadership who supported these people in NUS elections.

Sue says she still supports the CP's 'British Road to Socialism' and accuses the left of having 'narrow dogmas.' So what policies will she will find in the CSD?

We print below the thoughts of Dr Owen, espoused at a CLV meeting last year—the meeting was 'invitation only,' but a verbatim report of his speech managed to find its way to 'Militant' (moles rule ok!).

On education: "We need state boarding schools for diplomats who work outside the country. The NUT has a stranglehold on education; a Labour Secretary of State should take them on."

But doesn't the gang's 'Limehouse Declaration' call for an "Open, classless and more equal society"?

On the economy: "We would bless Margaret Thatcher for the VAT increases... We're too weak on issues like British Leyland and steel. Steel needs to be run down, but the Tories are running it down too fast."

But their declaration says they want to "eliminate poverty and promote greater equality." But not for steelmen and carworkers, it seems.

On the welfare state: "I've tried to get NUPE to accept the need to fairly distribute existing resources as between regions by closing hospitals in London..."

But their declaration says the "quality of our public and community services must be improved..."

For all their flowery phrases the Social Democrats are little different from the Tories. If these political wretches want to leave behind the labour movement with its socialist traditions and aspirations, then let them go—and good riddance to the lot of them!

NOLS must change course

Following the disgraceful smear campaign organised by 'Clause 4' supporters against 'Militant' at University College Labour Club, the national committee of NOLS has refused to disassociate itself from this action.

This is despite being presented with copies of the leaflet distributed by the 'Clause 4' supporters.

Alan Watson moved the following resolution, (the words in bold type were amended out of the resolution): "This NOLS NC disassociates itself, and condemns, the actions of those 'Clause 4' supporters at UCL who circulated copies of the 'Sunday Times' article on 'Militant's' finances, and a leaflet, which contained lies and distortions from the capitalist press. We deplore this crude attempt to influence the outcome of the delegate elections for NOLS Conference. This NOLS NC is opposed to any attempts to witch-hunt those on the left of the Party, particularly at a time when the Party should be united against

By Alan Watson

(National Organisation of Labour Students EC, personal capacity)

those on the right wing who are attempting to split and divide the Party."

After the amendment, the resolution is meaningless, if the NC are not prepared to take a stand against these types of attacks on the left when they actually occur.

However, the NC did pass Alan Watson's resolution condoning the Council for Social Democracy; and on the NUS Presidential campaign, calling for the campaign to be based on NOLS conference policies and putting forward a clear socialist alternative to the 'Left Alliance' leadership of NUS.

Labour Clubs will be very concerned about the proposals from the NC to run NOLS conference in the same way as NUS, taking one resolution and a series of amendments in each debate. This is a further turn away from the labour movement. It will mean even less chance for rank and file delegates to be involved. They are also proposing an extended meal break to allow "Women's caucuses" to be organised;

and seminars to take 1½ hours of each conference afternoon. All these measures in practice will mean less time for real debate and discussion.

In the past, the NC have been very enthusiastic to rule out of conference Clubs owing money for conference accommodation to NOLS.

For the past four years the deadline for payment has been the NC meeting before conference. But this year, that deadline has been extended until the first session of conference—maybe because mainly Clubs which support 'Clause 4' would be ruled out!

Only eight new Clubs affiliated to NOLS, half of which support 'Militant'. This is the smallest number of new Clubs for some years, showing how small the real growth in NOLS' support has been.

It is very clear that this NOLS leadership has been incapable of building the organisation. Indeed the contempt in which the NOLS officers hold the membership was shown by the National Secretary, who was absent from the meeting, and has said that he cannot give much time to NOLS because he is standing for a Student Union sabbatical position!

No edition of Labour Student has appeared since October; the NOLS membership drive was not even discussed by the NC! The present leadership are incapable of building NOLS. A change in direction is urgently needed!

FIGHT THE SPLITTERS

A split from the Labour Party is now certain. It is even possible that it will be announced this week. This is a move clearly designed to draw attention away from the Labour Party demonstration against unemployment in Glasgow this weekend.

By Peter Jarvis

(Hackney South Labour Party)

ately or commit themselves to stay with Labour.

But the unequivocal stand taken by the rank and file has not been echoed by Party leader Michael Foot.

He has pleaded with the right wing to stay and attacked 'Militant'. Last weekend he claimed that 'Militant' is a "pestilential nuisance to the party as a whole" and "an insult to the memory of Trotsky."

What does he mean by these strange remarks? They will infuriate party members who know of the ideas and activity of 'Militant' supporters in building the Labour Party.

They are clearly designed to placate the right wing who will remain after the 'gang' has departed who are still urging a witch hunt

against the ideas of Marxism.

The Marxist programme of the 'Militant' through the work of party members, especially its youth wing, the LPYS, has served Labour well. The efforts of the LPYS in the general election for example are a decisive testimony to this.

In many areas it is the programme and supporters of 'Militant' which have built the party and sustained it. This was confirmed in recent comments by party General Secretary, Ron Hayward.

The bold socialist policies for which 'Militant' has consistently argued, are winning increased support throughout the labour movement. They are indeed a proud monument to the memory of Trotsky and his struggle against tyranny in favour of democratic socialism.

Moreover Trotsky never resorted to denunciations of those who disagreed with him, but dealt with the ideas they put forward.

A more determined stand against those now splitting from the Labour Party and an end of attacks on those campaigning for a mass, democratic socialist party to fight the Tories would be welcomed by Labour Party members.



Arrested in February 1833, George and James Loveless, Thomas and John Standfield, James Hammett and James Brine were charged with administering secret oaths to the members of the Agricultural Workers' trade union. They were convicted and deported to Australia under the Unlawful Oaths Act of 1797. This 'gang of six' became known rightly as Tolpuddle Martyrs and their free pardon and eventual return home was only secured by massive pressure from the labour movement. Now the Tories have announced that the act is to be repealed as part of the routine revision of outdated legislation...with sufficient other anti-labour legislation on the statute books and planned, deportation is no longer thought to be necessary.

'The Guardian' reports that a "virgin field" for researching anthropologists is at last being opened up. The study of a dying species, another victim of industrialisation—the British worker—is revealing, to the surprise and horror of these learned gentlemen, a gulf between the manager and the worker. The former, it appears, does not understand the problems and motivation of the latter. What is needed, according to a certain Dr Mars, is a broker between management and the shop floor who should be—yes you've guessed it—an anthropologist! Using the 'techniques' developed to study primitive societies they believe they can greatly enhance their understanding of life on the shop floor. So if you see Richard Attenborough or David Bellamy crouching behind some lathe with a camera, you know what he's at...

One of those social occasions certainly missed by our hard-working readers was reported in the 'Daily Telegraph': "Mr Denis Healey MP entertained the Dickens Fellowship at dinner in the House of Commons." No doubt he regaled them with tales of how he promised to "squeeze the rich until the pips squeak." The Lords and Ladies were marking Dickens' 169th anniversary. For them, asking for 'more' has always been a hobby—not a necessity. But they do a lot better than Oliver Twist.

It has always been the position of Marxism and Leninism, as the readers of this paper will be well aware, that the conflicts and disputes that bedevil capitalist society nationally and internationally can only be resolved by the overthrow of the capitalist system and its replacement by a socialist system. Conflict and division are inevitable in class society.

Not so, according to a recent edition of 'Soviet Weekly': "There are no problems which cannot be solved through negotiation. Talks are the most effective and universal way for removing all that causes tension in the world."

Of course if one is more concerned to ensure the survival of bureaucratic rule in Poland and the other Eastern European states against so-called "anti-socialist forces" [from the same issue of SW] than to foster socialism on a world scale, such a point of view appears reasonable. It also appears reasonable to the likes of Michael Edwardes, the Duke of Edinburgh and every personnel manager. But then they're not interested in changing society. Marxism is.

'BEATING THE TERRORISTS'?

By Dennis Tourish

(Belfast Labour and Trade Union Group)

"I asked them if the Judges' Rules were applied during interviews. They laughed. I asked them if they had read the Bennet Report. They said they didn't bother with that sort of thing.

"Nor did they seem worried by the threat of prosecution by the DPP (Director of Public Prosecutions). They said they were getting results and that was the standard by which their work was to be judged."

These cynical remarks by members of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) to the author of this book are an attempt to hide the truth about RUC methods in Northern Ireland. The methods of extracting 'confessions' have only been changed recently.

70% of all convictions for political offences have rested just on these confessions, many false and procured by torture, as Taylor proves. They have sent the prison population soaring, with convictions in juryless courts by a single judge.

This book shows how RUC methods have been sanctioned from above, and how even some of the last Labour government are implicated.

Torture has been a standard weapon of the RUC throughout the troubles. The European Court of Human Rights decided that prisoners were "ill-treated" in the aftermath of the 1971 internment swoops. The only reaction has been to refine the torture, concentrating it in selected places, like the purpose built Castlereagh Interrogation Centre.

Hugh O'Neill was held in Castlereagh in October 1978. He was punched in the stomach, kneed in the chest, had his leg twisted and his hair pulled. The police doctor found 8 square inches of



A woman student was beaten up by the RUC after student demonstrations in the late '70s.

bruising on his stomach, and believed that torture was the only explanation for this.

Some people have spent long periods on remand, before having their "confessions" thrown out because of medical evidence. One such person, Charles Morgan, spent two years inside.

Not one member of the RUC, though, has ever been convicted for abusing prisoners, even in cases where compensation for ill-treatment has been handed out.

James Rafferty was arrested in Omagh in November 1976 and interrogated for 3 days. He wound up with four or five bruises on his stomach, with similar abrasions on his back, plus headaches, dizzy spells and severe nervous reactions. He had to spend three days in hospital, before finding that no charges were being preferred.

Rafferty's case was taken up by Jack Hassard, a prominent trade unionist, a

protestant, and then a member of the Police Authority, appointed supposedly to oversee the workings of the RUC.

When his complaint had been investigated and no action taken, Hassard tried to get the Authority to hold a tribunal—as it was empowered to do.

This was agreed in October 1978 (two years later!), appointed in the spring of 1979 and only met late last year. In the event, the 17 or so policemen involved refused to give evidence and the tribunal was rendered worthless.

Jack Hassard has long since resigned from the Police Authority, convinced that neither it nor the police tops are concerned about restraining the RUC.

The author is a liberal TV journalist, apparently sympathetic to the overall approach of the authorities in Northern Ireland and cannot be accused of being a Provo propagandist.

Yet he details the growing horror of doctors in Castle-reagh and Gough Brracks. They ceaselessly approach people as high up as the Chief Constable. Nothing is done, despite the profuse assurances being offered.

One such individual, Dr Irwin, wrote comments on his medical reports: "This man was obviously punched about the face and the injuries were consistent with that. It would be facetious to suggest that the injuries were self-inflicted."

"One is not inclined to believe that the continued parade of injuries is anything other than premeditated and carried out by so-called upholders of the law."

The top RUC personnel weren't the only people aware that this was going on. At one point the Attorney General sent James Callaghan a confidential note explaining that a clear pattern of "complaints" had emerged and saying that the idea that all the injuries were self-inflicted "should not be exaggerated."

Taylor's book shows the police will use any methods they feel are needed to defend capitalism.

Today the ostensible target in the Provisional IRA. Workers' understandable horror at the terrorist tactics of the Provos should not blind the labour movement. Untold numbers of young people are behind bars on trumped-up charges, facing horrifying treatment.

Tomorrow the trade unions and the working class could be in the same position. The labour movement must press for the repeal of all repressive legislation, the closure of the torture centres and the disbanding of the RUC Interrogation Squads, together with a labour movement review of all cases of conviction on political offences.

This book is unwittingly a powerful plea for action from the labour movement.

"Beating the Terrorists?" by Peter Taylor. Published by Penguin. £1.50 [+15p p&p], Obtainable from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Give us our football back!

Scottish football is once again in crisis with falling attendances, bans on alcohol at all grounds and a virtual ban at the holy of holies, Wembley.

The sports pages of Scotland's daily press abound with ideas to rejuvenate our national sport. Summer football, better ground facilities, more attractive games and even US style "razzamatazz" pre-match entertainment.

A closer look at Scottish football clubs reveals the truth. Outside a handful of big clubs, Celtic, Rangers, Aberdeen, Hibernian and Hearts, most clubs exist on a part-time basis—they live on a shoe-string.

Football is a working class sport, played, supported and generally coached by working people. But who runs and owns Scottish football? Not the workers, but businessmen, lawyers, publicans and accountants. In recent years the direct-

ors of the clubs have not made much, if any, profit, but the prestige and status of being a director of a football club is a great attraction.

Undoubtedly, their business benefits in free advertising and the publicity of association with the club. One individual, Tom Hart, a millionaire, owns one of Scotland's most famous clubs, Hibernian.

Personal plaything

A club supported by thousands of workers in Edinburgh, is merely Mr. Hart's personal plaything. It is no coincidence that since this self styled dictator took over the club in 1969, they have sold every good player they have had and are now languishing in a lower division in the Scottish league.

The football establishment in Scotland pays lip service to the supporters.

Every other day, they trot out the same platitudes "the fans come first"—"our game exists only for the supporters".

Many fans may ask themselves while attending "McEwans Lager" Scottish Cup Ties or "Dryborough" cup games or even "Bells" league club matches why the same directors who fully support the ban on the taking of alcohol into matches are quite prepared to accept the lavish sponsorship doled out by the big drinks firms.

Football, however, cannot be seen separate from the present state of British society. More and more this great working class sport is mortgaged to banks and big business in sponsorship deals.

When a club is successful, then big business will back it; when it is not, it will desert it. Big business does not back sport for fun or genuine enthusiasm for the game, but for profit.

If football is to survive in its present form, then it must be run by the people who are its lifeblood, the

supporters, players and coaches. The present state of the game is a damning indictment of capitalism.

Clubs, up to their eyeballs in debt, stadiums falling apart and playing standards falling, must reject the rich parasites feeding on its flesh for a quick buck. Not until the control and management of football is returned to the hands of the working class will it thrive and prosper.

By Benny Lynch

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By Ted Grant

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STOP TORY RACISM



British Movement members on recent march in London

Photo: MILITANT

Labour's strength can crush Fascists

Socialists will view the Tories' announcement of an 'enquiry' into Nazi groups in Britain with total cynicism.

The Tories use racism as a class weapon. At present they are pushing through the Nationality Bill in order to intensify state repression against black people and try to isolate them from the rest of the working class.

Police and state harassment will be stepped up. Racist propaganda, leaflets will continue, but some of the fascist thugs who operate outside the control of the ruling class will probably be curtailed.

With the recent splits of the National Front, the fascist movement has moved away from attempting to build electoral strength and resorted to increased violence.

For the bosses the fascists are at present not fulfilling their real role of dividing the working class. Instead they are helping fuel revolt, which

'Militant' reporter looks at the British Movement

could unite black and white workers.

Capitalists fear the backlash that could come from the minority communities if the increasing number of racist attacks continues.

The outrage felt by the West Indian community in Deptford, London, after the firebombing of a party in which thirteen people were burnt to death is just one example of growing tension. At only two days' notice, over 1,000 people turned up at a Deptford protest meeting and marched to the burnt-out shell of the house.

In these days of crisis and discontent the Tories are scared of more "Bristol" riots.

The recent arrest and conviction of three British Movement members 'or

amassing enough arms to equip a small army indicates that the capitalist state may actually intend to clamp down on the more virulent nazi groups.

But what hypocrisy! For years the nazis' bombing and arson campaigns went virtually unchecked: the bombs sent to the Communist Party and NUPE public sector workers' union headquarters, and to an Anti-Nazi League activist in 1978, the arson attack on 'Militant' in 1977, and more recently the letter bomb sent to Frank Allaun, not to mention the murders, beatings and fire attacks meted out on black and Asian workers.

In 1979 there were 3,927 attacks on black and Asian people reported to the police, and given the justifiable wariness of black people approaching the police, the real figure must be many times this number.

But why have these nazi terrorist attacks increased, and why has there been a growth in the size of the openly nazi British Movement?

The British Movement (BM) now claims 3,000 members. It was the brainchild of the infamous post-war nazi Colin Jordan. He formed BM in 1968 after being warned off from involv-

'Mother must go, son can stay'

By Jane McVeigh
(Secretary, St James Labour Party, Leeds)

The present racist laws are vicious in their attacks on black and Asian people. They are especially used against women as the more isolated sections of the community.

And the Tories want to increase repression with their new Nationality Bill!

In Leeds the local labour movement has taken up the case of Jaswinder Kaur Panu. The Home Office is trying to send her back to India, although her young son would be allowed to stay, because he was born here. They don't care about family life.

Jaswinder came here from India in 1975 and an arranged marriage took place in 1976. This marriage did not work out as her husband was a violent man who beat her and her baby Manjit.

When she applied for permission to stay here permanently, the Home Office found out that her husband was here illegally

and he was already married to someone else while another wife had committed suicide because of his violence.

In October 1979 Jaswinder left him. Jaswinder's husband was arrested for assaulting the baby, convicted and deported.

Now Jaswinder faces deportation as she is now regarded as "illegal". If she returns to India she has been threatened with further violence by her ex-husband. Her son is a British citizen and is legally entitled to stay here.

Jaswinder has a job here and her family is here. Her "illegality" is a result of the lies of her ex-husband.

Every help must be given to Jaswinder Kaur. A support group, "Friends of Jaswinder Kaur", has been formed and plans for a campaign of leafletting,

petitioning, picketing of the appeal venue and a procession through the largely Asian area of Harehills, Leeds where Jaswinder lives has been planned.

Already Leeds NE Constituency Labour Party and Leeds University Labour Club have passed resolutions of support. St James's Labour Party branch [which covers the part of Harehills in which Jaswinder lives] organised a public meeting last week.

Trade union branches, Labour Parties and Labour Party Young Socialists should send messages of support and financial contributions to Friends of Jaswinder Kaur, LAP, Box JK, 29 Blenheim Terrace, Leeds LS2 9HD before Tuesday 3 March when her appeal will be held.

Labour MPs must take up the case of Jaswinder Kaur as there can be little hope that her own MP will show much compassion, as he is Sir Keith Joseph.

Nationality Bill will be fought

If the Tories think that their new racist Nationality Bill will be passively accepted, then they're going to be disappointed.

By Jean Thorpe
(North Nottingham LPYS)

In Nottingham 350 people packed into a public meeting on the Bill called by the Standing Committee of Pakistani Organisations.

Speaker after speaker pointed to the need for black and white workers to unite and fight the Bill, and repeal all

racist legislation. Several speakers pointed to the need to ensure that with re-selection of Labour MPs representatives were chosen who were committed to the repeal of all racist laws.

Jean Thorpe of Nottingham North LPYS, who spoke from the platform, pointed out that the Bill represented a vicious attack by the ruling class on

the rights of black workers. She said it was a deliberate attempt to weaken working class unity by intimidating black workers, and frightening them away from political action and from the labour movement.

She called on those present to put pressure on the labour and trade union movement to launch a mass campaign in opposition to the Bill and for positive efforts to be made to recruit immigrant youth into the Young Socialists.

return to their rightful place in the ranks of the labour movement if they were given a bold socialist lead in the coming class battles.

The collapse of the National Front—both organisationally and electorally—shows that at present the nazis have no hope of gaining mass support. But as their support crumbles, so they will lash out.

Incidents like those already mentioned are on the increase, with fire bombings etc. usually carried out under the title of either 'Column 88' or 'The 11th Hour Brigade'. The BM especially has strong ties with the Ku Klux Klan in the US, and helped set up 'Europe', an international group that co-ordinates fascist activity throughout Europe.

Although horrific enough, the British nazis' attacks are still small fry compared to the massacres carried out by their European counterparts. But the recent discoveries of arms caches show that they will be quite capable of similar atrocities in the future.

It is imperative that the labour movement quickly stamps out the nazis wherever they appear and gives a clear lead to save any desperate workers from falling for the fascists' lies.

At the same time, it must

have no faith in any murmurings from the bosses' class about keeping the nazis in check. It is their system that acts as a breeding ground for the nazis.

More directly, the capitalist class, through their kept press, have been responsible for whipping up racism—now they hold up their hands in apparent horror at the nazis' limited growth.

History shows that capitalists are prepared to unleash the wild-dog of fascism on the labour movement when it feels threatened—they may tighten the wild-dog's leash at present, but they will not destroy it.

They will wish to use them as an auxiliary to the state repression of the labour movement. In recent divisions within the Tory party, one can see the embryo of a possible dictatorial capitalist party.

The labour movement is the only force capable of stopping the nazis in their tracks—its mighty strength if activated can quash the nazis. But socialism is the only permanent solution to racism and fascism—capitalism creates the sewers of misery in which the fascists breed; only when this system is cleared out can the disease of fascism be ended.

KEEP THE PROFIT-GRABBERS' HANDS OFF BRITISH TELECOMMS...

The threat to British Telecomms [BT] from the Tories' Telecommunications Bill is the most serious we have ever faced. That threat is about to be turned into reality.

Coupled with the policy of cash limits and the industry's own internal problems, the difficulties facing telecommunications are enormous. However, this need not be so. The industry, private and public, generates huge profits, profits amongst those least affected by the recession so far.

This is mainly due to the Post Office's high rate of investment, which was one of the highest in British industry, resulting in large orders and big profits for the manufacturers: Plessey, GEC and STC.

Many economists have pointed out that correctly planned investment in telecomms could be the key to motivating massive changes in electronics and its application throughout industry. From this base could be generated a rejuvenation of British industry.

With a socialist planned economy this could very well be true. However, the Tory measures now promise to wreck relatively favourable conditions that currently apply.

THE TORY BILL

Essentially the Bill will lift the monopoly the Post Office held on the installation of equipment on to the main network, opening this up to competition (after the first phone).

One of the fears of British manufacturers, however, is that this move may open the way to increased imports of foreign telecommunication equipment. Currently they enjoy, in practice, a shared monopoly of supply to BT.

The manufacturers' fear is real. Because of inefficiency, profit grabbing, and lack of investment, their share of telecommunications markets has steadily declined for two decades.

Changes from electro-mechanical to electronic equipment accelerated this. In 1963, the UK had a 25% share of world telecomms trade. In 1975 it had fallen to 5.9%.

Import penetration rose from 3.5% in 1967 to 14% in 1976. The situation now is undoubtedly worse, and the Bill will cause further loss on the home market, which is

By Phil Holt
(Liverpool Internal POEU)

already suffering fast decline in general demand (and this is not caused by the recession which is only now beginning to bite).

So why is big business not kicking up more fuss?

Partly, this is because this side of the monopoly is being continually breached in any case. What attracts them is some of the other clauses in the Bill.

Clause 6 gives the Secretary of State powers of general and specific direction to BT and a power to direct BT to dispose of any assets, plus power over BT's research programme.

Clause 59 gives the same power over posts. Clauses 15, 16, 65 and 66 give the power to introduce competition into telecomms and posts.

In other words, it is really an Enabling Bill which will allow various measures to be carried out when the Tories think it is tactically fit to do so. Once they have us tied up with industrial relations legislation, undoubtedly they hope that further provisions could be introduced.

This Bill is a major blow to public industry. It will undermine the existing limited planning and investment.

It is a massive threat to our jobs and is undoubtedly the first stage in the Tories' strategy to completely denationalise the profit-making sections. Together with "cash limits", it will seriously affect the industry's attempt to modernise rapidly.

At the same time rewards for modernisation carried out will be non-existent. The money simply won't be there.

One place the money will be in the banks and finance houses, which have rapidly increased their profit from telecomms due to increased high interest rates on loans because of the high bank rate.

For example, interest on loans re-payable was £355.8m in 1976. In 1980 it was £534m. Add on the manufacturers' profits on BT purchases, and it is evident that private enterprise represents a huge drain on public industry.

THE UNION'S ANSWER

So far POEU branches have been asked to campaign against the BT Bill by approaching MPs with our case, and to prepare for a lobby of Parliament.

We support these efforts, of

course, although it looks at this stage as if this is a central part of our strategy rather than a supplementary part.

Some of the literature from head office has tended to emphasise what has been safeguarded rather than what is under threat (see letter to Branches 1021).

This has had the effect of lulling the members to sleep with a false sense of security. A clarion call to action is what is needed.

For the lobby of Parliament, a one-day token strike to ensure maximum turn-out should have been called for. To ensure that the members realised how serious the situation is, mass meetings at area level should have been called to explain the call for a strike and lobby of Parliament.

This is what the Sutton Branch urged on the NEC. It seems to have been ignored. Such an event can still be called for in what should be the next stage.

The union must black "line only" circuits (i.e. where private competitors put the equipment on lines BT provides).

We should also prepare for any retaliatory action by management with plans to step up our action, especially against government institutions and against the government's main backers, i.e. finance capital. We should cut off the Stock Exchange, banks and international communication if members are sent home for blacking "line only" circuits.

In Parliament, our MPs should warn that any firm that takes part in any way in de-nationalisation will be re-nationalised without compensation. This is POEU Conference policy. But it is not enough for our leadership just to formally state it: there must be a real campaign on this issue throughout the labour movement.

We should not limit our fight to POEU members. A link-up with other PO unions should take place. A fighting front of trade unions in other public industries threatened by the Tories should be formed, as demanded by the North East Motor Transport branches.

If the union leaders are serious they should end the pretence that attempting to persuade the Tories is the way to defend our industry and jobs.

The Tories will only be persuaded when they see a determined union leadership rallying their members in a decisive way. No other way will succeed.

The Tories will only be persuaded when they see a determined union leadership rallying their members in a decisive way. No other way will succeed.



Photo: MILITANT
Frank Chapple of the electricians (left) and Terry Duffy of the engineers listening to William Rodgers MP speaking at a meeting of the now defunct Campaign for a Labour Victory.

UNION DEMOCRACY ESSENTIAL

Every so often the media and the right wing within the Labour Party erupts with allegations and revelations of "infiltrators", "moles", etc., inside the Labour Party.

Acres of print and hours of coverage are given to whip up witch-hunts within the Labour Party. All to no avail.

Yet a concrete and blatant attempt by the electricians' union the EETPU to flood certain Labour Parties has been virtually ignored. The evidence concerns Labour Parties, particularly in the South London area, such as Dulwich, Beckenham, Peckham and Bermondsey/Southwark — the last has had a staggering 11 new affiliations, all received from the Head Office of the EETPU in the name of certain branches.

A recent edition of the BBC TV programme 'Newsnight', reported that the EETPU leadership were concentrating their involvement on thirty constituencies.

Members of the EETPU branches in South London assert that they had no say in the selection of the so-called 'delegates'. The reason is all too apparent. In Southwark/Bermondsey, Labour MP Robert Mellish is 67 and may soon retire from politics.

Selection of new parliamentary candidates may also be in the offing in the other constituencies. If this blatant attempt to swamp General Management Committees with hand-picked delegates wasn't bad enough, a Bermondsey Labour Party officer has revealed that Charles Sawyer, one of the nominated 'delegates' purporting to represent London Staff Branch EETPU is a housing officer with Lewisham Council and a NALGO member. His connection to the electrical or engineering trades is, therefore, obscure.

The same with Frank Breaun, who last year was sent as a delegate to the GMC, again by the London Staff Branch. He's a chemist and, surprise, surprise, a Southwark councillor. So too is another delegate, Ernest Davies, former MP and research chemist and, yes, a Southwark councillor.

The Southwark/Bermondsey LP press release comments: "Most astonishingly of all, when the party contacted the London EGSA branch, Mr K Linney, branch secretary, [stated] the branch never agreed to affiliate to Bermondsey Labour Party or nominate anyone as a delegate. On hearing this the party refused to accept the affiliation and delegate."

Affiliations from Head Office

However, despite this decision, the EETPU National Political Sub-Committee subsequently agreed to affiliate to the Bermondsey Party on behalf of the London EGSA branch and appoint Mr Sawyer as a delegate, though the branch claims this, once again, was without the consent of the EGSA members.

Apparently George Page, the London LP General Secretary, has told the party that the manner in which unions affiliate and appoint delegates is entirely their own affair. But Peter Farchell, of Bermondsey LP, has correctly replied, "How the EETPU runs its affairs is its own business. But when it tries to import undemocratic methods into the Labour Party it becomes our business."

In Beckenham, Bryan Freaque, the Constituency Party secretary, has written a letter to the Chairman of

the London Labour Party's Organisation Committee querying the legitimacy of the EETPU delegations to this Party. He reports that Beckenham CLP has seven delegates from the EETPU, all of them full-time officials and staff of the union.

In his letter Freaque queries whether the EETPU branches which are affiliating to Beckenham and other CLPs really do have the numbers claimed of people paying the political levy. Also he finds it strange that someone working at the Headquarters in Kent and living in Beckenham, can be a member of Lewisham branch EETPU.

The rules of the EETPU apparently allow for Head Office to directly appoint delegates to CLPs who cannot get elected through the normal democratic procedure. All members of the union must protest strongly: resolutions on this question will almost certainly be on the agenda at this year's EETPU conference.

The London Press Branch has moved a resolution protesting at these methods. This has been sent to all LPs to which it is affiliated. (The branch's delegates, by the way, are all elected by the branch).

Labour's National Executive Committee has decided to investigate what is happening in Southwark/Bermondsey and it is vital that a firm stand is taken against any undemocratic practices.

The CLPs will undoubtedly welcome trade unions sending along all the delegates which they are entitled to—but only if they are elected democratically and reflect their branches. The CLPs will not tolerate their GMCs being packed with trade union delegates selected over the heads of their branches—delegates evidently selected to uphold the right-wing views of TU leaders completely out of step with the majority of active Labour Party and trade union members, both in their policies and their methods.

MILITANT PAMPHLET

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SCOTLAND ON TI

Unemployment in Scotland reached 286,000 at the end of 1980: one in nine Scots out of work. Lined up one yard apart, the dole queue of misery would stretch from Glasgow to beyond Liverpool!

The jobs carnage in Scottish industry continues. Burroughs, India Tyres, J&P Coats, British Leyland and the Clyde Ports Authority gave their workforces the Christmas present of two and a half thousand redundancies.

These companies now join NCR, Massey Ferguson, Monsanto, ICI, Prestcold, Timex, Hoover, Goodyear, Collins and Wiggins Teape, who in the last year or so have forced major sackings or shut up shop forever. And now, looming over the West of Scotland, the closure of Talbot Linwood threatens 10,000 more jobs.

In the 1950s unemployment in Scotland was around 50,000. In the next decade it seldom fell below 60,000 and had risen to 90,000 by 1969. By the end of the 1970s the dole queues reached 180,000 and in the first year of the 'eighties they crossed the quarter of a million mark.

As John Keenan says, under capitalism every job is "only as secure as next week."

In 1979 the total sackings in Scotland reached 34,000, but the figure for 1980 is likely to be near 56,000. In Strathclyde, the industrial heartland of Scotland, an astounding 135 jobs disappeared every day in the first nine months of 1980.

The 'Financial Times' described the position graphically [16.12.80]: "The cuts made by many industries have been savage and far reaching. There have been extensive manpower reductions in engineering, shipbuilding, steel, textiles and paper making, but the effects have been felt much deeper into the economy.

"The whisky industry is now almost uniformly on short-time working, the chemicals industry has suffered badly with major closures...some generating plant in power stations is having to be mothballed temporarily and electronics has also suffered redundancy and closed plants."

This catalogue of woe by a big business scribe charts the qualitative decline over the last two or three years. The traditional Scottish industries: heavy engineering, shipbuilding, and steel-making have shed labour for decades, but recent years have seen this trend carried over into the 'new' industries based on electronics, household consumer goods, light engineering and motor cars.



Stephen Gillan outside the wrecked remains of what was a Castlemilk youth club

Even the boom towns are bust

In the new towns of Irvine in Ayrshire and East Kilbride just outside Glasgow, in the early 1970s it seemed that the planners' 'boom town' future was coming true.

The Scottish Council for Development and Industry forecast that Irvine would be a "major growth point for Scottish industrial development".

The Development Corporation in East Kilbride boasted its slogan, "Come to East Kilbride—Britain's fastest growing new town!" But these hopes have been turned to despair.

Since 1978 these 'industrial growth points' have lost a flabbergasting ten thousand jobs. In July 1980 there were three thousand signing on the dole in East Kilbride and four

thousand signing on in Irvine. Capitalist crisis has reproduced the old problems even in the promised lands where milk and honey were going to flow.

John and Isobel Keenan know this all too well. They moved to East Kilbride in the late 'sixties. Now they have to explain patiently to their four kids that the only chance they have of getting a job when they leave school is if they get good enough exam results to get a college education.

"We are only secure as next week. When the giants of capitalism are struggling, who knows what's round the corner," John told 'Militant'. "Unemployment is on

everyone's doorstep now. Two of our near neighbours are redundant. One of them has lost two jobs in the last six months. He's going to be last in, first out, for the rest of his days."

Isobel continued, "You don't see the dole queues any more—you don't see them standing in line in masses, like they did in my father's day, in the 'thirties. It's all done politely, by post, nowadays but you can't sweep away two and a half million under the carpet forever."

Isobel was clear about the strategy of the Tories: "Their dictum is to make money survive by destroying people. You couldn't print what I think about Thatcher," she declared.

Neither John nor Isobel have joined the Labour Party, although they both agree the solutions they are after are political. John explained that he felt nothing in common with the right wing of the Labour Party and suggested that may have kept him back from joining.

"Look at Williams and her mob, or Jenkins, he's doing all right, ten thousand a year for a part-time number in a merchant bank. Not bad, eh. The sooner they go the better."

Some people might say that John and Isobel, who are both working, are fortunate, and should keep their mouths shut. They put it differently. "We're fortunate all right. Fortunate to exist, eat, pay the rent and pay the bills.

"The wages have just gone up 9% but the rent is going up 20%, the gas 23%, and that's before we talk about food and clothing."

The 'Deserts wi' windaes'

Mind you, on a Scottish scale of poor housing and unemployment there are many places further down the league than East Kilbride. Strathclyde Regional Council has discovered 114 areas, within its boundaries alone,

which suffer from extremes of poverty and unemployment. These areas, and their counterparts throughout Scotland, are where Scotland's one million poor—one in five of the population—live.

These are the areas where high numbers of kids don't go to school, where they learn to drink at an early age, and where glue sniffing is a major problem. The 17,000 electricity disconnections made in Scotland between June 1978 and March 1979 were concentrated here.

These are the areas where bands of well intentioned social workers are a common feature of life, trying to stem the tide of evictions, debt, alcoholism and related problems.

They are to be found among the huge housing schemes built in the 1950s on the fringes of most Scottish cities. Billy Connolly has described them as 'deserts wi' windaes' (deserts with windows—Ed.).

We talked to Stephen Gillan, who lives in Castlemilk, one of the monster schemes on the fringes of Glasgow.

into Glasgow and that costs a fortune. Then there's the trouble on the buses back home as well," he commented.

"If I had a magic wand my first priority for Castlemilk would be jobs for everyone. Then proper clubs for the teenagers to go to. I'd also make better housing. People shouldn't have to live on top of one another the way they do here."

Stephen is a member of Castlemilk Young Socialists but he feels let down by past Labour governments. "I was amazed the other day when someone told me that the Labour Party Conference of 1920 passed a resolution to take over the banks—how many Labour governments have we had since then?"

He spoke in clear cut terms about the problems of drawing unemployed youth into the labour movement. "If you're unemployed it's not 'us and the bosses'. You get up in the morning, hang about with your mates and go to bed. Where does politics come into that?"

The only force in society capable of making a way out

In East Kilbride every successful company makes the same thing. Profit.

Development Corporation advert, 14/2.81

"Glue sniffing is a serious problem with lots of sixteen, seventeen and eighteen year olds round here," Stephen told us. "They dab the glue, it's really an industrial cleaning liquid, on the cuff of their pullovers or on an old sock, and then sniff it deeply. It makes them feel drunk, imagine things or act like babies. It blows their brains out."

Stephen argued that one of the major causes of glue sniffing is the lack of things to do in Castlemilk. "There are no pubs or discos here. The only time I ever go out is

of this abyss of unemployment, poverty and helplessness is the labour movement Glasgow Trades Council' steps to set up an unemployed centre in Glasgow are welcome, but more action is needed if the unemployed and youth in particular, are to be saved from the horrors of glue sniffing and the like. There must be a campaign in the unions, especially the general unions like the T&GWU and the G&MWU, to recruit the unemployed, drawing them out of the claws of hopelessness and into the fight for socialism.

THE MARCH!

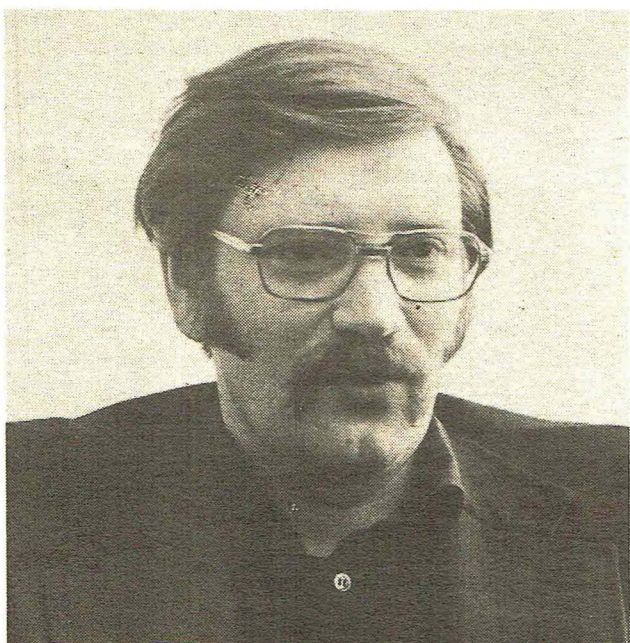
Interviews by Bob Wylie

Photos: J McKittrick

**Labour Party demonstration
against the Tories
and unemployment
SATURDAY 21st FEBRUARY
Assemble 11am, Blythswood Square
Glasgow**

THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

The need for the labour movement to take up a struggle for jobs and living conditions of working people is echoed by Ron Rigby, the AUEW Convenor at Talbot, Linwood.



Ron Rigby, Talbot Linwood convenor

Linwood has been starved of investment by its successive owners, Rootes, Chrysler and now Peugeot-Citroen, he explained. The shop stewards are campaigning in public meetings, a lobby of parliament, and on public demonstrations for £120 million of investment to safeguard the immediate future of Linwood. The closure of Talbot would put 10,000 jobs at risk in the West of Scotland.

The shop stewards at Linwood recognise at the same time, that they cannot stand alone. Ron Rigby said, "The workers of Linwood cannot take this struggle on themselves. We have contingency plans to involve the entire labour movement in the West of Scotland in this fight.

"We have no wish to carry the mantle of the labour movement on wider support. We are confident the movement is ready to respond."

This approach contrasts starkly to the attitudes of the present Scottish TUC General Council on fighting redundancies. Instead of working to build real unity against the bosses, based on the power of the labour movement, the STUC has sought the embrace of the SNP, the Liberals, the churches, even the Tories and the Scottish CBI.

If this motley crew are the friends of the labour movement, who prey tell us, are our enemies?

Apparently the Communist Party fully endorses this approach. At the STUC convention on unemployment, where church leaders, big business representatives, all the political parties and leading academics were allowed to air their views, Jack Ashton, the Scottish CP Secretary praised the STUC for "organising such a representative gathering of the Scottish people."

Sammy Gilmour, convenor of Govan Shipbuilders, correctly pointed out that the time for discussions with Thatcher is over. The solution to the

problems of Toryism lay in an industrial struggle of Polish proportions, he said. His contribution punctured the inflated platitudes of the majority of the speakers.

In the absence of a lead from the STUC General Council, Scottish workers will have to rely on the trades councils and the shop stewards movement to fight for their interests.

The recent call by the Scottish Graphical Division (West Branch) of the printers union SOGAT, for Glasgow Trades Council to set up a Strathclyde Shop Stewards' Committee to fight redundancies is significant.

The campaign has been developed by the Hunterston shop stewards' committee and the Labour Party Young Socialists, and is gaining significant support in the T&GWU Committee at Talbot, the shop stewards' committee at Weirs Pumps, India Tyres, Spillers, Wills and Hall, and Thermotank among others, and trades councils in Paisley and East Kilbride. Now our job is to ensure such a strategy is translated into reality.

The fight for jobs in Scotland cannot be separated from the fight against the system that creates unemployment; the need to abolish capitalism, and create a socialist Britain. All the day to day crises over jobs, decent living standards, decent housing, social services and community resources are now indissolubly linked with

breaking the stranglehold of the bankers and monopoly capitalists. The interests of the bosses and workers are irreconcilable.

The STUC and Scottish Executive Committee of the Labour Party should mount a joint campaign on a huge scale to explain these issues to the people of Scotland.

The horrors of life under capitalism contrasted to the possibilities of socialism, in a sustained crusade throughout the labour and trade union movement, at union branch and Labour Party meetings, in the shop stewards' committees, factories, offices and housing estates, would create an enormous groundswell in favour of a socialist form of society. Such a campaign, if linked to the struggle to save jobs, could create an invincible force to clear a way out of the abyss of capitalism.

The labour movement in Scotland has proud socialist traditions, from the formation of Glasgow Trades Councils in 1858, through the years of the Red Clydeside and John McLean, the hunger marches of the 1930s and the work-in at Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in the early 1970s. These traditions must be brought again to the forefront of life in Scotland in the eighties.

The words of John and Isobel Keenan concerning the eighties, are a determined reflection of the historic struggles of the Scottish working class: "There will be an Orwellian nightmare unless we take up the cudgels; ten million on the dole or socialism. The future will be in our hands—if we take it."



John Brown Engineering workers, in the old Clydebank UCS yards, kept open by the tremendous wave of support for the 1970s work-in

ACTION OVERDUE - says Ron Brown MP for Leith

6 While time for discussion was limited at the STUC Convention on unemployment, many Labour activists, including myself, were annoyed at the lectures from Tories and employers' representatives who were invited to speak — particularly as we were not given the opportunity to express our views.

This is not sour grapes. Unemployment is a serious matter, a cancer in our midst. But contrary to some suggestions, it is not inevitable; it doesn't just happen—it is made to happen.

It is caused by the failure of the so-called private enterprise system and of course by Tory policies.

Official figures state that over two million people are on the dole in this country, but the real figures are certainly much higher—probably over 3 million if unregistered women workers are included. Whatever the exact number, mass unemployment spells disaster for many working class



Ron Brown MP

families and also for many groups of people who perhaps regard themselves as 'middle class'.

The increasing level of unemployment is blamed on the Tory economic doctrine of 'monetarism'. Forget the name, it's not new. It has been tried before—in the '20s in particular.

This was the period when 'sound money' politicians argued for a return to the gold standard. Like today, it was an attempt to solve the crisis of capitalism at the

expense of jobs and living standards. It inevitably led up to the 1926 General Strike. Today, Tories are building up the army and the police force, backed up by new repressive laws to harass trade union and political activists. They know this preparation is necessary to defeat the much stronger organised working class.

But strong as workers are, they still lack a fighting TUC leadership, and though few in the movement relish the idea of confrontation, it is going to come. That is the logic of the present political situation, unless I am much mistaken. And recognising this, workers must face up to it—demanding more Liverpool-style demonstrations and real days of action against this government.

The time is overdue for sending the fiery cross around Scotland and into England to encourage all sections of working people to go on to the offensive against this government. The sooner this is done, the sooner we will have a Labour government—this time, I hope, armed with socialist policies to tackle the problems of unemployment.



FRANCE

'COMMUNIST' PARTY LEADERS ABANDON WORKERS' UNITY

The French presidential elections are only a few months away. Leo McDaid reports from France on the policy switches of the Communist Party.

The French Communist Party [PCF] leaders have been zig-zagging wildly in their policies in the past months.

Firstly in international questions, after years of taking a "Eurocommunist" position critical of the USSR they have increasingly taken a hard line pro-Soviet Union position.

The Party is quite open in admiration of the USSR and the Stalinist bureaucracy, as for example over Afghanistan.

Marxists opposed the invasion of Afghanistan as it was designed primarily to defend the interests of the parasitic ruling caste of the USSR, and also as it gave the opportunity for the capitalist powers to build up a propaganda war against 'communism'.

Although we would not now demand the withdrawal of Russian troops (see 'Militant' 23 January), the position of the PCF has been from the beginning, one of unequivocal support for the invasion.

This line is causing dissension within the Party, which is also in turmoil over the PCF election policy, which concentrated its main attacks until recently on the Socialist Party and their presidential candidate Mitterand.

But it is in the question of immigration that the biggest disputes have been seen.

The Communist Party leaders support the reactionary demand for immigration controls in France. The PCF section in Seine-St Denis, a suburb of Paris, claimed in their newspaper 'Actualités' on the 1st January, that "the clash of cultures and racist attacks have as consequences...delinquency and insecurity."



What will the PCF membership make of the changes in policy?

The implication is that immigration controls will help create a better society—did they ever stop to think that the level of delinquency and all the other ills of society are directly due to the lack of decent facilities provided by capitalism and the pressures put on the working class by living under capitalism?

The PCF say that it is necessary to only let in as

many immigrants as would be "tolerable" economically and socially. Tolerable to whom?

This reactionary demand is bound to provoke resentment throughout the entire labour movement in France and indeed inside the PCF itself, as can be seen by the dissent amongst certain sections of the Party.

In a society where real unemployment is not far from

Steel workers from Longwy in Lorraine demonstrate in 1979 against the murder of their town. The socialist and Communist parties should fight for working class solutions.

foto: John Sturrock (Report)



2,200,000, it is not surprising that the right wing capitalist parties such as the Gaullists are calling for a clampdown on immigration.

The PCF, though far from defending the interests of the oppressed minorities in society, instead lines itself with the French ruling class in attacking immigrants.

The PCF say that if immigration is controlled,

then there will be more jobs for the French workers. They cannot see that unemployment is a direct result of the capitalist system.

By adopting the demand of immigration quotas, and abandoning the demand for workers unity, the PCF merely split the working class when they face big attacks.

It seems that the PCF like other 'Communist' parties

has lost all traces of workers internationalism—something brilliantly foreseen by Trotsky over half a century ago—and have forgotten the slogan "workers of the world unite."

Do they intend to replace this slogan with others like "buy French"—already one of their slogans? Or even "French workers unite against all other workers"!

WEST GERMANY Recession bites deeper

West Germany has still one of the strongest capitalist economies in Europe, but the world wide recession is biting here too.

The recent annual government report predicts a 1% fall in gross national product during 1981. Unemployment has reached 1.3 million, the highest for five years—and in the most populated area, North Rhine Westphalia, the 6% on the dole queues is the highest since 1955. Short time working has also increased noticeably.

Investment has fallen in real terms, partly due to high interest rates on borrowing. Leading economists have suggested temporary withdrawal from the European Monetary System—

By a 'Militant' correspondent

which would allow interest rates to be cut, though at the cost of increased inflation.

The government report is worried at the growth of imports in West Germany where Japanese cars have doubled their sales proportion from 5% to 10% in a year. A third of all electronic goods are now imported.

SPD members angry

The Social Democratic Party [SPD] government has conflicted with its own party

rank and file in the last few months mainly over such issues as nuclear power and nuclear weapons.

The party chairman, Willy Brandt, has now presented a five-part programme on major areas of dispute in the party—such as employment, industrial democracy, defence, the relationship with the SPD's coalition partners the FDP [Liberals] and future social reforms.

The differences, though are very deep-seated and the growing problems of the West German economy will increase them.

As the economic crisis increases, the ruling class pressure on the government to introduce counter reforms will grow, the splits between the government and the SPD rank and file will intensify.

Since we received this report from France, the degeneration of the leadership of the Communist Party has reached a new level.

Militant (16 January) reported the CP led attack on a hostel for immigrant workers in Vitry near Paris.

Since then a 'Communist' council near Marseilles has evicted a gypsy settlement, others have refused to house foreign workers and another has put restrictions on the number of children of immigrant workers in its holiday schemes.

Then, on 8 February, a Moroccan worker Muhammad Karbouch was the victim of a near pogrom when the Communist mayor of a town in Val d'Oise led a group of about 50 party activists in a demonstration outside his home.

The mayor, who was wearing a sash in the colours of the French national flag the tricolor, had received an anonymous letter claiming that Muhammad Karbouch was a 'drug pedlar'. The man, who is described as a hard working father of eight has never been suspected by the

police of any offence.

These attempts to buy votes through any method have, to say the least, perplexed PCF activists. In three months they face an election in a country increasingly wracked by the effect of the world capitalist crisis.

One response of the French ruling class has been to increase the powers of the presidency. Giscard d'Estaing has been described by the Socialist Party leader Mitterand as an "elected monarch".

But the powers taken by General De Gaulle in 1958 were powerless to stop a growing crisis and a sharpening class conflict which blew up in 1968. Now France is suffering from the recession and the problems of capitalism cannot be route-marched out of existence.

Official estimates are that the French economy will grow by 1.6% this year but a growth rate of 6% would be needed to stop a huge increase in unemployment.

French society is already one of the most unequal countries in Europe in terms of income and wealth.

According to the Centre for Economic Research on Savings, 10% of the population own more than half the

wealth while the bottom 50% own a mere 5%. The difference between the top ten per cent and the bottom ten per cent has doubled over the last twenty five years of right wing governments.

The Communist Party and the Socialist Party would gain enormously from a clear class attack on the capitalist parties and the President. The racist antics of the CP leadership will only serve to disorientate workers. The only people to gain are the parties of the right.

LESSONS OF CHILE

Read this Marxist analysis price 50p [+ 15p p&p]

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The slave rebellion of 1791 in Haiti was one of the greatest movements of the oppressed in history.

It graphically shows how the slaves rose up from the greatest depths of degradation and squalor to fight successfully to change the world they lived in.

Haiti, then the French colony of St Domingue, was in the 18th century the greatest colony in the West Indies.

Christopher Columbus had arrived there in 1492 and called the island Hispaniola. He brought with him the benefits of western civilisation and within two hundred years the indigenous population (about a million when he arrived) had been wiped out.

In 1695 the island was divided by treaty between France and Spain. In the French half, settlers started to grow coffee, then indigo and then sugar, using imported slaves from Africa.

By 1789 there were about half a million black slaves on St Domingue—more than in all the rest of the West Indies put together. They existed at the base of a rigid almost caste-like system. Above the black slaves were the mulattoes (those of mixed blood) who were ranked in 128 divisions.

Above those were the poor whites (often the descendants of white slaves), above them, the white capitalist class and at the top the French government bureaucracy. In all there were about 30,000 mulattoes and about the same number of whites.

At this time, St Domingue produced half of Europe's sugar, indigo and cotton and the colony brought more profits to French merchants than all the British slave plantations put together.

In 1789 Britain's total foreign trade was £27 million of which colonial trade accounted for £5 million. On the other hand, France's total foreign trade was £17 million of which St Domingue alone was responsible for £11 million.

To cling on to this staggering wealth the white colonists attempted to make the slaves' lives as close an approximation to hell as possible. As James relates in 'Black Jacobins':

"Their masters poured burning wax on their hands and arms and shoulders, emptied the boiling sugar cane over their heads, burned them alive, roasted them on slow fires, filled them with gunpowder and blew them up with a match, buried them up to the neck and smeared their heads with sugar that flies might devour them..."

However, events occurring thousands of miles away in Paris were to have a decisive influence on the island. The slave revolt which was to take place in 1791 had its roots in the French revolution of 1789 and without the revolution in France, its success would have been impossible.

The first shock waves of the revolution were barely noticed by the slaves. Instead, a civil war broke out between the rich whites, the poor whites and the mulat-

By Steve Davies

toes—each section interpreting "liberty, equality and fraternity" to suit itself.

In the course of the fighting each group armed its slaves and slowly the ideas of freedom inspired and awoke the sleeping slaves to revolution.

By July 1791, in the densely populated north, they were planning an uprising. Like all peasants they craved land but because so many laboured in massive work gangs in the huge sugar factories, they had many similarities with the modern working class.

They were a semi-proletarian class—far more than any other group of workers in the world at that time, and in consequence, the revolt took the form of an organised mass movement.

In August the insurrection began. A month later a middle-aged man joined who was to stake his claim for a place in history—Toussaint L'Ouverture.

Initially there was a bloody settling of accounts for the years of degradation and inhuman torture but after a while, mercy became the order of the day—a mercy which the planters would not have extended to the slaves had the roles been reversed.

At this point the leaders of the rebellion were surprised, baffled and unsure of the direction they would take. They even attempted a sell-out in negotiations with the whites, offering to return most of their followers to slavery if a few hundred could go free.

"The black Jacobins" by CLR James. Published by Allison and Busby. Price £5.50 incl. postage from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

But the planters scornfully refused and from then on there was no thought of surrender. Toussaint began to train small bands of soldiers.

The French government under the leadership of the "moderate" bourgeois Girondins had persuaded the colonial interests to give full rights to the mulattoes in April 1792. But far from abolishing slavery, though, they sent troops to crush the slave revolt.

The slave revolt

They landed in St Domingue but before they could begin to attack, events had occurred in Paris which began to alter the whole course of the French revolution and with it the black revolution in St Domingue.

On 10 August 1792 the Paris masses, moving to impose their will on history, attacked the Tuileries palace and dragged the Bourbon king off the throne.

As James writes in 'History of Negro Revolt', "A wave of enthusiasm for liberty swept over France and from indifference to

FROM HELL TO THE BARRICADES



Slum conditions in Haiti today—a country wracked by super-exploitation. Haitian dictator Duvalier may live to regret the heritage of Toussaint L'Ouverture

slavery at the beginning of the revolution, revolutionary France now hated no section of aristocracy so much as the colonial whites, 'the aristocrats of the skin'."

By February 1793, revolutionary France was at war with England and Spain. Spain had helped the black slaves from the start (for her

were demanding a new democracy.

In February 1794, the three deputies to the French Convention from St Domingue (a black, a white and a mulatto) received a tumultuous welcome and on the same day the Convention passed a decree abolishing slavery without even a discussion.

In the mountains of St Domingue Toussaint heard the news and swung his army over to the side of France.

Spain made peace in 1795. By 1799 the British had been driven out of St Domingue and most of the other French colonies in the West Indies by armies of black slaves and mulattoes. Britain lost 100,000 men in four short years—two and a half times as many as Wellington lost in the whole of the Peninsula war.

Aided by the fever which was rampant among the British troops, Toussaint practically destroyed the British force. And in so doing the slave army diverted Britain from a more powerful attack on revolutionary France.

The situation in France continued to change, however, and the French provoked a bitter civil war between the slave army and the mulattoes. This took two years to win with enormous losses but Toussaint was victorious and went on to conquer Spanish St Domingo.

Toussaint's republic

For a year people of all the island of all colours enjoyed peace in a newly formed republic under Toussaint. He was a despot but slavery, the whip and all physical punishment was

abolished and production rose faster than at any time in the island's history.

When the Jacobins ruled France, Toussaint was for France, but when they were elbowed out by reaction, he was forced into opposition. Reaction crystallised around Napoleon Bonaparte and the blacks' success was too much for him.

He resolved to restore slavery and equipped an expedition under his brother-in-law, Le Clerc, which finally amounted to nearly 60,000 men. He sent many of his veteran generals from his European and African campaigns and Bonaparte summed up his order when he said, "I will not rest until I have torn the epaulettes off every nigger in the colonies."

The French army arrived in January 1802, and a year later was reeling to defeat in all its garrisons. Toussaint wished to end the bloodshed and come to terms. He was captured by a trick and shipped to France where he died in the dungeon of a French castle.

The French were now confident that they could retake the island and restore slavery. As soon as news filtered out about the French treachery and their plans for the restoration of the old regime, the fighting resumed with a new intensity.

Dessalines, one of Toussaint's lieutenants, had by this time seen what Toussaint never saw, that only independence could guarantee freedom. The mulattoes came over to the side of the blacks (having previously supported Bonaparte) and together the blacks and mulattoes fought a desperate war of independence.

A few months later the French army was shattered. They lost 50,000 men through battle fever. Le

Clerc himself died of yellow fever and Rochambeau, his second in command and a hardened racist, crawled out of the island after surrendering unconditionally.

Dessalines, the new dictator, declared the island independent and slavery was never re-established.

The victory of San Domingo's blacks spelled the beginning of the end of slavery in the West Indies. The effects of the black revolution were felt throughout the Caribbean.

Revolutionary heritage

The decisive factor was the French revolution which not only inspired the blacks but also between 1794 and 1797 under the Jacobins gave active support. The international conflict which the slaves were able to use to such good effect was itself the result of the revolution.

The slaves themselves fought magnificently and defeated the military might of Britain, Spain and Napoleonic France.

Last year a BBC programme dubbed Toussaint 'The Black Napoleon', which is about as far from the truth as it is possible to go and speaks volumes about BBC research (or the lack of it).

As C L R James has written, Toussaint L'Ouverture was a Black Jacobin and the leader of the only successful slave revolt in history.

The present-day dictator of Haiti, 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, may well live to regret the revolutionary heritage of Toussaint.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Thatcher's vandalism

Dear Comrades,

I am appalled at this government's attitude to the people of this country.

They choose not to see the despair of the working man unable to find work or living with the threat of redundancy. Are hunger, depression and servility to become an established way of life as they were in the '30s?

As the saying goes, there's none so blind as those who will not see.

I charge M Thatcher and co with purposely destroying the economy of this country. You hear every day of factory closures and then Thatcher and co announce their intention to subsidise a factory for Datsun Japan, at the expense of the British tax payer.

While Vauxhall of Liverpool plan to make three thousand men redundant, Leyland have to beg for state aid, and any profits Datsun make will go back to Japan.

We scream out for import controls so Thatcher helps them come through the back door. This money should be invested in British industry or housing.

It is time this country rose up with an angry roar, threw out the capitalists for ever, and returned a true socialist government, which will be pledged to the road of true and firm socialism.

Yours fraternally
M Bagam
Shop Steward
Branch 5 G&MWU
Liverpool

Short cut to profits

Dear Editor

My sister is training to be a hairdresser in a well known salon in Glasgow. Although she has successfully passed her City & Guilds exams and has a job, all is not well!

The manager has a large staff including one girl on six months' work experience and two young girls still at school who come in twice a week for another form of work experience, taking turns to sweep up and make tea.

Because these girls on work experience are working for nothing as far as the boss is concerned, he has put three of the hairdressers, including my sister, on part time, with the threat that if business does not pick up in a few weeks he will have to make them redundant. For my sister this will mean the end of her career as she is not yet indentured.

Here once again work experience is seen as a method of getting cheap labour...with no hope of a job after six months, not without five years training at less than thirty pounds a week.

Hairdressing is a bad enough job without having the threat of cheap unqualified labour being used by the bosses as a whip to keep staff in order at work. Create jobs—at low wages—in order to make 'expensive' fully trained staff redundant seems to be Thatcher's creed!

Yours fraternally
R Mitchell
Barrhead

Tenants' anger builds Labour

Comrades

After a period of partial collapse and stagnation, my ward of the Thanet East Labour Party is now beginning to show signs of its former, lively, self. The ward covers a big council estate in Ramsgate and has a tradition of voting in Labour councillors in this otherwise Tory "backwater".

With the announcement of rent rises of £2.44 to £3.55 a week a lot of members who had ceased to play an active part in the

ward are now asking for new membership cards and are willing to come to the ward meetings. In one day two former party members came round to my house asking for party cards and information—out of this came six potential YS members, the children of these people.

The proposed rent increase has caused a feeling of outrage against the Tory council.

The Labour group on the council, six in all, have managed to get special meetings of the housing committee to review the rent decision. While applauding the brave fight Labour councillors have put up

against a solid Tory majority more and more tenants are realising that leaving it to the small Labour group is not enough.

Tenants are asking what they can do to fight the Council's decision, a slap in the face for party members who said that council tenants just will not get up and fight or take part in Labour meetings.

I have every confidence that the new spirit of resistance shown by tenants will result in the regeneration of the local Labour ward. The policy of outright opposition to the Tories is the only way; only by taking decisive action will

there be any chance of putting down their disastrous policies on housing.

The job now is to build unity among tenants on the estate and spread the agitation to council estates in other parts of Thanet. The whole question of cuts in services and increasing unemployment locally and nationally will need to be faced.

Meanwhile, the message from the Labour Party must be: No rent rises, no rate increases. Stop the cuts and jobs for all!

Yours fraternally
Joe North
Thanet East YS

Abusive Language

Dear Comrades

The art of political assassination is not confined to the Tories. Mr Weighell of the NUR is catching up quickly.

What are these people up to? The only one to profit from these right wingers are the Tories and their pals. The enemies of the workers are those who use the gutter press and the TV media to put over their hatred of the left.

I haven't heard Tony Benn squabbling when he has lost a point. Nor does he use the media for personal attacks on his opponents.

If Mr Weighell and his like want to spit in anyone's eye, I suggest they start on the enemies in the capitalist parties.

My wife and I are now 83 and we have seen the right wingers sabotage the workers' fight since 1914. We are not Militant Tendency but we've certainly got a tendency to be militant.

Long live militancy.
Yours
Mr and Mrs Wootton
Pier Ward
Brighton LP members

"I will spit in his eye sooner than sign a thing like that."
Sid Weighell on Tony Benn's resolution to the NEC, 1.2.81.

No turkey this year!

Dear Comrades

With my wage packet this week I received the following printed statement:

From the Chairman, to all staff. CHRISTMAS BONUS 1981. Despite adverse economic conditions, the Company again paid a bonus to staff at Christmas 1980.

It is with regret, however,

that I find it necessary to point out that, should the recession continue into 1981 it may not be possible to repeat this gesture next Christmas.

It looks as if the deepening recession will mean the end to the traditional Christmas bonus, at least where I work.

Under conditions of continuing capitalist crisis, I am just wondering how long it will be before employers

not only stop bonuses but also attempt to reduce wages in real terms, as happened in the 1920s and 1930s.

The letter from my company chairman is only a small indication of what capitalism has to offer workers in the future—nothing!!

Yours fraternally
Stephen Wright
USDW
East Kilbride LPYS

No time to talk

Dear Comrades

As you may have heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Geoffrey Howe, recently visited East Kilbride's 'Centre One', to try and persuade the civil servants not to go ahead with their fifteen to nineteen per cent pay claim.

The LPYS were demonstrating outside the centre along with some Rolls Royce workers.

Sir Geoffrey did not even take the time to explain how Tory policies are going to put this country back on its feet again. I wonder why?

BBC TV covered the demonstration quite well; that's more than I can say for EK's local paper, which only put Sir Geoffrey on the

front page, and never even mentioned that about 30 people were demonstrating against his policies.

We must take every opportunity to demonstrate against the Tories, and show them that we are not going to sit back and let them treat us like dirt.

Yours faithfully
Alan McElhoney
East Kilbride LPYS

Tory thinking

A LETTER TO THE 'TIMES'

Sir

I think it's about time we in the Tory Party had a say about the T.U.C.'s record on unemployment. It's pretty bad isn't it: 2 million on the dole!

But then, being honest, we must admit it's not entirely their fault: the Labour Party is also partly

to blame as indeed are the E.E.C., the Russians and all those rockets they keep sending up into space: I don't call that natural.

However, it's not enough just to apportion the blame, enjoyable as that can be; we must also identify the root cause of unemployment, i.e. people in work asking to be paid.

If all Britain were to agree to only a 5% pay increase then unemployment would virtually disappear; if they were to agree to no pay increase at all then unemployment would vanish completely. If they agreed to a

pay cut, everyone would be live happily ever after, the streets of London would be paved with gold and the Thames would flow with champagne. While we're waiting for that to happen we in the government have to face the immediate problems posed by inflation—problems such as poverty, despair and Dennis Skinner. Obviously something must be done; so we say to the people of Britain—we're rather busy right now, would you mind dealing with this one?

M J Higgins
Bromsgrove

Minimum wage too low

Dear Comrade

Please find enclosed POs for £3.25 for 13 issues, also could I please have six 'Militant' posters. By the way there is a Day of Activity and memorial service for Ernest Bevin in Bristol March 14th. It is a Transport and General Workers' Union rally.

I agree with what 'Militant' stands for, a 35-hour week, Labour to power with socialist policies. But I disagree with the £80 minimum wage, it should be £100 per week to give a worker a take-home wage of £80.

Yours fraternally
Mike Wright
T&GWU shop steward
Stafford Miller Ltd
Devon



Tory party conference 1980—over to you, chaps

Photo: Militant

A shorter working week

Dear friends

Although I have been an active member of my local ward Labour Party since 1945, I have only just become acquainted with 'Militant'.

I like the paper very much. But, I doubt if you realise the tremendous trouble you will have to convince ordinary working people that mass unemployment is not the chief disaster affecting the world.

We shall have to get used to the idea that only a few hours daily is necessary to do all the world's work, and that overtime must not be permitted.

It pays employers to permit overtime. We must not allow it. Everybody must work. Huge salaries to the heads of firms must be forbidden.

We must work towards G Bernard Shaw's dream of absolute equality for all. We must abolish capitalism and private enterprise.

No, I know this cannot come soon. But we must teach people about it. I suggest that all left-wing thinkers should read the American Edward Bellamy's 'Looking Backward'. This modern "Utopia" shows how to reform the world.

I'm sorry I cannot help you with money. I'm an OAP on supplementary allowance, but I enclose £1 as a token of goodwill.

G Cargill
Edinburgh

ads

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Hear: Dennis Skinner MP Speaker Northern Ireland Young Socialists

Venue: Partick Burgh Halls
On: Saturday 28 February—Sunday 1 March
Time: 10 am to 5 pm

Militant Marxist Discussion Groups The highly successful Marxist discussion groups in Wandsworth are continuing. Those readers interested in participating should contact:

Bob McKee, 675 5184, for the Battersea group—at present discussing 'State and Revolution'.

Tim O'Donnell, 870 8324, for the Tooting group—at present discussing 'The Communist Manifesto today'.

SCOTTISH LPYS Annual Conference

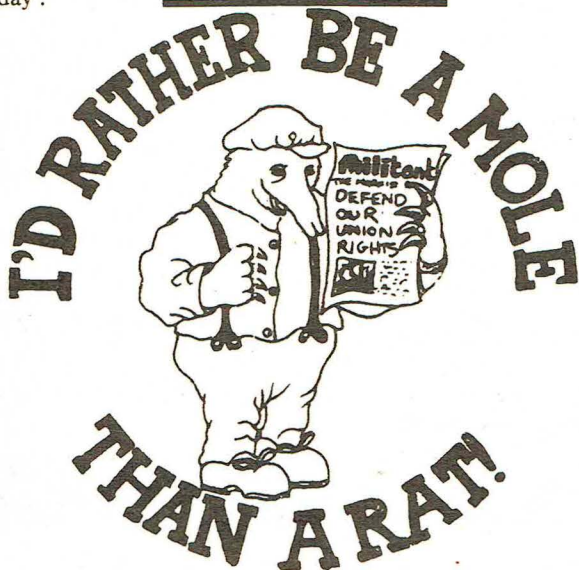
MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING
Hear: Bob Wylie 'How to fight unemployment'
Venue: Partick Burgh Halls
Saturday 28 February 6.00 pm

GLASGOW public debate
Young Conservatives v Labour Party Young Socialists
★ Wednesday 4 March
★ McLellan Galleries, Glasgow
★ 7.30 pm start
All welcome

NOTTINGHAM Readers' Meeting 'Build a mass, socialist democratic Labour Party. Kick out the Tories!' Tony Saunois (LP NEC, personal capacity), Wednesday 25 February, 7.30pm Albert Hall Institute, Maid Marion Way. All welcome.

LANCASTER 'Militant' Readers' Meeting 'Democracy in the Trade Unions' Monday 23 February 1981, Lancaster Trades Hall, Fenton St., Lancaster

Socialist Action public meeting: 'A socialist strategy to fight unemployment'. Wednesday 18 February, 8.00 pm, The Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, W1



Summer T-shirts. Colours—white, yellow, sky blue, dark green, navy and black. All with red motif. Round neck and short sleeves.

Sizes—children's: 24, 26, 28, 28 and 30 inch chest. £2.80 each. Adults: small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra large (no dark green)—42-44. £3.25 each. Both costs include postage and packing. Please indicate colour, and size preferred. ALL PROCEEDS TO THE FIGHTING FUND:

Cheques and postal orders made out to R Harris. Send orders with payment to: R Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1UR.

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Articles on Britain, India and the Belfast engineering strike of 1919

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Build

Militant

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 April	Target for year
Eastern	321		1775	7100
East Midlands	312		1375	5500
Hants & Dorset	303		1300	5200
Humberside	93		875	3500
London East	584		1900	7600
London West	303		1200	4800
London South	163		1375	5500
Manchester & Lancs	350		1450	5800
Merseyside	286		1650	6600
Northern	406		2150	8600
Scotland East	122		1100	4400
Scotland West	237		1875	7500
Southern	521		1775	7100
South West	320		875	3500
Wales East	204		650	2600
Wales West	96		1150	4600
West Midlands	353		2150	8600
Yorkshire	490		2250	9000
Others	23		3125	12500
Total received	5487		30000	120,000

Target for 11 April £30,000 Target for year £120,000

No big backers..... Just your £s and pennies!

THIS WEEK £1,706

The right-wing gang of splitters from the Labour Party get their millions of pounds worth of free publicity from TV and radio but they are not averse to being paid for their "troubles".

Nor, it seems, are those right-wing MPs, even those who leave the Labour whip, ashamed to keep their parliamentary seats—or their salaries which are well above those of ordinary workers.

When a consistent supporter of 'Militant', Andrew Price of Cardiff South East Labour Party, debated on TV and radio with Tom Ellis MP and on the special LP conference, he signed over the cheque he received (for £43) to the 'Militant' fighting fund.

This week's largest individual donation, though, was £50 from a reader in the Wirral, and £25 which we are forwarding to 'Militant Irish Monthly'. Union expenses of £40 from M Howard (Gateshead) and £20 from D Williamson (Paisley) together with donations from R Ascal (Glasgow, £20) and M Holmes (Essex, £15) made up another good proportion of our income.

Tenners included those from D Reid (tax rebate) and P and A Bennet (Cardiff SE CLP), E McAteer (ASTMS, Hull), and firemen S Parry and T Waller (Crosby, Merseyside). Seven members of Enfield North and Wood Green LPYS branches from N London collected over £15 for us with K Johnson (Enfield North) contributing £8.15!

Fivers came from A Johnson (ASTMS member, GEC Coventry), J Stavers (Basildon), S Donnelly (Leyton), 'Brad' (Reading LPYS), I Wyborn (Romford

LPYS) and M Oldfield (NUPE, Liverpool).

We obviously get many more smaller donations than larger ones, but on grounds of space we can't list every one. It will be very interesting, however, to see whether the 'new party' will get more regular tenners than we do from supporters on average wages.

A sample of sums under £5 were £4.50 and £4 from Bristol readers V Kaufman and R Giles, £3 D Dougal (Newham NALGO), £2

from R Clarke (Castlemilk), R Jowett (Salop), K Vickers (SLADE, Kettering) and J Dawson and D Ward (Rover, Solihull workers) and last but not least £1 from retired reader G Cargill (Edinburgh).

Money has come in, too, from Readers' Meetings in places as far apart as Blackpool and Newham (£40 from these two alone), while collections at workplaces from Knowsley, Merseyside and Leicester netted another £9.

YS sales crucial

The greatest boost we have had to our sales has been the ever growing response in the LPYS branches. The letter below is a great example of why 'Militant' is so badly needed:

"Here in the industrial town of Bridgwater, Somerset, we have formed a small group of the LPYS which, in a town with dole queues which lengthen each week, are, we believe, an extremely important force. We only have about ten regulars at our weekly meetings, though, so we obviously need to publicise.

"For this purpose, I believe 'Militant' would be ideal, as they could be sold to young people like ourselves at the dole queue. These young people are angry at life. If we can channel their aggression at the Tories, we could achieve a big following in Bridgwater.

"After I had read it I left it in my local pub. The next time I went there, people were asking me how they could get another copy. Could I have some details of how to get say ten copies a week, as I think I could sell them with ease, perhaps more at a later date.

"Secretary, Bridgwater LPYS."

Milton Keynes LPYS and a seller in Macclesfield LPYS have also taken bulk orders. The comrades in Great Wyrley [South Staffs LPYS] are already one jump ahead, they have increased their bulk order to 20 per week. Make sure that your LPYS branch sells 'Militant' along with the LPYS paper, 'Socialist Youth'.

For details of how to obtain a weekly bulk order of 'Militant', write to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

Refreshments, coffee money, child-minding, phone money, and curry evenings are all sources of finance for us and services provided for the convenience of comrades. Think what these items would cost at normal prices! Have you got an original way of making money that we can recommend in this column?

Meanwhile, thanks for jumble money from Reading and Huddersfield, home brew (Ealing), guess the headline (Northants), Stockport cartoon books, sponsored walk and dominoes (S Yorks) and social evening (Gateshead).

We urge all readers to make a regular donation, preferably weekly, because that way we can plan ahead. We need just over £3,000 each week now to get to £30,000 by April 11th! If, in every area, readers are prepared to back us with hard cash, we will do it easily.

WEST LONDON MILITANT READERS' MEETING
'Labour's Future'
Speakers: Ray Apps (Brighton Kempton LP) Jake McGee (GLC Labour candidate for Uxbridge)
March 11th, 8pm. - Clem Atlee Community Centre, Clem Atlee Estate, Lillie Road, SW6

GOSPORT Militant Readers' Meeting 'Labour Party Special Conference—What Now?' Speaker: Andy Rosser (Delegate from Poole CLP). Monday 23 February, 8 pm, Gosport Labour Rooms, 145 Brockhurst Rd, Gosport.

Industrial

Labour Group NUS/Euroweld meeting

Struggling against all odds

A leader of the Belfast seamen's disputes committee condemned the Provisional IRA in their blowing up of a ship last week, in which the crew were actively involved in the NUS dispute.

John Magee, chairman of the NUS disputes committee, said the Provos' action has scared many workers—it was almost as though they were in the pay of the bosses, he said.

Bro Magee was joined by Fred Cobain, chairman of the Euroweld shop stewards' committee where the workers were occupying against closure at a Labour and Trade Union Group public meeting.

Workers in Belfast are anxiously watching the progress of the two major disputes. Both speakers spoke of the tremendous growth of militancy and union solidarity among their members, praising their willingness to fight their employers and this bosses' government.

Pointing out that many Tory MPs are in fact ship owners, John Magee said the struggle was for a basic living wage to destroy the misery of the poverty trap that snared so many seamen.

Brother Cobain spoke of the workers' determination to keep their factory open. The Euroweld workers' immense pride in their work and their almost unique plant totally destroys the bosses' press myth of striking workers as industrial wreckers.

But one of the most serious aspects of the dispute and the cause of great anger amongst the workers is the attitude of the trade union tops and officials to the occupation. No union official had seen fit to visit



The picket line at Euroweld, east Belfast

the factory.

Behind the scenes they were working along with the bosses in the attempt to force the workforce to accept redundancies which for many of them would mean a lifetime on the dole. Much discussion followed on the role of union officials and the need to make unions democratic, representative fighting organisations for their members, and the need for more shop stewards' committees and

combines.

As Bro Magee said, if the Belfast Disputes Committee were the executive of the NUS the dispute would have been brought to a successful conclusion long ago!

A collection at the meeting raised £170, the largest ever at a Labour Group meeting in Belfast. Money is essential for the successful conclusion of these disputes. Both groups of workers are facing great hardship and their victories would be a

magnificent lesson in how to struggle for all workers here faced with low pay or redundancies.

Donations and messages of support can be channelled through the Labour Group, 4 Waring Street, Belfast.

By Paul McCauley (Ballymena Labour and Trade Union Group)

Busmen fight back

Brighton

Brighton Area Transport Services have unleashed a furious wave of opposition to their latest proposals to re-organise bus services in Brighton and Hove.

Three hundred angry people crowded into a meeting at which the bus company explained its proposals. If the mood of this meeting is anything to go by, Brighton workers will tell the bus company exactly what they think of the latest round of cuts, which comes on top of a major re-organ-

isation last July.

Although some areas will have an increased service and there is an attempt to co-ordinate services, others will have a drastically reduced service, these being the remote, outlying areas, and the Hovingdean area will have no bus service at all. The overall result is a large cut.

When Wally Lave, GMWU Branch Secretary, said, "No Brighton buses will run unless they run to Hovingdean," he was greeted with raptures of applause.

The TGWU have also pledged to fight the cuts, using strike action if necessary.

Even with this "economy measure" which is expected to save £500,000 a year, fares will still rise in April. Services have been re-organised twice in the last four years and other insidious cuts have been made.

The crisis in the bus service has gone from bad to worse. As the Tories prune subsidies even further the

vicious circle of rising fares, fewer passengers and cuts will continue, and more people will use cars and motor bikes, thus increasing traffic congestion and wasting fuel.

Manchester

There is a growing anger among Manchester busmen at the plans of the Tories who run Greater Manchester transport to axe nearly 2,500 jobs this year and devastate existing services.

The Tories' most recently announced plans will mean 50 services cut and many more reduced.

Services to overspill estates and in some outlying towns are particularly threatened. So too are many school, hospital and works services.

As Warren Bates, T&G branch chairman, points out, "These cuts are a culmination of years of decay. We are already

having to cope with more breakdowns because we now have to keep buses on the road for 16 years instead of 12.

"On top of the cuts, the new Transport Act means that cowboy operators can step in and hi-jack the more profitable services and this is already happening.

"We have got to draw public attention to a Tory policy hell-bend on destroying public transport."

There have unfortunately been some voluntary redundancies, but the T&GWU is opposing the cuts, and it is local union policy to meet any attempt at compulsory redundancies with strike action and the occupation of all 20 depots.

As Alex Pandolfo, shop steward at Queens Road depot, says, "We have to be prepared to take determined action in defence of jobs. A show of strength is often the only language the Tories understand."

Bristol busmen: see back page

Heathrow

British Airways manual workers at Heathrow airport will be staging a further 24 hour strike on Friday 20th February, in their latest step towards achieving a decent pay rise this year.

British Airways management—determined to make the workforce pay for the serious problems facing the airlines—have made the workers and "offer" that is scandalous.

Trade unions representing the workers, manual workers in the engineering and maintenance, the ground services, and the ramp at Heathrow put in a modest claim for a 20% pay rise keeping them in line with the cost of living, a shorter working week as per the confed settlement and extra holidays in line with British Airways clerical workers.

The management's response has been outright rejection. They want a three month freeze on rises (originally they wanted a 6

month freeze), and then a mere 8% pay rise from the first of April, and not from the normal settlement date of the 1st January.

Furthermore they want to suspend previously fought for gains on London Weighting and shift pay agreements. British Airways management claim they can't afford any more as a result of Tory government cash limits.

So far, mass meetings have voted overwhelmingly for strike action. The last 24 hour strike was a tremendous success with the airport grounded with the exception of a few foreign airline operators.

The mood was good, many workers likening it to the major struggle by airport workers against GAS (General Aviation Services) in the Industrial Relations Act in the early 1970s.

Clearly now it is important that that mood is matched by a clear national lead from the major trade unions involved.

By Martin Elvin (ASLEF)

Ansell's

After six weeks on strike, the workers at Ansell's have all been sacked by the management but are determined as ever to fight to the end if necessary.

A worker on the picket line who had been working at Ansell's for eight years told me that he can't afford to lose this one. At his age he would stand no chance of getting another job, but he wasn't going to bow down to the threats of management and take a cut in his wages.

"All the concessions we have got for a decent wage etc. have all been fought for over many years and they are not going to give anything away without a fight."

Management have put forward a proposal to rein-

state four hundred of their 1,250 workers and pay the remainder severance pay. This proposal was unanimously rejected. The full support of other brewery workers in the T&G to fight this dispute would be a great spur to the workers.

This dispute at the moment is reaching a stale-mate, with management trying to destroy the union and cut the wages and jobs of the workers. But the workers are determined to fight to defend their jobs and their living standards.

Allied Breweries, for all their power and profits, have met their match this time.

By a 'Militant' reporter

USDAW

As the election period moves into its final week, the last of the USDAW branches are casting their votes in what is undoubtedly a very important period for all USDAW members.

Not since the 'thirties have shop and distributive workers been faced with such a serious attack on their living standards. On the one hand, many members are accepting, in some cases because of no firm alternative being offered, wage increases of under 10%. On the other hand some members are faced with redundancy. In Liverpool, some 1,200 redundancies are threatened by Littlewoods Mail Order. Unless the union leadership

is prepared to give a firm lead and make a determined fight, all these jobs could be lost.

There has never been a more urgent need for a determined fighting leadership in USDAW. The union membership have a clear choice before them: the continuation of the present timid and hesitant leadership, or a change of direction by electing Audrey Wise for president and supporters of the USDAW Broad Left to transform the union into a dynamic, campaigning organisation.

By Dave Kennedy (Broad Left candidate, NW Divisional Council, USDAW)

STOP PRESS

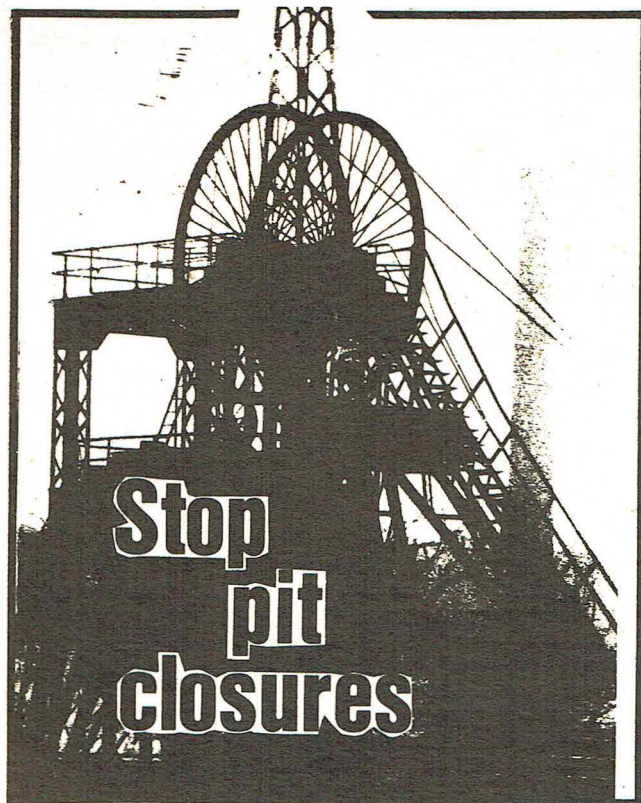
Lister

Watneys

Although the AUEW have deferred making the dispute official, the workers at Lister, Swindon, have voted to carry on the all-out strike.

After a mass meeting on Tuesday, workers at Watney's London depots have called for strike action against redundancies.

Reports



'Tories won't break us'

"We haven't felt this unity amongst our members since the days of '72 and '74. The Tories aren't going to break us."

So Bob Moody of the Nottingham NUM spelt out the determined mood felt by miners throughout the country during a lobby of their union executive in London last week.

"Our union policy is that only exhausted pits will be allowed to close—we're here today to make sure the executive carry through union policy."

The 300 miners present then joined a rally. Here, all the left-wing speakers received standing ovations when they attacked not only the Tories, but had some sharp words for some of the right-wing union leaders.

Loud applause greeted Arthur Scargill when he warned members not to accept redundancy pay: "No man has the right to prostitute his job for a few pounds. No man has the right to throw away the job prospects of his son..."

"We need solidarity and unity as in 1972 and 1974 when we achieved our biggest victories."

While the miners lobbied their leadership in London last week, God not only provided them with bright sunny weather, but entertainment too.

This came in the form of a 'Born Again' bible puncher who felt it his duty to save the miners from the ways of the Devil.

Material gains were all very well, he cried, but "what about your spiritual liberation?"

"What about the workers!" came the reply.

He pleaded with them, pray there and then, and to "get down on your knees."

Kent

By Nigel Simpson (Snowdown NUM)

Snowdown Colliery in Kent is threatened with closure.

Last Saturday 400 miners met and voted unanimously to accept the Area Conference's recommendation for an overtime ban from 6 o'clock the following day.

Jack Collins, Kent area secretary, at the meeting dismissed the Coal Board's argument that Snowdown is unworkable. He pointed out that a new seam of coal remains to be exploited which offers the basis of a completely modernised pit.

Jack Collins said he had already been in contact with union leaders in the London docks, in the power stations, in Fords Dagenham and they had promised their full support.

He told miners not to turn up to the picket line in plimsolls, but to take their pit boots home with them; the police weren't going to walk all over them!

"We get down on our knees every day mate."

And he warned, "Strikes won't save you from hell!"

"Oh, we don't mind—we're used to working underground."

However, one good turn deserves another and as this God-fearing citizen had entertained the miners for a good half hour, the fine voices of the Welsh NUM lodges were called upon to return the compliment, and soon Euston Road echoed to the strains of traditional Methodist hymns, much to this prophet's bewilderment.

Photo: MILITANT



Miners give Arthur Scargill a standing ovation at the London rally last week

Yorkshire

By Mick Rafferty (Brodsworth NUM)

Miners in Yorkshire voted overwhelmingly by 86% in favour of fighting for their jobs and their future. They voted against returning to the era of pit closures, in the days of Lord Robens, during the 'fifties and 'sixties.

The Tories argue that pit closures are necessary because of a decrease in the demand for coal due to cut-backs in industry, and also that there is a glut of cheap foreign coal on the market.

This is a negative attitude, for at a future increase in the demand for coal, it

will take much investment and time to meet targets, to re-open pits where viable reserves still exist. Indeed many pits will be unable to re-open, losing vast reserves for ever.

The truth about cheap short term foreign coal is that it is greatly subsidised by its own governments, creating an artificially and temporarily low price.

But a blanket ban on imports would, as with other industries where this demand has been raised, weaken national and international solidarity and weaken our support and strength, and would divert attention away from the capitalist representatives whose lack of financing has restrained the industry.

However, workers at home and abroad understand the need for a nationalised industry to be adequately financed—at the moment the coal industry is bled dry by massive interest charges: £237m this year alone — and restrained through Tory cash limits. If our industry is to be viable this conscious sabotage must be ended, and we must get proper financing.

Whereas British coal is subsidised by only £1.06 a tonne, Germany, France and Belgium are subsidised to the tune of £14.85, £17.96 and £34.05 per tonne respectively. In real terms Britain's miners produce the cheapest coal in Europe.

Notts

The Coal Board hope to "divide and rule" again, obviously wanting miners in the productive North Notts area not to support the industrial action.

The response to the Mansfield Young Socialists who have been leafletting pubs and pits in the area indicates the Board will be disappointed.

John Foster, a NUM branch committee member, told us how the younger miners in particular feel. "Miners completed all the tasks they were asked to do on the '80-'81 wage claim.

"Ezra promised no closures or redundancies if we accepted the Board's offer. We came up to perfect standards to be sold down the river once again.

"Some older men may be tempted by higher severance pay. Being a Geordie, I think the lesson has to be learnt from the closures during the 'sixties.

"The industrial deserts of the North and Wales should stand as an example to the rest of the mining communities. In 1947 there were 600,000 miners; in 1974 there were 203,000. In Nottinghamshire it will come sooner or later."

By Tony Cross

South Wales

"Taking on the miners is the biggest mistake the Tories will ever make. I believe that we have the support not only of every mining area in Britain, but the people in the streets will flock to this cause."

Tyron O'Sullivan, secretary of Tower Lodge NUM South Wales area, told how the Tories' picketing law would not hold the determined miners back.

"We will if necessary break the law from the very first day. No law will contain us, we intend to have mass picketing. If they think they can put us in gaol, they will have to have pretty big ones!"

"We are looking for support nationally. This will have a massive impact on

the whole of the country, and pave the way for the bringing down of the Tories."

Verdun Price of Coegnant Lodge, said, "We went through a period last year to develop a ten-week programme in eight weeks.

"When people came to the pit last Thursday, the Deputy Director and the production manager gave a glowing report to all the men in the pits, and said what a good job they had done.

"Then the next day we were told we were to close! We accepted the slim-down in good faith over the past period, and what is our thanks for it? A kick in the teeth."

Durham

By Stan Case Durham NUM

The Durham Miners Association will take strike action in support of jobs.

The NCB are bemoaning the fact that some of the pits scheduled for closure are working 21-inch seams—but they have been working those seams for years!

The Sacriston pit produces the best coking coal in the whole of Durham, and if it were closed there would be hundreds of thousands of tonnes left underground.

If the NCB get away with the present closures then in a few years we will only have

four or five pits left in the region. Yet at the same time it was reported that there are 60 open caste sites working including 25 private sites; some of these seams were abandoned by the NCB!

There are many new open caste sites being proposed with a total tonnage running to the 4 million mark. No doubt the Tories would like to shut down a dozen or so NCB pits and open up private sites, but we are having none of it.

Build the 'Alliance'

Steel closures, pit closures, railway closures. Once again the axe is being wielded, this time with a vengeance!

It is against this backcloth that members of the Tinsley branch of the NUR welcome the joint NUR/ISTC/NUM initiative for the Triple Alliance between the three unions.

Indeed, since the announcement of its formation, Tinsley branch has been instrumental in forging links locally with both the miners and the steel workers.

This is a recognition of the fact that the Triple Alliance, if it is to be the weapon that we desperately need, must be built on rock solid foundations.

It is essential that the lessons of the years 1919-26 are thoroughly appreciated. During those years the potential strength of an alliance between workers in the basic industries was clearly demonstrated yet still the Alliance crumbled when faced with its first real test in 1921.

As a result a million miners and their families suffered terrible privations for three long months and the Black Friday burnt itself into the very consciousness of the working class. There must not be another Black Friday!

The Alliance should not be seen as the unions at a national level pressurising the government. It must not filter from the top downwards. The results to that approach were shown in the '20s.

There must be a firm strategy not only of defence but also of attack—we don't just want to save our industries—we want to change them! It is vital having sacked the likes of Thatcher, and having replaced them by our own Labour government firmly committed to socialist policies, that we are able to put forward a coherent programme for the future development of our industries.

With this in mind, Tinsley Branch adopted the following course of action.

We are calling for the immediate establishment of a co-ordinating committee representative of all branches of the three unions in the South Yorkshire and South Derbyshire area.

Meeting on a regular basis, it would have three aims:

★ to organise a campaign combatting management lies and educating our memberships;

★ to thrash out a real policy capable of uniting the rank and file of the three unions;

★ to organise and co-ordinate action in the coming battles over closures.

By Jeff Bright (Vice Chairman, Tinsley NUR, personal capacity)

Militant

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BRISTOL BUSWORKERS- FIGHT FARE RISES

The Blackest Monday. That's what the local Tory rag called 16 February as Bristol was reduced to rush-hour traffic chaos with no buses on the road.

The busmen's struggles against redundancies and increased fares is now in the second week with the bus company maintaining its lock out of over 1,000 Bristol busmen.

On Tuesday 10th February more than 300 bus workers lobbied Bristol Labour council at their meeting and handed over a petition of over 75,000 signatures to the Labour leader as part of their campaign.

They are calling for the Bristol Labour Council to take over the city's services which at present are owned by the National Bus Corporation.

The busmen's next step is a mass rally and demonstration on Saturday 21st February, assembling at College Green, Bristol at 12.30pm and marching to the Corn Exchange.

Tony Benn will be one of

By Pete Hammond

(Bristol city councillor)

the speakers at the rally, as will be Militant supporter Cllr. Peter Hammond. Tony Benn has cancelled going to Glasgow in order to be at this rally.

The bus company, Avon County Council and the government must be forced to retreat from the sustained destruction of our services and provide the money to run a cheap, efficient and expanded transport service.

Bristol LPYS are holding a public meeting on Wednesday 25th February at 7.30pm at Sheppards Hall, Old Market on a socialist integrated transport policy, with two speakers, Richard Sheppard from the National Union of Railwaymen and one of the local busmen.

Miners Fight

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

over the Board's decision to close ten pits in South Wales was summed up by one young miner who said that we had done everything that had been asked of us by producing more coal only to be treated like rubbish and thrown on the scrap heap.

The anger of the miners will not be satisfied by short term compromises or a small shopping basket of goodies to buy us off.

If the Tory government cannot guarantee adequate financing of our industry and the proper planning of energy resources then it will

have to make way for the return of a Labour government pledged to a socialist energy policy of:

- ★ No pit closures
- ★ No redundancies
- ★ The setting up of a board comprising the trade unions and the Labour government to run the mining industry in the interests of working people and not for profit.

The TUC should now respond to the miners' action, by calling for industrial action to save the jobs of miners and all others who depend on the coal industry.



Photo: Picketing at Salfley gates showed the solidarity of workers in the 1972 miners strike.

Miners must win!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

selling their jobs is recoiling in the faces of the Tories. The miners are determined to save every job.

Only for reasons of safety, or because of the proven exhaustion of coal reserves will the miners allow pits to close.

In 1972 and 1974 the miners inflicted humiliating defeats on the Tory government of Edward Heath. They know they can also defeat this Tory government. So does the entire labour movement.

But bold leadership and the widest solidarity is essential to ensure a speedy and a decisive victory.

An all out strike of miners should be called without delay. The South Wales pits are already out on strike. The Yorkshire miners have also

given their leaders sanction to call strike action.

If the leaders in each area follow the lead of the South Wales miners the NUM nationally will move into action as one united body.

A national ballot to ratify the action could then, if necessary, be held later in order to satisfy the legality of the union rule book for the purposes of strike pay.

The government have tried to intimidate the miners with talk of massive stocks of coal. But there were similar stockpiles in 1972. The solidarity of other workers turned the tables on the government then.

This time, solidarity has been promised in advance. Indeed the rail and steel workers have formed the Triple Alliance with the National Union of Minework-

ers. This Triple Alliance must involve much more than just discussions at National Executive level.

It must become a living reality at all levels, particularly amongst the rank and file, where Triple Alliance Committees should meet, drawing together delegates from all three unions to plan wider action.

Other unions are also directly involved such as the Transport and General Workers union which has the biggest membership of lorry drivers. The efforts of all unions must be co-ordinated by the TUC and locally by the trades councils to ensure total embargo on the movement of coal.

The trades councils and Labour Parties should then organise broader local activity in support of the miners,

including accommodation for flying pickets, help on picket lines and mass rallies where miners can put their case to other workers.

Millions of workers would be eager to give assistance to the miners once asked. The unemployed in particular should be mobilised.

Joe Gormley correctly said that the 2½ million out of work could be mobilised to support NUM pickets.

The trade unions must draw this force behind the miners and build a solid combination of employed and unemployed workers actively struggling to save jobs.

The miners have picked up the gauntlet arrogantly thrown at them by Thatcher and her government. They must win. A victory for the miners will be a victory for the whole working class.

LINWOOD

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

this kick in the teeth by the Tory government, Jimmy went on to say, "All we have had is British tax-payers' money being wasted once again by multinational companies."

A campaign of mass industrial action like that of the Upper Clyde shipbuilding workers in the early '70s is a possible outcome at Talbot.

Jimmy highlighted the need at a later stage to involve the whole shop stewards' movement in West Scotland in this campaign. "That's the type of political pressure necessary to gain support."

Faced with the possibility of management moving out certain special pieces of machinery from the plant the convenor said, "We could immediately go to our members and ask for any movement of machinery etc. to be blocked. Then we'd make sure that they didn't move."

It is vital therefore that the labour movement throughout the UK should respond if this happens.

Already dockers from the Grangemouth area have sent a message of support to Linwood workers.

Jimmy stressed that, "If necessary financial support will be requested, and also industrial action by the rest of the movement, we would expect to get support nationally from the TGWU."

"The next couple of weeks will be crucial, to see what response we will get from outside the factory. We think it is right to fight, not just for ourselves. We don't believe that selling a job for £1,000 is right, it isn't ours to sell, it belongs to the community."

Living under a relentless onslaught of redundancies and closures in the West of Scotland, the fight to save Talbot takes on enormous significance. The campaign must be taken to every section of the labour movement.

Only by mobilising this solidarity will the workers at Talbot be in a position to fight the closures. The Talbot workers have made a stand, it is our job to back them.

See also pages 8-9

Supplies of 'Militant' for swood Square and West Glasgow demonstration will be distributed from the North West corner of Blyth-

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