

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

Lessons of the

SPAIN

attempted coup

Pages 8-9

JOBS NOT PROFIT

The start of the New Cross demonstration, 2 March



Photo: J McKirrick (Militant)

Thirteen dead and nothing said!

"Murder, murder, murder. Thirteen dead, but nothing said."

The rage of Britain's black community over the recent New Cross fire-bomb attack in which thirteen black teenagers died was shown last Monday [2 March].

In one of the largest demonstrations of West Indians ever held in this country, up to 15,000 young blacks took part,

along with several hundred white workers and youth.

A number of local schools and colleges were closed, following mass walk outs by West Indian pupils and students. Coaches came from all parts of the country, including Bristol, Manchester, Birmingham and Bradford.

The marchers' mood was explosive—a reflection

of deep anger at police failure to take decisive action against the perpetrators of the fiendish crime!

Contrary to the hysterical and disgusting Fleet Street coverage, the march was almost entirely peaceful, except for one or two isolated skirmishes, deliberately provoked by the police when they started snatching youths from the crowd.

The only serious incident occurred when police, equipped with riot shields tried to stop the march

south of Blackfriars Bridge, despite the fact that the route had been previously agreed.

The police then prevented the march proceeding to New Scotland Yard and Downing Street where a coffin was to be laid on Thatcher's doorstep. We were instead diverted through Central London and ended up in Hyde Park.

The success of the demonstration will have undoubtedly provided a huge boost to tens of

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With 1 in 7 out of work Welsh steelworkers fight closure threat

Enough is enough! There will be no theft of plant and jobs from our town!

That is the workers' reaction to the threatened closure of Dupont Steel in Llanelli, and the loss of 1,200 jobs.

This town, on the edge of the South Wales coalfield, has over one in seven already on the dole. At one day's notice on 26 February, one thousand workers and their families turned out on a demonstration and rally in the town.

Wales has always relied on the basic industries of coal and steel, the backbone of British manufacturing industry. Now the crisis in the capitalist system and the folly of

Tory monetarism have laid waste the wealth-producing areas.

Dupont Steel is a modern factory. It has already invested £13 million in two new blast furnaces with a capacity of 500,000 tonnes per annum. The only reason it can't survive is capitalism's inability to use the plentiful resources. Profit

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By Anthony
Williams

Llanelli LPYS
and TGWU

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Democrats

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CASH IN AGAINST TORIES

The proposed Lonhro takeover of the 'Observer' is yet more proof of big business domination of the mass media.

Newspapers are not in danger of being merely the "kept poodles of rich men" [Eric Jacobs, Sunday Times] but are powerful weapons wielded against the labour movement.

If the television, radio and press barons had their way, Labour would never get back into office. They have spent £ millions on "free" publicity for the "free enterprise" Social Democrats to try and divert discontent with the Tories into 'safe' channels.

They also hope to restrain the Labour Party from

carrying out its traditional task of transforming society by attacking the left in general and the 'Militant' in particular.

Our paper struggles to arm the labour movement with policies that will break the stranglehold of the bosses on society. For this we urgently need cash.

We need £ thousands to get our Fighting Fund back on target [see page 13] but we are asking YOU for a 'tenner', a 'fiver' a £1 or 50p. Send as much as you can and ask others in the labour movement to do the same.

Support the paper that fights to kick out the Tories and end Bosses' rule in the media!

Militant

1 Mentmore
Terrace,
London E8 3PN

Social democrats aim to be bosses 2nd Eleven

There is nothing 'new', despite the claims of its spokesmen, in the 'Social Democratic' Party. It is another Tory/Liberal party in disguise.

This 'Gang' are masquerading as "the real Labour Party". However, their claim to be "democratic" let alone "socialist" sits uneasily on their lips.

Owen for instance, as foreign minister in the last Labour government, slavishly supported the Shah of Iran to the last, whilst that bloody tyrant was wading through the blood of the Iranian workers and peasants. At home Owen triumphantly crossed the council workers' picket lines during the 'winter of discontent.'

Shirley Williams also urged teachers to "cross pickets" during the same dispute. Moreover, it is now conveniently forgotten by her, and her cronies, that as

Minister of Education she carried through massive cuts upon which the present Thatcher government has built its programme for savaging education.

These 'democrats' sit in the House of Commons under false pretences. They were elected as Labour MPs but have now deserted the party. Why do they not resign and fight by-elections to test support for their ideas?

"Mr Roy Jenkins suggested penalising strikers with loss of benefits to help wage moderation." [*The Times*, 24 February]

They realise that in solid Labour areas, which many of them are in, they would probably be faced with defeat at the moment. They are therefore playing for time and hoping to establish a base from which they can either retain seats or fight in areas, probably in the south, which would be more receptive to them.

The social democrats

hope to cash in on the disillusionment with past Labour governments as well as the Tories. Since the war there have been 17 years of Labour government and yet the working class is as worse off as ever.

It is Williams, Owen, Jenkins and Rodgers who are responsible for this disillusionment. They claim that their party will be based on "new and fresh" ideas. Yet it was their ideas—

reformism without reforms, indeed with counter-reforms—which formed the basis of the last Labour government.

At best their programme is to share out the misery a little bit more equally than the Tories! Behind the scenes the capitalists treat with derision the hotch-potch of utopian and vague ideas which form the basis of the new party.

Yet with unconcealed glee they welcome its formation: "We wish the social democrats well" [*Financial Times*, March 3rd]. Good wishes will be matched by massive financial support. It was reported in the press that £15m was offered when a break from the Labour Party was first suggested in October.

The capitalists calculate that the social democrats can be used as a 'safety net' for the millions of Tory voters who are threatening to swing over to support a left Labour Party. They realise that Thatcher and the Tories are the most unpopular government this century. In a general election Labour would probably get a 200 seat majority.

"The NUT has a stranglehold on education, a Labour Secretary of State should take them on. We are too weak on issues like British Leyland and steel. Steel needs to be run down, but the Tories are running down too fast." [David Owen, 18 January 1980].

A new Labour government, unlike the last minority Labour government, would have no excuse for not carrying out radical policies. It would be under terrific pressure from an aroused and embattled working class.

It could go much further in taking measures against the capitalists than even the Labour leaders intend.

Therefore the formation of this party is a device to avoid this nightmare for the capitalist class.

The capitalists are embarking on a very dangerous manoeuvre. They hope that the Labour Party will be

shattered by the social democrats. But it could be the Tories, in the long run, who could suffer most from this party.

However, in the short term, the social democrats with the help of their friends in the media, could inflict serious damage on the Labour Party. There is a tendency for some leaders of the labour movement to merely dismiss the social democrats as of no consequence. They have taken very few active Labour Party workers with them.

In the long term the basis for this party will completely evaporate. We have pointed to the fate of similar ventures in Holland and in Australia. Like the Democratic Labour Party in

Therefore it is vital that the labour movement conduct a mass campaign not just against the Tories but also to unmask the social democrats as Tories or Liberals in disguise.

In all seats presently occupied by the social democrats a campaign should be launched. Moreover, the desertion of the 12 does not mean the danger from the right wing has disappeared. Some who remain within the Parliamentary Labour Party also pose enormous danger to the labour movement in the future.

Some of these, perhaps even a majority, will play the role of a Tory/Liberal Trojan horse in a future Labour government. They could easily act like Ramsay MacDonald, Philip Snowden, etc, during the government of 1929-31. At a certain stage they could go over to a national government.

Therefore the only way to eliminate the danger from the social democrats is for a mass campaign now, to bring to power a new Labour government this time pledged to carry through the socialist transformation of society.

Australia they had initial success but then virtually disappeared with the polarisation between the classes.

But in the short term they can, with the help of the media, inflict damage upon the labour movement.

"There were several things that Mrs Thatcher was doing which he thought were right. Closing down uneconomic pits was one of them. It was therefore incredible that she should have surrendered." [Leading 'Social Democrat' speaking to the 'Financial Times' just after the Tory government's retreat on pit closures].

Security Forces considered violence to stop Benn

How many millions of pounds worth of free publicity has been accorded in the past few weeks to the advocates of a Social Democratic Party?

The press and TV barons have also made sure that the Labour political opponents of the Gang of Three particularly the Marxist left, have been given no right to answer them or even to reply to their slanders.

'Militant', for instance, has been accused of "wanting to establish centralised democracy" (the implication being that we wish to see the formation of a one-party totalitarian regime in Britain). We have fully answered these distortions in the pages of 'Militant'.

But when Shirley Williams on BBC's Panorama programme made a specific accusation against the 'Militant' we were refused the right of reply. When the same scurrilous accusations from Denis Healey and Roy Hattersley on ITV were made, 'Militant' spokesmen were not allowed to reply because of the fear of what we would say both in the defence of our programme and also on the nature of the mass media which allows such poison to be daily uttered against the labour movement, and particularly

By Peter Taaffe

against its socialist and Marxist left wing.

It is therefore ironical that these accusations have been made precisely at a time when definite proof has surfaced to show that it is precisely the very programmes, their producers and political masters who practice "centralised" or "guided" "democracy".

The recent Panorama programmes on Britain's security services were cut, or "censored", by a total of 15 minutes because of the intervention of the BBC's Director General, Ian Trethowan. Indeed, BBC journalists, not hitherto noted for extreme radicalism, were reported to have protested against this "censorship".

One of the most sensitive issues eliminated from the programme was the allegation by former MI6 electronics expert Lee Tracey that possible "violent action to stop Tony Benn ever becoming a Labour prime minister was secretly discussed between former MI6 employees and the late Airey Neave MP, just before the last election." These allegations are contained in an article in the 20 February issue of the 'New Statesman'.

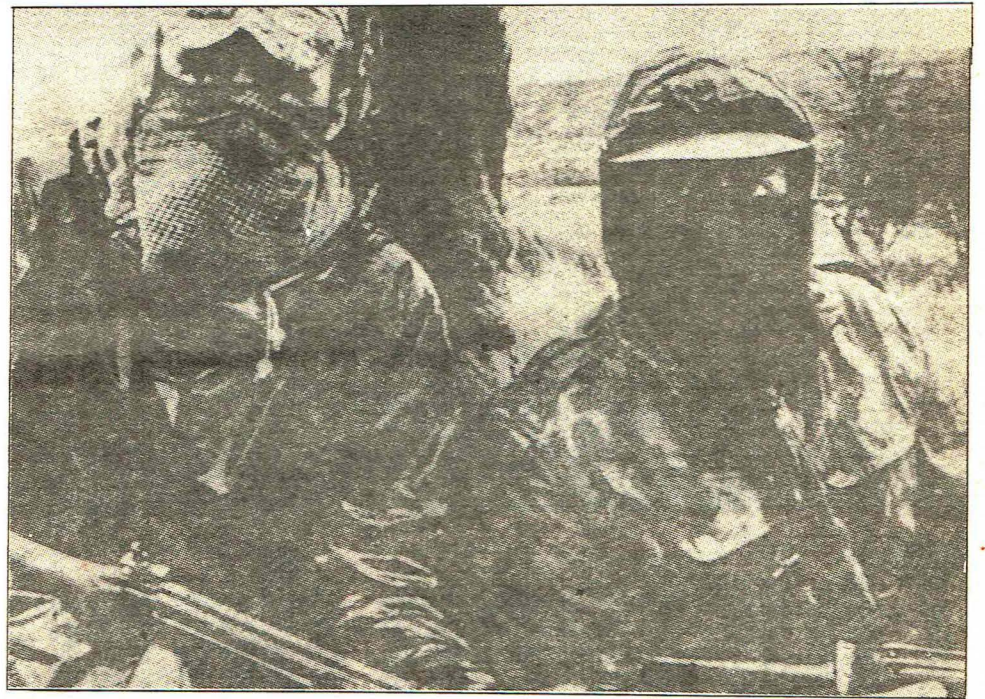
Tracey alleges that Neave discussed his fears that Labour might be elected in the May 1979 General Election and that this could be followed by the premature retirement of James Callaghan, which could pave the way for Tony Benn to become prime minister. It is alleged that Tracey was asked to join a team of intelligence experts that would make sure "Benn was stopped". Tracey claims that it was quite clear that violent means were a possibility in this connection.

This shows that the claim of the capitalists and their Tory puppets that they uphold "democracy" is sheer hypocrisy. The right hand man of Mrs Thatcher was prepared to sanction violence merely to stop a Labour government which leaned to the left coming to power in Britain, because this is what the replacement of Callaghan by Tony Benn would have represented.

It is unlikely in any case that Tony Benn would have replaced Callaghan due to the right-wing complexion of the Parliamentary Labour Party. But this incident shows that if the mere election of Tony Benn to the leadership of the Labour Party could lead to the ruling class contemplating such measures, what would be their reaction in the event of a Labour government seriously threatening to carry through the socialist transformation of society?

They would not hesitate to resort to the most brutal methods, along the lines of Chile, in order to prevent such a development.

This conclusion is given added force by a little item that was tucked away in 'The Times' diary on the 26 February. Tory MP Eldon



Who controls the SAS [above] or the security forces? Behind Parliament lies the real state power in Britain.

Griffiths was discussing with Senor Jaime Gusman, an adviser to the Chilean dictator Pinochet, when right-wing Tory MP Julian Amery, the member for Brighton, breezed into the room.

Guzman was expounding on the great advantages of the new dictatorial Chilean constitution. Imagining that he was in the presence of a "democratic" politician, he was endeavouring to justify the constitution on the grounds of the purest "democratic principles".

However, he was taken aback when Amery declared that "Britain had no democracy, and never had had." He declared "that parliament, the voice of the people, and Ministers were simply the liaison officers between parliament and the Queen, the armed forces and the civil service, who really run the country."

He then went on to say, "A good minister can change policy 10%, most ministers 1%, some not at all." The bewildered Gusman is reported to have declared, "It would be difficult to have that in Chile!"

This incident shows the real nature of capitalist democracy. Behind Parliament are the real rulers of Britain, the big monopolies and their pliant tools at the top of the civil service, the armed forces, etc. Moreover, if their system should ever be endangered by the Labour Party, which seriously intended to carry out Clause 4 of its Constitution, then the capitalists would not hesitate to resort to the most "extreme" measures, using the monarchy and the armed forces.

It gives added point to the demands of the labour movement for the complete

abolition of the so-called "security services" and the Official Secrets Act. They are not used in the main against Russia, but in order to spy against and intimidate the active workers in the labour movement. The labour movement should also demand the abolition of all secret files and computer data assembled against labour movement activists.

We should also press for the nationalisation of the press and TV facilities. Access and time in the press and TV, radio, etc. should be determined on the basis of votes at elections. Above all the labour movement must learn the lesson that in the long run unless the socialist transformation of society is carried through all their conquests, including democratic rights, are endangered.

LPYS Week of Action great success

Photo: D. Godson



Grantham and area LPYS demonstrate outside Thatcher's (née Roberts) old grocery store

When the unemployment figures came out last week, most of the gutter press were full of another 'vital' piece of news, the royal wedding.

'Le Monde', the French equivalent of 'The Times', commented: "What better way to forget a little the troubles of the times they live in, like the strikes, the bankruptcies, the tax increases, the massive rise in unemployment."

TV and Press publicity

LPYS branches certainly weren't diverted by royal wedding blues, and despite the media's love of trivia, we still got valuable publicity for our ideas in the week of action.

TV cameras covered three

By Kevin Ramage
(National Chairman LPYS)

separate protests in Southern Region, on the Isle of Wight, in Portsmouth and Southampton. In the East Midlands, protest vigils and pickets outside job centres and Tory Party offices resulted in coverage on Radios Humber, Nottingham, Leicester and Trent. Radio Leicester transmitted a debate on 24 February about unemployment between members of the LPYS, Young Tories and Young Liberals.

Humber LPYS branches also got on TV after leafletting local schools. In Corby, leafletting schools for a Youth Campaign

Against Unemployment meeting resulted in students filling in eighty LPYS application forms.

In London members who picketed the Confederation of British Industry's headquarters, were told that "there was no one available to speak to you about the unemployed." The bosses might have nothing to say but youth have.

Over 40 people came along to a meeting of Hampstead LPYS, including some who travelled ten miles after seeing an advert. Also in London, 35 students from Waltham Forest Tech were so incensed with the response they got during a visit to Tory Party Central Office, that at their next stop, to see Labour's Youth Officer Andy Bevan, 13 signed up to join the LPYS!

The message of the LPYS week of action is clear:

Working class youth are more than ever before searching for an alternative to the Tories and their system. LPYS branches that are organising lively campaigning activities can often get coverage in the press, radio, and even TV.

Putting the two together can ensure thousands of new members of the LPYS, and new recruits to the struggle to change society.

The new YCAU 'Save Jobs, sack the Tories' leaflet is now out, £5 per 1,000 [post £1 extra] from YCAU, PO Box 104, London E9 5TP.

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 Saunois [LPYS representative on Labour Party National Executive Committee]

2,000 [and you?] coming to LPYS Conference

There are only six weeks to go to the Labour Party Young Socialists' conference at Easter. Over 2,000 young workers, unemployed and school students are expected to attend. Why not you as well?

Despite the Tories' attacks, we are optimistic of building a fighting alternative. We are already the largest socialist youth movement in the country, and we're growing fast.

All the major political issues of the day will be thrashed out at the conference. Don't miss it!

Every LPYS branch should organise a hardship fund now to make sure everyone who wants to can go to conference. Visit

By Laurence Coates
(LPYS National Committee)

workplaces to see shop stewards' committees. Give them the nationally produced official appeal letter. Tell them what the LPYS is all about and ask them to send at least one of their members to the conference.

In addition ask them to sponsor an unemployed YS member. Do the same at your union branch, Labour Party or Co-op. Follow the example of Bath LPYS and hold a sponsored walk—they raised £60. If this is too strenuous, be like Hackney who are holding discos to raise the money.

LPYS Annual Conference April 17-20

Bridlington, Yorkshire

Details from local LPYS branch or Andy Bevan, Youth Officer, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

Birmingham Demo Against Unemployment

By Les Kuriata

Over 25,000 leaflets and 800 posters have been distributed in the build-up to the demonstration. Yardley Wood, Ladywood and Wednesbury YS, Selly Oak YCAU and Frankley Labour Party all held public meetings publicising the demonstration. Bromsgrove LPYS, which has recently recruited a number of unemployed workers, held a sponsored vigil outside Bromsgrove job centre as part of their day of action.

With workers in Birmingham beginning to shake themselves out of the initial shock of mass unemployment there can be no doubt that the LPYS branches can grow and become a real force in the area. Come on the march.

Devastation of W. Midlands article page 7

"This country has gone to the wall. How can you be expected to work for £30 per week?" This was what several youth in the Washwood dole queue in Birmingham told us as we campaigned for support for the 7 March Youth Campaign Against Unemployment demonstration.

It seems we aren't the only ones concerned about unemployment. The local BRMB radio station recently boasted that their 'lucky breaks' feature aimed at finding work for unemployed youth, had found 11 fortunate young people a job in one day.

That is fine, but with 86,000 locally unemployed it would take about 30 years at that rate to end the dole queues. We can't wait that long.

That's why we've called our demonstration, to help the fight for a real alternative to the present dead-end system. YS branches have had an enthusiastic response from local trade unionists and youth outside dole offices.

Activists wave blues goodbye

Few tears have been shed by Labour Party activists at the departure of the closet-Tories to form the Social Democratic Party.

In Wrexham, Norman Bithell, a long-standing member of the Party, explained the feelings of many

Party workers to Richard Venton, who had just spoken at a local Party meeting:

"Very few Party members in Wrexham would leave when Tom Ellis leaves. There are a good few people who support him, but they're not Party members. Cefn Mawr branch put in a no confidence resolution on him and it was unanimous.

"Tom Ellis says he hasn't changed, but it's the Party has changed. But I agree with your answer tonight—the Party is changing back to its original aims.

"I don't think the Party has moved—the constitution still stands. I mean clause four of the constitution.

In Newcastle East, Mike Thomas MP decided to give almost three weeks of interviews to the media before telling his General Management Committee. When it came it wasn't only second-hand news, it was almost a side issue. Charlotte McDonald, Secretary of Heaton Branch (Newcastle East CLP) found that most of the venom was kept for the left:

"On a local radio phone-in a few days before the Annual General Meeting, Mike Thomas characterised

Heaton Branch as a small part of Newcastle East Party, and a clique of 'Militant' supporters. What we didn't realise then but discovered at the AGM is that with over 100 members we have nearly half the total Party membership. Such is the bankruptcy of the right wing and their inability to win support that the other four branches reported between 26 and 31 members each.

"Thomas' friends on the GMC were not in the least embarrassed by his defection. 6 Party officers have since left to join the Social Democrats. At the AGM they attacked the delegates from Heaton branch. This branch, a lone voice for the past few years [apart from a small number of trade union delegates] had taken the initiative of replying to the

MP's letter to his constituents.

"We did not write to Thomas personally but an open letter to residents of the ward. We called for his resignation and took up very briefly some of the points from Labour's programme which he has consistently opposed. We drew attention to the dishonesty of campaigning for a new party while remaining in the Labour Party.

"The leaflet ended with an application form to join the Party. The response to our letter was 13 membership applications in three days and half a dozen letters of criticism.

Elsewhere in the North East a similar attitude is being taken. Delegates in Teesside Thornaby, where Ian Wigglesworth MP has joined the claret brigade

were angry that Wigglesworth chose to issue his statement on the 6 o'clock news before telling his GMC that evening.

Immediately afterwards the Party issued the following statement, which said, in part:

"This CLP condemns those who are splitting from the Labour Party. We are resolved that the Labour Party will not be diverted from its campaign to defeat the Tories and all parties opposed to the Labour Party."

One delegate summed up the view of the meeting when he declared that: "The Party is in transformation. We are following the tradition of our socialist forefathers who laid down that the key to political power is economic power."

UCL occupation

Last week students at University College London voted overwhelmingly to go into indefinite occupation of the university's administrative corridor.

The students are occupying to show their opposition to discriminatory fees for overseas students and to force the college to make a stand against increasing overseas students' fees by the University Grants Committee's recommended minimum of 25%.

Before the occupation, the college's Trade Union Liaison Committee gave its full support for any student action taken against cuts.

The occupation was preceded by a boycott of lectures on the 24th with pickets at the entrances to the college and departments. At noon a rally of 300 UCL students heard David Aaronovitch (NUS president) attempt to sidetrack the campaign into a ritual protest of letter writing and lobbying of MPs.

Vic Bennet (NUPE branch secretary) extended his union's support for the students' action in fighting the cuts. Bob Lee [PNP Youth (UK) Secretary] outlined how working class students from home and abroad were getting a raw deal from the present education system, and made a stirring call for action that received an enthusiastic response from the gathering.

From the beginning the occupiers have realised their aims can only be realised with students in other colleges adopting similar action in order to force the government to reverse its cuts in higher education expenditure.

To this end delegations from UCL have been visiting other colleges to rally support. In many other colleges, UCL's action appears to be just the catalyst required to spur other students into action.

This groundswell of support must be used to force the NUS executive to take a lead in this campaign to stop fee increases, end discriminatory fees and reverse the cuts in education.

NUS should seek the support of the trade union movement, particularly those unions involved in education, in opposing the Tories' plans.

By Robert Lewin

(UCL occupation committee, personal capacity)

Answering Tory press smears

In the weeks prior to the selection of Rod Fitch as prospective parliamentary candidate for Brighton Kemptown, the local paper the 'Evening Argus', conducted a vitriolic campaign against 'Militant' supporters and Rod in particular.

The candidate they wanted selected was meanwhile given wide favourable coverage.

The 'Argus' claimed "Militants want the selecting made while they are dominant. They may lose strength on the party's policy making body the GMC at the next AGM."

This ignores the fact that the Party had been waiting for NEC permission to proceed for eighteen months as we were anxious to have a

By Ray Apps

(Brighton LP)

candidate in the field as soon as possible.

As for our losing support, at the AGM after the selection of Rod our support on the party's policy making body the GMC at the next AGM."

Cllr. Tom Forester who has defected to form a new centre party stated in the



Rod Fitch during campaigning work for the Labour Party in Brighton

same article "this confirms my worst fears."

We have standing as a New Centre Party candidate in a local bye-election, a certain Mr. Cameron, who a few months ago stood as a National Front candidate in St Peters ward and received 15 votes!

Rod's selection has engendered tremendous enthusiasm. The local labour movement has rallied round him.

Countless party members have sent in messages of support, the Council Labour Group, the Trades Union Council, who have appoint-

ed their past president to liaise with Kemptown Labour Party to mobilise active union support.

Party membership is growing by leaps and bounds, and more trade union branches are affiliating. We have our own local Labour paper distributed to 15,000 households answering media distortions.

Our roots are deep in Brighton's working people. Our support continues to grow because of our ideas and record of service to the labour movement over two decades.

Quinten Barry our candi-

date in the last election, sums up how we are viewed as real Labour loyalists, when in a letter to me he states "in a long a gruelling campaign I was encouraged every morning by your enthusiasm and tireless work."

True, Andrew Bowden the Tory has an 8,000 majority, but we are confident that with socialist policies and necessary organisation we can beat off the social democrats, smash that majority and return a Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown, as part of a massive majority for Labour at the general election.

LPYS Regional conferences

By Dave Carr

(Gosport LPYS)



An anti-Tory demonstration initiated by Harlow LPYS received an added bonus as it was held on the same day the Eastern Region LPYS held its annual conference in the town.

It was agreed to cancel the morning session which was to be a regional 'school' and the Young Socialists swelled the members on the march and rally, armed with hundreds of red flags.

In all 300 joined the demonstration. Local youth were attracted to the rally held in the town centre, by the group 'Newtown Neurotics' who performed before and after the speakers.

Workers gave Labour Party Youth Officer Andy Bevan a good reception when he said of the 'Social Democrats' "the Labour Party is not forcing anyone to leave—they can attend

By Bob Wade
(Brentwood & Ongar LPYS)

meetings and put their views like the rest of us. But if they feel they have to go, then good riddance to them!"

The conference began in the afternoon with a fraternal address by Sam McClusky of the Seamens union.

Conference debated many resolutions, including nuclear disarmament and unemployment, with the conference, the largest held in Eastern Region, reaffirming its support for the Marxist policies of 'Militant'. 'Militant' supporter Nick Toms was re-elected to the LPYS National Committee unopposed.

On Saturday evening, the YS delegates and visitors were invited to a disco and buffet arranged by the local NALGO branch.

The second conference session on Sunday debated many issues, although unfortunately because of lack of time, the important issue of Northern Ireland had to be dropped. However, this was compensated by the afternoon school session. Here, Eddie McParland of the Greater London LP executive explained the situation and solution to Northern Ireland, in excellent detail.

The fact that Eastern Region LPYS had achieved its target number of YS branches of 37, set for the past year, was clearly shown in the hundred plus delegates and visitors who attended the weekend event.

Sixty-one delegates and visitors from 32 branches from the Southern region of the LPYS gathered recently for its area conference.

After a slow start delegates, many of whom were speaking for the first time at a conference, gave graphic examples of how the Tories were driving down the living standards of workers in the 'soft South'.

Jo Richardson MP, for the NEC exposed the Tories desperate and lunatic drive toward arms accumulation and spending. National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan, attacked the ideas and tactics of the gang of three and friends, rightly identifying them as the bosses' representatives in the labour movement.

Andy also called for YS branches to overcome any lingering conservatism in their campaigning work in order to achieve the onerous task of changing society.

Ray Buckton, Gen. Sec. of ASLE&F, in his address to the conference on the Sunday also described the great responsibility resting on the shoulders of the YS to carry the fight for socialism "once we've gone" He added he had every confidence in the ability of the YS to do just that.

The self-sacrifice of comrades was proved many times over at conference. Firstly, an appeal by Andy Bevan for cash to reach the YS campaign fund target raised £115. Donations at a highly successful readers' meeting netted over £100. Further, Bro. Dave Warren of the AUEW from the local firm of KTM made an appeal on behalf of his members who had been out on strike for more than two weeks. A magnificent £60 was raised.

A lively discussion followed a resolution on organisation from East Surrey branch which called for the expulsion of those "who subscribe to the views of the ruthless mass murderer and political tyrant, Leon Trotsky..."

Such a childish and contemptible resolution was politically hammered out of court, but not before delegates pointed out that these right-wingers would like to see the YS disbanded. At this suggestion, they nodded in agreement! The seriousness of these delegates was demonstrated by their failure to attend the next day's proceedings.

spread his reactionary views" and went on to show who really controlled the national press.

On the Sunday conference reaffirmed its commitment to fight the Tory cuts in public expenditure, council house building, the NHS and education.

The conference closed with resolutions on LPYS organisation, arming all comrades with the tools to carry through the building of a mass youth organisation committed to socialism.

Obituary

Edinburgh 'Militant' supporters are saddened and shocked by the untimely death of their comrade John McKay.

John was 25 years old and died from injuries received in a mountaineering accident. He was a qualified electronics technician and due to start work soon, after several weeks unemployment.

The Labour Party's advance towards a socialist

programme and democratic control had attracted John to join last January.

He came with a good understanding of socialist ideas and quickly identified his views with those of the LPYS and 'Militant'.

However, John was no armchair socialist but quickly showed he understood the need to go outside the party routine to win workers' support.

In the short time he

worked with us, John helped the LPYS in two series of visits to local factories and took on a weekly paper-round of seven deliveries.

It is for his modest manner, his keenness to study politics critically and his campaigning confidence to develop the influence of Marxism amongst workers that we remember him.

The clear message that came across from this year's Northern Region LPYS conference was the need to get out onto the streets, housing estates, factories and schools and recruit.

The LPYS took full advantage of their first opportunity to discuss international questions with excellent resolutions on South Africa, Chile and Northern Ireland.

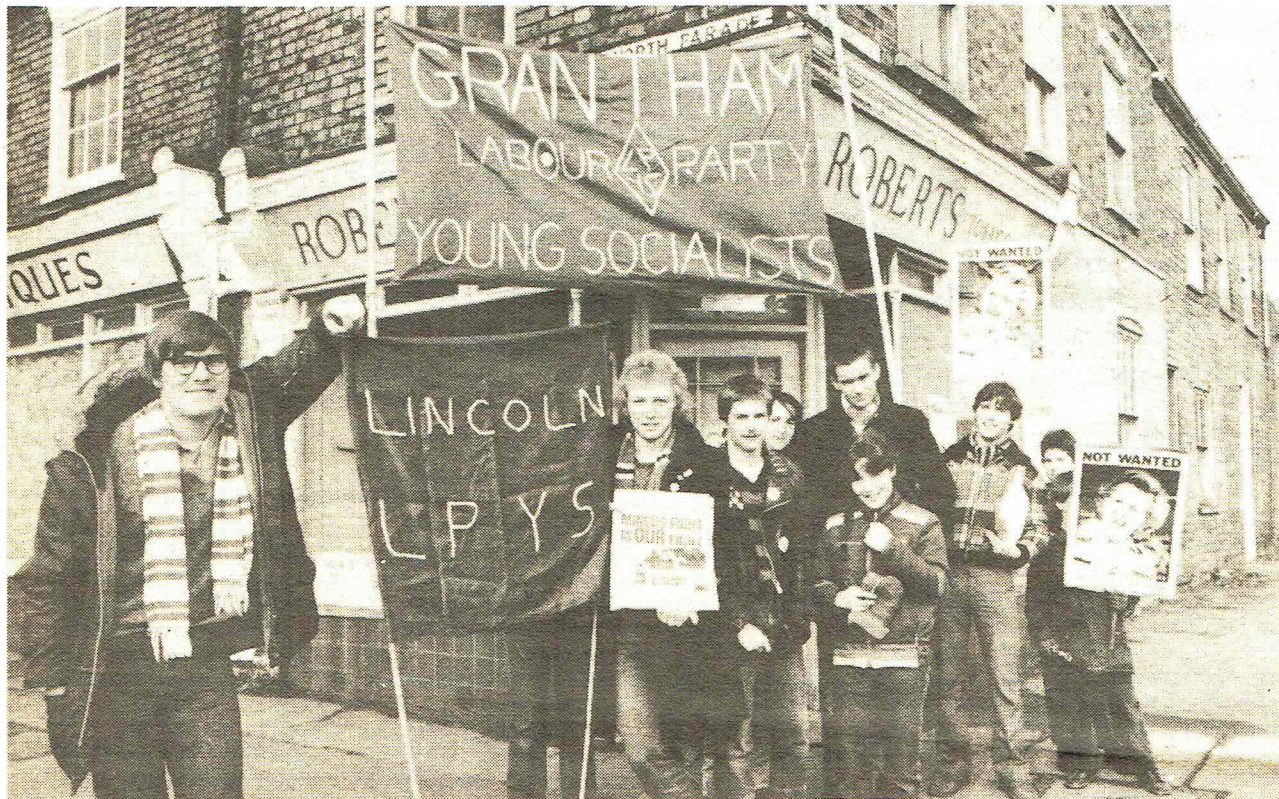
Conference pledged firm support to SALEP (South African Labour Education

By a 'Militant' Reporter

Project), and urged the Labour Party Regional Council to support its activities. The Saturday closed with a lively contribution by a delegate on the media. She outlined how "The purchase of the Times by Murdoch would merely give him a mouth piece to

LPYS Week of Action great success

Photo: D. Godson



Grantham and area LPYS demonstrate outside Thatcher's (né Roberts) old grocery store

When the unemployment figures came out last week, most of the gutter press were full of another 'vital' piece of news, the royal wedding.

'Le Monde', the French equivalent of 'The Times', commented: "What better way to forget a little the troubles of the times they live in, like the strikes, the bankruptcies, the tax increases, the massive rise in unemployment."

TV and Press publicity

LPYS branches certainly weren't diverted by royal wedding blues, and despite the media's love of trivia, we still got valuable publicity for our ideas in the week of action.

TV cameras covered three

By Kevin Ramage
(National Chairman LPYS)

separate protests in Southern Region, on the Isle of Wight, in Portsmouth and Southampton. In the East Midlands, protest vigils and pickets outside job centres and Tory Party offices resulted in coverage on Radios Humber, Nottingham, Leicester and Trent. Radio Leicester transmitted a debate on 24 February about unemployment between members of the LPYS, Young Tories and Young Liberals.

Humber LPYS branches also got on TV after leafletting local schools. In Corby, leafletting schools for a Youth Campaign

Against Unemployment meeting resulted in students filling in eighty LPYS application forms.

In London members who picketed the Confederation of British Industry's headquarters, were told that "there was no one available to speak to you about the unemployed." The bosses might have nothing to say but youth have.

Over 40 people came along to a meeting of Hampstead LPYS, including some who travelled ten miles after seeing an advert. Also in London, 35 students from Waltham Forest Tech were so incensed with the response they got during a visit to Tory Party Central Office, that at their next stop, to see Labour's Youth Officer Andy Bevan, 13 signed up to join the LPYS!

The message of the LPYS week of action is clear:

Working class youth are more than ever before searching for an alternative to the Tories and their system. LPYS branches that are organising lively campaigning activities can often get coverage in the press, radio, and even TV.

Putting the two together can ensure thousands of new members of the LPYS, and new recruits to the struggle to change society.

The new YCAU 'Save Jobs, sack the Tories' leaflet is now out, £5 per 1,000 [post £1 extra] from YCAU, PO Box 104, London E9 5TP.

**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 Saunois
[LPYS representative on
Labour Party National
Executive Committee]**

2,000 [and you?] coming to LPYS Conference

There are only six weeks to go to the Labour Party Young Socialists' conference at Easter. Over 2,000 young workers, unemployed and school students are expected to attend. Why not you as well?

Despite the Tories' attacks, we are optimistic of building a fighting alternative. We are already the largest socialist youth movement in the country, and we're growing fast.

All the major political issues of the day will be thrashed out at the conference. Don't miss it!

Every LPYS branch should organise a hardship fund now to make sure everyone who wants to can go to conference. Visit

By Laurence Coates
(LPYS
National Committee)

workplaces to see shop stewards' committees. Give them the nationally produced official appeal letter. Tell them what the LPYS is all about and ask them to send at least one of their members to the conference.

In addition ask them to sponsor an unemployed YS member. Do the same at your union branch, Labour Party or Co-op. Follow the example of Bath LPYS and hold a sponsored walk—they raised £60. If this is too strenuous, be like Hackney who are holding discos to raise the money.

LPYS Annual Conference April 17-20

Bridlington, Yorkshire

Details from local LPYS branch or Andy Bevan, Youth Officer, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

Birmingham Demo Against Unemployment

By Les Kuriata

"This country has gone to the wall. How can you be expected to work for £30 per week?" This was what several youth in the Washwood dole queue in Birmingham told us as we campaigned for support for the 7 March Youth Campaign Against Unemployment demonstration.

It seems we aren't the only ones concerned about unemployment. The local BRMB radio station recently boasted that their 'lucky breaks' feature aimed at finding work for unemployed youth, had found 11 fortunate young people a job in one day.

That is fine, but with 86,000 locally unemployed it would take about 30 years at that rate to end the dole queues. We can't wait that long.

That's why we've called our demonstration, to help the fight for a real alternative to the present dead-end system. YS branches have had an enthusiastic response from local trade unionists and youth outside dole offices.

Over 25,000 leaflets and 800 posters have been distributed in the build-up to the demonstration. Yardley Wood, Ladywood and Wednesbury YS, Selly Oak YCAU and Frankley Labour Party all held public meetings publicising the demonstration. Bromsgrove LPYS, which has recently recruited a number of unemployed workers, held a sponsored vigil outside Bromsgrove job centre as part of their day of action.

With workers in Birmingham beginning to shake themselves out of the initial shock of mass unemployment there can be no doubt that the LPYS branches can grow and become a real force in the area. Come on the march.

Devastation of W. Midlands
article page 7

Activists wave blues goodbye

Few tears have been shed by Labour Party activists at the departure of the closet-Tories to form the Social Democratic Party.

In Wrexham, Norman Bithell, a long-standing member of the Party, explained the feelings of many

Party workers to Richard Venton, who had just spoken at a local Party meeting:

"Very few Party members in Wrexham would leave when Tom Ellis leaves. There are a good few people who support him, but they're not Party members. Cefn Mawr branch put in a no confidence resolution on him and it was unanimous.

"Tom Ellis says he hasn't changed, but it's the Party has changed. But I agree with your answer tonight—the Party is changing back to its original aims.

"I don't think the Party has moved—the constitution still stands. I mean clause four of the constitution.

In Newcastle East, Mike Thomas MP decided to give almost three weeks of interviews to the media before telling his General Management Committee. When it came it wasn't only second-hand news, it was almost a side issue. Charlotte McDonald, Secretary of Heaton Branch (Newcastle East CLP) found that most of the venom was kept for the left:

"On a local radio phone-in a few days before the Annual General Meeting, Mike Thomas characterised

Heaton Branch as a small part of Newcastle East Party, and a clique of 'Militant' supporters. What we didn't realise then but discovered at the AGM is that with over 100 members we have nearly half the total Party membership. Such is the bankruptcy of the right wing and their inability to win support that the other four branches reported between 26 and 31 members each.

"Thomas' friends on the GMC were not in the least embarrassed by his defection. 6 Party officers have since left to join the Social Democrats. At the AGM they attacked the delegates from Heaton branch. This branch, a lone voice for the past few years [apart from a small number of trade union delegates] had taken the initiative of replying to the

MP's letter to his constituents.

"We did not write to Thomas personally but an open letter to residents of the ward. We called for his resignation and took up very briefly some of the points from Labour's programme which he has consistently opposed. We drew attention to the dishonesty of campaigning for a new party while remaining in the Labour Party.

"The leaflet ended with an application form to join the Party. The response to our letter was 13 membership applications in three days and half a dozen letters of criticism.

Elsewhere in the North East a similar attitude is being taken. Delegates in Teesside Thornaby, where Ian Wrigglesworth MP has joined the claret brigade

were angry that Wrigglesworth chose to issue his statement on the 6 o'clock news before telling his GMC that evening.

Immediately afterwards the Party issued the following statement, which said, in part:

"This CLP condemns those who are splitting from the Labour Party. We are resolved that the Labour Party will not be diverted from its campaign to defeat the Tories and all parties opposed to the Labour Party."

One delegate summed up the view of the meeting when he declared that: "The Party is in transformation. We are following the tradition of our socialist forefathers who laid down that the key to political power is economic power."

UCL occupation

Last week students at University College London voted overwhelmingly to go into indefinite occupation of the university's administrative corridor.

The students are occupying to show their opposition to discriminatory fees for overseas students and to force the college to make a stand against increasing overseas students' fees by the University Grants Committee's recommended minimum of 25%.

Before the occupation, the college's Trade Union Liaison Committee gave its full support for any student action taken against cuts.

The occupation was preceded by a boycott of lectures on the 24th with pickets at the entrances to the college and departments. At noon a rally of 300 UCL students heard David Aaronovitch (NUS president) attempt to sidetrack the campaign into a ritual protest of letter writing and lobbying of MPs.

Vic Bennet (NUPE branch secretary) extended his union's support for the students' action in fighting the cuts. Bob Lee [PNP Youth (UK) Secretary] outlined how working class students from home and abroad were getting a raw deal from the present education system, and made a stirring call for action that received an enthusiastic response from the gathering.

From the beginning the occupiers have realised their aims can only be realised with students in other colleges adopting similar action in order to force the government to reverse its cuts in higher education expenditure.

To this end delegations from UCL have been visiting other colleges to rally support. In many other colleges, UCL's action appears to be just the catalyst required to spur other students into action.

This groundswell of support must be used to force the NUS executive to take a lead in this campaign to stop fee increases, end discriminatory fees and reverse the cuts in education.

NUS should seek the support of the trade union movement, particularly those unions involved in education, in opposing the Tories' plans.

By Robert Lewin

(UCL occupation committee, personal capacity)

Answering Tory press smears

In the weeks prior to the selection of Rod Fitch as prospective parliamentary candidate for Brighton Kemptown, the local paper the 'Evening Argus', conducted a vitriolic campaign against 'Militant' supporters and Rod in particular.

The candidate they wanted selected was meanwhile given wide favourable coverage.

The 'Argus' claimed "Militants want the selecting made while they are dominant. They may lose strength on the party's policy making body the GMC at the next AGM."

This ignores the fact that the Party had been waiting for NEC permission to proceed for eighteen months as we were anxious to have a

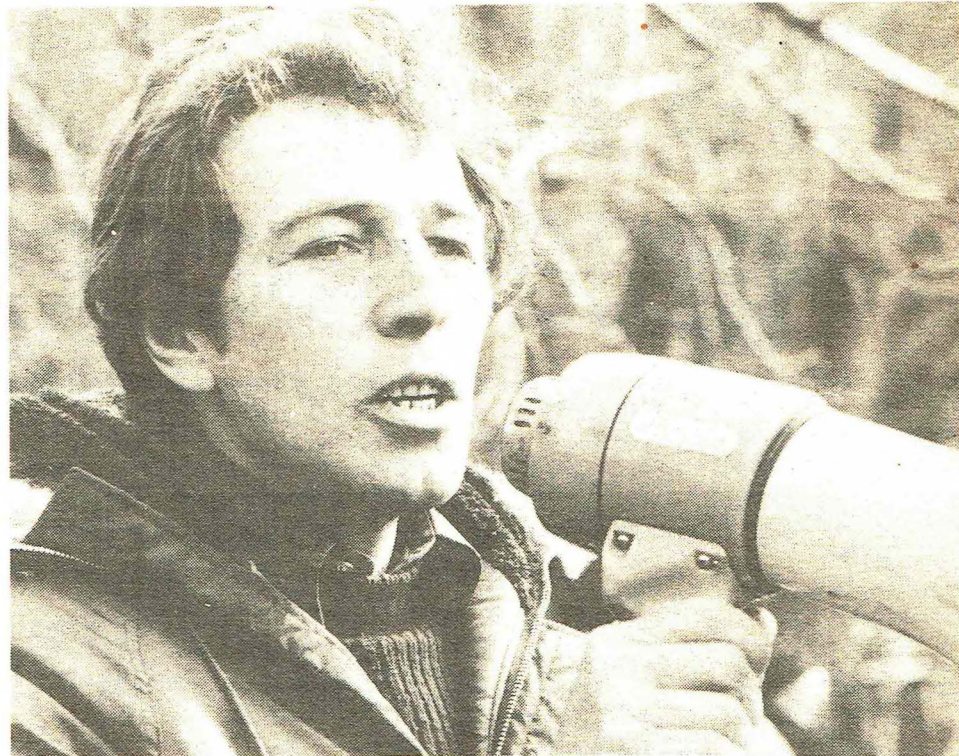
By Ray Apps

(Brighton LP)

candidate in the field as soon as possible.

As for our losing support, at the AGM after the selection of Rod our support in Kemptown has grown rapidly as the 'Argus' was forced to concede with the shock headline "Militants Tighten Grip."

Cllr. Tom Forester who has defected to form a new centre party stated in the



Rod Fitch during campaigning work for the Labour Party in Brighton

same article "this confirms my worst fears."

We have standing as a New Centre Party candidate in a local bye-election, a certain Mr. Cameron, who a few months ago stood as a National Front candidate in St Peters ward and received 15 votes!

Rod's selection has engendered tremendous enthusiasm. The local labour movement has rallied round him.

Countless party members have sent in messages of support, the Council Labour Group, the Trades Union Council, who have appoint-

ed their past president to liaise with Kemptown Labour Party to mobilise active union support.

Party membership is growing by leaps and bounds, and more trade union branches are affiliating. We have our own local Labour paper distributed to 15,000 households answering media distortions.

Our roots are deep in Brighton's working people. Our support continues to grow because of our ideas and record of service to the labour movement over two decades.

Quinten Barry our candi-

date in the last election, sums up how we are viewed as real Labour loyalists, when in a letter to me he states "in a long a gruelling campaign I was encouraged every morning by your enthusiasm and tireless work."

True, Andrew Bowden the Tory has an 8,000 majority, but we are confident that with socialist policies and necessary organisation we can beat off the social democrats, smash that majority and return a Labour MP for Brighton Kemptown, as part of a massive majority for Labour at the general election.

LPYS Regional conferences

By Dave Carr

(Gosport LPYS)



An anti-Tory demonstration initiated by Harlow LPYS received an added bonus as it was held on the same day the Eastern Region LPYS held its annual conference in the town.

It was agreed to cancel the morning session which was to be a regional 'school' and the Young Socialists swelled the members on the march and rally, armed with hundreds of red flags.

In all 300 joined the demonstration. Local youth were attracted to the rally held in the town centre, by the group 'Newtown Neurotics' who performed before and after the speakers.

Workers gave Labour Party Youth Officer Andy Bevan a good reception when he said of the 'Social Democrats' "the Labour Party is not forcing anyone to leave—they can attend

By Bob Wade
(Brentwood & Ongar LPYS)

meetings and put their views like the rest of us. But if they feel they have to go, then good riddance to them!"

The conference began in the afternoon with a fraternal address by Sam McClusky of the Seamens union.

Conference debated many resolutions, including nuclear disarmament and unemployment, with the conference, the largest held in Eastern Region, reaffirming its support for the Marxist policies of 'Militant'. 'Militant' supporter Nick Toms was re-elected to the LPYS National Committee unopposed.

On Saturday evening, the YS delegates and visitors were invited to a disco and buffet arranged by the local NALGO branch.

The second conference session on Sunday debated many issues, although unfortunately because of lack of time, the important issue of Northern Ireland had to be dropped. However, this was compensated by the afternoon school session. Here, Eddie McParland of the Greater London LP executive explained the situation and solution to Northern Ireland, in excellent detail.

The fact that Eastern Region LPYS had achieved its target number of YS branches of 37, set for the past year, was clearly shown in the hundred plus delegates and visitors who attended the weekend event.

Sixty-one delegates and visitors from 32 branches from the Southern region of the LPYS gathered recently for its area conference.

After a slow start delegates, many of whom were speaking for the first time at a conference, gave graphic examples of how the Tories were driving down the living standards of workers in the 'soft South'.

Jo Richardson MP, for the NEC exposed the Tories desperate and lunatic drive toward arms accumulation and spending. National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan, attacked the ideas and tactics of the gang of three and friends, rightly identifying them as the bosses' representatives in the labour movement.

Andy also called for YS branches to overcome any lingering conservatism in their campaigning work in order to achieve the onerous task of changing society.

Ray Buckton, Gen. Sec. of ASLE&F, in his address to the conference on the Sunday also described the great responsibility resting on the shoulders of the YS to carry the fight for socialism "once we've gone". He added he had every confidence in the ability of the YS to do just that.

The self-sacrifice of comrades was proved many times over at conference. Firstly, an appeal by Andy Bevan for cash to reach the YS campaign fund target raised £115. Donations at a highly successful readers' meeting netted over £100. Further, Bro. Dave Warren of the AUEW from the local firm of KTM made an appeal on behalf of his members who had been out on strike for more than two weeks. A magnificent £60 was raised.

A lively discussion followed a resolution on organisation from East Surrey branch which called for the expulsion of those "who subscribe to the views of the ruthless mass murderer and political tyrant, Leon Trotsky..."

Such a childish and contemptable resolution was politically hammered out of court, but not before delegates pointed out that these right-wingers would like to see the YS disbanded. At this suggestion, they nodded in agreement! The seriousness of these delegates was demonstrated by their failure to attend the next day's proceedings.

Obituary

Edinburgh 'Militant' supporters are saddened and shocked by the untimely death of their comrade John McKay.

John was 25 years old and died from injuries received in a mountaineering accident. He was a qualified electronics technician and due to start work soon, after several weeks unemployment.

The Labour Party's advance towards a socialist

programme and democratic control had attracted John to join last January.

He came with a good understanding of socialist ideas and quickly identified his views with those of the LPYS and 'Militant'.

However, John was no armchair socialist but quickly showed he understood the need to go outside the party routine to win workers' support.

In the short time he

worked with us, John helped the LPYS in two series of visits to local factories and took on a weekly paper-round of seven deliveries.

It is for his modest manner, his keenness to study politics critically and his campaigning confidence to develop the influence of Marxism amongst workers that we remember him.

The clear message that came across from this year's Northern Region LPYS conference was the need to get out onto the streets, housing estates, factories and schools and recruit.

The LPYS took full advantage of their first opportunity to discuss international questions with excellent resolutions on South Africa, Chile and Northern Ireland.

Conference pledged firm support to SALEP (South African Labour Education

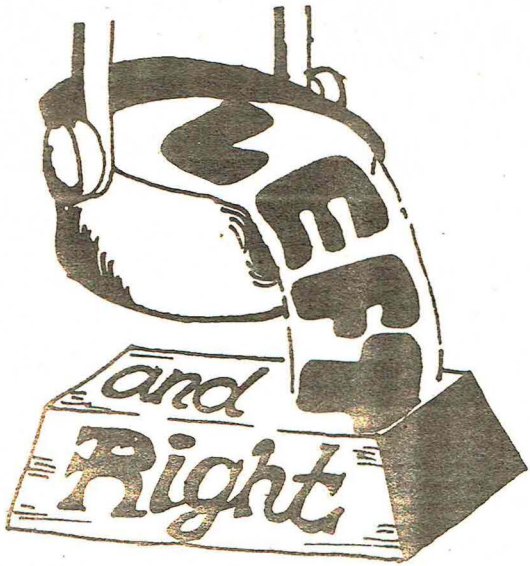
By a 'Militant' Reporter

Project), and urged the Labour Party Regional Council to support its activities. The Saturday closed with a lively contribution by a delegate on the media. She outlined how "The purchase of the Times by Murdoch would merely give him a mouth piece to

spread his reactionary views" and went on to show who really controlled the national press.

On the Sunday conference reaffirmed its commitment to fight the Tory cuts in public expenditure, council house building, the NHS and education.

The conference closed with resolutions on LPYS organisation, arming all comrades with the tools to carry through the building of a mass youth organisation committed to socialism.



Thirty-eight Euro-MPs plus numerous hangers-on managed to spend £8,360 on a trip to Africa. They claimed first class air fares, but actually travelled economy class. But how do you get through so much money? Easy, spend it on 50 bottles of champagne at £43 a bottle. Buy 50 bottles of red wine at £14 a bottle. Add 20 bottles of whisky at £38 each, £57 for mixers, plus £33 worth of water! That leaves you a measly £200 for your flowers and cigars and £760 service charge. Who pays? We do. Us, the taxpayers, who've never tasted a £43 bottle of champagne in our lives.

The Tories appear to have a new monetarist idol. His name is Professor Friedrich von Hayek, but his solutions have worried even some of the most reactionary Tory back bench MPs. The 'Financial Times' recently reported on some of the proposals he put forward at a special meeting at Tory HQ. "Hayek first provoked a certain nervousness at his 'think-in' by assuring his audience that the policies would work perfectly with unemployment at 20 per cent. Some MPs had barely finished calculating that this meant about six million jobless before Hayek was apparently urging them not only to strip the trade unions of all their post-1906 immunities but to return them to the 1880s." The FT of course quickly pointed out the MPs took this with 'mild ribaldry' [only 'mild?']. But it's unlikely the MPs were scornful of his proposals because of any concern for the working class. Rather they were worried of the reaction from the labour movement it could provoke. However, it shows the logical conclusion of the Tories' monetarist policies.

There are still a few idiots around today who would have us believe that 'class' does not exist any more, and is a thing of a by-gone age. If this is so, then they can try and explain this. It was recently discovered that some home-workers were getting a mere 14 pence an hour with no sickness, holiday or maternity benefits for their hard graft; about £5.60 a week. The new boss of British Oxygen gets nearly £5,200 a week. That's almost a thousand times more.

Last week 'Militant' spoke of a well-heeled millionaire who had just copped a £2.9 million tax demand: his reply was, "It's only money and I'm not short of £3 million." What a contrast to the lives of ordinary people! The 'Sunday Mirror' recently asked people what they would do if they came into some money. The replies hardly asked for much. People's plans included 'no more washing vegetables in cold water, which gives me cramp, I'd like to have it luke-warm'; 'not to cut a pile of sandwiches every day...if I had the money my children would eat school dinners'; and 'not to be measly over the bubbles I put in my bath'. Another letter talked of being able to afford a monthly bus pass. These humble desires contrast starkly with the gilded world of gluttony, avarice and greed of the millionaire class and their sickly hangers-on.

Cambridge's Chief Education Officer, Mr Geoffrey Man, has just had a sixty quid a week pay rise. Lucky man. The local council must have had a windfall to pay that sort of increase, it seems. But not so. Its school cleaning staff have just had their hours reduced as part of the cutbacks. And for some staff this means a loss of £100 per year. Which just goes to show you should never believe the employers' pleadings about 'equality of sacrifice'.

COURT CIRCULAR

"Nations do not flourish because of the competing schemes of politicians to put them to rights, but through the mutual affection and loyalty of their citizens."

Hyah, Hyah, absolutely. The editorial of the 'Telegraph' on that historic day of February 25 says it all. This wedding will be just the ticket, if we are to save our beloved country from falling down the slippery slope to Bolshevism.

The Chosen One and this gal Di couldn't have timed it better, what with those silly fools in the cabinet balling it up with the miners. If we play our cards right we should be able to take the mob's mind off any silly ideas about general strikes and so on, for a few months at least.

It was real ace announcing the engagement on the same day the latest unemployment figures came out too. Mind you, they had only gone up by 43,000 anyway—hardly worth bothering to mention these days.

And it was jolly clever to pick half-term as well; what with all the peasants and their brats coming into the city wanting something to oggle at to try and brighten up their dreary lives. It guaranteed a fair size crowd outside the Palace, which always looks good.

But it all seems a climb down for the young gal. I mean, I know times are getting a bit threadbare for the Royals, but the house the Chosen One has just bought is a bit meagre.

It's only got 346 acres, four reception rooms, nine bedrooms, six bathrooms (Yes, only six! What on earth will they do on a Sunday?).

He bought it from that

By Beatrice Windsor
(no relation)

Tory MP fellow. Maurice Macmillan for a mere £800,000—I mean it might be o.k. for our parliamentary wallahs, but the Heir to the Throne?

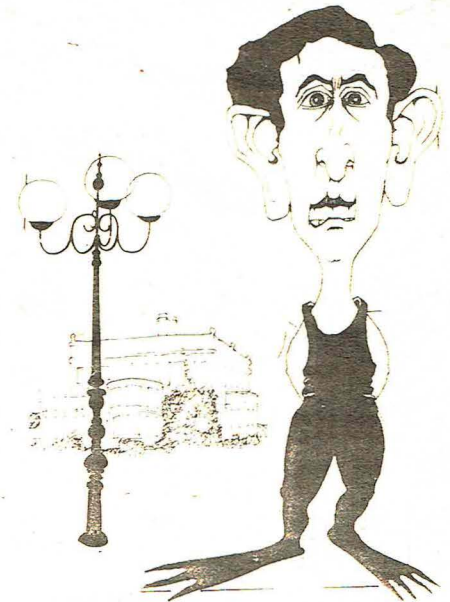
Still, Maurice was glad to get rid of it. Well, when you're calling on the plebs to 'tighten their belts', 'take the medicine' etc., they tend to get a bit restless when they see you lounging about in your mansion.

'God defend the Right'

But how will the gal cope? Her home, the Northamptonshire Estate in Norfolk, has 15,000 acres, which is more like it. Mind you, she has been slumming it for a year or so in a £100,000 flat her millionaire father, the Earl of Spencer, bought for her, so she just might make it.

Still, the marriage will be a good thing. It's common knowledge the Chosen One is bit of a pinko. There's even talk now, if you can believe the 'Daily Express' (and I swear by it), that he will say 'I do' in Welsh at the ceremony! They'll be wanting bloody Welsh miners for the choir next.

And the ring was a bit cheapo, if you ask me. Only cost £28,500. One miserly sapphire and only 14 tinsy-winsy diamonds set in 18 carat gold. And gold dug up in Wales at that! Hardly very exotic is it. Where were



The Chosen One, soon to marry Lady Diana Spencer, to be known as Princess Charles, Princess of Wales, Duchess of Cornwall and Rosyth, Countess of Chester, Baroness of Renfrew, Countess of Carrick and Uncle Tom Cobby and all

the koh-i-nor diamonds from India, the 24 carat gold from Africa, the...oh yes, the Empire, Independence and all that. Damn shame.

But pairing him off with the Spencers will help. Their family motto—"God defend the Right"—is just the sort of patriotic stuff we need.

There's some good eggs in her family too. Her step father, Shand Kydd, certainly knows how to deal with workers who get upperty over factory closures.

Got an eye for money too. Her step-brother, Viscount Lewisham, was quick to take up the ousting of that leftie Manley in Jamaica. Now we've got a decent sort in charge—none of this 'Cuban help' nonsense—land prices in the old colony have appreciated by 400%. The Viscount has quickly snapped up property there.

Mind you, it took that commie rag the 'Guardian' to dig up that Lord Lucan can be found amongst her tribe.

Still, a royal occasion now and then helps keep the Labour reds in their place. As columnist Tim Herald pointed out in the Telegraph (February 25) "The Queen even made a monarchist.... out of the late Dick Crossman. Indeed, I have seen the present Leader of the Opposition, in Ebbw Vale of all places, treating Prince Charles with all the scrupulous deference of a medieval courtier."

What a wheeze! A bit of

royal blood and these round-head upstarts soon remember their station.

Mind you, as we get the monarchy road show in top gear, with the press, TV, souvenirs and so on, we'll have to keep quiet about the loot.

You know, the £2 million plus a year pocket money the Royal family alone get (not to mention the hangers on), or the other £2.5 million a year spent on doing up their residences, or the other annual £2 million spent whisking them around the country in ships, planes and cars.

What with all this mass unemployment it won't be easy to sell the royals this time. But should the masses get restless, the old Charlie can handle it. He certainly told those rebels when he visited an off shore island of New Guinea in 1975 a thing or two. The cheeky blighters had declared independence, just because Rio Tinto Zinc's mining operations had virtually destroyed their homes.

But Charlie put them in their place; he told them quite straight: "Everyone must obey the State authorities, for no authority exists without God's permission, and the existing authorities have been put there by God. Whoever oppose the existing authority, opposes what God has ordered and anyone who does so will bring judgement on himself."

Bung ho, Charlie—that's the stuff!

'CIVILISATION'

In last week's 'Militant', part one of the review of 'Let us die fighting' showed how German capitalism colonised the area of Africa now known as Namibia, with virtual genocide carried out on the two native tribes, the Herero and the Nama.

Having humiliated the Herero, the Germans turned on the Nama people. Bitter guerilla warfare ensued for years, throwing up outstanding militant tribal leaders like Jakob Morenga. But the Nama didn't stand a chance. Eventually they shared the fate of the Herero.

German imperialism was forced to modify its policy of annihilation in the course of the struggle against the Nama. Not for humanitarian reasons but because an acute

shortage of labour was beginning to be felt in the colony. The survivors were thrown into concentration camps where they were ravaged by hunger and disease. According to an official report "from October 1904 to March 1907 a total of 7,682 of the approximately 15,000 Herero and 2,000 'Hottentots' (Nama) or 45.2% of all prisoners have died.

"The women aborted their children rather than have them born in captivity." One official gloated "Our military successes had not made much of an impression on them. But the ordeal they are now undergoing is bound to have a more lasting effect."

The benefits of German rule were shown in the 1911

census. "In 1911 there were a mere 15,130 Herero left out of an original 80,000 and 9,871 Nama out of an original 20,000."

All this had been done so a few big land companies, shipping magnates and military suppliers could make a fortune. Now the tribes had been smashed, 'normal' capitalist exploitation ruled in South West Africa. The natives were settled in camps and had to carry a pass, with a tag like a dog's around their neck. They were forced to labour in what was once their country.

For the white colonists, Cramer was a typical specimen. A police patrol noticed his entire workforce were covered with festering wounds. He had whipped at least two women to death and two more had miscarried under the whip. Sentenced in respect of eight cases of brutality he served three months. Even a liberal deputy in the Reichstag was forced to admit of the colony, that it "marks the entree of modern slavery into Africa."

"Let us die fighting" is an

unforgettable account of the brutality of capitalism. It records the heroic but doomed struggles of the tribes.

But it also points forward. In 1910 a force of dispossessed natives were engaged in building a railway when their wages were cut. They went on strike. Troops fired indiscriminately killing 14 and wounding 25 others. But troops could not break the solidarity of the workforce.

Here in the working class was a force that could destroy the system of slavery imposed by capitalism in Namibia, and is the force that can destroy Namibia's apartheid system of today—a revival in a higher form of the liberty, equality and fraternity of the old tribes.

"Let Us Die Fighting" by Horst Drechsler: £4.50 Zed press [£5 from World Books, including postage].

FIGHTING THE EDUCATION CUTS

Women force Tories to retreat

If you oppose cuts and mobilise support amongst working people you can defeat the Tories.

In Sefton, Merseyside, they have been forced into partial retreat. An outcry from mothers, teachers, students and children forced the Tories to back down from an original £16 million package of education cuts, to one totalling £600,000.

The campaign against these cuts involved a whole series of meetings. At Range High School in Formby—an area not particularly noted as a socialist stronghold—some 2,000 angry parents and teachers arrived in coachloads for a protest meeting.

These meetings were a positive step forward in mobilising opposition to the

cuts and bringing people into activity to defend their children's education and oppose compulsory redundancies for teachers; that same week, 500 parents and teachers turned out to lobby the Education Committee meeting, and reminded the Tories in person of the anger they had generated.

There was a particularly strong voice on behalf of the children and mothers of the Nursery section in Sefton, which would have been wiped out had the cuts gone through in full. Happily these were salvaged from any cuts in this round. But Sefton continues

to have one of the lowest provisions for nursery education in the country.

There is now great potential to recruit more members to the Labour party as the Women's Section in Bootle have done during the last year. Over the coming months our WS will be going out and attempting to attract into the ranks of the labour movement those women who have become involved in these campaigns. We will explain that while cuts may be curtailed or even reversed through such struggles, it is only by fighting for the return of a Labour government committed to full-blooded socialist policies, that a continued and improved education for their families could be guaranteed.

Bootle Labour Party Women's Section Public Meeting 'Women in the labour movement.' Speakers: Frances Done, Felicity Dowling, Josie Aitman. Monday 23 March, 7.45pm. Bootle Labour Club. All welcome.

Also: Disco, Friday 20 March 8pm. 50p. Further details, Barbara Hunter 051-933 5730.

By Joan Clarke and Barbara Hunter (Bootle Labour Party Women's Section)

By Maggie McGinley (Dagenham LPYS)



Demonstration last month in Solihull against local council's wholesale attacks on local services. Photo: MILITANT

Only training needed is signing on dole

I'm one of the many Scots who, reluctantly, had to follow Margaret Thatcher's advice, and move to find work. I'm a teacher, so perhaps I'm in a better position than some other workers who didn't get the opportunity to stay on at school and get some qualifications—but no section of society is now exempt from the effects of the government's vicious anti-working class policies.

I was on the dole for several months before I was forced to move to London in January to get a job. Now even that is threatened with the govern-

ment's latest round of cuts in local authority spending.

The school I teach in has been told to shed fourteen teachers (out of 89) by September. There have been various mumblings about "falling rolls", but there's no way that, over the summer, the number of pupils will fall sufficiently to justify making 16% of the teaching staff redundant.

Reduce class sizes

Anyway, if there are falling rolls, with so many teachers on the dole, surely this would be the golden opportunity to reduce class sizes and give working-class kids in a deprived area like Dagenham an equal opportunity in education.

But no—despite the fact that nearly half of the first year intake to my school need remedial education, they're talking about scrapping the remedial department. After all, you only have to be able to sign your name to go on the dole!

However, there's a growing mood of militancy amongst teachers. They realise that if they sit back and breathe a sigh of relief that they weren't one of the unlucky ones to get the boot, life will become increasingly difficult with bigger classes and practically no free time for preparation and marking.

And anyway their number could be up next—because, make no mistake about it, if we don't fight these cuts now, the Tories will take it as a signal that they can be even more vicious in the future.

At the recent annual general meeting of the Barking and

District National Union of Teachers a unanimous resolution was passed which stated that if negotiations with the council fail, a half-day strike should be called and no cover given for teachers who are absent or who leave and are not replaced.

No cuts No rate rises

It's recognised that this action will probably not be enough to stop the council implementing the cuts, and teachers are ready to go further if and when necessary. The branch committee is trying to get joint action with other threatened council workers; the direct works department is soon to lose 200 jobs.

It's not just our jobs which are being threatened, but the education of working-class youth—in fact the whole

fabric of the welfare state which the labour and trade union movement fought so hard for.

What's the difference between Tory councillors who quite happily cut public spending, and Labour councillors who 'reluctantly' do so. Labour councillors were elected to represent the working class not slash social services or add astronomical rate rises to the already over-heavy burden borne by working people.

They should be mounting a campaign around the slogan "No cuts, no rate rises".

If Labour councils were to mobilise on this demand, we could soon see the back of Thatcher and her bully-boys, and the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies—and maybe I'd hang onto my job!

Making Social Security a 'criminal' offence

"Never kick someone when they're down." Obviously the Department of Health and Social Security have never heard the saying because from April this year an even tougher line will be taken with "social security scroungers."

It's bad enough being out of work. Now they're planning to turn the screw even further to make you feel like a criminal. This "Special Claims control", descriptively known as the "knockers charter", at present in force

By Doreen Roberts

(Wimbledon CLP)

in Manchester and Merseyside, will now be extended to the rest of England and Wales.

According to the DHSS, the unemployed will be under suspicion for fraud if they have:

A "suspiciously high" standard of living—supposedly claimants should pay for their "crimes" by living on the breadline.

A marketable skill or trade [e.g. motor mechanic or

building trade]—presumably there is a surplus of such jobs—well, where are they?

A record of self-employment—sometimes the only alternative in a high unemployment area.

A significant, money-earning occupation which could nevertheless be followed on a casual or spare-time basis [e.g. bar staff]—can anyone really make a living working for peanuts in a pub? Pub-work tends to be a last resort, especially for women, when they can't make ends meet anymore.

Apparent good health and fitness—Do they suppose the bosses only sack people because of ill-health? Since

when has health meant an offer of a job when there aren't any? Or are they admitting the difficulties of feeding a family on low Social Security payments?

Mothers living alone with young children will also be under suspicion if:

A visiting officer has noticed signs of male presence—Why do they always presume this to mean she is being supported financially?

A claimant refuses to take proceedings for maintenance—If her ex-husband is out of work, what's the point?

A claim has been made on the grounds of desertion—They should just look at the correlation between marital

breakdown and high unemployment areas.

There is current debt—Is this really so surprising when you consider that inflation means that prices go up almost daily now—not so social security benefits!

It is proposed that "discreet" enquiries be made amongst neighbours, employers and "known third parties", to substantiate evidence (sounds even more criminal as we proceed). Spy on each other to serve the Tories

Over £3 million was spent in 1978 on employing extra Social Security investigators and back-up staff, while the total money fraudulently obtained only amounted to £50

million.

Compare this to the Inland Revenue's estimate of £3,500 million per year lost through tax evasion. Investigation of this is far more profitable, but claimants are being hounded for their class not for their money.

£50 is reclaimed for every £1 spent on investigation of tax evasion. Yet the government only spent enough during the year 1979/80 to recoup £91 million.

How long will we put up with these gross injustices? We want a secure future, for us all not one run by and for the bosses.

Yorkshire Labour conference

The backing down of the Tories to the miners provides the background of class struggle for delegates at this year's Yorkshire Regional Labour Party Conference. The mood of workers in Yorkshire is not just to force U-turns on the Tories, but to chase them right out of office, and replace them by a Labour government that will carry out a transformation of society.

The resolution from Bradford AUEW district committee explains the type of fighting socialist programme needed. It calls for nationalisation of all firms introducing redundancies or short time working, for public ownership of major industries to enable planning of the economy and for industries to be run under full democratically elected workers' management.

At present the nationalised industries are being ripped off by capitalists with high interest charges, private contractors etc. It is essential that a clear socialist alternative is made, without conceding to the bosses idea of 'national interest'.

The amendment opposing import controls helps spell out why that nationalistic alternative offers no real way forward for British workers. Only industrial modernisation and sufficient state financing of basic industries can provide security.

Import controls would invite retaliation, and there is no guarantee that British capitalists would invest. Even in the coal industry, if cheap coal is on offer from abroad, and the industry continues to be run in the interests of the bosses, then over a period of time import restrictions would be lifted. Import controls are a blind alley, not a way out for the problems facing British workers.

The only way forward is one of all out struggle against the Tories. Just to defend living standards to-day requires such a mobilisation. We must build on recent successes and get rid of their system once and for all.

MILITANT MEETING: 7pm to 9pm, Saturday 7 February.

The Greyhound Pub—directly opposite the three Bs, venue for the Labour Party social.

Speakers: Peter Taaffe, Editor of Militant, Glynn Robinson, COHSE Assistant Regional Organiser.

Chairman: Terry Wilson, Leeds North East Labour Party.

What can stop the devastation of the heartland?

Where is the economic recession having its most devastating effect? In which region is unemployment rising fastest?

Scotland, or Wales you might think, but you would be wrong. Last year unemployment shot up by 82.4% [the highest in the country] in the West Midlands geographically and formerly industrially, the heartland of Britain.

By December 1980 243,700 workers were out of work in the area—110,000 more than at the beginning of the year. This represents 10.4% of the workforce, a 4.7% climb in just twelve months. The number of notified vacancies has slumped to just 6,000, giving one vacancy for every forty on the dole.

These are just some of the startling facts and figures contained in the document "Our Future—A Planned Programme of Economic and Social Advance", recently produced by the West Midlands TUC.

The picture painted is bleak indeed. By 1985, if present trends continue, the region will have 17% unemployment; only Wales and Northern Ireland would be higher. The avalanche of closures and redundancies has engulfed the workforce in the region, and they are still suffering from shock. Temporarily the confidence has been knocked out of some of the most militant workers.

For the collapse has hit a region which in the early 1960s had a gross domestic product 10% higher per head than the UK as a whole. Earnings then were 10% above the national average—now they have fallen to 3% below.

Virtual full employment existed then. In 1969 both Walsall and Birmingham only had 1.9% unemployment. Last year it was 10.6% and 10% respectively.

The West Midlands economy is based on industries forming the mainspring of British capitalism's prosperity in the post-war years: metal manufacture, mechanical and electrical engineering and vehicles. A quarter of all jobs in Britain's vehicles and metal manufacture are to be found in the region, even though the West Midlands only has 9.5% of total employment in the UK.

But just as the 'boom' was built in the Midlands, so the decline of the region is a barometer for the deindustrialisation of Britain.

700,000 workers had jobs in engineering in the West Midlands in 1965; twelve years later 128,000 of those jobs had disappeared. This decline of 18.3%, was well above the 12% national fall in engineering employment.

In the motor industry 47% of jobs were destroyed, as employment plummeted from 227,000 to 180,000 by 1977. And now it is predicted that a further 60,000 could go in the next 5 years.

So it is clear that the decline had set in well before Thatcher or the current recession. They have helped speed up the process, but the lack of re-investment over decades is what made British industries increasingly less competitive.

There used to be a machine tool industry in the West Midlands. But a major firm like Alfred Herbert only recorded profits of £8.7 million between 1965 and 1970; and then it gave £9.2 million to its shareholders. No wonder there was nothing left to plough back, and the region is now disintegrating into an industrial desert.

The Regional TUC's analysis proves that only the most drastic measures can arrest this slide into oblivion, and allow the West Midlands to flourish.

But their proposals indicate that they seem to be frightened by their own conclusions.

The document details the international crisis of capitalism, the decades of negligence by the British capitalists and the savagery of this Tory government. Yet they advocate "a broad campaign," involving a "joint approach" with the Regional CBI and the Chambers of Commerce!

So while the miners threatened all-out confrontation with the employers and the government, and in Birmingham the Ansell workers are still on strike against redundancies, the West Midlands TUC suggests a campaign against unemployment and deindustrialisation hand in hand with those responsible for it—the employers.

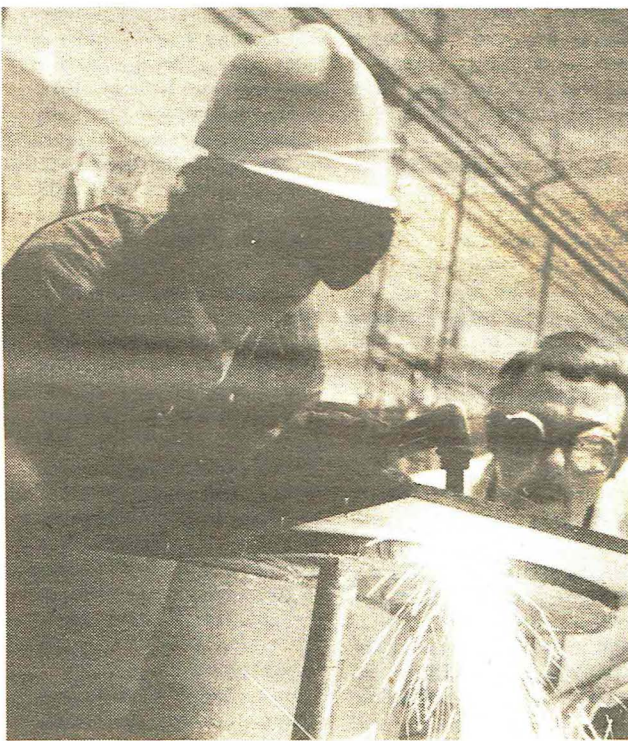
The document advocates aspects of the alternative

By
Jeremy Birch



Above: W. Midlands trade unionists marching to save jobs in British Leyland.

Below: Engineering apprentices are now few and far between.



economic strategy for the West Midlands. Import controls, it says, should be introduced, including a virtual ban on foreign car imports after 1982.

But not one word is given over to dealing with the inevitable retaliation. Yet Leyland is Britain's biggest export earner. Nor does the document answer the problem it sets when it states that imported cars contain "certain components made by Lucas, GKN etc", based in the West Midlands.

Worse still the Regional TUC urges a nationalistic drive reminiscent of the laughable 'I'm Backing Britain' campaign, under the slogan "Construct your own import controls—Buy British."

The document unfortunately merely pulls out the same old tired and failed ideas. It calls for "workers' participation" and even laments its passing in Leyland. When

surely the experience there should have discredited participation well and truly in the Midlands.

Despite the fiasco of the last Labour government's solitary planning agreement, with Chrysler which did not stop redundancies in Coventry, the document wants compulsory planning agreements. It also calls for more money for the same National Enterprise Board, which presided over 2,000 redundancies at Alfred Herberts and the creation of a National Investment Bank. And this, it believes, will counteract a slump which has already hit the West Midlands far worse than the depression of the thirties.

But perhaps most amazing of all, a call is made to "join and play an active part in your political party... We must develop our case by arguing it through every opportunity."

Former Birmingham MP

Roy Jenkins is already building a Social Democratic Party and may well attract other Midland figures to join him. Should trade unionists join that political party or the Liberals or other even more anti-union parties?

Does the Regional TUC really believe that in fighting for a programme for Midland workers any party can possibly give support except the union's own Labour Party. And when one looks at the experience of 1974 to 1979, when the problems of the region continued under the Labour government, is it not a question of committing Labour to real socialist policies?

Nowhere in the document is the word socialism even mentioned. Why, when capitalism is daily showing its inadequacy, should any labour movement representative shy away from campaigning to change society?

Nowhere in the document is any direction given to shop-floor union representatives about how to combat redundancies. Should they occupy, strike, or what? The trade unionists in the Midlands offer their members no answer.

The decline of industry and the long term crisis in British society surely mean that all the valid ideas in the document—work-sharing and massively increased public spending can only be possible with the public ownership of all the country's resources.

If the onset of sudden mass unemployment has served to stun the labour and trade union movement in the West Midlands, then it seems to have begun at the top, with the Executive Committee of the West Midlands TUC. Their all-too moderate plan would go nowhere far enough to tackle the desperate problems of the region, and would certainly be insufficient to guarantee 'Our Future'.

United
action
to stop
rent
increase

Council tenants in Renfrew district could soon be launching a rent strike against the proposed 50% rent increases.

In the last few weeks nearly 2,000 people have attended protest meetings, and feeling for such a strike has been virtually unanimous.

The chairman told the 1,000 tenants at the Paisley meeting that the rent rises were the result of Tory government policy. But, given that 34 of Renfrew's 40 District Councillors were Labour, instead of passing on a 50% rise they should be leading the fight against the Tories; if they did so, he said, they would get the total support of the tenants.

Pat Scarfe, leader of the joint tenants' federation, continued: "Maggie Thatcher supports the men with money. We expect Labour to support the working man."

Local trade unions and Labour Parties have expressed their support for the tenants. Renfrew CLP has called on the council to rescind the 50% rise and pledged its support for a rent strike.

Support from the trade unions, especially public sector ones, is vital. Job losses and cuts in services are no alternative to balancing the council books.

The councillors' policy plays into the hands of the Tories. Since the rent rise was announced about 800 applications have been received from tenants wanting to buy their own homes. Clearly for many, huge rents could mean they are financially better off buying, especially with discounts and mortgage tax relief.

But it was stated forcibly at the meeting that public housing stock is a district asset and belongs to the people. The struggle against rent rises must also be linked to the campaign to refuse to sell council homes.

We must put forward the clear socialist alternative of taking housing out of the hands of the moneylenders who impose massive interest charges upon councils. People's needs not profit should be the guideline.

Many tenants in Renfrew district see the struggle as political. They are determined to fight and detailed plans of withholding the increase have now been drawn up. Talks have been arranged with the local NALGO branch which covers the housing department.

The Labour Party must respond by ensuring that firstly Labour councillors take no action against tenants supporting the strike and instead that they either join the fight or make way for those prepared to do so.

By
Hugh Henry

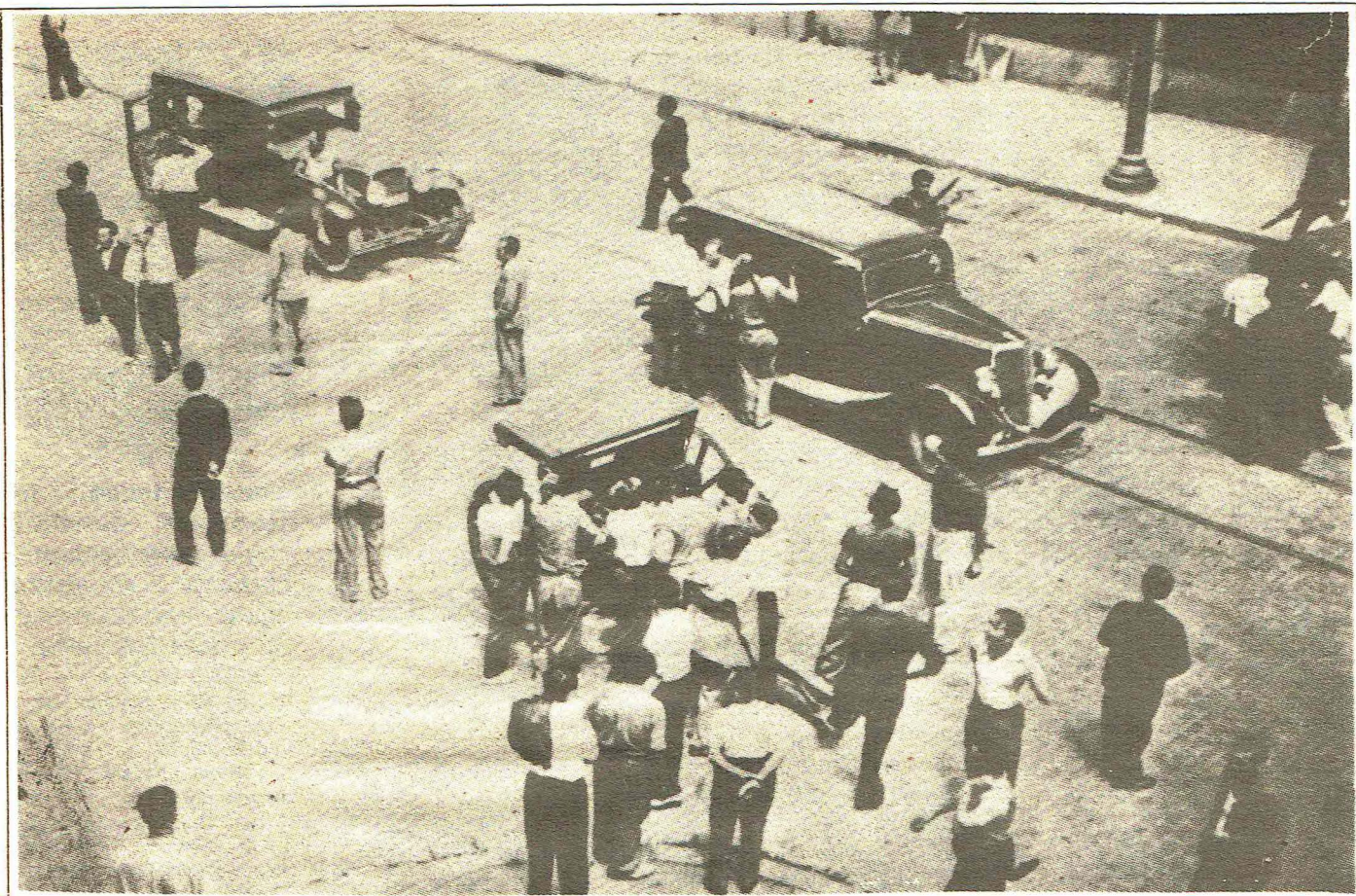


Photo above: July 1936 in Barcelona where the working class fought an independent class battle against Franco's coup.



SPAIN NO TRUST IN CAPITAL

Editorial Comment

The article below is taken from a special issue of the Spanish Marxist journal, *Nuevo Claridad*, produced during last week's coup attempt.

It is now clear that more than just Tejero was involved in the plot. The army deputy Chief of Staff, General Armada, Military adviser and confidante of the King, Juan Carlos, and most of the regional commanders, apart from those in the Basque Country and Catalonia were involved in the coup.

Sections of the officers of the key armoured division in Brunete on the outskirts of Madrid have also been implicated.

Obviously army intervention was widely accepted amongst the officer caste. 'The Times' commented "Colonel Tejero's putsch was not perhaps as isolated as it seemed and it would have enjoyed wider support if it had been better organised" [February 26th].

No wonder Armada in negotiations with Tejero to end the coup offered to spirit his fellow conspirator out of the country. Tejero was given the opportunity of an aeroplane and safe passage abroad.

Contrast this to the treatment which would have been meted out to soldiers who had engaged in a rebellion. They would either have been shot or given long jail sentences. Tejero himself speculates that he will receive "30 or 40 years jail."

In reality the plotters if

not Tejero himself will be treated as leniently as he was for his involvement in the earlier "Galaxy plot".

And while praise has been heaped on Juan Carlos for his "staunch defence of democracy" evidence has emerged indicating that there were discussions of the need for army intervention in Royal circles.

The 'Financial Times', for instance, commenting on the involvement of Armada, speculates "Either [Armada] totally misinterpreted the King's wishes or had actively conspired to bring down the government" [26 February]. It is noticeable that the King waited three hours before deciding to make his broadcast denouncing the coup.

From the viewpoint of capitalism and its defender, Juan Carlos, the coup was premature. It is comparable to the attempt of the Monarchist General Sanjurjo to seize power in August 1932. That attempt was met with an immediate general strike of the workers' organisations.

Rely on workers' strength

However, the Communist and Socialist Party leaders, this time acted in a similar fashion to the leaders of the workers' organisations when Franco attempted to seize power on July 17th 1936.

In 1936, the right wing liberal ministers and workers' leaders, like last week, called on the workers and peasants to go home and to observe "peace and calm".

Where the workers and peasants took this advice they were taken from their beds on the 17th and 18th of July 1936 and murdered. It

was only the heroic uprising of the immortal Barcelona working class which transformed the situation.

They took power in Barcelona and Catalonia and the revolution spread to the rest of Spain. Four fifths of the country was in the hands of the workers.

It was not the Popular Front, a pact between the workers leaders and the liberal capitalists, which saved the Spanish working class in 1936. Only by the use of their own independent class methods and organisation did the Spanish workers, at least temporarily, defeat Franco's initial uprising.

During the siege of Parliament some MPs waved the Spanish constitution at the Civil Guards. As if the Spanish capitalists would be deterred from crushing the labour movement by a "scrap of paper" which is how they view constitutions!

They are not afflicted with the "parliamentary cretinism" of the PSOE and CP leaders. Neither should the workers show any signs of this malady.

Only by consciousness of their own power, and by relying on their own strength and their own organisations will they defeat reaction.

The situation in Spain today is entirely different to the 1930s. The working class is much more powerful and an overwhelming majority of the population. Even if a coup would have succeeded it would have been very temporary and based on much more shaky foundations than the colonels' regime in Greece of 1967-74. In the present situation in Spain it would have lasted no more than a year or two.

It was this and not any "love of democracy" which decided Juan Carlos to

oppose the coup at this stage. He also probably understood that while the officers would go along with the coup, the largely conscript ranks would oppose it once the threat to the working class became clear.

He understood that any support for the plotters would mean that the inevitable overthrow of any military dictatorship established would also mean the end of the monarchy itself.

It is therefore fatal for the leaders of the workers' organisations to look towards the King as "guardian of democracy".

With thinly veiled astonishment, the 'Financial Times' commented the day before the coup: "Senor Santiago Carrillo [Communist Party Leader] has spoken of King Juan Carlos as guarantor of civil peace in the country. From a Communist Party leader that is a remarkable statement."

In so doing, Carrillo and Felipe Gonzalez, the Socialist Party leader are preparing a noose for the labour movement in the future.

Spanish capitalism is utterly incapable of solving the problems of the working class and poor peasants. Unemployment is at present more than one and a half million, over 12% of the labour force. Inflation is over 20%.

Such is the drop in living standards for the mass of working people that during the coup, in some of the factories in Madrid and elsewhere, backward workers even gave lukewarm support for the coup.

They compared the situation today unfavourably with what existed five years ago before "democracy" was established.

The working class demands democratic rights—right to strike, freedom of assembly, right to vote—as

a means of defending and improving living standards against the onslaught of capitalism.

When capitalist democracy is incapable of giving these minimum standards, then it is inevitable that certain small backward sections of the working class, the middle class, and the peasantry in particular, would look towards reaction as an alternative.

Only by offering a socialist alternative can these sections be won to the banner of the labour movement.

The King opposed this coup as premature, but he is himself the "fountain-head" of reaction and will become the organiser of a coup if the system which he defends is endangered.

It is noticeable that in a special appeal to "political leaders" he stated that "the situation was so delicate that more drastic action against the armed forces could not be expected immediately."

In other words, scapegoats will be made of a few plotters who will be given kid glove treatment, but the officer-caste and police riddled with fascists will remain untouched. They are the ultimate guardians of Spanish capitalism against the working class.

It is scandalous that the workers' leaders have sanctioned joint demonstrations including not just the UCD, but Fraga's extreme right wing party, "in defence of democracy, liberty, etc". These parties, particularly Fraga's "Popular Alliance" could become at a later stage the civilian wing of a royalist military police dictatorship.

Following the collapse of the coup, one and a half million, mainly workers

demonstrated in Madrid and an equal number elsewhere. This was the biggest demonstration in Spanish history and shows the narrow base of reaction at this stage.

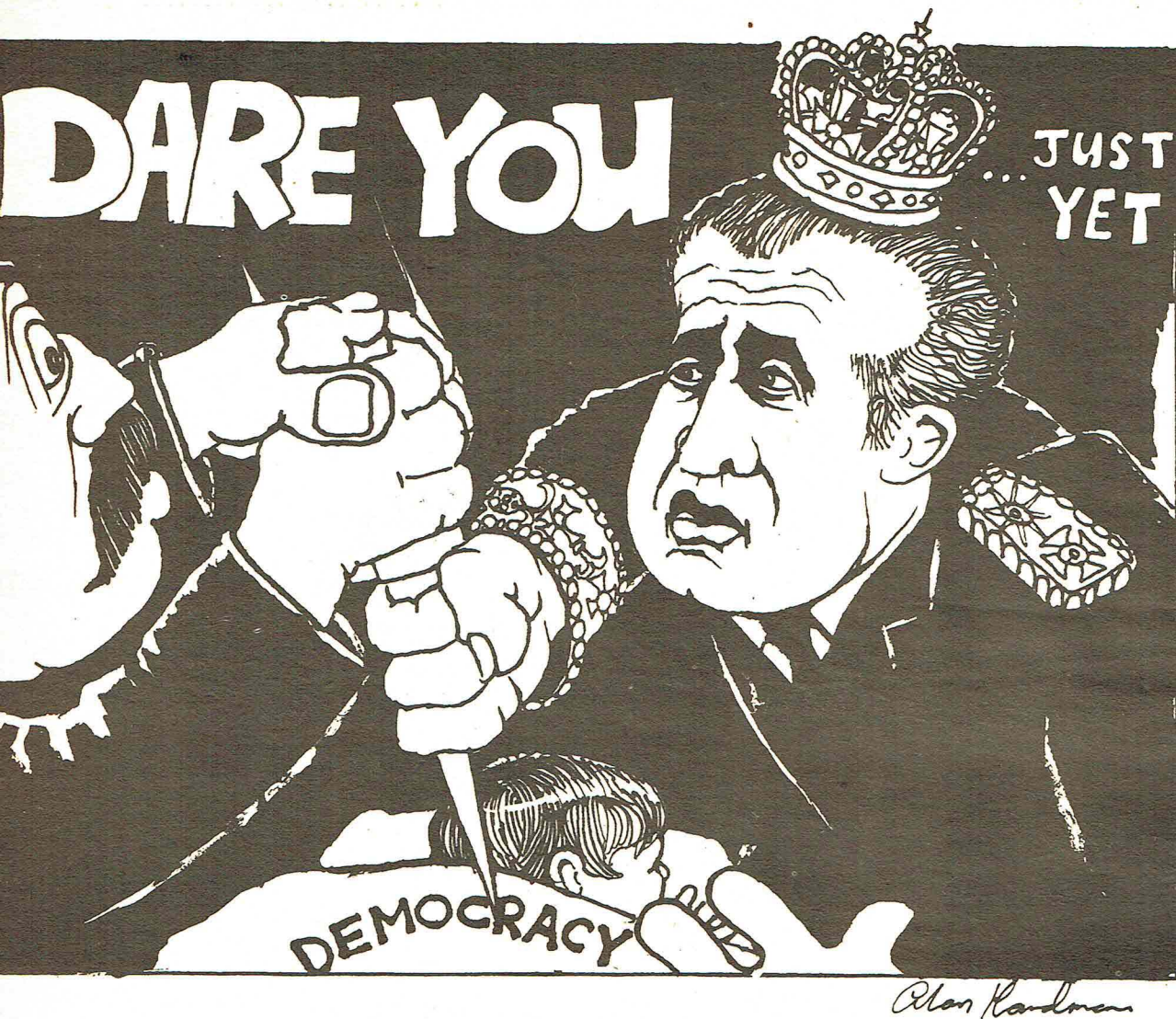
But the worst feature of the demonstration was what the 'Morning Star', paper of the British 'Communist' Party said was "the unusual sight of Conservative leader Manuel Fraga arm in arm with Marcellino Comacho, Communist leader."

Felipe Gonzalez, Socialist Party leader, has also called for a coalition government to solve Spain's present crisis. The Socialist and Communist Party leaders are terrified of taking power by themselves.

However, Spanish capitalism for the moment, has no need of the workers' leaders in the government. In the aftermath of the coup, the UCD nominee, Sotelo, has been elected prime minister with the support of the Catalan regional capitalist parties and the right wing Christian Democrats.

But given the explosive economic and social situation in Spain, this government will be no more successful than the last UCD government in solving the country's problems. Therefore, at a certain stage, probably in the next year, the Socialist Party leaders and possibly the Communist Party will be gratefully taken into a coalition government.

As in the past, the capitalists in Spain will use this coalition as a screen behind which to prepare harsher methods against the Spanish workers. It is therefore necessary that the Spanish workers absorb the lessons of the recent coup and go forward on the programme outlined by *Nuevo Claridad*.



LIST 'DEMOCRATS'

The attempted coup d'etat of the Civil Guard in Spain has been a serious warning for the working class.

After five years of 'democratic transition' the fascists and torturers, the worst enemies of the working class remained in their posts.

The same police, judges, gaolers, generals and bureaucrats have remained in their jobs, transforming the state apparatus as a whole into one enormous and permanent conspiracy against the democratic and social rights conquered by the workers.

We are told that the assault on the Chamber of Deputies, was a mere 'incident', an accidental event which interrupted 'normality'.

Nobody will believe this! We remember that not so long ago this same Lieutenant Colonel Tejero was implicated in the similar Operation Galaxy. We also remember how he was 'punished'. He was let free and re-incorporated in his position.

We remember the photographs of these fascist conspirators in the newspapers, drinking champagne and laughing at the stupidity of those commentators, who, at that moment as well expressed the opinion that it was a question of a mere 'incident'.

In all his actions, words, and ideas, openly expressed throughout the recent period, Tejero has shown

himself up as a fascist and a dyed in the wool enemy of democracy.

Nevertheless, he was permitted to occupy a key position in the Civil Guard. This is also the case with General Milans del Bosch. What were the intentions of the conspirators?

We need look no further than the actions of Milans del Bosch in Valencia where he immediately announced the prohibition of working class parties and trade unions.

These elements, if they would have succeeded, would have wiped out the last vestiges of democracy, pushing the whole of society back towards barbarism and the nightmare through which we have lived in the last 40 years.

Behind Tejero and Bosch stood all the sadistic torturers of the secret police, the rabid dogs of Fuerza Nueva and the other enemies of democracy and the working class.

But the whole cloudy affair has other dimensions.

If Tejero and Bosch were able to hang onto their positions in spite of all the warnings someone must have covered up for them. **Who was that person?**

A coup of this magnitude—clearly a serious attempt, carefully planned and not at all a theatrical

coup—necessarily has very wide ramifications.

Evidently these people have been involved in conspiracy for months on end. It is impossible to organise the seizure of the Palace of Deputies and the occupation of television studios and radio stations in Madrid at the same time as a military uprising in Valencia without both long term planning and a very wide discussion within military circles.

Were there no rumours throughout all this time? Did nobody know anything about it? Was there not one single officer whose loyalty towards democracy obliged him to denounce these events to his superiors?

This is difficult to believe. Unless the support which the conspirators enjoyed was considerably wider than the narrow circle of those who participated in the actual assault.

The silence of the secret services so efficient at persecuting and intimidating the left is more eloquent than any speech. No! This is no accident.

It was not an improvised act by a small minority or a comic-opera coup, it was the expression of a generalised mood of conspiracy and reaction among wide circles of the state apparatus which have been maintained perfectly intact from the dictatorship.

They have changed the labels, but they are the same old fascists hiding behind the protective shield of 'democracy' and the UCD Government.

Who protected those responsible for the massacre on 3 March 1976 in Vitoria, who have never appeared before the court in order to explain that bloody massacre? Who defended those guilty of the murder of Glydys Del Estal of Gernan Rodriguez and of the police riot in Renteria?

Only days before the seizure of the palace of parliament, Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo the representative of the big banks and the most right wing section of UCD refused to set in motion the reorganisation of the police.

The Minister of the Interior, Roson, refused up to the last minute to admit that José Arregui had been tortured to death in the cellars of the security police.

Frankenstein created a monster who subsequently escaped from his control. The UCD did not create the police force and the Civil Guard. For that 40 years of dictatorship were necessary. But they did deliberately cover up for the fascist elements at all levels of the state apparatus.

There is little gratitude in this life. The first victims of the monster have been its very protectors! Thus it has been thus it will always be.

Not all the police and military men are fascists. But precisely those who are not fascists, those who wish to defend democratic rights have been systematically subjected to repression and acts of vengeance and silence by the fascists with the tacit support of the 'democratic' politicians of the UCD.

There is the case of the officers of the UNV (Democratic Military Union), there is the case of the members of the USP (left wing police union) who have been subjected to disciplinary action. The threads by which the conspiracy hangs are lengthy and reach up to the highest summit of the state.

All the organisations of the working class must demand the dissolution of the repressive organisations of the state, once and for all, a purge of the state apparatus of all those elements compromised with links with fascism and repression and a popular trial of the

torturers and the conspirators.

But it is not just a question of making demands. The Spanish oligarchy which moves all the strings is not effected by polite requests but only by deeds.

It is no use appealing for serenity when the fascists are already knocking at the door. There is no use appealing to 'continuity' and 'legality' when all continuity and all legality has been brutally broken by the actions of armed gangs moved by invisible strings.

The working class cannot remain with its arms folded when the existence of our organisations, our rights, our lives are at stake.

If the majority organisations of the working class, the UGT, the workers commissions, the PSOE and the Communist Party do not give a decisive answer to the fascist aggression then this attempt will be repeated again and again until finally they arrive at their objective—the total destruction of our democratic and social rights and a return to barbarism and slavery for the working class.

We must call a general strike throughout the country, form action committees and generalise the struggle to the mass of the people with the participation of housewives, small business men, etc.

They tell us we must maintain calm and tranquility, we should not be surprised at that. **They said exactly the same in July of 1936!** If the workers had listened to these voices at the moment in time fascism would have triumphed not in 1939 but in 1936.

With their treacherous appeals to serenity the capitalist politicians of UCD, PNV (Basque Nationalist Party) and the CIU (Catalan Nationalist Party) are continuing the same policies of the last five years, the policy of rotten compromises with reaction, whose poisonous fruit has been the coup d'etat of the 23rd February.

If the PSOE and Communist party leaders accept these arguments from the capitalists they will fall into a terrible trap.

Once 'normality' has been re-established the reactionaries—with other names—will once more begin their conspiracies against the democratic rights of the working class.

But the next time there will be a difference. They will do it in a more careful and a more cautious manner.

As day follows night there will be a new coup d'etat—possibly with greater success

than this one.

The only force which can avoid the danger of a new coup d'etat, defend democratic rights and smash the reaction is the force of the working class. We cannot trust the 'democratic' capitalist politicians whose mission is to cover up and defend the forces of reaction against the indignation and anger of the working class.

The coup d'etat has failed. But other conspirators remain in their posts in the highest organs of power. They are backed and financed by influential sections of the banks and big business.

A capitalist government has never been capable of putting an end to these conspiracies, which in the last analysis are the product of the incompatibility of the interests of big business with the existence of the workers' organisations and democratic rights.

While a handful of wealthy people, the hundred families, continue to control the power and wealth of this country, we will never be safe from the terrible menace of fascist coups.

Only a government composed of the representatives of the majority parties of the working class will be capable of carrying out a strong purge of the organs of the state by means of the dissolution of the repressive organs of Francoism and a peoples' trial of the conspirators and their protectors.

If the capitalists attempt to boycott the democratic programme of a socialist government the reply must be the nationalisation with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need and under democratic workers' control and management of the banks and the key industries.

As an immediate, urgent task the leaders of the PSOE, Communist party, UGT and workers' commissions must call a general strike to protest against the coup d'etat.

This should be combined with campaigns of demonstrations, mass meetings and factory meetings calling for severe punishment for the conspirators and a total purge of the state apparatus.

The leaders of the workers' organisations will thereby be in a position to force a general election allowing the working class to decide upon the future government.

The election of a socialist government with a socialist programme is the only way to put in motion a real break with the past and to commence the socialist transformation of society.

New Militant pamphlet

'Lessons of Spain' by Leon Trotsky
With the original 1938 introduction
30p + 15p p&p

Also available:
'The Spanish Revolution 1931-36' by Ted Grant
30p + 15p p&p



Murder, violence and corruption

In the first of two articles, Ronnie Sookhdeo looks at developments in the Caribbean state of Guyana.

"They have lived for these many years by putting on a certain mask, by trying to fool the outside world and even some Guyanese who live right here, with the mask of democratic government, because they have a joke institution called a 'Parliament'."

This was the characterisation of Forbes Burnham's regime in Guyana, a former British colony in South America, made by Doctor Walter Rodney a few months before his brutal murder.

Dr Rodney, a historian of international renown, was the leader of the newly formed radical Working Peoples Alliance (WPA).

The WPA was only formed in 1979 from an amalgam of trade union and oppositional groups but it succeeded in uniting the black and Indian masses against the dictatorial Burnham regime.

It is the fulcrum for all opposition to the Burnham government. The existence of massive corruption, the rigging of the recent December Presidential election and intimidation of all opposition has been confirmed by the British Parliamentary Human Rights Group in a recent report published fol-

GUYANA

NEXT WEEK:

The programme of the WPA

lowing a visit to Guyana.

The report points out that some people were declared ineligible to vote "because they were dead"! In previous elections hanged criminals, deceased citizens, children and even horses were counted as valid voters.

This has been accompanied by violence and murder on an unprecedented scale. Burnham has used crazed religious groups like the deceased Jim Jones' 'Peoples Temple' and David Hill's 'House of Israel' to act as strike breakers, to intimidate and to assassinate oppositional figures.

But how is it that Burnham, who declares that his regime is 'socialist' and that he is a 'Marxist-Leninist', has resorted to such methods to maintain himself in power?

He even describes his position as 'Burnhamism-Leninism', an advance on Marxism-Leninism.

Burnham's People's National Congress (PNC) was created as a direct result of the aim of imperialism to set the Indian and the black



Photo: July 1979. Burnham's PNC rely on "House of Israel" religious fanatics to attack WPA supporters

- The Burnham road

workers and peasants at each others throats as a means of maintaining its hold on Guyana.

Burnham was a leader, together with Cheddi Jagan of the Peoples Progressive Party (PPP) until 1961. He split away from the PPP because of his own personal ambitions to be top dog.

He was also tempted to take this path by massive financial inducements from imperialism.

The CIA supplied Burnham with a minimum of 250 thousand dollars in 1966 in order to organise a so-called 'general strike.' This caused over £10 million worth of damage, left 171 dead and hundreds injured, embittered relations between the black and Asian masses and brought down the PPP government.

Capitalist crisis

Burnham, with the help of imperialism and a rigged constitution, was able to 'win' subsequent elections and to maintain his position ever since by massive intimidation.

Guyana is a tiny country of no more than 3/4 million people, but has huge mineral resources which imperialism relies on. Guyana and Jamaica between them supply 42% of the world's bauxite, and 90% of the bauxite requirements of the US economy.

Burnham, in the aftermath of his election victory offered imperialism free reign to exploit the resources of Guyana.

However, the crisis of 1973/74, had a devastating effect on the Caribbean and particularly Guyana. Burnham's reliance on imperialism foundered.

Bauxite companies cut back their production and Burnham imposed higher taxes. The bauxite monopolies countered this by stepping up production in Brazil and Australia in order to undercut the Burnham government's plans.

The Guyanese government in turn retaliated by nationalising the bauxite companies in August 1974. A year later the sugar industry was nationalised, thus putting 80% of the economy in the hands of the state.

It looked as though Guyana was going to be the first workers' state on the South American mainland.

However this development was cut across by a number of factors. In the eyes of the Indian masses who form the majority in Guyana Burnham was associated with discrimination and racial oppression, of corruption, etc. Burnham was therefore incapable of bridging the racial divide.

It is also probable that the Russian bureaucracy, already compelled to pay a heavy price in subsidising Cuba and particularly its sugar industry at a time when sugar prices have collapsed, was none too eager to take on the extra burden of supporting Guyana.

In all probability they were reinforced in their attitude by the Cuban bureaucracy which had trad-

itionally looked towards Cheddi Jagan as a supporter of their policies in Guyana and on the South American mainland.

On the other hand, the PFP of Jagan was incapable of mobilising the black workers who came increasingly into opposition to the Burnham regime.

Burnham turns back to imperialism for support

The collapse of the PPP-inspired sugar strikes in 1977, the feeble and mainly parliamentary opposition to the Burnham regime gradually undermined the support of the PPP not only amongst the black population but increasingly amongst the Indian workers and peasants as well.

In this vacuum we have seen the emergence of the WPA. Its support has grown as the increased mass discontent with the Burnham regime has mushroomed. Because Burnham did not complete the process and establish a workers' state his regime has been in a cul-de-sac.

He stopped three-quarters of the way towards establishing a workers' state and, as in Portugal, chaos, mismanagement and enormous social strife resulted.

He therefore turned back

to imperialism for support. Between 1976 and 1978 US aid increased from a mere £2 million to £24 million.

Faced with a bankrupt economy, Burnham appealed to the IMF, the world bank, the West German government, etc, to bail him out. This aid was given but of course at a big price to the Guyanese workers and peasants.

The repayment of interest on old loans is higher than the total amount of new loans! Moreover, the IMF demanded a ruthless programme of austerity, which has included a savage wage freeze.

And unlike Jamaica, where the Manley government resisted the pressures of the IMF, Burnham completely capitulated to these demands.

This in turn provoked an enormous wave of strikes, which rocked the Burnham regime.

This meanwhile provoked splits in the PNC and even in the government itself which began to divide into different factions. Divisions also began to appear in the army. Thus, when the army was called on to act as strike breakers in the sugar strike in 1977 the chief of the army vetoed this.

Therefore, Burnham was forced to call on the remnants of Jim Jones' 'People's Temple' and the 'House of Israel' zealots to act as strike breakers.

Increasingly desperate, Burnham resorted to a policy of outright terror against all opposition. This laid the basis for the growth in the support of the WPA.

NEW ZEALAND

The hidden general strike

The Tories in Britain have had a dress rehearsal of the storm which would arise if they attempt to use Prior's Employment Act against pickets. The 'dummy run' was in New Zealand.

A wage dispute between Air New Zealand and airport engineers blew up into a general strike when 48 pickets were arrested in Auckland Airport for trespass when they refused to stop picketing against non-union labour. Picketing has been regarded as a right by workers, but has no legal immunity.

Almost 60,000 workers walked out not just in the airport but in docks, ferries and in many other industries. The New Zealand Prime Minister Muldoon tried to intervene to force a negotiation over the original dispute but this was now a secondary issue.

The New Zealand Federation of Labour called for a general strike and Auckland and other North Island cities were paralysed. Six of the forty-eight strikers have refused bail and will remain

in prison until picketing is legalised. Even 'moderate' unions were forced into action as workers saw the clear need to defend their basic organisations.

Significantly, only the Financial Times in Britain reported these events. Plainly the bosses feel that advertising mass action against labour laws would give ideas to British workers.

There are many parallels between Britain and New Zealand. The country has dropped from fourth place in the world per capita income to 18th in fifteen years, plagued by falling investment, rising unemployment, [now over 50,000 mainly young and Maori workers] and chronic inflation and balance of payments difficulties.

The ruling right wing National Party have been in power since 1975. Muldoon is an admirer and follower of Thatcher's 'answers' to economic problems. The lessons of New Zealand may not be slow to sink home for Britain's ruling class.



CUBA—Analysis of the revolution by Peter Taaffe 'Militant' pamphlet. Price 10p [+15p post and package]. Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Militant International Review No. 21 Winter 1980/81

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

[Available from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London, E8 3PN. Price 50p + 15p p&p]

Greater London Labour Party Conference

Prepare for confrontation to carry out manifesto

Local government faces its biggest ever crisis, squeezed on the one hand by Heseltine's straitjacket of the block grant system, and on the other by massive debt charges.

In 1980-81 the Greater London Council will pay out £435 million, 42% of its total spending, to the parasites in the City of London.

By Eddie McParland
(Vice-President, Greenwich CLP)

This weekend's London Labour Party Conference will be dominated by the May GLC elections. The fight to return a Labour GLC gives the labour movement a tremendous opportunity to mobilise workers support not only against the Tories in County Hall, but also Thatcher and Co. in Westminster.

A determined stand by a Labour GLC would transform the situation as all the London Labour councils have at present backed off from a direct confrontation with the Tories.

The ravages of Tory rule, at County Hall and Westminster are seen in the 87% increase in unemployment in London since Thatcher came to power—now a staggering quarter of a million are on the dole in the region.

In the past two years 200,000 new applicants have joined the London housing waiting lists; at the same time Cutler, the Tory leader at County Hall, has boasted of cutting new starts in house building, from the 6,000 he inherited in 1977 to virtually nothing.

Cutler, Thatcher's local government wonderboy, presents the GLC at Tory party conferences as the model to follow: housing has been slashed, deteriorating transport services etc. Instead of bread he offers circuses—proposals for a London Olympics or for Disneyland to be built on derelict dockland; all empty stunts which generate publicity and then vanish quietly.

The GLC and other local government elections in May will provide the first real electoral test of Thatcher's policies. So unsure are the Tories at County Hall of victory that in May last year an internal confidence memorandum predicted defeat.

Labour on the other hand has its most radical ever election manifesto; its prom-

ises of far reaching reforms in housing, transport, and employment policies must be supported by all workers. The manifesto was drawn up after extensive debate in the movement and finally voted on at a special conference—an exercise in democracy which could act as a model for the movement in the rest of the country.

Undoubtedly one of the key debates at this weekend's conference will be on the Tory cuts. Both nationally and locally, Labour councils have not mounted effective opposition to Tory government demands to reduce their expenditure. Instead they have put up rents and rates, slashed services and jobs.

If a Labour GLC were to press ahead with its plans to freeze rents, to cut fares by 25%, to create a new direct labour organisation and carry out the essential reforms promised in the manifesto, it would set the stage for a major confrontation with the government. London, Britain's largest municipal authority, is in a position to act as a pace setter in the struggle against Heseltine determining local government expenditure.

The Tories, undoubtedly will seek to curb any "excesses" of a new Labour GLC. This weekend's Conference resolutions and composites demand that the new Labour GLC does not shrink from this battle, but from the first day of office wages an effective fighting strategy against the Tories.

This is spelt out most clearly in the amendment from the LPYS Regional Committee to motion 27 from Woolwich CLP. The amendment calls for a "steadfast refusal to implement cuts and redundancies or to carry through rate and rent rises to mitigate the Tory attacks. Such measures merely diffuse the struggle and spread

cynicism among tenants and rate payers."

The strategy of rent and rate rises to compensate for Tory cuts poses an electoral danger, as many workers will not discern the hand of the Tory government behind their increased rents and supplementary rate demands and could easily fall prey to hypocritical Tory propaganda about wasteful expenditure by Labour councils.

Militant supporters do not oppose rate increases to pay for genuine extensions of local government services. e.g. giving increased subsidies to London Transport in order to cut fares. We are, however, absolutely opposed to rent and rate increases as a substitute for mobilisation against the Tories.

Heseltine has constructed a political and legal straitjacket for local government. His officials determine what a council should spend on every area of services. If a council exceeds this estimate and raises the extra revenue through rate increases, the block grant from central government is reduced by that amount—thus forcing even greater cuts or bigger rate rises the following year.

Heseltine cannot be defeated by debates in the council chambers or Town Halls. But mass public and trade union support can only be guaranteed if there is a firm and militant stand taken by Labour councils.

Were the GLC to adopt such a resolute stand the banks would then probably try to foreclose their loans or Heseltine would try to disbar councillors or surcharge them with non-elected district auditors taking councillors to court for "unreasonable" expenditure. The major metropolitan authority in Britain would, in effect, be "locked out" by the banks or the Tories.

Such an unprecedented situation should be met with a massive campaign of trade union, electoral and other forms of protest, including rent and rate strikes against any supplementary rents or rates levied by Heseltine. A policy of non-cooperation should be mounted towards any commissioners appointed by the government.

This must be allied to a national campaign in defence of councils fighting Tory diktats. The National Executive Committee of the Labour Party should immediately give a pledge that any disbarments or surcharges would be lifted by an incoming Labour government.

If this fight is to be successful, it must be taken out of the council chambers



Cuts have hit all social services

Photo: MILITANT

and out of the lawcourts. The Tories strategy cannot be defeated within the law. In the 1920s, Poplar councillors waged a massive and successful battle for the right of Labour councils to determine their policies. Their experience was summed up by one councillor: "the master class has made the laws".

Councillors, who do not feel they are prepared for such a fight against the Tories should make way for those who are.

The Labour leaders and the TUC nationally have preserved a scandalous silence on this issue, merely offering token support for any council that puts up a fight. They must give a more positive response.

Yet the absence of a national lead does not excuse local council leaders from their responsibility to lead the fight. No Labour council should act as the human face for the miseries caused by government expenditure cuts.

In particular, a resolute stand by a Labour GLC could galvanise Labour councils throughout Britain to follow their lead and force the Tories to retreat. The regional executive, unfortunately voted 23 to 7 against support for the YS amendment and the Greenwich composite which posed a strategy of confrontation.

The majority of the Executive, have therefore a real responsibility to spell out in detail to the conference their alternative—do they support a policy of allowing rates to rise indefinitely or do they foresee a limitation on rate rises and therefore cuts in services and enforced redundancies? Because these are the only real alternatives to a policy of confrontation.

Thatcher's U-turn on pit closures demonstrates that

the Tories understand only one language—that of class confrontation.

Other debates at conference on unemployment, the health services, transport, education and housing will demonstrate the devastating effect that 18 months of Thatcher and 4 years of Tory rule at County Hall have had on essential services and workers living standards. A Labour GLC by itself cannot solve these problems and the composite from Deptford/YS Regional Committee spells out clearly the national action needed to resolve these problems, which are rooted in the crisis facing British capitalism.

The incoming Regional Executive must not only face up to the task of mobilising support for a victory in the GLC elections but also of campaigning in all the CLPs and affiliated trade unions "for the return of a Labour government mandated to bring about a permanent and irreversible change in the structure of society" (Resolution no. 39 from ASTMS No. 8 Divisional Council).

Such a government must immediately take on board the implementation of clause 4 part 4 of Labour's constitution, cancel all outstanding debt charges on local councils and introduce socialist economic planning. The struggle against the cuts is an integral part of the battle against cash limits in the public sector and against wage restraint for public employees.

This conference can lay the basis for building a Labour party with a mass membership and a leadership that is prepared to lead the struggle against the Tories in order to wrest power from the industrialists and capitalists who run Britain today.

Re-elect Militant supporters onto Executive

Militant supporters on the Regional Executive have worked, alongside other members, to galvanise the entire Party in the struggle against the Tories. This has meant taking initiatives like the very successful train to the Liverpool demonstration last year and arguing for a London march against unemployment and the Tories through a working class district.

At the same time we have argued for the closest possible ties between the different sections of the labour movement, to help build the Party by ensuring that it has a large active working class membership.

Primarily, however, the Militant supporters on the Executive have argued for a policy of confrontation with the Tory government in order to defeat their attacks and, at the same time, help force a general election. While we have been in a minority on this issue, nevertheless we believe that growing sections of the labour movement are coming round to agreeing with us that an all-out battle with the Tories cannot be avoided.

CLPs

Area 2
Bob Labi
[Hampstead CLP]
sitting member

Area 4
Nick Bradley
[Deptford CLP]
sitting member
Eddie McParland
[Greenwich CLP]
sitting member
David White
[Croydon Central CLP], sitting member

MILITANT MEETING at Greater London Labour Party Conference

'Labour Party: Left, Right or Centre'
Sunday 8 March
12.40 pm
in Basement,
Camden Town Hall

Speakers:
Jake McGee [GLC candidate, Uxbridge]
Bob Labi
[Hampstead CLP]
Chair:
Eddie McParland
[Greenwich CLP]



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Abortion rights —in law and in practice

The National Abortion Campaign and the Labour Abortion Rights Campaign has called a conference on positive legislation and abortion, to build on the great support gained within the labour movement during the Campaign Against Corrie.

It was the first time ever any trade union movement in the world had called such a widely successful campaign in support of women's rights to abortion. However, successful though the Campaign Against Corrie was, it was by its very nature defensive.

NAC and LARC both feel that the 1967 Abortion Act is inadequate as it by no means gives women the right to choose. Both the TUC and the Labour Party are committed to a policy of choice, and we feel that the time has come to fight for that right. This is why we have called the conference to discuss possible ways of establishing a woman's right to choose in law and in practice.

NHS facilities in some parts of the country are virtually impossible to obtain: in Dudley only 6% of abortions are done on the NHS. We see rectifying this situation as the first push toward positive legislation, by making it statutory for the government to supply abortion facilities throughout the country.

The second stage of the attack would be to introduce legislation to decriminalise abortion.

Under the 1861 Offences Against the Person Act, abortion is only legal in certain restrictive circumstances. If the law were interpreted literally (and the anti-lobby has tried to do this in the past) drinking gin in the bath, whether you're pregnant or not, is a crime, punishable by imprisonment for life, to say nothing of what would happen to the unfortunate person who supplied the gin.

Finally, the introduction of a woman's right to choose bill would give women effective right of choice in law and in practice.

This three stage campaign is the main topic of discussion for the conference, but we will specifically be discussing how we can educate and organise in the trade unions and the Labour party, to see that the policies are not wasted pieces of paper but have solid ground support.

The conference is open to members of trade unions and Labour Parties affiliated to NAC or LARC and is to be held at Starcross School March 14th. Delegate forms available from NAC 374 Grays Inn Road, Tel. 01-278 0153.

Yours in solidarity
Sue Mills
on behalf of the Labour
Abortion Rights
Campaign

GUARDIAN DIARY

Bleep, buzz ker-pow!

LABOUR has now lost its first councillor in the South to the growing Gang, and in the process the country has gained rather a good metaphor. The new recruit to Roy and Shirley is Mr Tom Forester, who represents Hanover ward in Brighton (and also fought Lewis, where Jim Callaghan keeps his rural seat,

for Labour at the last election).

Mr Forester will sit as a Social Democrat from now on and is also intending, unlike some of the more pusillanimous members of the CSD, to put his new convictions to the electorate. A resignation and by-election, with Mr Forester standing under Social Democratic colours, can be expected by the good folk of Hanover.

The metaphor, meanwhile, comes from Mr Forester's wife, Delia, who describes fighting the Militant Tendency in a university town like Brighton as like playing an endless game of political Space Invaders. You gun them down by the dozen but still they keep coming, she

says; and no-one who isn't on the machine (and this seems the most telling point of all) is the slightest bit interested in the proceedings.

Treat in store

BROWSING over my Militant the other day, while my husband fetched my slippers and stirred the cauliflower cheese, I chanced on an interesting letter from Comrade Des Heemskerk of North-west Leeds. "God knows what goes into the pet food," he exclaims, "which many unemployed and low paid are sometimes forced into having to eat!"

But if people are buying petfood to eat (as opposed to simply eating it, which we

probably all do, judging by recent reports on the meat trade) they are acting with extreme unwisdom. A foray to the Guardian's local Spar supermarket at lunchtime revealed the most horrifying prices.

A large tin of a rather fancy game soup cost 3p less than a similar tin of Whiskas and two cauliflowers (bought in Leather Lane, admittedly, but most towns have similar markets) came to 9p less than one of the cheaper pet brands, Frisky. I could go on at length, but a rallying call to Militant members is much more urgent. Stop marching (and waving your right arms up and down) comrades, and get out there and teach a bit of home economics!

Extracts from the 'Guardian Diary', 17.2.81—we know we're important but...

A letter to the 'Guardian'

Dear Sir,

I was rather taken with the analogy in your Diary (17 February) between Labour Party politics here in Brighton and the game "Space Invaders."

It is certainly apposite if your correspondent meant that however many times the ideas of socialism and workers' democracy are apparently shot down or betrayed they always spring up again, stronger and more powerful than before. If, as I suspect, she meant rather that universities provide an inexhaustible supply of young idealistic students wanting to change the world, there is also some

strength in the analogy.

Some few years ago, our local defector Tom Forester was also one of these. I find it very hard to square this long-term fighter for moderation with the member of Revolutionary Socialist Students' Federation who informed me when I canvassed him for Labour in 1970 that he would not be voting, as Labour was no more than a 'left Conservative' party, and who went on record as believing that social changes could not be achieved via the parliamentary system.

One point of correction: as I understand it, the fact about "Space Invaders" is not that it only interests the player, but that interest in playing has spread like a forest fire with machines springing up in the most unlikely places.

Here too we have a fair analogy. In Brighton in the last fortnight, for every well-publicised defection, we have had five or ten applicants to join the Labour Party, the vast majority not students.

Yours faithfully,
Geoff Jones
Vice-chairman,
Brighton Labour Party
(bleep-bleep)

—and one they didn't print

Dear Sir,

Browsing over the 'Guardian Diary' the other day (17 February) while my (unemployed) husband made the tea, I received an unexpected lesson in spiteful journalism.

Holding the 'Guardian' in my right hand and reaching for a copy of 'Militant' with my left, posed some problems in tea drinking but did enable me to read Comrade Heemskirk's short letter to 'Militant' in full.

As he is apparently a member of the Labour Party Young Socialists, I presume he has not yet had the time to establish his career in the working class movement,

defect to the Council for Social Democracy and thus merit a fraction of the space devoted to Sue Slipman—enabling his letter to be quoted in full.

Neither has he probably had the time to develop as a comparison shopper and evaluate the difference between two cauliflowers and cat food. But I am willing to lay my life if need be on the fact that he realises the economic reasons why my husband is unemployed, and what's more has the heart to care!

Yours very truly,
Mrs M. Shaw,
Hackney, London

Fact and fiction: disturbing minds at the BBC

Dear Sir,

I am writing on behalf of the John MacLean society, with the support of Glasgow District Trades Council, in connection with the documentary programme "The Revolutionaries" produced by BBC TV Scotland. It was transmitted on the network on 16th July last year to mark the birth centenary of John MacLean (one year late).

During the course of the programme, Lord Shinwell stated that John MacLean "had been for some time in an institution because his mind was disturbed". These are his exact words.

This is quite untrue, and can be proved to be untrue. His family, hurt and bewildered, maintain categorically that it is a falsehood, and nobody else has ever suggested such a thing.

I myself, as John MacLean's biographer, am aw-

are of all his activities week by week right up to the end of his life on 30 November 1923, and can state quite definitely that he was never even in an ordinary hospital, let alone a mental one.

I was instructed to inform the BBC about the above error, and ask to have something done about correcting it. I wrote to the producer of the programme, and received no reply.

I then wrote to the head of Scottish Television and to the controller of BBC Scotland. Both replied that they could do nothing about Lord Shinwell's "view of events".

I replied pointing out that it was not a "view of events" but an unqualified statement purporting to be a fact, and was accepted as such by the viewers. On receiving more or less the same replies as previously, I

wrote to George Howard in London, BBC chairman, and received the same kind of reply.

The members of both the John MacLean Society and Glasgow District Trades Council are deeply troubled by the BBC's apparent lack of integrity and are horrified that in a so-called democracy a dead man can be slandered with impunity.

Yours faithfully
Nan Milton
Secretary
John MacLean Society

Jane McKay
Secretary
Glasgow District
Trades Council

The train is coming...

Dear Comrades,

In these days of gloom and doom for British capitalism, it is unusual to come across a business publication containing articles titled: "Facing the future with confidence", "On the road to success", and "Winning is their way".

Those of you hoping this means jobs for steel and car workers, I'm afraid will be disappointed. The articles are from the February issue of the staff newspaper of the hotels empire, Trust House Forte, pompously called 'The Times'.

The chairman of THF, well heeled Tory Lord Thorneycroft, told journal-

ists the group was facing 1981 with "optimism and quiet confidence." THF turnover in 1980 increased to £772 million, more than £50 million up on the previous year. Profit after tax was up by 18 per cent to £47.7 million.

The short-sighted, quick profit mentality of British entrepreneurs has meant a drastic decline in investment in manufacturing industry, while investment in hotels and service industries has mushroomed. Anyone who so neglects the foundations of their house, must not be surprised when the walls begin to crumble around them.

As if recognising this and feeling the deep pile carpet begin to move under his feet, Sir Charles Forte said he could see a light at the end of the tunnel. Inflation had to be conquered as the first priority—but then it was important that new jobs were created.

Perhaps someone should tell Sir Charles that the only light at the end of the tunnel is the on-coming express train of socialism, and that he and his parasitic class had better get off the tracks fast!

Fraternally,
Clive Gravel
COHSE, Kidderminster

Join the anti-bodies!

Dear Comrades,

The teenage plague of boredom can be a killer.

Boredom is a virus picked up during unemployment and other socially inadequate conditions. It preys particularly on the youth, who haven't been vaccinated with the hardening experience of the labour movement and the class struggle.

Their symptoms of this plague, which is sweeping the country, are an overwhelming desire to escape from poverty, misery and isolation. This develops into a desperate need to socialise and young infected victims tend to form street gangs [the cuts have ensured that there isn't anywhere more suitable to congregate].

In the later stages of the disease, a collective search is launched to find things to do. This can lead to vandalism, hooliganism, alcoholism, drug taking—even suicide.

The root cause is found in the social system under which we live; a system eager to make cuts in

education and the social services; that exiles 2½ million people to the scrapheap of the dole; that cannot cater for the social needs of people; a system that creates all this misery, because of the greedy search for the profits and riches of the capitalist parasites who own, control and wreck our lives. The root cause of this plague is capitalism!

The cure for this disease can only be found by utilising and expanding the anti-bodies that already exist: the trade unions and the Labour Party. These anti-bodies, if embracing the whole of the working class, can attack and defeat the poison of capitalism and create a sharing, caring society that is free of economic diseases: socialism.

Anti-bodies of the world unite, we have a disease to kill!

Yours fraternally,
Ray Duffill
Hull Central LPYS
[anti-body]

Lighting the gloom

Dear Comrades

I noticed the following in the sports pages of the 'Harborough Mail' recently. As an indication of the decay of British manufacturing industry I feel it needs no further comment: "Ambitious Desborough Town are planning to install a floodlighting system that

will match those at many Football League clubs...The problem of providing the four 80-foot pylons has already been solved. They were obtained from Corby's disused British Steel complex."

Yours fraternally
Dave Buss
Thurmaston
Leics

ads

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

OLDHAM Militant Readers' Meeting. 'Redundancy and Closure'. At The Sergeant at Arms Public House King Street, Oldham. On Saturday 8 March.

WEST HULL Militant Public Meeting 'Democratic Socialism or Social Democracy, which way for Labour?' Hear: Mike Foster (Louth CLP). Chairman: John Atkinson. Wednesday 1 April, 7.45 pm, Costello Sports Centre, Room 3, Pickering Road.

TEESSIDE Militant Readers' Meeting 'The Labour Party'. Speaker: John Pickard. Sunday 8 March, 7.30 pm, Eston Hotel, Fabian Road, Eston.

SOUTHWESTERN Labour Party Regional Conference Militant Meeting 12.45 pm on Saturday 21 March at Devonport, in Fore Street (50 yards along from the conference), Exeter. Speakers will include: Cllr. Pete Hammond (Member of Regional Executive); Robin Clapp (Delegate, Bristol South and Regional Executive member); Mike Sheaff (Delegate, Plymouth Devonport, shop steward COHSE)

BRACKNELL Militant Readers' Meeting 'Which Way Forward for the Labour Party?' at Griffin House (opposite Red Lion Pub), Tuesday 10 March, 8.00 pm Speaker: Lynn Walsh (Militant Editorial Board)

For regular coverage of the labour movement in Ireland North and South,

read 'Militant Irish Monthly'
Price 10p
From Middle Abbey St, Dublin 1

THANET Militant Supporters 'Mexican Night'. Mexican food, dress and music. At 18 Richmond Road, Ramsgate, on 7 March at 8.00 pm. Bring a bottle (full). Admission 75p.

Militant Readers Meeting, N.W. Regional Conference of the Labour Party. Speakers: Tony Mulhearn (Liverpool DLP). 12.45 pm. Saturday 14 March, Opera House Foyer Annexe, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

BRIGHTON LPYS Unemployment March Southern Region LPYS's to attend. Saturday 7 March to Labour Party Southern Regional Rally, to hear Michael Foot. Later, 'Sack Thatcher' socials present: 7 March 8.00pm-2.00am. 'Ammonites' + 'Law Infringement' + disco. Tickets £1 only. Accommodation and tickets contact Jeff Riley, 11 Egremont Place, Brighton.

MANSFIELD Militant Readers' Meeting. 'The Labour Party, democracy for whom?' Speakers: Graham Naylor (Bilthorpe NUM); Henry Richardson (Vice-chairman, Notts Area NUM, personal capacity); Jon Ingham (Leeds AUEW, personal capacity). Room 2, Market Hall, Chesterfield. 7.30 pm, Friday 20 March.

BASILDON Militant Readers' Meeting. 'The Miners' Strike and the Fight against Redundancies'. Speakers: Bob Edwards (Militant Editorial Board), Bill Bridger (TGWU). Laindon Community Centre, 8.00 pm, Wednesday 11 March.

We invite your trade union, Labour Party or LPYS branch, shop stewards' organisation or trades council to place in 'Militant' fraternal May Day greetings to the labour and trade union movement.

'Militant' is read by thousands of labour movement activists in Britain and internationally. Unlike the capitalist press we have no rich backers or big business advertisers. We rely on individual workers and workers' organisations like your own to support our newspaper.

Send your greetings of solidarity with the labour movement. Help build a paper that fights for socialism. The closing date for copy is Tuesday 21 April.

RATES FOR GREETINGS: Semi-display: 3 column centimetres (up to 15 words)—£3; 6 column centimetres (up to 25 words)—£6; Display: one-sixteenth page—£10; one-eighth page—£20; one-quarter page—£40.

BRIGHTON Militant Rally
'For Socialist Policies and Party Democracy We Stand Firm'
Wagner Hall, Regency Road, off West Street, Brighton.
Peter Taaffe
[Editor, Militant]
Rod Fitch
[Labour PPC Brighton Kemptown]
—answer press distortions. Come and hear what we really stand for.
Thursday 12th March 7.30pm.

Starry Plough Badges 20p each, or 10p each for 20 or more.
p&p add 25p for the first 20 badges and 12½p for every extra 10 badges.
Order from V Seal, 15 Thornbury Road, London SW2 4DL.

CHESTERFIELD Militant Readers' Meeting. 'How to Beat the Tories'. Speaker: Jon Ingham (Leeds AUEW, personal capacity). Room 2, Market Hall, Chesterfield. 7.30 pm, Friday 20 March.

GATESHEAD EAST Militant Readers' Meeting. Monday 30 March, 7.30 pm. Miners Welfare, Smithburn Road, Boghouse Estate. 'The Secret Service and its activities within the labour movement'.

Newcastle daytime Marxist Discussion Groups. For unemployed, students, shift workers and housewives. Every Thursday, 2.00 pm. First meeting 5 March 1981. Contact Dave Cotterill, Newcastle 692655 for details of venue.

Build Militant

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 April	Target for year
Eastern	489		1775	7100
East Midlands	394		1375	5500
Hants & Dorset	393		1300	5200
Humberside	183		875	3500
London East	728		1900	7600
London West	496		1200	4800
London South	385		1375	5500
Manchester & Lancs	567		1450	5800
Merseyside	449		1650	6600
Northern	594		2150	8600
Scotland East	248		1100	4400
Scotland West	374		1875	7500
Southern	715		1775	7100
South West	424		875	3500
Wales East	236		650	2600
Wales West	302		1150	4600
West Midlands	448		2150	8600
Yorkshire	625		2250	9000
Others	24		3125	12500
Total received	8074		30000	120,000

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

A DEBT WORTH COLLECTING

THIS WEEK £1,133

You get less but you pay more—that's what's happening to local councils thanks to the parasitic grip of the banks and finance houses.

The professional body for public sector accountants showed recently that debts have been piling up while services are cut.

In London, for example, a debt of 1,194 for every man, woman and child means that the average family will be paying back about £13 per week in interest charges alone. This is not just on rates directly but through rate rises passed on in price rises.

Under a planned economy the needs of society dominate the economic system, and we wouldn't have to pay these exorbitant interest rates. But in order to convince the majority of

the working class that socialism is the only viable alternative to increasing misery, we need to build the coverage and distribution of the 'Militant' to reach every work-place in Britain.

And we can't do that without your help. We're not asking for as much as we pay to the banks (though we wouldn't say no) but we do ask for a weekly donation of whatever you can afford.

Those who responded to our appeal last week included Hatfield Main NUM Branch, who sent us a £10 cheque, nine workers in Hillingdon Parks Dept., who collected £7.52, and Leicester readers who passed on £12.53 in union expenses. Chester LPYS

sent us £2.77, and £64 was sent in from Militant Readers' Meetings held in Gosport, Teesside, Greenwich and a Discussion Group in Hull.

Individual donations include a tenner from M Christoforou (W London), fivers from J McIver (Paris), G Drury (Jarrow) and R Annand (Chester).

Amounts of between £2 and £5 came from C and A Holme (Ruislip) and R Jones (NUPE steward, W London), K McCombes and A Miller (Glasgow and E Kilbride), A Smith (POEU Manchester), R Surrey (POEU London), A Roff (S London), N Taylor (Strathclyde NALGO), M McKann (Birmingham), J Hull (Colchester) and C Baum (Grantham LPYS).

Between £1 and £2 came from A Winslade and D Copeland (E London), B Williams (NATSOPA, Daily Express), I Bailey (Jarrow)

and G Miller (Glasgow NALGO).

Elsewhere we've had bulk donations from supporters in Newcastle, E London, Bracknell, 'profits' on meals from Gosport and on badges sold on the Glasgow demo, money from meals and phone calls (Leicester), sale of furniture from Harlow, teas and cartons from Huntingdon, and lift money from East Kilbride.

However, the £1,133 raised this week must be increased, and we can only appeal to you, our readers, to rush in your donations. Are there any other TU branches or groups of workers who see the 'Militant' and are considering a donations?

Don't delay! We try to bring you the news comment and analysis you need. Help to repay a debt worth paying —to 'Militant'.

SOUTHERN AREA MILITANT SCHOOL on Sunday 3 May—Bank Holiday Monday 4 May. Three speakers & social (with food). Hotel Bed and Breakfast at the Danville Hotel (on sea front), Cliftonville, Margate.
Only £7.50 (same price as last year). Please book early as capacity limited. To book write/phone K Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Cliftonville Margate, Kent (0843-291293)

Speakers: Ray Apps: 'What is Marxism?'; Dudley Edwards: '1926 General Strike'. Debate: 'Militant' v Communist Party, 'Perspectives for Britain'.

WEST LONDON Militant Readers' Meeting postponed. Look out for further details.

AND NOW! Plunder Woman carrier bags. Let Thatcher carry the load for a change! A great way of making money for the fighting fund. Prices: £2.00 for 12—minimum order including postage and packing. £10 for 75 etc. Money with order please. Bulk orders: prices on request. Contact: J Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Margate, Kent. Tel: 291293. Please allow 21 days for delivery.

PEOPLE'S PALACE —MERSEYSIDE SOCIALIST CENTRE

Socialism and Democracy: turning cynicism into mass activity
A public discussion led by Audrey Wise, Hilary Wainwright, Tariq Ali
Saturday 26 March 2-4.30 pm. AUEW Hall Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 1
For creche ring 051-735 1725 by 13 March

Hands off Polish workers! Socialist and labour movement demonstration in favour of Polish Solidarity. Sunday 15 March. Leave Speakers Corner 2.00 pm and march to picket Soviet Embassy. No Cold War banners or slogans. Supported by Tony Benn and London Labour Briefing.

Public Debate: Young Conservatives v Labour Party Young Socialists. McLellan Galleries, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. 7.30 pm, Thursday 19 March.

Sheffield Hallam LPYS Public Meeting 'The Fight Against Unemployment' Hear: Margaret Reavey (LPYS NC)
7.15pm AEU House, Furnival Gate. Wednesday 18 February. All Welcome

Chester-Le-Street Marxist Discussion Group. Friday 13 March, 7.00 pm, at Chester-le-Street Labour Club. Topic 'What is Marxism'. For further details contact Wally Scott, 0385 887603.

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS End Unemployment! March and Rally. Dover, 28 March, 2.00 pm. Meeting at Russell Street Car Park (next to Southern Region TV offices). Speakers include Rod Fitch (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate Brighton Kemptown).

Industrial

in brief

Tanker drivers and ancillary workers in Mobil have put in for 13 to 15 percent wage rises and payments for using the 'tachograph.' The Financial Times [March 2] said if the tanker drivers win, it "could set a bench mark for pay settlements in other parts of the oil industry right into the next bargaining round."

In a great victory of the Broad Left in USDAW, the union's Private and Trades branch in Swansea decided to cast its 1,100 votes for Audrey Wise in the presidential elections. Branch member Brian Lewis reports, "The right wing were furious at the decision, and because they knew that the balance of forces outweighed them, they resorted to bureaucratic manoeuvres in order to prevent the branch casting its votes for Broad Left candidates. 21 votes for British TUC conference were denied to the branch. The women from British Home Stores were disgusted at the behaviour of the right wing who could see that they were losing the battle. The move to the left amongst the rank and file was shown by the fact that three 'Militant' supporters received the branch vote for Labour Party conference and two 'Militant' supporters to the TUC conference."

Leaders and officials of the print unions SOGAT and NATSOPA meet later this month to discuss details of a merger. The other two print unions, NGA and SLADE, will probably merge later this year.

The European Federation of Agricultural Workers which represents two million farm workers, has added its weight to the campaign to get the weedkiller 245T banned.

The dispute at Lister engineering firm in Swindon continues [see recent 'Militant' reports]. Shop stewards have rejected a management offer of a £60 bonus for a return to work, with negotiations on a productivity deal then to follow. Shop stewards will recommend a rejection of this offer at a mass meeting

At the annual conference of the Somerset and Avon farm workers union, the NUAAW, district organiser Barry Leathwood told how a herdsman who after being made redundant killed himself, rather than face life on the dole. He said, "His redundancy was a consequence of Common Market policy, supported by the government, which gave massive subsidies to farmers to go out of milk production. A fortune for farmers but a pittance in redundancy pay and life on the dole for workers". He added, "Until a relatively short time ago workers who were displaced by change in farm policy, by improvements in technology could rely on obtaining another job, perhaps in agriculture, or in one of the other rural industries. But those days are gone now."

An economic lesson for Tories

By
Wayne Jones

The spectacular success of the miners highlighted the Tories' latest U-turn in relation to subsidies to state industry.

The trend started a few months ago. Even before the first year of Thatcher's administration had ended the electricity supply industry was given an extra £300 million.

British Airways received £85 million, British Rail's cash limit was extended by £40 million, British Shipbuilding, a top up of £65 million and of course British Leyland and British Steel

have recently received substantial aid.

The Tories have learnt a basic economic lesson the hard way. It is not possible to impose 18th century economic doctrines on present day capitalist economies.

The fact is that subsidies are a significant ingredient of European industry. In the UK, the BSC received total state aid between 1974 and 1979 amounting to £3,176 million. In France it is estimated that the steel industry will receive £3,483

million at least!

In the case of railways, the UK network receives less support from public funds than its European neighbours. Detailed investigations three years ago (they still broadly hold true today) revealed that Britain received subsidies and loans amounting to 29% of total railway costs, including investment. But West Germany received 39% of costs. The Netherlands and France 45%, Belgium 50% and Italy 68%.

In the coal industry the disparity is even more glaring. Total direct aid to the West German coal industry in 1979 amounted to £1,386 million. In France it was £334 million, in Belgium £208 million, and in Britain? Only £189 million in the financial year 1979-80! Putting it another way, subsidies per tonne

Production subsidies* to European coal industry

Country	Subsidy (£ per tonne)
BELGIUM	34
FRANCE	18
W. GERMANY	15
UK	1½

*Excluding social grants and Government contributions to pension funds.
Source: National Coal Board.
Figures relate to 1979.

Chart showing UK subsidy rates compared to the rest of Europe, reproduced from 'The Times' [February 25]

amounts to £34 in Belgium, £18 in France, £15 in West Germany and a puny £1.50 in the UK!

These figures totally justify the demand of the NUM for adequate financing. Otherwise the price of coal is distorted, thus allowing the NCB and the Tories to claim that the mines are uncompetitive and so pits must close.

These figures show the crying need for an economy where production is planned under the control and management of the working class.

Capitalism cannot exist without massive state aid to its industries.

But although essential they are portrayed by the capitalists and Tories as being inefficient, wasteful, unnecessary etc. The constant stream of abuse heaped on the nationalised indus-

tries is all designed for a purpose.

It allows the Tories and the bosses' class to 'justify' hiving off the profitable sections—which were only made economically viable through massive state intervention after the capitalists had driven these industries into ruin in their anarchic search for profits rather than an industrial society's modern needs.

It also attempts to prevent workers realising it is not nationalised industries that are bankrupt or unproductive but that the very system itself which is bankrupt; when there is complete state ownership can proper planning and production for need take place, and the burning economic, social and industrial problems be solved.

Longworth

The occupation of Longworth Hospital was recently suspended after an 11 week struggle to keep 13 beds open.

It was suspended just over a week after AHA officials, ambulances and local management forced their way past the one picket on the gate and removed 4 (yes 4) patients, whilst the police blocked the road in all directions to prevent assistance from arriving. They had also blocked the phones so staff were unable to summon help.

After the raid, the scene was as though a bomb had struck. By this time many of the off duty staff who lived locally had arrived and were huddled together in clumps; many were crying or near to tears. The patients left were scared that they would be the next to go.

Despite reservations as the possibility of winning this stage of the fight (the rest of Longworth is due for closure 'within 3-4 years' according to AHA plans) we decided to recommend the staff not to call off the occupation at that point.

Firstly we would be seen to have given in under the violent attacks of the AHA. Secondly there was a slight possibility of getting supportive action elsewhere, and we could use the events at Longworth to open the way for further more widespread action elsewhere, against future cuts.

Finally it was important to get back into negotiations with the AHA with the threat of re-starting the occupation in the future when further cuts are on the cards. I am sure that the fight at Longworth is not over, and that further attempts to close beds will be made and resisted.

We will be putting a resolution to our next union branch meeting calling for a delegate conference of representatives from all trade unions in the area, to discuss what active support can be given to fight the next cuts in the NHS, which was after all one of the greatest achievements of the labour movement in the country's history.

By Peter Haworth
(Branch Secretary,
COHSE Oxford)

Mosedale

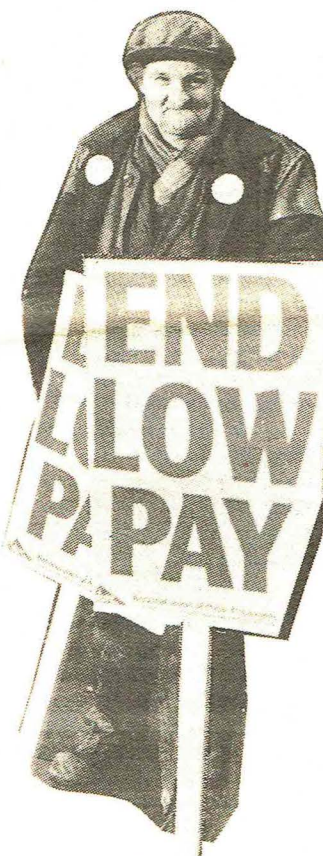
The 20 men still out at Mosedale's Brick Works at Flixton, nr. Manchester, are in urgent need of support from the labour movement.

Liverpool Direct Works have effectively blocked the delivery of bricks from Mosedale but dant is still arriving from Sutton Manor colliery near St. Helens, and oil is being delivered by the

Liverpool firm of Lyster's. The T&GWU regional executive itself should take firmer measures in ensuring effective blacking.

Two strikers have been arrested and charged with criminal damage. In an attempt to crack down on the pickets, instead of the usual remand on bail, they have been remanded in

Water Workers



**'MILITANT
GMWU REVIEW'**
A pamphlet putting the Marxist case for a socialist leadership of the union.
20p plus 10p P&P. From World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Bitter cries of 'sell out' are ringing through water depots throughout the country, as water workers are angry at their union leadership's attempts to settle for less than the 15% rise they deserve.

Northern water divisions are out on unofficial strike, and shop stewards in Essex and London have rejected the '12.3%' offer, and are still calling an unofficial strike from March 16.

A mass meeting on Monday of men from the Pennine division, representing branches in Oldham, Bury and Ashford, agreed to stay out on strike.

Senior Steward David Nelson of the Foxdenton depot said the men were bitter the leadership hadn't called a national strike for the 15%. "Most workers view the strike as a war of attrition and will accept nothing less than the full claim."

"We totally reject the offer which would amount to no more than a £5 efficiency bonus, which most of us receive weekly anyway. The attitude of the men was further hardened by a threat from management to push through redundancies."

The workers are sending out pickets to depots in other areas.

the notorious Risley remand centre pending further reports and investigations for two weeks!

Financial support continues to come in from the movement in the order of £60 a day but much more is needed in a lockout which has now lasted for almost three months.

But most urgent is sup-

port from the labour movement for the mass pickets to force Mosedale to back down on the redundancies.

For details of mass pickets, messages of support and donations contact: J Brown, 216 Irlam Road, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester.

Vauxhall

Vauxhall Motors in Ellesmere Port have now received applications for approximately half of the 2,800 redundancies asked for amongst the hourly paid employees.

But the bosses are keeping a low profile; they hope to starve people out of their jobs by applying for a further three months on the government's temporary short time working scheme.

When the company was asked by the Joint Negotiating Committee to top up the wages to 75%, this request was met with a flat refusal.

What Vauxhall bosses don't realise is that their workers can now retreat no further. Everyone is struggling to pay their bills and keep their heads above water after losing their night shift rates, getting a wage rise that was far from the rate of inflation, and then the 75% temporary short time working scheme now dropping to 50%. We can take no more!

On the other hand, production must be maintained despite the crisis in the car industry, so management keeps the 'us and them' attitude alive by paying the staff full wages.

To coincide with the attacks on wages and jobs, management are still attacking individuals.

A sacked T&GWU shop steward, after a tribunal which recommended his reinstatement, is still on the dole.

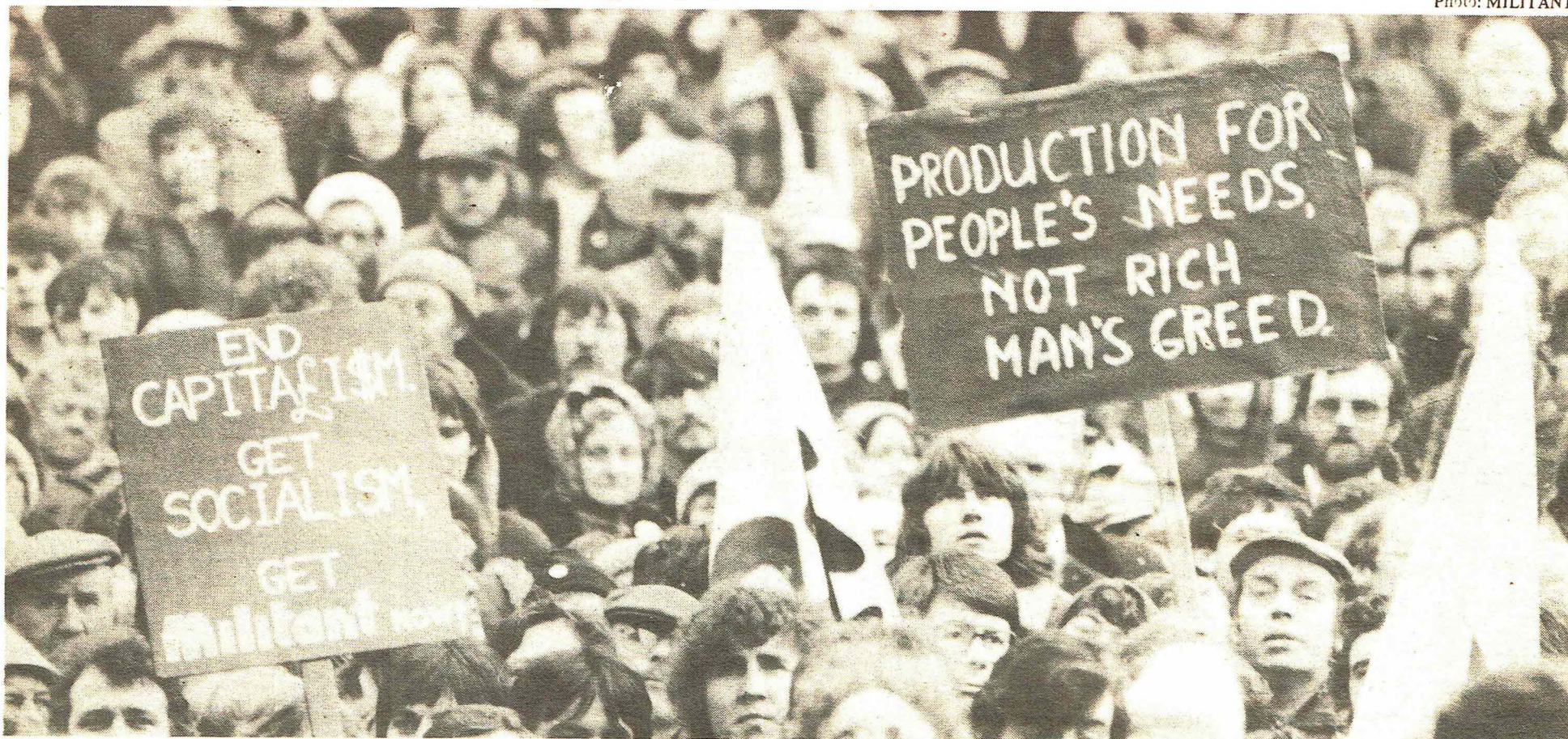
It's no wonder most of the workers can't wait until a little strength returns to the shop floor.

By T Burns
(Shop Steward,
Vauxhall)

Reports

Photo: MILITANT

Part of the massive demo in Glasgow. The Scottish labour movement must be tapped for support for the battle at Linwood



FIGHT FOR EVERY JOB!

The struggle to save the 4,500 jobs under the axe at Talbot, Linwood, has taken a decisive turn.

The shop stewards committee at the plant recently issued a call to the shop stewards movement in the west of Scotland, to involve them in their fight. A delegate meeting has been called [see details below].

John Hepburn, sub convenor, T&G committee at Talbot, told the Scottish LPYS Conference at the weekend, "we cannot win this fight alone. The ingredients for a tremendous struggle for these jobs are there, but the workers at the plant need the support of the entire labour movement if they are to win."

By appealing to the shop stewards movement, the leaders of the Talbot workers are building the fight in the only section of the labour movement that can guarantee victory.

To date, vital work has been carried out in pressurising MPs, publicising the case through public meetings, and conducting negotiations with various sections of the labour movement on future strategies.

However, the time for talking is over. The meeting of shop stewards must pledge full support for the

By
Bob Wylie

Talbot workers, and, as an indication of the seriousness, a half day strike in the west of Scotland should be organised.

The only force capable of causing the Tories and their friends to change course is the labour movement united in action. The recent victory of the miners proved that point.

LPYS branches throughout the west of Scotland must play their part in mobilising support for this meeting. In the last two months the LPYS has campaigned (including visits to over 100 factories in Strathclyde) for the setting up of a Strathclyde shop stewards committee to combat the redundancies. Support for this has been clear.

The Talbot workers can therefore be confident of future support from this meeting, which could be a massive foundation stone in the building of an historic victory.

**West of Scotland
Shop Stewards Meeting
Wednesday March 11th,
10am. at Rosevale Cinema,
Dumbarton Road, Partick.
Union credentials must be
shown at door.**

Corby

Almost exactly one year ago, the town of Corby suffered a tremendous defeat at the hands of BSC and the Tory government.

Steel-making ended at Corby; the furnace was shut down and over 6,000 jobs were lost, and in a town with a workforce of 24,000, and no other major industries, the blow was devastating.

But one year after the closure of the steelworks the Tubeworkers are on official strike. At the time of writing this article only the CD mill

employing about 300-400 workers are involved, but it is expected that the strike will spread to the whole works.

The significant thing is that the strike is about overtime work. There is a local agreement limiting overtime to 8 hours a week. One man in the CD mill worked his eight hours, and then turned up at the Saturday shift to work more overtime. The other men refused to work with him. The management stopped their time sheets so they came out on strike.

This strike shows that despite the failure of a lengthy campaign to save the steelworks, involving three massive demonstrations in Corby, and two local

one day general strikes; despite a long drawn out strike last year that caused much poverty and hardship; the workers of Corby are not defeated.

It is a credit to the labour movement that the workforce at Corby tubeworks are prepared to make a stand for their fellow workers. It is vital that their courage and determination is backed by the leadership of the unions involved, and in particular the ISTC.

STOP PRESS

Victory! Management have conceded to all the striking workers' demands, and the busy beaver who caused it all has been moved to another plant.

Greenock

One place Prince Charlie missed in his recent visit to Greenock was the VF Corporation factory. It has been under occupation by the workers since February 5.

The factory is owned by an American multi-national and produces denim-jeans.

Shop stewards said "Our managing director came to a factory meeting in January to wish us a happy new year and tell us that the factory was to close in April!"

But the women at the factory refused to accept these dictates. In a fight to save the 240 jobs at stake they took over the factory a week after the closure announcement. They've

been there ever since.

The occupation is organised on three 12-hour shifts and the morale of the workers is extremely high. "We're confident we'll win; we would not be sitting here otherwise."

Already the support from the labour movement has been considerable. Numerous shop stewards committees, including the local shipyards have made large donations. The local Labour MP has pledged support and there have been talks with the STUC. A delegation from the factory also put their case to last weekend's Scottish LPYS conference. Hundreds of goodwill

letters have been sent, including one from a pensioner in St. Ives, Cornwall!

These women are flatly refusing to be treated like pawns in the games of profit hungry multinationals.

Messages of support and money should be sent to:

Mrs E Monaghan, Convenor, VF Occupation, 55 Cambridge Road, Greenock, Renfrewshire, Scotland.

By Alan McCombes

(Craigton LPYS)

Ansells

At Ansells the war of attrition is now on. The company have said to the pub managers who are T&G members that unless they serve foreign beers they will be thrown out of their houses.

The 300 managed houses have, however, refused to

accept beer unless delivered by Allied workers. Two thirds are shut and the other third are operating at only a fifth capacity, so only 4% of normal trade is being conducted through these outlets.

Wholesalers who were hyper active have now dropped out of the race to supply Ansells, due to successful picketing.

One hundred places are covered by pickets and the 'flying squad' can be sent off in minutes to any of these sites or new places. The wholesalers are not prepared to lose all their business just to satisfy Ansells management. Ansells can't be making any profit at the moment as a consequence.

Police have been used to

break picket lines. One picket was injured when a police van drove at the line, and two pickets were arrested in the subsequent scuffle.

The T&G regional officials leave 'something to be desired', as one steward put it. Rather than fighting the closure by extending the dispute to other sectors of the combine, they are being

content to negotiate terms of accepting the closure in relation to payments.

They should match the support, both financial and moral, being given by the labour movement against this closure. Keep it coming! Send to Joe Bond, 23 Barne Road, Erdington, Birmingham B23. (cheques to '5/377 T&GWU Branch Levy account').

LT builders

London Transport building trade workers suddenly and unexpectedly find themselves in the front line of the redundancy fight.

Out of the blue and without consultation with the union London Transport have decided on a complete reorganisation of the Building Department.

They propose that work will be handed to contractors and that the direct labour force be reduced to accommodate their plans.

The Joint Convenors Committee are determined to do all in their power to thwart LT's Executive's ambitions. We have called a mass meeting of its members, to be held at Camden Town Hall this Monday at 5.30pm.

The JCU fully support this move as do the regional committee of UCATT. The meeting has the full support of the unions involved in the department.

The stewards' committee cannot accept a loss of jobs for the direct work force, when LT call on contractors to perform work that has traditionally been done by direct workers.

We ask all bodies that can help us in our struggle to do so. The Tories have consistently hit at direct labour forces at every level since they were elected. This must be resisted by all means and at every level.

Without a viable building department on LT the London rate payers can be held to ransom by the big money builders who neither care about their standards of work or the welfare of their employees, but just want to milk as much profit from their jobs as possible.

By John Janman

(Sec. Joint Convenors Committee LT)

CIVIL SERVICE

'PAY US A LIVING WAGE'

JOBS NOT PROFIT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Next Monday, 9 March, civil servants from all the main unions will give their opinion of the government's 6% public sector wages policy.

A one day stoppage will see rallies and marches throughout Britain and Northern Ireland. Ports and Airports will be shut. Income Tax, Social Security and even driving tests will be suspended!

For the first time a really united campaign of action has been launched. Strike centres have already been set up in 40 localities nationwide.

The stoppage is the first step in what promises to be a long drawn out struggle, with plans to concentrate firepower through selective strikes in key financial and administrative centres.

By only bringing out a relatively small number of workers in computer centres and elsewhere and paying them high strike benefit (85% of pay) they hope to keep them out for a long time.

All the unions have for the first time agreed to levy their members weekly to back up the strike and enable us to pull out wider areas. In addition to the selective strikes, guerilla action is likely.

The unions are concentrating on revenue departments

By Pat Byrne
(CPSA)

such as Income Tax and Customs and Excise, attempting to stop much government income. In particular they hope to blunt the edge of next week's budget.

If necessary, however, computers in DHSS and DE may be shut down, although an emergency service will be operated by our members in local offices.

There is a high level of feeling running right through all grades in the service! 7% (the government's final offer) is seen as an insult. Price rises in the pipeline have already taken that paltry sum away before we even get it!

However, despite victory for the miners and relative success for the water workers, we cannot expect an easy battle. The Tories are now looking for a whipping boy so they can show us who is boss.

Unlike 1979, we can expect massive retaliation by management. Where selective action bites hard, the Civil Service Department under

orders from Thatcher will start suspensions, locking out members in related areas.

Members throughout the country must be prepared to come out in defence of such members. But if management retaliate in any serious way then all out action will be posed before us.

In their secret strategy document written by Nicholas Ridley, before the last election, the Tories laid out clearly their plans for trade unions.

They would retreat in the face of action by miners, power workers and water workers, but would make a stand against British Leyland, the steelworkers and the civil service! How prophetic! First British Steel, then the car workers, are we next for the chop?!

For a Conservative government, though, to alienate its own civil service, even of the highest grades would be suicide. As an integral part of the state machine, the cost of employees' disaffection could be fatal.

Fears about the leaking of secrets explains why the cabinet and Thatcher herself take such a close interest in developments within civil service trade unions and their general leftward trend.

Without doubt as we shall show on 9 March, our interests now lie with the labour movement. If a general strike develops in the near future we will not man the buses and organise strike-breaking as in 1926. On the contrary!

Lord Soames may possibly



CPSA members meet in the 1979 dispute. This struggle could be far tougher.

Photo: MILITANT

alone is the barrier. At last week's rally, local Labour representatives Anne Clwyd and MP Denzil Davies said that they would back the workers in Duports with all their power and ISTC national official Sandy Feather spelt out that the steel union would call for work or nationalisation.

"Nothing will move"

Terry Thomas, speaking from the Welsh executive of the NUM, called for all union support for the steel workers. The miners had proved that Thatcher could be beaten and he pledged support from the National Union of Mineworkers.

The working class of Llanelli must mobilise to halt the wrecking of the factory and jobs. The LPYS has already offered full support in the campaign.

There is a tremendous undercurrent of support for these workers in their struggle. The mood of the works committee at Duports was 'No theft of plant and jobs from our town. Nothing will move.'

Political fight

The chairman of the works committee summed it up. "We are going to change the name from Duport Steel to Llanelli Steel."

Steelworkers realise this is a political fight, and the answer to the problems of unemployment is clear. Nationalisation of the plant with workers' control and management is the only way forward. Socialist planning of industry to meet our needs, not the shareholders' profits, would guarantee jobs for all. The only way we can save jobs is through the power of organised labour.

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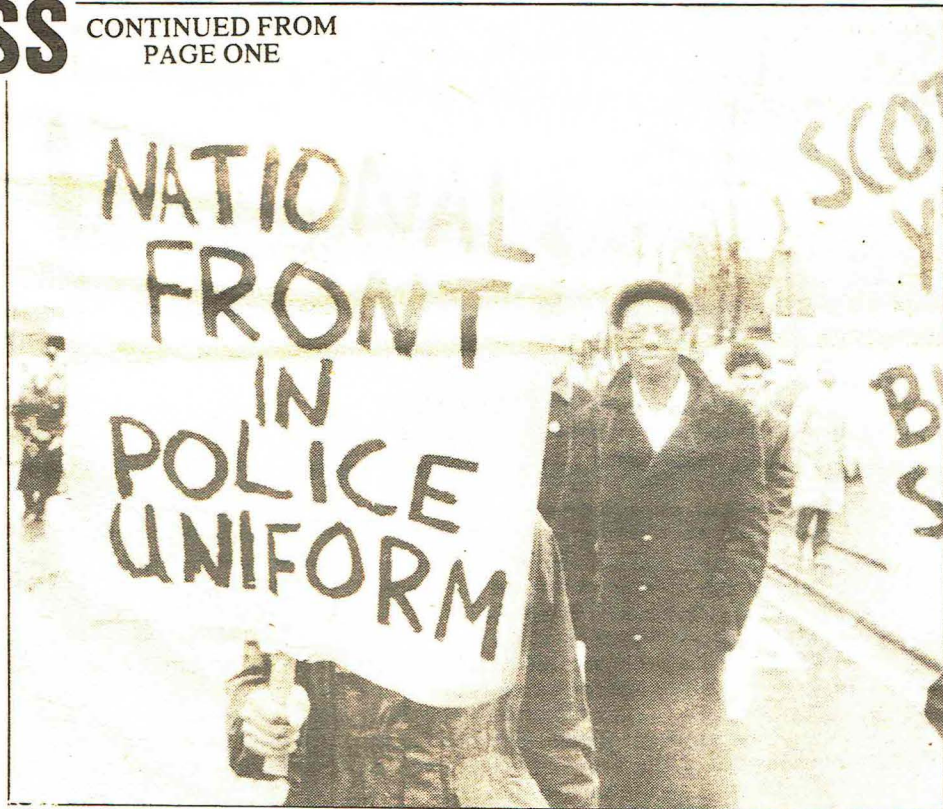
CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

thousands of blacks throughout Britain who face a growing threat of racial violence and Tory attacks. But many on the march felt that a much clearer political direction was needed. The question was asked: "Where do we go from here?"

The task now must be to galvanise the tremendous struggles of the black youth who came out in their thousands—into a nationwide campaign against the racist menace.

Such a campaign must be linked to the fight of all workers against this government. The Tories, in the final analysis, are responsible for these attacks since it is the profit system that breeds racism.

Campaign Against Racist Laws Demonstration Sunday 5 April 1pm. Speakers Corner, Hyde Park.



The anger could clearly be seen. What is needed now is a political direction.

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