

Militant

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CONTACT
NIGEL EDWARDS
12 AUSTERBERY WAY
ROWNEY
GOSPORT
FO. 2314

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Tories attack jobs and pay

STRIKE BACK!

TUC Must prepare 24hr General Strike

Throughout Britain, workers are beginning to take action against the attacks of the bosses and their government.

Over 200 women textile workers at Lee Jeans in Scotland have shown the way to fight.

They have occupied their factory for eighteen weeks in a fight to save jobs.

'Those who are last shall be first.' That's what the bible says—and Lee Jeans workers are

By Eileen Short

taking it literally.

These workers, treated with contempt by the employers, are setting an example for workers

everywhere.

While the heavy battalions of the trade unions: car, steel and engineering workers, were stunned by the avalanche of redundancies and Tory callousness, the jobs onslaught went unchecked.

The miners' stand against pit closures brought new confidence. The Lee Jeans workers, civil servants, People's Marchers—women, youth, the unemployed— took up the cudgel.

Now ambulance, rail and hospital workers are
**CONTINUED ON
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Photo: Militant

The demonstration to end the People's March for jobs showed the anger of the working class. Now civil servants, ambulance, railway and hospital workers have taken to struggle.

NALGO Fights Tory Cuts



The opening days of the annual conference of the National Association of Local Government Officers (NALGO) have shown the process of change rapidly taking place in this union.

Over pay the Health service group have agreed that an annual meeting should ratify their pay claim and a further meeting should be held to decide if the offer be accepted.

The Gas group have agreed that an all-out strike should be declared if the Tories hive off any part of the gas industry.

The group representing workers in the university

By Dave Griffiths

sector passed a resolution supporting industrial action to fight cuts—in opposition to the leadership's recommendation.

Cheered on by an impressive lobby of striking typists from Liverpool, the Local Government group passed an emergency resolution to strengthen their dispute. An excellent speech from Derek Hatton, himself a Labour Councillor, outlined the need to take up the political aspect of this struggle.

The resolution was overwhelmingly carried against the advice of the leadership. Conference has also

agreed to make provision for unemployed members to remain within the union.

This fighting determined mood augurs well for the rest of the conference week and raises the hope that the resolution supporting the campaign for a ballot on affiliation of NALGO to the Labour Party may be successful.

STOP PRESS—NALGO

The Labour Council in Lothian have refused to implement Tory inspired cuts.

NALGO members came out on strike on Tuesday in support of the council. Over 2,000 union members attended a march and rally.

BUILD Militant RALLY

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AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED

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Militant

Support Benn Against Attacks

In the battle for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party, the attacks upon Tony Benn have increased to a crescendo.

The press have found more ammunition with which to attack him in the challenge by Michael Foot to stand for the leadership not the deputy leadership.

But the challenge is more a comment on Foot and the right wing in the Shadow Cabinet than on Tony Benn himself.

We expect, of course, that the press will always attack Tony Benn because of the fact that he represents the movement of the rank and file of the Labour Party towards real socialist policies. But it is disgraceful that some of the left should have joined in the baiting of Tony Benn.

It has been reported that Neil Kinnock and Stan Orme, both Tribune group members were involved in Foot's attacks, even to the extent of helping him draw up the 24-page statement that was presented to the Shadow Cabinet, something that can be interpreted in no other way except as a defence of Denis Healey for the deputy leadership.

It is a matter of public record that Healey has opposed all the democratic changes that have been introduced in the party, and that he stands against most of the policies agreed by Conference. In the eyes of most Party members he is associated with the policies of monetarism—in reality diluted Thatcherism—that were the economic basis of the Labour government's policies from 1974 to 1979, with rising unemployment, the £8bn.-worth of public expenditure cuts, the tax increases and the wage controls that led to Labour's defeat.

It is not an accident that all the Tory press barons are rooting for Healey. But what is true of Denis Healey is also true of a majority of the Shadow Cabinet and the Parliamentary Labour Party. The right-wing make-up of the Shadow Cabinet is a reflection of the fact that most Labour MPs are divorced from the aspirations of the rank and file and are opposed to Party policy decisions.

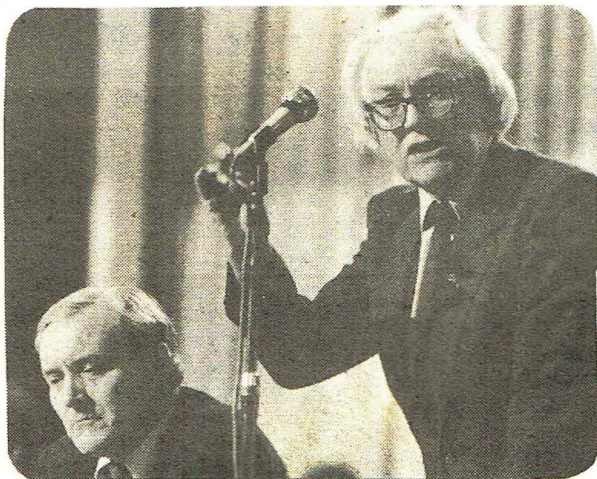
As David Watt stated in 'The Times': "the fact of the matter is that the existing Shadow Cabinet really cannot be 'trusted' to adopt the kind of left-wing policies that the Labour conference, or even the TUC, are enjoining."

Former leader James Callaghan has raised the possi-

bility of the PLP refusing to accept the Wembley conference and continuing to elect its own leaders as before: "In the autumn the Parliamentary Labour Party—whatever the conference result—will have to elect its own leaders."

Quite clearly, it is not Tony Benn, but the PLP and the Shadow Cabinet which is out of step with the needs and wishes of the Party membership.

Even while in opposition, the gulf between the Conference and the PLP is extremely damaging. If the Labour leaders were to use their authority to campaign seriously for the reforms and



Benn and Foot at last year's Party conference

changes spelled out in conference decisions on unemployment, housing, health, and so on, then massive support could be rallied for the party. Even the debates in Parliament could serve as a rallying call as Labour leaders spoke over the heads of the Tories to the working class outside.

But Tony Benn is absolutely right in saying that the Shadow Cabinet have failed to put forward Party policy. Rather than take the policies of the Conference as a launching pad for an attack upon the Tories, the right wing in the Shadow Cabinet have spent most of their energies denouncing Contry. The right-wing make-up of the Shadow Cabinet is a reflection of the fact that most Labour MPs are divorced from the aspirations of the rank and file and are opposed to Party policy decisions.

Even in the debate on defence, when Benn was supposed to have led a "revolt" of 73 Labour MPs, their crime was actually to have voted against the Tory defence estimates whilst the official policy was not to oppose but to abstain!

By his attacks upon Benn and the left of the party in general (including, of course, the new ritual attack and distortion of 'Militant's' ideas), Foot's own position in the Party will be weaken-

ed. He is reported to have personal views close to Benn's on many issues, but he has effectively junked his former left-wing ideas by defending Healey.

Whilst avoiding any debate on policy, he has thrown all his own personal prestige and authority into the battle to get Healey re-elected.

When Foot rose to speak in the House of Commons last Thursday, he was cheered by Tory MPs, but in the same proportion as he becomes more popular with the Tory benches, his authority in the party will decline. Labour MP Bob Cryer has already said that Foot's action last week "places him firmly in the leadership of the right wing."

The challenge to Benn to stand for leader will bolster the morale of the right wing in the PLP, which in any case would vote overwhelmingly for Healey. But it

will make little impact on the CLP delegates who are still likely to vote overwhelmingly for Benn. Moreover, the movement to the left in the trades unions, indicated by the huge conference fringe meetings addressed by Tony Benn, will not be reversed.

Benn's stand for the deputy leadership can only be seen as part of a wider campaign to make Labour MPs accountable to the Party; it is a reflection of the pressure of the rank and file of the party, pushing it in the direction of socialist policies and for that reason should be supported.

Those on the right wing of the Party who are attacking Benn are more and more openly calling for a witch-hunt to expel marxists from the Party. But the attacks of the right will not succeed. If Healey wins the contest at all, it is still likely to be close, and he will be overwhelmingly defeated in the Constituency section.

The events of the last week will only strengthen the resolve of Party members to fight for MPs and leaders who will genuinely reflect the socialist aspirations of the Party Conference and membership.

Left candidates replace right-wing MPs



Laughing at Eric Heffer's speech during last year's Party Conference. But the right wing of Healey, Owen and Mason are not so happy now

The latest round of selection conferences for Labour Parliamentary candidates reflects the move to the left in the Party.

In West Derby, Liverpool, Eric Ogden became the second sitting Labour MP to be dropped as a candidate for the next election.

Ogden has a long record of supporting the right wing of the Party. During his seventeen years as an MP he has called for the expulsion of *Militant* supporters from the Labour Party.

He was defeated by Bob Wareing, a Merseyside District Councillor who stands on the left of the Party.

Significantly, all three candidates on the short list, apart from Ogden, were left wingers.

In Wigan, traditionally a right wing party, Les Huckfield, National Executive Committee and Tribune group member, was selected to replace sitting MP Alan Fitch, who is retiring. Huckfield's current seat at Nuneaton is being redistributed amongst neighbouring constituencies.

He beat local left winger Neil Turner by two votes. The right wing candidates were eliminated early in the ballot.

In Gateshead West, where the MP, John Horam, defected to the Social Democrats, local left wing Councillor, Dave Clelland was

selected. All the candidates on the short-list were on the left.

Dulwich also saw the selection of a left wing candidate. Kate Hoey, a Hackney Councillor was selected to replace former Solicitor General, Sam Silkin, who is retiring as an MP. Again, three out of four candidates on the short list were on the left.

All these selection conferences reflect the move to the left within the ranks of the Labour Party. With the growing polarisation between Labour MPs and party members, there can be little doubt that rank and file members want their representatives in Parliament to really carry out Party policy.

See re-selection article p.5

Tories hit out at Labour Councils

The days when local councils could maintain a high level of public services by increasing rates to counter-act Tory cuts are over.

By
Larry Flanagan
(Rutherglen LPYS)

Lothian Council has been told this week to cut its planned expenditure by a massive £53 million. If they do not comply voluntarily, legislation going through Parliament will shortly compel them.

Under the "Miscellaneous Provisions Bill" (Scotland) the Scottish Secretary of State is allowed to cut the amount of money given by the central government in the rate support grant. As this totals over 60% of all local authority revenue it is clear that local Councils will be unable to maintain services unless they mount a massive campaign against the government.

Otherwise, as fast as Councils raise the rates, the Tories will cut the rate support grant. And raising the rates only undermines



working-class opposition to the Tories.

Already rate and rent increases have aroused tenants' anger throughout Scotland. The road of carrying out Tory cuts is a road to disaster. It only separates workers from their Labour councils.

With six other district Councils in Scotland being affected by the new legislation, the government can only be defeated by mass united action. And the Tories' action in Scotland is only a foretaste of what the rest of Britain has in store.

Labour Councils cannot fight alone with one hand tied. They can only defeat

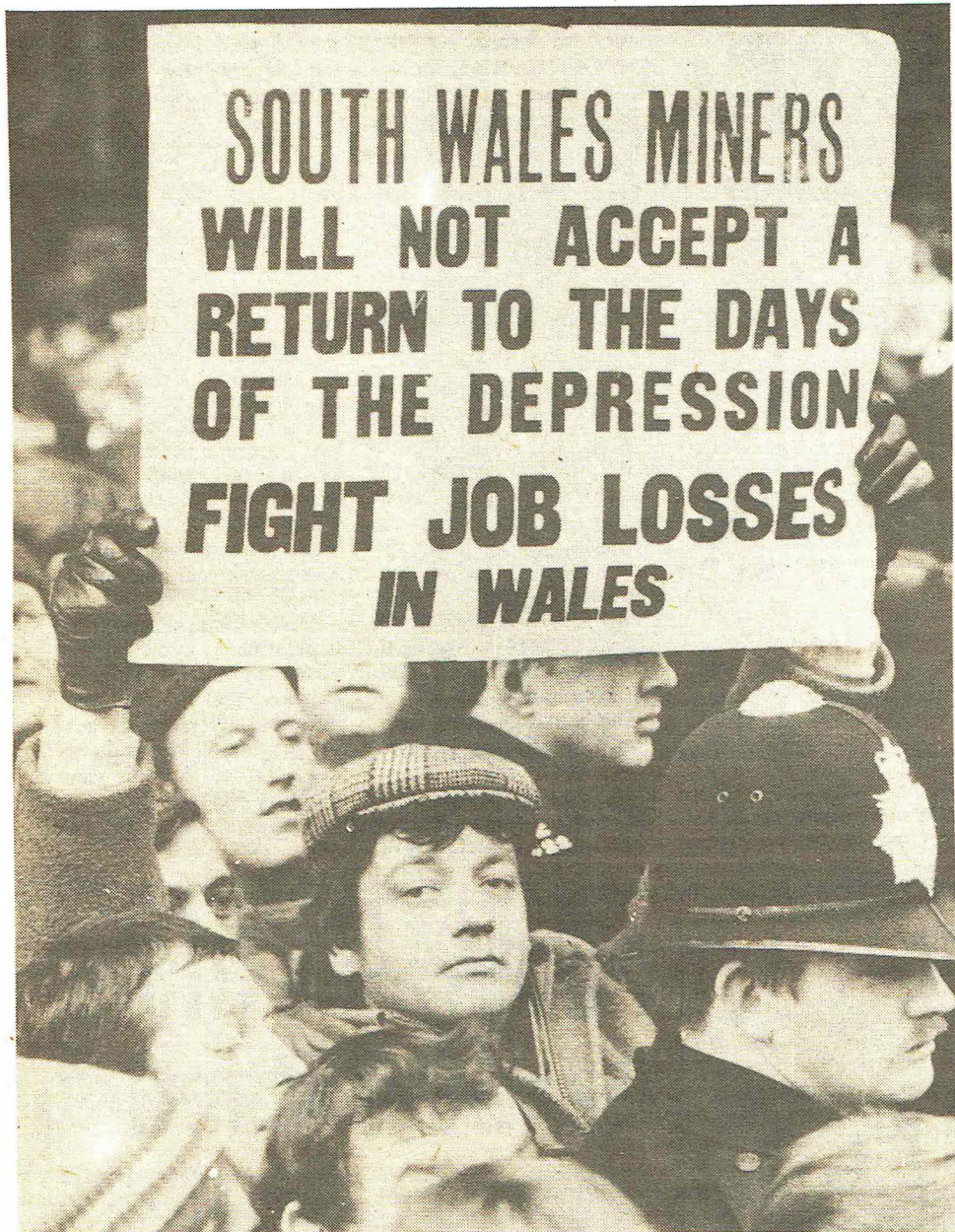
the government if there is action by workers, tenants and their families.

Last week Heseltine told Councils in England and Wales to cut £450 million from their budgets this year. This will devastate the inner city areas where there is the greatest deprivation.

Labour Councils must now rescind earlier rent rises and announce a rent freeze. Mass meetings of both local authority workers and tenants should be held, to explain the actions of the government and to build opposition to them.

A major stand by the Scottish labour movement against the Tories could attract enormous support. The left wing leadership of the Scottish Council of the Labour Party should take a lead in co-ordinating such a campaign. Unless they do so, the only choice Labour councils will soon face is which services to cut.

WALES - STOP JOBS DISASTER



Strike action stopped pit closures earlier this year

Photo: Militant

200,000 people on the scrap heap. that is the prospect which faces the working class of South Wales by the end of 1982: a further 53,000 on the dole.

There were ten times as many redundancies last year compared to eight years ago; there were 29 people chasing every vacancy. In Llanelli a quarter of the town's workforce will soon be without a job.

By Brian Lewis

The workers of South Wales face disaster if capitalism is allowed to continue. Last year Thatcher told the workers of South Wales to move to find jobs. It is not

the workers who should move out but Thatcher and her government.

Put the Tories on the scrap heap. That's the message which must be echoed at the Labour party demonstration in Cardiff on July 4th. Make this demo against the Tories part of a mass campaign to force an immediate general election and bring to power a socialist Labour government to end unemployment.

SAVE THE MINES

Despite our recent victory the South Wales miners are still on their guard against further attacks on the industry by this vicious Tory Government.

The promise of much needed investment into the South Wales coalfield has not materialised especially in the five pits originally threatened with closure. They are still being run down.

But it is not just these pits that we need to be concerned about, many other pits could also face the Board's axe. Unless cash is brought into the area.

We must demand from our leadership that unless the promise of more investment is acted upon, then

further industrial action must be considered to secure our jobs. Many of our members rightly feel that when we held the knife to Maggie's throat we should have stuck it in and brought down the Tory government.

By

Tyrone O'Sullivan

(Sec. Tower Lodge
S. Wales NUM)

Our national leadership urged us to hold back and accept the promises of the government. Promises do not provide jobs. Recruit-

ment is low, with few of our unemployed youth having the opportunity of starting down the pits.

South Wales miners won't allow the Tories to get away with false promises again. If we are forced into confrontation again with this government we should be prepared to fight to the end. We should fight for increased investment in the coalfield, and more recruitment to the industry. Miners should take their part in the fight for the return of a Labour government which will implement Labour Party Conference decisions. This is the only real way to secure a real future for miners and their families.

Boycott Scarman — Hold Peoples's Enquiry

By

Kevin Fernandes
(London LPYS
Regional Committee)

The Tory enquiry under Lord Scarman into the Brixton upheaval which begins on Monday is nothing more than a sham. The bosses' minds are already made up.

According to Thatcher and the Tories, unemployment had nothing to do with the Brixton disturbances. In a crude racist smear they wrongly claimed that nothing like this happened in the 1930's. This attempt to blame the explosion the black people of Brixton is just a foretaste of future attempts by the Tories and the bosses to whip up racism.

The role of the police had long been clear to the people of Brixton: the everyday harassment of young people, the arrest on trumped up 'sus' charges, the blatant racist bias of many police, the provocative intervention of the Special Patrol Group, and the sustained, high saturation of policing the area. All this was shown in Lambeth Council's report on the area published last January.

It is the police who should be put in the docks for harassment, intimidation, and provocative tactics. So what confidence can we have if an enquiry con-

ducted by a top judge, the very pillar of the state legal establishment?

People with first hand experience of condition of Brixton police tactics are not giving evidence to Scarman. They know that this enquiry is pre-determined. The vast majority of local black and community organisation are boycotting Scarman. Not one local labour movement organisation, is submitting evidence and only four community groups are represented at the enquiry.

The terms of the Scarman Enquiry reveals its real motives. Firstly it will deal with "an examination of the events of 10-12 April and their immediate causes".

This has great danger for anyone who gives evidence. No one should be fooled by the Attorney General's promise that anyone testifying will have immunity from prosecution.

Although this is a tacit admission that it was the mass police intervention which sparked off the general revolt by local workers, immunity only applies to evidence given directly to the enquiry.

It will not, in any way,

prevent criminal proceedings being brought against witnesses if other evidence is found. There is nothing to stop evidence given to Scarman being used by the police against other individuals.

The second part of the Scarman Enquiry seems, on the surface, to be innocuous. It involves "consideration of the underlying causes, with special preference to policing areas where the community is multi-racial". In reality this is just an attempt to see how best the police can "control" the most deprived sections of society. The reference to "multi-racial" communities implies that blacks are a particular source of problems for the police, and therefore need "special attention". The Enquiry will not lead to the ending of unemployment, terrible housing conditions or police harassment.

What is needed is a genuine People's Enquiry,

which must be initiated by the labour and trade union movement, together with black organisations.

Only such an enquiry would be trusted by the people of the area. People would be prepared to give their evidence to a People's tribunal, but not to a law Lord, surrounded by officials and policemen.

A People's Enquiry would be able to really investigate the causes behind the riots and see who is to blame for unemployment, poor housing, and cuts in social services.

The whole of the labour movement in Lambeth must, rally round the call of the Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton, for the setting up of a People's Enquiry as an alternative to Scarman. Such an enquiry must have the backing of local black organisations and must be linked to the campaign for the dropping of all charges arising from the events of 10-12 April.

Police and Fascists provoke violence

The report of the Coventry anti-racist march in *Militant* (29 May) does not give a complete picture of the events of Saturday, May 23rd. The blame for the troubles lies fully on the shoulders of the racials and police methods during the demonstration.

The police allowed chanting racist thugs to stay near the route of the march, hurling abuse and obscenities and giving Nazi salutes at the demonstrators as they marched past. The thugs were allowed to taunt the marchers, whilst the police intervened only sporadically.

When the demonstrators reached Cathedral Square, the police sectioned off the last third of the march and prevented it from entering the Square. The police eventually allowed the marchers to go to the Square through a narrow cordon. Meanwhile, racist thugs appeared on the other side of the police lines and began again to chant abuse and give Nazi salutes.

A section of the march was enraged by the police provocation and the racist slogans. It became even more enraged when mounted police charged into the marchers trying to get into Cathedral Square.

At this point, some missiles were thrown. The police sent in 'snatch squads' to arbitrarily arrest demonstrators. This in-

By Darrall
Cozens
(Vice Chairman, Coventry SE Labour Party)

furiated the marchers even more, and more missiles were hurled at the police. Most of the missiles, however, landed on or near other demonstrators.

At this point, attempts were made by more experienced Asian comrades to get the missile throwing stopped. They saw it was futile to take on the police as a substitute for taking on the racials. Such actions could only result in more arrests and therefore unnecessary sacrifices.

Following this demonstration, *Militant* supporters in Coventry are pressing for:

★ A labour movement enquiry into the events of Saturday, May 23rd.

★ The dropping of all charges against those anti-fascist demonstrators arrested on the march.

★ The raising of money to pay the legal costs involved.

★ A campaign to ensure that the violence initiated by the racist and fascist thugs does not result in a blanket ban being introduced on all political activity in the Coventry precinct.

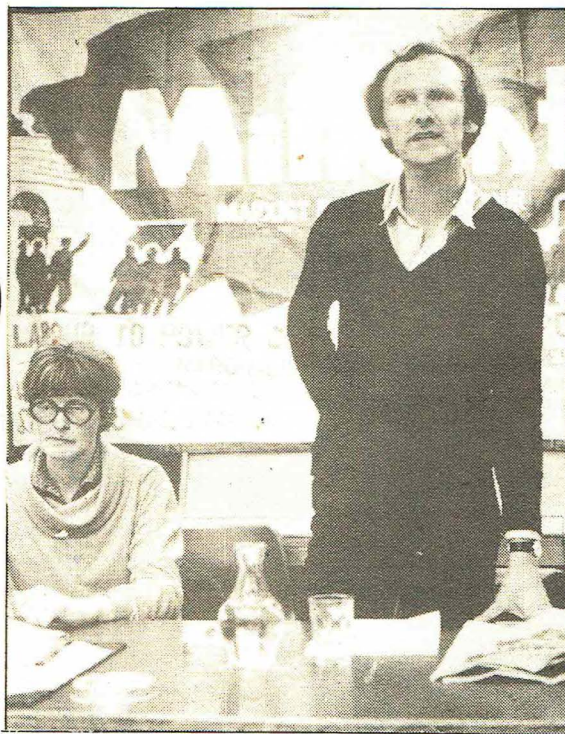
LPYS SUMMER CAMP AUGUST 1st-8th

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COME TO- MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL

This year's Marxist Weekend School promises to be the best since the school was first held in 1978.

By Peter Lush



Bob McKee, one of the speakers at the weekend school, addressing a Readers' Meeting.

The weekend opens with a debate on 'The Future of the Labour Party', between Tony Saunois (LPYS representative on the NEC) and Alan Whitehead (Labour Co-ordinating Committee). With the clashes over democracy in the Party, the deputy leadership contest, and the continuing

debate over which policies Labour should adopt, this will be a valuable exchange of ideas.

The five courses at the school all cover important topics for the labour movement today. Following the election of Mitterrand in France, the course on France covers the Popular

Front Government of 1936, the upheavals of 1968, and the future for France with a Socialist President. Peter Taafe and Lynn Walsh will be speaking.

A speaker from *Militant Irish Monthly* will lead the discussion on Ireland. With

the increase in tension in the north over the past few months, an examination of Ireland is even more essential. Two of the sessions deal with Irish History—the 1916 Uprising, and partition and the civil war—while the final session looks at perspectives

for Northern Ireland.

The past five years have seen enormous developments in South Africa, with continual struggles against the apartheid regime. The course on that country will cover the history of the South African labour movement, as well as prospects for the future of South Africa.

Brian Ingham and Tony Saunois will be speaking on 'The History of the British labour movement.' This course covers Chartism, the early trade unions, and unemployed struggles in the 1920s and '30s, with particular attention being paid to the National Unemployed Workers Movement.

After the recent 'People's March for Jobs', this will be valuable for all those involved in the fight against unemployment. There will also be a session on 'Poplarism'—very relevant today—covering the role of Labour Councils in the fight to oppose cuts and defend living standards.

The course on 'Introduction to Marxism' covers the theory of Marxism, economics and 'Marxism and Internationalism'. Jeremy Birch and Bob McKee will

be speaking.

The struggle by the workers in Poland to win independent trade unions, and the role now being played by the leaders of Solidarity will form the basis for the session on 'Poland: the struggle for workers' democracy', with Lynn Walsh speaking.

The final session will be a debate on 'How to achieve peace and disarmament?' between Peter Taafe *Militant's* Editor and a leading anti-nuclear campaigner.

150 people attended the first Marxist Weekend School in 1978. Last year, 320 attended. Every reader and supporter of *Militant*, from all over the country, as well as those active in the labour and trade union movement will find this school valuable. Why not organise a mini-bus to bring people from your area to the school?

Send bookings in as soon as possible. Only £4 for the whole weekend—school students and unemployed half-price. Don't miss out on the best weekend of political discussion this year—BOOK NOW!

RIGHT WING POLICIES WON'T WIN BACK VOTES



Eastern Region Labour demonstration in Cambridge against Tories. Photo: Ian Campbell

The Eastern Region was where the Tories had their greatest success in the 1979 election. Labour won only five of the region's forty-five seats.

But since then there have been signs of a growing radicalisation; in the May local elections the Tories lost 162 seats, 120 of them to Labour.

Whereas in the 1930s the economic depression almost by-passed large areas of the region, 1981 sees unemployment rising everywhere. In the past people moved to new towns such as Basildon. Now unemployment has doubled in Basildon in the last year—where can you move to now, in order to find a job?

The debate on 'Unemployment and industrial strategy' will provide the major discussion at this weekend's Eastern Region Labour Party Conference. The right-wing in the

party always used to claim that new towns were the answer. Now with the capitalist crisis hitting everywhere they advocate wage restraint.

Resolution 27 from the engineering union AUEW (Hatfield and Welwyn) denies this arguing that "experience has proved that such measures deepen Britain economic crisis by cutting purchasing power and lessening demand and therefore increasing unemployment." This resolution must be supported as must those which advocate improvements in the living standards of working people.

But it is vital that a clear socialist alternative comes from this Conference. Although the alternative economic strategy contains many reforms it retains the private ownership of industry, the very reason why British society is in crisis.

Resolutions from Harlow and Southend West Labour Parties point to a clear socialist alternative.

Harlow states "we see that the solution lies in not only getting rid of the Tories but in campaigning to return a Labour government committed to socialist policies." It calls for the resources of the economy to be used for the people but recognises this is only possible 'by ending the rule of profiteers and financiers' and demands a socialist planned economy.

Fear of nuclear war has led to the second highest number of resolutions submitted being on nuclear disarmament. But none of the seven resolutions explain how this will be achieved other than to 'campaign' or 'demand' nuclear disarmament.

This is not enough. Weapons in themselves do not cause war.

The 1919 Versailles Treaty almost totally disarmed Germany—not just bombs but also planes and ships. But the crisis of capitalism within Germany produced Hitler and re-armament leading to

the Second World War.

The cause of war is rooted in the crisis of capitalism—only a policy to end capitalism removes the threat of war. Participation in the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament should be to argue for socialist policies and a socialist society and not to get involved in alliances with Tories and businessmen that will prevent such a strategy being adopted.

There will be many other important debates at Conference, on N. Ireland, women, and race. But to help ensure that these democratic decisions of the party are put into practice delegates should back the resolutions supporting the Wembley Conference decision and throw its weight behind Tony Benn's candidature for deputy leadership.

By Mike Waddington
(E Region Executive LPYS representative)

Panorama films Readers Meeting



ITN at Militant Readers Meeting last year

The fifty five people who attended the Militant Readers' meeting at East Ham Town Hall on 20 May were surprised at the extra attention we received—from a BBC TV "Panorama" film unit!

Leading London Militant supporter Bob Labi, who for the last 11 years has been a member of the London Labour Party Executive, spoke on the theme "Benn v Healey—which way for Labour?"

Bob Labi explained that the newly established Electoral College—which will settle the deputy leadership question in October—makes the decisions on a "recorded vote"

basis, which means that every local Labour Party will know how its delegate and its MP votes, and every union branch will know how its delegation votes.

The keen interest in this issue among rank and file trade unionists was reflected in contributions to the discussion from local members of the electricians, rail, post-office engineers and building workers unions.

The collection raised £155. "Panorama" filmed the meeting as part of a feature on Benn's campaign for the deputy leadership, which is due to be screened on 22 June.

NUCLEAR WASTE OPPOSED

Barrow's Labour council has now come out against using the town to transport nuclear waste to Windscale. This decision followed resolutions to the Party's General Management Committee.

A number of Labour councils have now expressed their opposition to this dangerous traffic. The decision by Bar-

row is one of the more significant because the port is essential to British Nuclear Fuels. The struggle will continue until this transportation of nuclear fuel is ended.

For further information on Barrow's campaign against nuclear waste, contact Jean Emery, 29 Longreins Road, Barrow. Tel 33851.

Democracy's 'A plot' says rejected MP

The bosses' press have recently agonised over the case of the first Labour MP to fail to regain nomination as his constituency's candidate for the next general election.

As the bosses' hired hacks weep into their gin and tonics, most Labour Party members will be toasting 'the first of many'.

The fate of Ladywood MP John Sever is being portrayed as 'the beginning of the end' for right-wing and 'moderate' Labour MPs. In reality it is the latest episode in the struggle to wrest power in the party away from the top and install democratic accountability.

On Friday, 22 May, at the re-selection conference, John Sever agreed that he thought it "fair" that internal party matters should be discussed with the press only by the officers of the Constituency. He also claimed that he had been mis-quoted in the *Birmingham Evening Mail*.

Yet on Friday, 29 May, the *Mail's* front-page carried an exclusive interview with—no prizes for guessing—John Sever MP. In this disgraceful attack, Sever accused the CLP's chairman and secretary of "conspiring" with the successful nominee to overthrow him. Use of the democratic re-selection procedure is condemned as "a plot."

Sever forgets to mention in the press interview that when he was originally selected as candidate in 1977 he only succeeded by one vote!

But there have been plots in Ladywood CLP. There has been a campaign to change the leadership of Soho ward, not on the basis of discussing different ideas,

opinions and arguments, which nobody would complain about if it had been done in an open, democratic manner; but by flooding the party with new members who have been told a string of fairy tales about 'infiltration', and 'plots'.

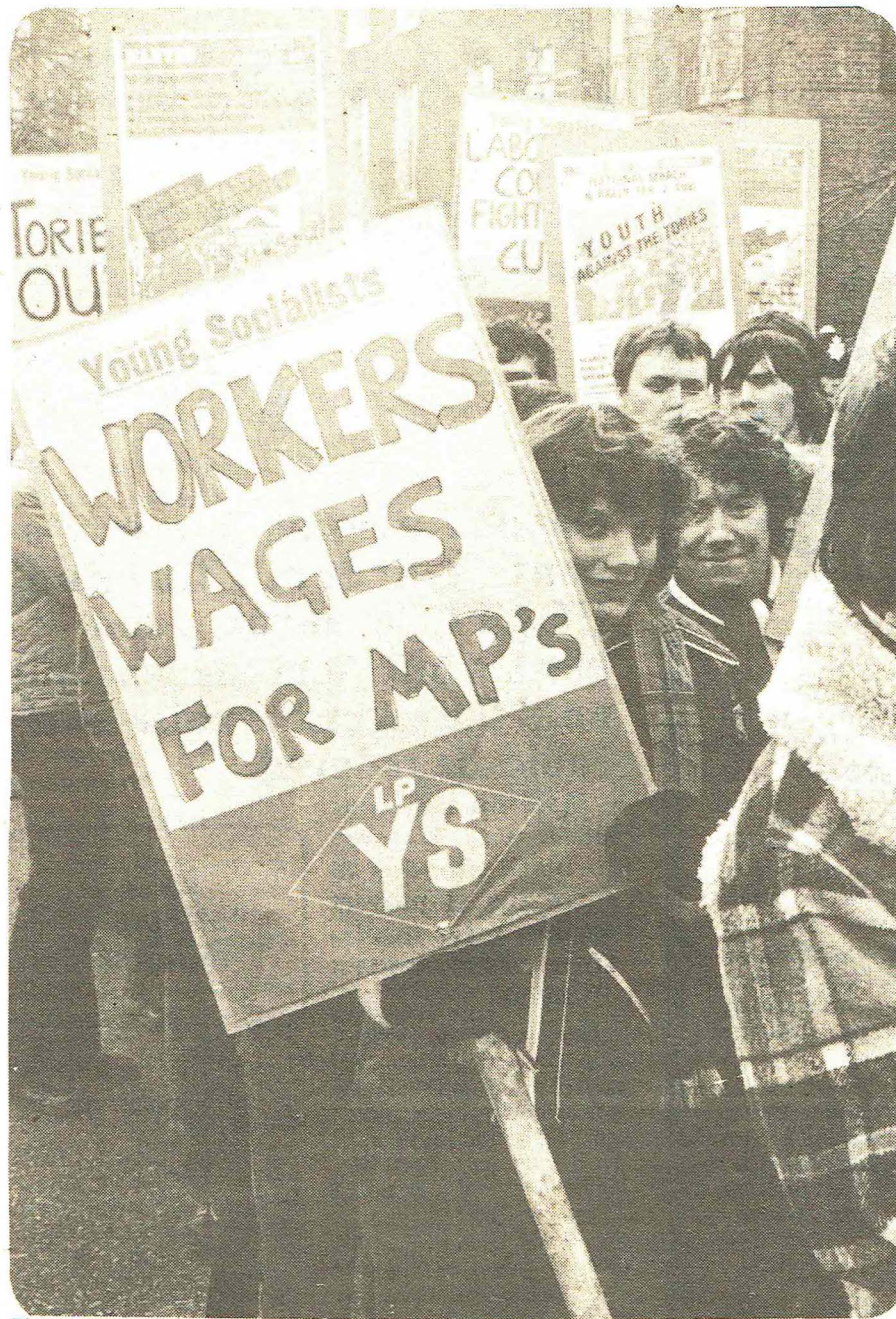
Mr Sever, incidentally, felt it necessary to attend Soho ward's AGM, and in doing so missed the AGM of another ward where he is the treasurer. At the Soho ward AGM, one of Sever's supporters was seen to try to pass around a list of candidates for various positions!

Contrast this with the present leadership of Soho ward. The meeting was conducted in the most democratic manner. All nominees for elections were asked to speak for a few minutes outlining their policies (these were translated into Punjabi or vice versa as necessary). Isn't this an example that the whole movement should applaud?

According to the *Mail*, Sever intends to fight to regain the position of Labour candidate in Ladywood. How does he intend to do this? The bosses' papers have given the game away.

They report that the MP has been working to change the composition of the General Management Committee to shift the political composition in his own favour. How does he intend

By a 'Militant' reporter



The demand that MPs should receive no more than the average industrial wage was raised on last year's LPYS march (above). Photo: Militant

to go about this, by manoeuvres or by arguing his case among the membership?

Labour Party members in other areas going into the re-selection process should be warned. On 22 May, Sever seemed much more amenable than usual. But this apparent 'deathbed conversion' lasted about a week. So if your MP appears to have a sudden change of heart, don't be fooled.

The sitting MP in any case has an enormous advantage over the other nominees. The MP can stand on a record of work while the other hopefuls can only try to convince you of what they would do if selected and elected. How can an MP deserve to be re-elected if he or she cannot convince a bare majority of their General Management Committee that they have done a good job?

'WE WERE NOT ELECTED FOR PERKS'

Since becoming a Councillor it has become even clearer to me the correctness of Militant's demand that all Labour movement representatives should have their expenses agreed by the working class bodies that select them.

Falkirk local authority has itself twinned with a Royal Navy vessel. So when the ship docked at a local port this became the opportunity for a reception for Councillors, officials, officers and crew. The cost was only £10 for a

dinner and dance, with a free bar all evening. Labour group members were asked not to indulge in too much alcohol as 'this might throw a bad light on the Labour Party'.

Surely a far worse light was thrown by the council spending, at the cost of the ratepayer: £950 on drink, £800 on food and £15 on cigars. Although this may not be a large part of the Council's budget we were not elected to enjoy perks but to fight cuts.

By Councillor John Wilson

Fight for unemployment cafe continues

The special cafe for the unemployed in East Kilbride, which opened for an experimental period of 28 days last month, has now closed, as the lease has expired.

The local council were given the town centre premises for a rent-free period of only one month. While the cafe was open it clearly demonstrated the outstanding need for such facilities for the young unemployed. During the 28 days, 3,500 young people used the cafe.

Mr Owen Collins, area community education officer, said, "The young people of the area supported the project well. Their eyes are now on the local authority to see what

action will be taken. In East Kilbride a cafe or cafes would be an asset...to the existing provision for young people."

In a questionnaire carried out by the Youth Enquiry Service on young people using the cafe, nearly ninety-five per cent thought the cafe was a good idea. At the same time forty-eight per cent of those questioned thought that an unemployed association should be started in East Kilbride.

East Kilbride LPYS have put a resolution to East Kilbride Labour Party calling on the Labour Council to open a permanent cafe for the

unemployed youth of the town. The LPYS have no intention of letting this matter rest and we will continue to campaign for improved youth facilities, particularly for the unemployed.

The opening of the cafe, even for only 28 days, has shown that the campaigning work of the LPYS is not empty sloganeering, but can be put into practice. East Kilbride LPYS will continue the fight.

By Stephen Wright
(East Kilbride LPYS)

Stop Fascist Attacks

On 9 May a young member of Fleetwood LPYS was savagely attacked by a group of National Front thugs who had recognised him from an anti-Fascist demonstration in Blackpool the week before. He was left with a bruised and cut face and clearly shaken by the ordeal.

Another lad was threatened with similar treatment and two girls were taunted with threats of rape. All four are between 16 and 17 years old and have only come into the LPYS in the last six weeks.

The police have been unhelpful and the only way we have found to protect ourselves is to take up the issue within the labour

movement and organise our own defence.

In this area of former prosperity, now devastated by the collapse of the fishing industry, it has become all too easy for Fascists to peddle their nationalistic rubbish. The trade union and labour leadership have not helped by their denunciations of foreign fishermen and reliance on nationalist solutions. All this does is build barriers against international solidarity amongst the working class.

The LPYS locally is determined to continue the fight for the socialist transformation of society, and help mobilise support to drive the fascists off the streets.

MILITANT READERS MEETINGS

COVENTRY: 'Car Industry in Crisis—the fight for jobs'. Speaker: Bill Mullins, TGWU, former senior shop steward, British Leyland, Rover, Solihull. At Indian & Commonwealth Club, Lockhurst Lane, Monday 15 June 7.30 pm.

EAST KILBRIDE: 'Ireland—the fight for a socialist solution'. Hear Billy Lynn (Belfast Trades Council executive member). Wednesday 17 June 7.30pm at Kirkton Holme Hall, West Mains, East Kilbride.

SOUTH LONDON: Tories must go—socialist policies for Labour. Speakers: Ted Grant (Political Editor 'Militant'); Jake Magee (Labour GLC candidate for Uxbridge, May 1981); Bob Lee (PNP Youth). Wednesday 17 June, 7.45 pm. At Lambeth Town Hall, Lower Hall, Acre Lane, Brixton SW2.

WEST LONDON: 'The Tories and the Trade Unions'. Speaker: Peter Taaffe. Venue: The Tabernacle, Powis Square, London W.11. (Westbourne Park nearest tube). Date: Tuesday 16 June, 8.00 pm.

SOUTH HERTS: 'The Leadership of the Labour Party'. Speaker: Steve Amor (Stevenage CLP). Thursday 11 June, 8.00 pm. Venue: Room 2, Allum Hall (opposite Elstree Station).

SUNDERLAND: 'Ireland: which way forward?' Sunderland Supporters Club on Wednesday 17 June, 7.30 pm. Further details phone Sunderland 653994.

CHESTER-LE-STREET: 'Ireland: which way forward?' Chester-le-Street Labour Club, Sunday 14 June, 7.30 pm. Further details phone Chester-le-Street 887603.

ISTC Conference. Wednesday June 17th 7.30pm. Town Hall, The Square, Bournemouth. 'Save Steel, Fight the Tories'

LEYTONSTONE: 'Benn or Healey, which way forward for Labour'. Tuesday 30 June, 8.00 pm. Harrow Green Library, Cathall Road, Leytonstone E11. Speaker: Martin Elvin.

TOTTENHAM: Tuesday 16 June, 8.00, Tottenham Trades Hall, E. Grove, London N.17. 'South Africa—The fight against apartheid'. With a South African speaker.



According to the strict letter of the law as laid down by Thatcher's guru Milton Friedman, there is no need for the civil servants' strike—their pay is irrelevant. So says Mrs Thatcher.

When Enoch Powell asked her, in parliament, whether there was any "logical necessity, for the purposes of eliminating inflation, to attempt to reduce the real remuneration of those in public non-commercial employment," Mrs Thatcher replied: "In strict academic logic, disregarding the number in the public sector, disregarding the need for capital expenditure, disregarding the levels of taxation and interest rates, on strict academic logic you are right—in everything else you are wrong."

Not much comfort for civil servants, or the millions of unemployed, or those dependent on decimated social services and shrinking benefits, but in amongst the gobbledegook the message seems to be: monetarism is fine in theory, but the practicalities are different..."

Too much or too little; price rises, shortages, or surpluses—anything that happens to oil seems to seize up the creaking machinery of world capitalism.

To insulate the Japanese economy from fluctuations in supplies, 'strategic oil reserves' are being increased. Meanwhile, part of Japan's fleet of super-tankers, one of the biggest in the world, lies idle. The solution? Twenty-seven of the tankers are at anchor or drifting off the Japanese coast, weighed down with oil.

Each is fully manned and kept spotless—all dressed up with nowhere to go. Another eight tankers are to be added to the 'depot' which will then account for a quarter of Japan's total tanker capacity.

Perfectly sensible, for an individual nation state, trying to stay afloat on the stormy waters of capitalist world trade.

In terms of the rational use of the world's resources, insanity. Released from the fetters of 'patriotic' competition and the desperate drive for profit, oil could be put to work when and where it is needed. Resources could be directed to developing alternative fuel sources, and the world's tankers and ships used for the purposes for which they were designed—as transporters, to distribute the world's wealth.

The Tory government is considering giving Sir Peter Parker, head of British Rail a £30,000 pay rise. With all the pressures of rising prices poor old Sir Peter finds it a bit difficult to make ends meet on his paltry £48,000 a year.

Mind you part of his job at the moment consists of telling railwaymen that BR can not afford to pay them more than a 7% increase. A drivers assistant gets a basic wage of £64.80, a driver gets £93.80, and as railwaymen point out 7% of nothing is nothing. Sid Weighell, leader of the NUR, has described Sir Peter as "A first class Chairman". Maybe that's because he serves the interests of first class passengers!

But at a time when the government is cutting investment in the rail industry, imposing cash limits; when derailments are becoming more frequent because of cuts in track maintenance, we would make one suggestion about how to save money. Sack Sir Peter and put the industry under workers' control and management.

Building-Lives Sacrificed for Profit

On one housing site in Covent Garden, London, UCATT members had to black a brick-cutting machine until the excessive noise levels could be reduced.

And on the same site it was necessary to black asbestos to force the employers to find safer insulation for water cylinders.

This was not a particularly dangerous site. The examples are unfortunately typical of the hidden hazards of construction sites all over the country. These are highlighted, and their drastic consequences spelt out, in the latest UCATT pamphlet *Organise for Safety's Sake* (available from UCATT, UCATT House, 177 Abbeville Road, London SW4 9RL).

Low fines

An appalling quarter of all fatal accidents at work occur in the construction industry, mostly from falls. Construction is also responsible for 10% of all reported accidents, although it employs only 7% of the work-force. The Health and Safety Executive admits that most accidents are preventable, and have been brought about by foreseeable risks which should have been removed by management.

Factory inspectors, however, have little effect in forcing the bosses into taking adequate safety measures, and fines for breach-

ing safety regulations are ridiculously low.

A recent survey, moreover, showed that about one in every six construction workers admits to some form of disability, and at least half of them say that their problem can be traced back to an accident at work.

Prolonged exposure to cold, dusts and fibres, fumes, vapours and chemicals, vibration, and excessive noise are just some of the hazards. The situation is made worse by the casual nature of the industry.

Bonus schemes

But above all, it is the extreme reluctance of the bosses to sacrifice any of their profits to provide for decent conditions and adequate health and safety measures which perpetuates the deaths and injuries.

The pamphlet points, for example, to the widespread use of bonus schemes by employers: "They buy our



Workers on a hotel building site in London

agreement with pennies to make thousands in profits. But the bonus they pay cannot buy back somebody's health when it's gone. We pay for their profits with our lives."

The pamphlet rightly concludes that "the only solution lies in our own capacity to organise," and it outlines the key points of the

relevant Health and Safety legislation, providing a number of important guidelines for trade union health and safety representatives.

UCATT will be organising five Health and Safety at Work courses during 1981/82 (details available from its education department: 01-622 2442).

N.Ireland: Plastic Bullets Kill!

By
Manus Maguire
(Derry Young Socialists)

The recent upsurge of sectarianism in Northern Ireland and the outbreak of continual rioting in Catholic areas of Belfast, Derry and other towns has also been marked with an increase in the indiscriminate use of repression by the police and army.

Over the past few weeks eight people have died as a result of being hit with plastic bullets. The plastic bullet which replaced the rubber bullet in the 70s as more "effective" is the deadliest anti-riot weapon to appear in the North in recent years.

Far from being "a minimum deterrent" as described by RUC Chief Constable Jack Hermon, the plastic bullet when it hits a vulnerable place is prac-



For a long time, it has been the young in Derry who have suffered most from repression including attacks with plastic bullets.

tically as lethal as a lead bullet.

Police and army chiefs claim that the weapon is used only to contain rioting. Yet a whole litany of casualties show that the vast

majority of those hit with plastic bullets have either been very young children, school girls or middle aged women. In Belfast a pregnant woman was also hit.

The Young Socialists in

the North have stressed that the recent rioting offers no solution to the problems people face. Nonetheless the use of stark repression must be taken up within the labour movement. These events only serve to show the dangers posed to the whole working class, especially in the aftermath of the Brixton events.

As the crisis within British capitalism deepens, the frustration of young people heightens, and most of all as the labour movement increasingly threatens the power and privilege of the British ruling class, the methods of repression forged and developed in Northern Ireland will be turned on the organisations of the British working class.

The Derry Young Socialists have already come out publicly and called for a ban on these barbarous weapons and we appeal to the Young Socialists all over Britain and Ireland to join us.



Last week the Nottingham National Union of Miners celebrated their centenary of trade unionism.

The earliest attempt at organisation in Notts was in 1844. The owners at the time retaliated by locking out all miners who joined the union. The owners obviously had the whip hand, they simply sat back and starved the miners out.

But some owners used more devious methods to break the new union. They offered work at increased wages to miners who returned to work and signed a pledge to leave the union.

This split the union and left the main organisers unable to get work. When a miner tried to seek alternative employment he had to produce this document. The union collapsed but left a skeleton of an organisation.

The second attempt at unionism in 1863-64—the Derby and Nottingham Miners Association. Because of owners' opposition it remained in secrecy until about 1866 when it surfaced with about 300 members, many with experience from 1844.

In 1866 the then Miners National Union sent an organiser and before long the new union had 7,000 members on its books. The owners' reaction was predictable. They immediately gave one month's notice to vacate both jobs and accommodation. Strike breakers were brought in from all over the country.

The MNU supported the locked out miners and appealed to other unions to give support. By 1868 money was scarce, the owners again moved in for the kill.

Unionism had once again reached rock bottom. However, unionists worked away winning membership back to the lodges, and by 1874 the DNMA was again at 6,000 members. At the open air gala of 1874 a prominent speaker said the DANMA was now an established fact, but by 1875 the owners came round seeking wage cuts.

This was refused and another lockout began. After 15 weeks, men began to return to work through

sheer necessity. The owners were able to impose their wage cuts, unionists were again dismissed, the DANMA slipped back into a moribund state.

In all these disputes local reaction was usually in favour of the miners. Reports on the 1844 strike tell of begging miners receiving eight large clothes baskets full of bread, cheese and bacon. The miners of Kimberly Notts were able to resist inducements to return to work by the gift of 10 stones of bread, 20 pounds of cheese, bacon and meat from their own townsfolk.

In 1881 the Nottinghamshire Miners Federation was inaugurated, later renamed the Nottinghamshire Miners Association.

The great impetus for the new union was provided by the appointment of William Bailey to the position of agent. Bailey was a local Methodist lay preacher, and a good speaker. From his appointment in 1887 to his death in 1896 his passion for working people's rights was expressed in an organisational zeal which helped take the union from a position of 1,500 members to 16,275 in the year of his unfortunate death.

Bailey's politics were those of the radical liberal, but thanks to him trade unionism had become established in the Notts coalfields.

Politics

If Bailey approached his work with honest zeal unfortunately his heirs did not always show the same qualities.

The Notts area had always been in the hands of the Liberals but by 1906 plans were being made to organise a new party to get working people into parliament. The then national leadership of this Miners Federation of Great Britain gave orders to take an area by area vote to decide whether or not they should

NOTTS MINERS...

The long struggle to build a Fighting Union

affiliate to the new Labour Representation Committee, but the ballot was lost.

This did not deter the national leadership. Another ballot was taken in 1908, this time with the MFGB issuing a recommendation to accept affiliation to the LRC. The ballot was carried, and by 1909 the miners were part of the LRC.

The seat of Mid-Derbyshire became vacant and the Notts agent, J.G. Hancock, became the first miners candidate to stand for parliament as a Labour Party representative.

But Hancock then pursued the Liberal party of the constituency and stated that 'although he stood as a Labour candidate his views were that of a progressive Liberal'.

When the MFGB affiliated to the Labour Party, they did so on the condition that their existing representatives in parliament remain as they were, but when next elected they sign the Labour Party constitution. This Hancock refused to honour and maintained his membership of the Liberal Party.

In 1915, the MFGB conference voted that while Hancock could still be a

union official, he would lose all financial support in the political field. The NMA appealed against this decision but lost. Hancock did not allow the matter to rest, and tried to disaffiliate the NMA from the MFGB for political purposes. This was the old leaders' earliest attempt at a breakaway, but it was ably fought off by two miners, Herbert Broth and W. Askew.

They issued 30,000 leaflets at their own expense and argued the length and breadth of the country against Spencer and Hancock. A ballot was held and Booth and Askey emerged winners.

However by 1918 George Spencer was seeking official backing for his prospective nomination to the position of Labour candidate for the Broxtowe division in Notts. Spencer gained the Labour Party nomination and MFGB backing. The NMA then decided to provide funds (£125 per year) plus legal advisers to help organise the Labour Party in Mansfield and Broxtow division. Spencer won the seat in a three-cornered fight.

1918 saw Spencer move against national union policy. Before the first world

war all miners negotiated wages at district levels. The war saw all these centralised, meaning equal wage rises throughout the coalfields. Many miners wanted to retain central negotiation and to help eliminate cut-throat inter-district selling of coal which in turn caused low wages.

Spencer, aware of the Notts prosperous position spoke against. But the South Wales motion for central negotiations was carried. Later in 1918 Spencer, with another NMA delegate Frank Varley, once again spoke against central negotiations. Spencer's stand won him no friends, he was nominated by Notts for the position of General Secretary of the MFGB but came last of five candidates.

At the NMA council meeting of March 1921 they voted against district agreements in favour of national unity of the mining industry. They also said that in the event of a strike over de-control the MFGB should consider the most practical way of working the pits in the operatives' interests. After a 3-month strike again the miners were defeated.

By 1923 South Wales was calling on the MFGB to consult districts on terminating wage agreements. The general idea being to seek higher wages collectively. Varley and Spencer were against any termination that might cause a stoppage. However, a national ballot was undertaken, those in favour of termination 510, 303; against 114,558.

National Wages

In Notts the voting was: for termination 11,392, against 5,059. Prior to the ballot the NMA council voted to adhere to ballot decisions and recommended Notts to vote in favour of termination. But this did not prevent Spencer from making a public statement against termination. After this show of national militancy the owners offered improved terms and Varley and Spencer recommended that they be rejected and better terms sought!

After the 1921 strike the NMA lost a good many members. But what was flourishing at the time was 'non-political unionism'.

Two characters were campaigning for this. Some said they were financed secretly by the owners. The strong hold of these people were the Bolsover and Barber Walker pits. These people later formed the nucleus of Spencer's breakaway union.

By 1926 Notts was at a cross roads. Before the historic strike Varley was publicly saying "failing all negotiations they would rather sit and starve than work and starve." But by June 1926 when the general strike of all workers was well over, Varley had an article published, totally without the knowledge of the NMA, stating that the miners should return to work on reduced wages.

Unity

Spencer went about negotiating for a local colliery which wanted to return to work, an act for which the MFGB showed him the door. This inspired him to form his own union which the owners readily agreed to. They instigated the new 'Industrial Union' of which you had to be a member before returning to work. This was a new slant on the 'good behaviour' certificate and once again the militants found a themselves unable to obtain work, some for as long as 13 years.

It was a terrible period for Notts miners that had to be endured until 1937 when because of a dispute at Harworth Colliery and pressure from government quarters the Spencer union was forced to merge with the moribund NMA but with Spencer still in charge for at least five years. Then again Spencer was shown the door, this time for good.

So what do we learn from all this? The answer is simple. The strike of 1972 showed that when men earning equal wage rates under one union stood together and fought the Tory government, they won. There was no chance for the management to split the union.

It is only by unity between the areas that today we can stop closures and maintain our wages. In the battles to come the Notts miners will completely erase the memory of 'Spencerism', and become one of the most militant areas in defence of the livelihoods of all miners.

Labour Women's

WOMEN WILL NOT PAY FOR THATCHER'S PLUNDE



The agenda for this year's Labour Party Women's conference reflects important changes in the attitude of Labour women to their position in capitalist society and towards their own organisations.

The National Women's Officers report a marked increase in the number of sections and councils, with younger women playing a larger part. This growth is reflected in the number of resolutions on the agenda, up from 83 last year to 145.

The resolutions themselves voice the anger of working class women against the Tory government and make clear attempts to draw up policies and a strategy for fighting back.

There is growing concern, reflected in the agenda, at the peri-natal mortality rate and the number of handicapped children. The lack of provision for cancer screening and treatment has led to the premature deaths of thousands of women.

In fact, no area of the NHS can be pointed to as adequate and the amendment from Toxteth CLP to resolution 67 proposes a solution to these problems. It calls for the full restora-

tion of cuts, more money for the building of hospitals and health centres and for preventative medicine, the abolition of private nursing and medical agencies, the nationalisation of the drugs industry and medical supplies and the democratisation of the NHS, with more representation for health service workers.

The resolutions on the elderly from COHSE, on peri-natal mortality, the NHS and on child care, also demonstrate the important role which communal provisions have to play in freeing women from their exploitation within the home and reducing the risks involved in their role as mothers.

Women are now being expected to replace the disappearing services, caring for the sick and aged at home. COHSE's resolution calls for an end to the cuts and for a massive expansion of all services for the elderly.

The dire poverty into which so many women are being driven, partly by discrimination, which has always existed in taxation and benefits, and partly by further cuts, is reflected in the number of resolutions on taxation and benefits. The level of benefits these

days is in no way adequate to keep women's heads above water.

Even where there is another income coming in, more and more working class families rely on child benefits, for example to provide food after the weekend until the next pay day.

However, one resolution (42) in this section has to be opposed. This raises the question of child benefit of £10 payable to mothers of children under school age, so they don't have to go out to work.

This is completely out of keeping with the other resolutions in the section. Although we would support higher child benefits, the reply to the questionnaire on women's rights produced for this conference makes it clear that the priority is to fight for the right of all women to go to work, through fighting unemployment and demanding the provision of nurseries and suitable child-care.

Support Party democracy

To suggest women should be paid to stay at home underlines the inequality and personal female responsibility for child rearing, and any moves in this direction should be opposed.

Democratisation of the women's organisation is a theme taken up repeatedly. Resolutions call for a campaigning women's section, going out to factories, estates, and shopping centres, organising local

and national activities.

There is no doubt that the present regional structure is holding back the women's organisation, and should be replaced by regional committees and a national committee member elected at regional conference. In this way the women's organisation could be re-built and welded together as a national organisation.

Several resolutions take up the question of the relationship between the women's organisation and the Labour Party.

Various demands are raised, for instance that five resolutions from women's conference should be automatically placed on the agenda of Labour Party conference. Whilst the sentiment behind this is good, it would merely be a cosmetic measure. Undoubtedly there is a neglect of women's issues at conference, but this reflects a lack of consciousness, not merely at the conference but throughout the whole Party.

A campaign for such issues needs to be taken to and fought for at local, regional and national level through patient argument and explanation, so that the political level of the whole Party is raised. This will ensure that women's demands find their reflection in national conferences. Purely tinkering with the conference rules will not change things.

The question of positive discrimination on short lists for electoral candidates is raised, with various demands on the numbers of women, blacks and manual workers to be included.

This rests on the assumption

that a woman would necessarily reflect the views of women better than a man. Yet the main disagreements on selection of candidates cut across lines of sex and colour.

The main criteria for choosing any candidate has to be their record in the movement and their political views.

As the women's organisation is re-built and plans recruitment and political education on a larger scale, undoubtedly more women will come forward for short-listing, and will be fighting for the interests of all of the working class, including women.

Campaign for women's right to work

Another demand is for the women's section of the National Executive Committee to be elected at women's conference. Although in future this demand would need serious consideration, the present time it is more important to preserve the strength of the left wing on the NEC and the link between the NEC and the Labour Party conference policy.

A change at the present time would allow a foothold to those who would prefer the NEC not to be directly answerable as a national leadership to national conference, with an almost federal make-up, seats for areas, seats for local councils etc.

Not surprisingly, many resolutions are on unem-

ployment. There is a complete rejection of the idea that a women's right to work—married or single—is of secondary importance.

Many resolutions point not only to the hardship caused when women lose their jobs but also reflect the need for women to be economically independent. There are calls for a campaign to protect part-timers, echoed in the National Women's Officer report.

The main emphasis must be on fighting any 'policy' to sack part-time workers. The earnings of part-timers are every bit as essential to families' well-being as those of full-time workers.

The Equal Pay Act should be amended so that part-timers can claim equal pay with full timers on a pro-rata basis, and there should be a special drive to recruit these women into a trade union.

Other resolutions in this section call for the organisation of the unemployed and the provision of day centres, very important if women are not to be isolated in the home. Resolution 14 on Youth Opportunities Programmes should be supported.

It calls for trade union rights for YOPers and trade union control over schemes, proper training and guaranteed jobs. It demands the trade union rate of pay, a minimum of four weeks holiday a year and a 35-hour week, and the transformation of the programme into a massive scheme of public works to build new schools, nurseries, hospitals and other much needed facilities for workers and their families.

There is growing determination to be fighting women's organisation

Conference



Photo: Militant

'Nothing will stand in our way'

Sheila Lewenack's book, *Women and the Trade Unions*, describes an inspiring history of struggle by women workers under very difficult conditions. It holds many lessons for today and explodes many myths.

With society moving into a period of crisis, women today, as in the past, look to the labour and trade union movement. In the public sector and in the sweatshops, more and more women are getting organised.

Industrial action by women workers was the crucial pressure that forced through the Equal Pay Act under the last Labour Government. At Fords, Dagenham women machinists struck against the result of a re-grading exercise which just happened to put them all on the lowest two grades. In 1968 there was a strike by London lavatory cleaners, supported by the men, and one of the most spectacular was in 1970 involving 30,000 Leeds rag trade workers.

Wilson was forced to concede the Equal Pay Act in the face of growing militancy. But even as it was going through, the right wing tried to drive a wedge between women and male workers by saying that equal pay for women meant that men would have to hold back on their wage claims.

Second class wages reflected the second-class status which women were relegated to with the development of class society and private property. Even in the early '70s, semi-skilled woman would still earn less than an unskilled male labourer.

Although the burden of domestic work meant the activity of large numbers of women never reached the same level as men, women were involved from the earliest days, especially when the working class as a whole was moving forward in a militant mood.

In the nineteenth century women took part in the spontaneous protests over food shortages and wage cuts, to the despair of *The Times* (25th June 1880) which complains about the behaviour of Lancashire weavers. "The women are if possible more turbulent and mischievous than the men, their insolence to the soldiers and the special constables is intolerable".

The growing militancy prior to the first world war saw the move towards general unions, organising unskilled workers. In the

summer of 1911, 15,000 unorganised women working in 25 Bermondsey firms struck against low pay, and won. In Glasgow after a strike over low wages in 1910, 12,000 joined the Federation of Women Workers.

These periods of confident action based on the growing realisation of the strength of the working class, affected those women who are traditionally seen as difficult if not impossible to organise.



Members of the National Federation of Women workers before the first world war.

Originally, women had to form their own unions, being excluded from men's but as production techniques were developed, all barriers were broken down. As one Manchester worker put it "whilst the engine runs, the people must work—men, women and children yoked together with iron and steam."

In textiles there have always been mixed unions and unity was maintained by the price list negotiated for work done, irrespective of sex.

The attitude of many male unions to their female counterparts and vice versa was usually one of support and solidarity, for example in London where the female trade union associated with the Society of Bookbinders struck against wage cuts imposed by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The financial support from the men—meant they were able to win.

The main setbacks to women's trade unionisation came with periods of unemployment. Repeated attempts were made (occasionally for humanitarian reasons) to exclude women from various trade unions, to preserve men's jobs.

Since women, like men, work because they have to, they became desperate and were prepared to take work for lower rates of pay in industries where they weren't excluded. Where they were excluded, it often led to an extension of home working and sweated labour for example in tailoring.

Attempts to solve the problem of unemployment by

'Women and the Trade Unions' by Sheila Lewenack, (Benn £9) reviewed by Margaret Crear

recruiting women. By the depression, the trade unions were considering again how to maintain membership amongst women.

In Scotland membership had been maintained better largely because of the work of the Organisation of Women Committee of the Scottish TUC. It didn't simply look at paper membership but encouraged activity through very successful day schools aimed at women.

By 1938 with the upturn in the economy, membership was over one million again and a more critical militant attitude was developing.

The start of the second world war cut across the growing militancy, but the end of the war saw larger numbers of active women in the trade unions.

The campaign for equal pay was taken up again meeting opposition from the Tories and the bosses and also from the Labour government and trade union leaders committed to wage restraint.

Today demands for recognition, for implementation of equal pay and action over other specific problems facing working class women are being raised by wider and wider layers of women workers.

We must ensure that through campaigns for democracy in the labour movement no obstacles stand in the way of their involvement.

As the ideas of Marxism grow in the labour movement, uniting all workers in the struggle for a socialist society, the ruling class will inevitably try to drive a wedge between workers to escape the consequences of their own crisis. They must be met by closed ranks united in struggle against them.

Sheila Lewenack's book contains many points of analysis and statements which we can't agree with, such as her treatment of the 1926 General Strike, and the effects of the post war boom. But it's worth reading for its rich factual material. At a cost of about £9, however, most workers will have to order it from the library.

Resolutions 5, 6, 7, 8 and 10 call for a campaign against unemployment. They highlight the need for a 35-hour week without loss of pay, a minimum wage and useful public works schemes. They link these and other demands to the need for a socialist plan of production based on the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies, banks and finance houses, under workers' control and management.

Unemployment is the result of the crisis in the capitalist system and only the removal of that system offers security and prosperity to the working class.

The two alternatives facing women at this conference are summed up in the two opposing resolutions from APEX and Liverpool Wavertree, in the section on economic policy.

Right-wing policies failed before

The Wavertree resolution provides the answer to the objection, 'Where will the money come from?'

Basically the APEX resolution suggests means by which ailing British industry can be put back on its feet. It complains of the high level of interest charges and sterling which it says are doing little to ease the financial squeeze.

In fact most of the demands are a re-hash of policies that we have seen before under the Labour government, which attempted to manage capitalism rather than end it.

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SRI LANKA

Repression by the police and army in the Tamil speaking Jaffna peninsula, reported in last week's Militant, has reached new heights in the past week.

On Sunday 31 May, the London 'Times' reported, "hundreds of policemen went on the rampage" after a plain clothes policeman had been shot.

The rioting policemen assaulted Tamils, burnt down Jaffna City's market place, a Hindu temple and the library as well as over 20 private homes, including that of a Jaffna MP.

Immediately the Jayawardene regime clamped down a state of emergency and curfew in the Northern Province. But this did not stop the murder of seven Tamil youths the next day. It is not known who killed these youths at present, but their deaths bear similarities to the murder of three Tamils in 1979 after they had been taken away by security forces for questioning.

Boycott

This rioting and killing took place during the run-up to the District Development Council elections on June 4th. Most of the opposition parties had agreed with the call of the Marxist Nava Sama Samaja Party to boycott these elections, but in the Tamil areas the main opposition party, the Tamil United Liberation Front, had decided to participate.

Fearful that the elections in the Tamil areas would show massive opposition to his government, President Jayawardene sent the leading Sinhala chauvinist, Industries Minister Cyril Matthews, to Jaffna to supervise the UNP election campaign along with 500 'helpers'.

The local UNP leaders in Jaffna, clearly attempting to intimidate the Tamil population, arrested Appapillai Amirthalingham, the TULF leaders and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament, from 2am until 8am on June 4th, the polling day.

The election results which have been published from the rest of Sri Lanka show that only 40% of the electorate voted, well down from the usual levels of 70%-80%, a sign of the success of the boycott campaign.

So worried was the government that this defeat would encourage the opposition it extended the state of emergency throughout the whole island one hour after the polls closed on June 4th and imposed press censorship banning all reporting of the news from Jaffna and all criticism of the government and the President.

In this situation it is vital that an effective struggle is mounted against Jayawardene's repression and the attempt to enflame communal tensions, by drawing together all layers of the population into a united struggle against the UNP government under the leadership of the working class.

BANGLADESH

Last week's abortive army coup based in Chittagong brought the assassination of Zia ur Rahman, but has failed to overthrow his regime.

The attempted coup has once again focused attention on Bangladesh, revealing the depth of the crisis in this country, whose 88 million people mostly live in dire poverty.

The events show that ten years after Bangladesh broke away from Pakistan, nothing has been solved on the basis of landlordism and capitalism.

The coup's leader, major-general Abdul Menzur, was arrested and killed. Seventeen other senior officials were arrested following the two-day rebellion; 3,000 rebel soldiers surrendered their arms; and a further 3,000 armed rebels are believed to be in the countryside.

The nominal head of state is now 75-year-old President Sattar. Elections for a new president are supposed to be held within 180 days.

Zia is now being portrayed by the capitalist media as "a man of vision", an "incorruptible leader," who dreamed of a "golden Bengal". The truth is, he was a ruthless dictator, who stepped into power with blood on his boots, and who presided over a regime rotten with corruption.

Bonapartist

Zia emerged as the military "strongman" after a rapid series of coups overthrew Sheikh Mujibur Rahman in 1975, with the murder of Mujib, most of his family, and many of his supporters. Later, Zia purged and executed thousands of the officers involved in the 1975 coup.

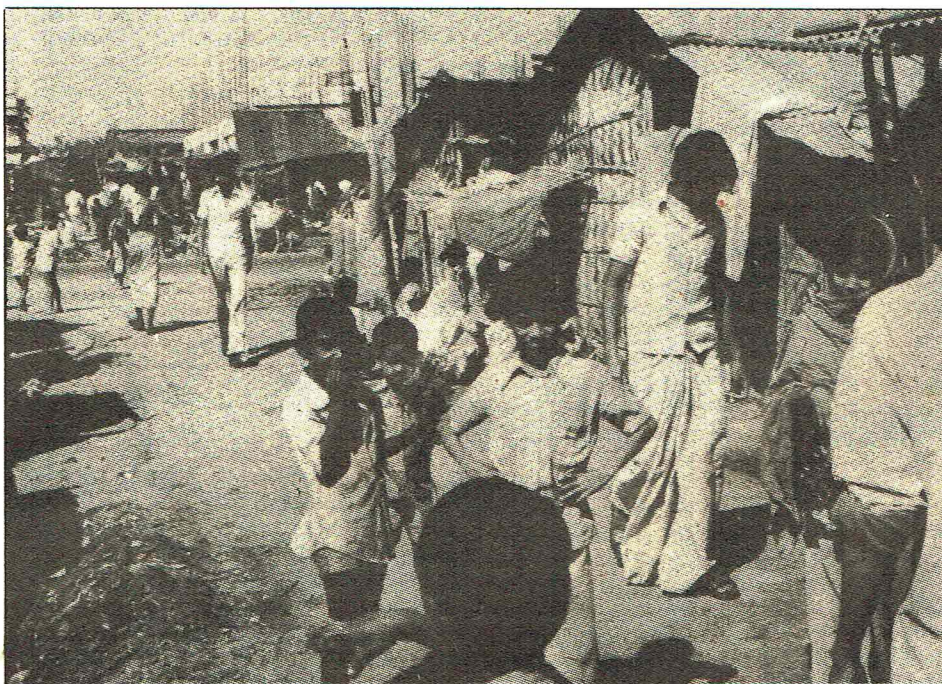
Even after he dropped his own military title, and arranged carefully managed elections [in 1979, when his party secured 220 out of the 300 parliamentary seats], Zia remained a dictator and ruled in true bonapartist style.

He still ruled from military headquarters. Ironically, Zia appeared to model himself on Ayub Khan, the head of the Pakistan military regime—the very state which Bangladesh [formerly East Pakistan] had fought for its independence.

The party on which Zia based his "civilian" rule, the Bangladesh National Party, was unmistakably the party of the landowners, the merchants and money-lenders, and businessmen. Many of them had moved over from the Awami League after Mujib's downfall.

Zia cultivated an 'honest', 'benevolent' image. but, "according to a former member of the Planning Commission [reports the 'Financial Times'] what emerged under Zia was "a professional milking of the machine by almost everyone in power." By contrast, Mujib and his cronies were considered "amateurs".

By Lynn Walsh



90 million people live in a land size of England and Wales. Adult literacy 22%.

Average food consumption 16ozs a day—less than the bare minimum to support life. 80% of children under 5% malnourished.

75% of exports depend on jute—a declining world market. Imports three times the value of exports.

Far from harvesting the potentially rich resources of East Bengal for its people, Zia's "development" policies have filled the coffers of the rich elite, leaving most Bengalis to live in unimaginable poverty.

Not only have conditions not improved since independence, they are worse than in the days of the British Raj! A pound a week would be considered a "good" wage. Average food consumption is less than the bare minimum to sustain a healthy life. More than 80% of children under five are under-nourished. Adult literacy is only about 22%.

Opposition

Most of Bangladesh's exports [about 75%] come from a single crop, jute, which is going through a slump in world sales. The rise in oil prices has hit the economy hard. Imports, while only \$3,000 million, nevertheless amount to three times the value of exports.

How can such a country remain stable for very long?

There was an attempted coup against Zia in 1977, and there have been military plots since then.

Enthusiastic rallies to welcome the recent return of Sheikh Mujib's daughter from exile in India reflect the growing opposition to Zia's rule. There have also been reports of agitation and clashes in border areas.

TEN YEARS OF CRISIS

end to the economic bleeding of East Bengal by West Pakistan, but they expected to take control of the land, the factories, and improve the people's condition of life.

Workers, particularly the youth, the poor peasants and students joined the Mukthi Bahini to fight for the land and the factories, and to throw the rich exploiters off their backs.

But they were countered by the Mujib Bahini. This guerrilla force was organised by the Indian army, and supported by Sheikh Mujib who needed Indian backing. It was intended not to fight the Pakistan army, but to check the Mukthi Bahini.

It soon became clear to the militant fighters of the Mukthi Bahini that Mujib intended to hand out "jobs for the boys", and put the economy in the hands of Bengali nationalist landlords and capitalists. They soon dubbed the Awami League as the "Association of Looters".

Upheaval

But without a clear socialist programme and a Marxist party, the radicalised workers and peasants could not push Mujib and the national capitalist leaders aside and carry the independence struggle through to revolutionary conclusions.

Mujib succumbed to Zia. Now Zia, too, has fallen to military assassins. The regime he leaves, despite the failure of this coup, faces a period of upheaval, possibly the outbreak of civil war or revolutionary uprisings.

Events in Bangladesh, moreover, cannot be isolated from developments in Pakistan and India, both facing terrible economic problems and sharpening class tensions.

One thing is clear. The need for a Marxist party to rally the workers and peasants of Bangladesh to the programme of the socialist revolution, and to appeal to the exploited masses of the sub-continent for a Socialist Federation of Bangladesh, Pakistan, and India, has never been more urgent.

Government spokesmen in force. Deserted by many of the propertied people who switched their support to Zia, it has begun to reflect some of the discontent of the lower middle classes and peasants.

However, whatever the personal motives involved, there are undoubtedly different political trends in the officer corps, which reflect class pressures.

Manzur, according to reports, wanted a regime which would turn more towards the Chinese Stalinist regime for backing. Many officers, moreover, fought in the war for independence against Pakistan, and are resentful that Zia staffed his regime with many officers who comfortably sat out the war in West Pakistan.

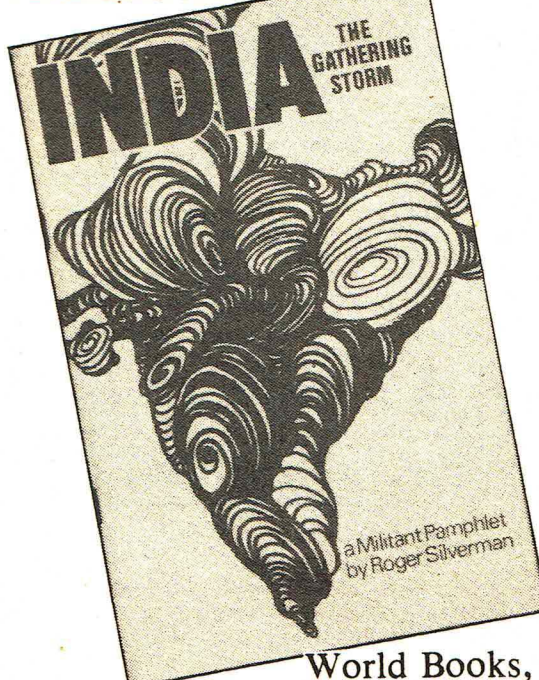
"Looters"

There are also younger, junior officers, who are impatient for more radical economic measures to try and lift Bangladesh out of the morass of corruption and backwardness. Some reportedly favour the creation of another "people's army" similar to the Mukthi Bahini, the mass guerrilla force which did most of the fighting against the Pakistan army in 1971.

A movement of radical officers, however, although it could arouse mass support, would still mean bonapartist change from above.

Recently, the Awami League, once led by Mujib, has become more of an opposition

Available from



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E8 3PN. 60p plus 15p postage.

ITALY

Corrupt State Corrupt Ruling Class

By Brent Kennedy



Top: P2 leader Gelli, fascist millionaire, notorious torturer under Mussolini, and leader of the most powerful group in Italian society.

Middle: The "freemasons" of Propaganda-2.

Bottom: Workers at Fiat in Turin. The power of the working class must be used to eject the corrupt capitalist parties from government.

Blackmail, murder, multi-million pound swindles and tax evasion, espionage, fascist terrorism and attempted military coups.

These were the methods of a secret society of the ruling class to run Italy in their own interests.

The startling revelations of the P2 freemasons' lodge of 962 bankers, industrialists, politicians, judges, journalists and army chiefs have already brought down the Forlani government.

But unless the whole rotten system of Italian capitalism is swept away the next government's slogans must inevitably be "corruption is dead—long live corruption!"

The lodge membership list reveals a tight network of powerful men who have cynically manipulated Italian society, whilst hypocritically ruling in the name of "democracy", "Christianity" etc.

This state within a state, puppeteers who made governments, courts, media and political parties dance to their command, has exposed the workings of the capitalist state normally hidden behind a democratic mask.

Among members of P2 are the heads of the state TV and radio news services and the editor of Italy's most prestigious paper, *Corriere Della Sera*, which pump out anti-working class propaganda daily. Although this editor has resigned, his successor will be chosen by shareholders, including another P2 member, top banker Roberto Calvi, who currently faces charges of illegally stashing away currency abroad. He owns 40% of the shares.

Scandals

An 18 page document details plans to syphon £57 million from the state oil company, ENI, to named senior politicians including a former Christian Democrat (DC) prime minister and a head of another party.

This whole scandal surfaced during investigations into the Sindona scandal. Sindona, a wealthy banker with Mafia connections and former financial adviser to the Vatican, presently sits in an American jail on a 25 year fraud sentence.

The DC party itself now admits that it relied on this character to provide cash for its attempt to swing a referendum in 1974 to try to ensure a vote against the right to divorce.

These acts were hidden for years due to the cover-ups by fellow masons. Accusations of tax fiddling could be banished to some filing cabinet and forgotten on orders from lodge member Orazio Giannini who was head of the Financial Police!

Investigations of P2 members could easily be blocked by any of its 19

judges or scores of magistrates and lawyers. Control of the media prevented exposés.

If all else failed there were other methods. When a journalist named Pecorelli publicly exposed the fascist sympathies and CIA connections of P2 leader Gelli in 1979 he was shot dead.

But what of the political nature of this secret organisation? Italians are asking—what are three cabinet ministers, 30 generals, 8 admirals, 183 armed forces officers, 19 judges and 42 MPs doing in a secret cabal organised by a fascist millionaire?

What use are elections, they ask, with key state positions in hands of an unelected clique? Who really governs Italy, and in whose interests?

This camarilla of reactionary politicians, military intelligence chiefs and fascists was responsible for the terrorist violence which press and police blamed on left wingers.

They used this excuse to introduce special powers for state forces, supposedly against terrorism, but actually for future use against the labour movement.

General Miceli even built up a private intelligence network while head of the Defence Ministry's secret service. Today he sits in Parliament as a fascist MSI deputy.

It now becomes clearer why investigations into the 1969 Milan bombing (which killed 16 people and which was ludicrously blamed on left wingers), the bombing of a train near Bologna in 1974 and the murder of a Rome magistrate in 1977 (after both of which Gelli was himself questioned by police and quickly released), and another military coup plot in the mid 1970s, produced no results.

Colonel Viezzer, former secret service boss, now faces espionage charges. The Intelligence Service heads have been ordered to take indefinite leave and the Chief of General Staff, Admiral Torrisi, suspended for 45 days along with five Generals.

These are the real organisations of power, the specialised armed bodies of men and the paraphernalia of repression: the courts, jails, etc., which are uncontrolled by the majority and accountable only to a tiny powerful elite.

At times of sharp class struggle, when everyone sees clearly the irreconcilable conflict of interests, the ruling class is forced to rely solely on naked violence, through its monopoly of repression, to maintain its rule. The Chilean bosses' military take-over in 1973 and the recent abortive coup in Spain show how far the 'democratic' capitalists will go.

But in prosperous times capitalism prefers to rule with a minimal conflict and cost through their distorted 'democracy'.

The media and other moulders of "public opinion" carefully construct an

illusion of an 'impartial' state, running society for the common good under popular control through elections.

The danger is, if this illusion should be exposed, the real nature of the state as a bosses' weapon becomes obvious.

The P2 scandal is one of those historic moments when people respected as the leaders of society are revealed as a corrupt gang of crooks, swindlers, murderers, confidence tricksters and bullies.

This presents a golden opportunity to sweep away capitalism in a peaceful transformation of society involving the overwhelming majority of workers, peasants and small businessmen. It resembles the Dreyfus affair which exposed the French state in the 1890s as a corrupt, racist dictatorship.

"Democrats"

So widespread was the revulsion in French society at a parasitic officer caste acting as a law unto itself, that, as Lenin pointed out, a bold lead from the socialists could have led to the downfall of the bankers and capitalists whose system the disgraced army protected.

But precisely at that moment Millerand, the socialist leader, held out a saving hand by joining a Radical (i.e. liberal) government in the world's first experience of class collaboration "to defend democracy".

The P2 scandal is only the most blatant in a long series of scandals revealing the putrid rottenness of Italian capitalism. All parties now call for a clean up. But where does "corruption" stop and "normal" capitalist swindling and exploitation begin?

It is not enough to sack a few generals or magistrates. Others will fill their places. And how will they get their plum jobs? Through a bribe or a word in someone's ear from some other faction in Rome. It is the capitalist state itself which puts all power in the hands of a few.

The Christian Democrats will appoint an "inquiry" to investigate their brother capitalists. But what these "democrats" will never do is to seriously purge the state machine of plotters, reactionaries and fascists.

The army, courts, etc. must be kept untouched as the last protection of their system against the working class. Forlani hid the list of P2 members for a full two months—doing nothing about members of his cabinet in its ranks.

What will the Socialist and Communist Parties do now? Disgracefully, one PSI minister and 35 of its MPs and bureaucrats are on the masonic bandwagon.

Drive the carpetbaggers and fascist collaborators out of the workers' party! Build a mass, democratic fighting Socialist Party! These must be the demands of the PSI rank and file.

The Communist Party (PCI) correctly blames three decades of DC rule for the extent of corruption. Their leader Berlinguer declares that the communists will not "collaborate" with Forlani's caretaker government or any other DC-headed government.

But they are prepared to

enter a government of class collaboration with the DC if the prime minister is drawn from another party! But which party? All the capitalist parties are implicated by the scandal.

How can socialist leader Craxi and Berlinguer agree to work with the PSDI (Social Democrats), for instance, when the leader of the PSDI is in P2 and the party itself was created by the freemasons and the CIA? It was split from the PSI precisely to stop a PSI/PCI government coming to power!

The participation of workers' parties in a coalition government with the representatives of big business will do nothing to end corruption. The Italian economy is in dire trouble with permanent mass youth unemployment, 20% inflation and the worst housing shortage in Europe.

Six months after the earthquake in the South, tens of thousands still suffer in disease-ridden tent towns while empty holiday villas and second houses of the rich remain bolted up. Isn't that corruption?

Capitalism can't even look after victims of a minor natural disaster, let alone provide for tens of thousands of jobless and homeless in Naples.

Following the farcical earthquake "relief" when most aid went into the pockets of building speculators and the Mafia, PCI leader Berlinguer proclaimed the need for a "government of honest men" from all parties.

But an honest capitalist politician must "honestly" represent the interests of his class. And isn't that exactly what they are doing now?

The workers' parties must seize this opportunity to wrest those peasants, middle class and more backward workers away from capitalist parties. All their talk of 'democracy' and 'patriotism' etc. has been shown to be lies.

People's Inquiry

In all the long list of scum in P2, not one worker's name appears. No peasant rubs shoulders with any of the bankers he is in debt to. No shopkeepers or conscript soldiers hobnob with their 'betters' or 'superiors'. In fact, if a soldier tried to form a union, let alone indulge in criminal activity, he would face court-martial!

Yet these workers, peasants, shopkeepers, conscripts and unemployed are the vast majority of the Italian people. They must conduct a genuine inquiry into the 1,000 "top people", to expose the machinations of the bosses' state and root out corruption.

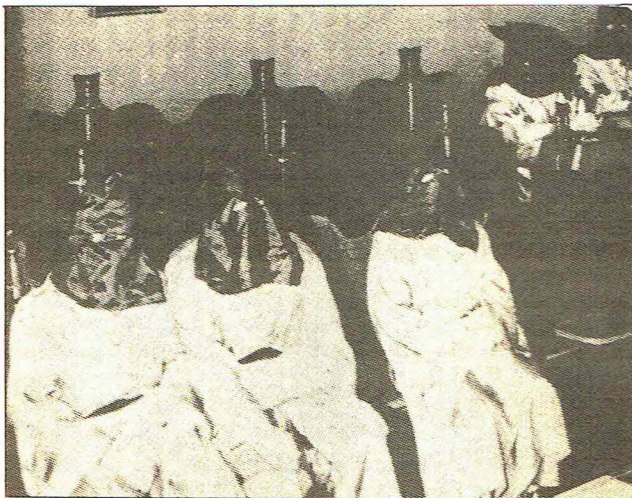
The workers' parties should fight for—

★ An end to business secrets—workers' control of finance and industry!

★ An end to state secrets and corruption—for a people's inquiry by trade unions, peasants' organisations etc.

★ Jobs and houses for all—for a socialist, planned economy!

★ No class collaboration with the capitalist parties of corruption—for a PCI-PSI government on a socialist programme!



Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Ireland—is Militant wrong?

Dear Comrades,
I feel I must express disillusionment over *Militant's* recent Hunger Striker stand. Though I agree with your opinion of prison reform, *Militant's* presentation leaves a lot to be desired.
We all agree that the tragedy of Ireland is being kept alive by pathetic government on one side and bigotry and violence on the other. The problem is to unite a much divided working class. This unity is easily undermined if we tend to show favour on one side of this divide.

On the subject of the hunger strikers *Militant* vigorously campaigns for reform, quite rightly, but appears to condone what these prisoners did before their imprisonment. This alienates our Protestant friends.

I know *Militant* condemns the gunmen and bigots, but in some articles this condemnation is not loud enough and seems to appear as an afterthought. A few articles are needed highlighting the irrelevance of Protestant versus Catholic, and the relevance of Labour versus Capital.

The deaths of the hunger strikers, soldiers, men, women and children in Northern Ireland have all been needless. Under true socialism there would be no needless deaths, because there would be no bigots and no capitalism.

Yours fraternally
Dave Perry
Wigan LPYS



Derry, May 1981. Is Militant wrong to fight for workers' unity?

Comrades

While I agree with most of *Militant's* views I find that I cannot understand your viewpoint on Ireland. In *Militant* on the 8 May 1981 you said: "Bernadette McAliskey, for instance has called for 'Catholic Unity' against the British. Such sectarian appeals have divided workers in Northern Ireland and have weakened the opposition to the H-Blocks."

You go on to say "Yet even now the potential for unity of workers, Catholic and Protestant, against repression and against the poverty and unemployment is being shown."

As we all know Northern Ireland is a state where to be a Catholic is to be second class. Only recently in *The Guardian* there was a list of people who simply didn't get jobs simply because they were Catholics, one case in particular was when a 'Protestant' with one 'O' level got a job over a person with 6 years training.

There there is the practice of gerrymandering the electoral boundaries so that less Catholics get elected.

The civil rights movement wasn't a mass movement of Catholics and Protestants, because it was, and still is, the Catholics who were being oppressed by the Protestants. "What about the capitalists?" you may say.

So they exploit both sides, but is *Militant* ignoring the fact that a colonial situation exists in the North? A situation which must be destroyed before we start worrying about workers' unity.

Basically the Catholic workers must get the same rights and privileges as the Protestant workers and only then will it be possible for the workers to unite against the ultimate enemy which is capitalism.

It seems to me that *Militant's* N. Ireland position is similar to saying to the 'blacks' in South Africa. "Don't fight the 'whites' but

join with the white workers and fight capitalism instead." The whites don't want to join with the blacks, as with the Catholics and Protestants, they are the privileged class, they have the power which they will not give up easily.

Yours fraternally
Ian Wallis
Manchester

Join now!

Comrades

We often say that workers are looking for a socialist alternative but sometimes the literal truth of the matter can jolt us.

After a long and tiring train journey last Sunday I arrived home at midnight and immediately hit the hay. Other members of my YS had been out that day leafletting for a showing of *The War Game* later in the week.

Just before one o'clock a.m. my phone rang and a rather 'liquid' voice informed me (as my phone number had been on the leaflet) that he "was definitely coming to the meeting!"

When I pointed out the time his reply was "well it says on the leaflet 'Join Now' so I thought I'd give you a wee ring."

End of argument!
Fraternally
Larry Flanagan
Rutherglen LPYS

CB—no gimmick

Dear *Militant*

Mr Hawker (Letters 15 May) refers to CB radio as a consumer gimmick of low social value, only adding to the exploitation of cheap labour in underdeveloped countries. This criticism could be levelled at almost any number of consumer items which improve our quality of life.

There is nothing intrinsically bad about a consumer society, the problem lies in the profit motivated, capitalist dominated multinationals that exploit a genuine desire or need. A communication medium such as CB Radio which allows direct interaction between ordinary people is preferable to the highly filtered and often distorted outlook presented by the broadcast media.

As regards interference to services, hospital paging systems would be the main

Selling Militant

Dear Comrades

Sales of *Militant* are going from strength to strength in the Govan area of Glasgow with two new regular sales at subway stations on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, to add to our regular factory sale outside Howden.

Last week alone, 25 papers were sold in one morning, mostly due to the enthusiasm of many new YS comrades who were recently attracted to our ideas after the February 21st demo.

Unfortunately, the week before, one comrade was assaulted and a bottle thrown at us by a Rangers fan who was under the misconception that we were supporters of the IRA and the smash H-Block committee.

Having tried to reason with the person, which is rather hazardous when

someone's idea of democratic discussion includes boxing, but we did try to emphasise the fact that we do not support the sectarian and dead end terrorist tactics of the IRA.

Although it is difficult to reason with politically backward workers like this, it must be remembered they are workers and probably he was even a trade union member.

Although we were determined not to be intimidated and ensured sufficient numbers the following week turned up to protect ourselves, we were also aware of not causing or being provoked into, what could be blown up as a sectarian battle, given the sensitive situation in Glasgow regarding Ireland.

However, with only a few verbal threats passed, the paper sale ended a very good success.

Yours fraternally
Govan LPYS

Abolish the Lords!

Dear Comrades

The next Labour government must do all they can to abolish the House of Lords. How can you say you have a socialist government when these Lords still sit without anyway we can tell them they're no good.

In the manifesto, this has to be stated or it can not be called a socialist manifesto. The Labour leaders must make up their minds—are they trying to get a new way of life for the people or not?

They must give the lead. If MPs pay was reduced, to the level of a worker in a factory, then they will know what it is like when a loaf of bread goes up 3p. Or when you have to go somewhere in the country to see a member of your family who is ill—and have to borrow money to pay the train fare.

Give a lead now and people will follow in a flood. Don't just go half way, go all the way—then you can call yourself a socialist government.

Yours
Joe Harte
Hayes & Harlington LP

The people march...

Dear *Militant*

If any justification for the use of the term 'gutter press' were needed, it was amply provided by the *News of the World* of May 31st.

The issue which carried three articles attacking Tony Benn (in one of which Frank Chapple, 'a leading union moderate', revealed that Tony Benn is 'front man' for the Militant movement) also contained an article about the People's March for Jobs with the banner headline, 'The People's March for Making Love'.

The article purported to show that the march was merely an excuse for teenagers to go on an extended 'booze and birds spree' and that the young people on the march were totally politically illiterate.

A typical comment they quoted was: "I don't know anything about politics either but this march is a great way to spend a few weeks with everything paid for."

Along with frivolous and scurrilous reports of a very important event which has captured the imagination of working people throughout the country and achieved widespread support, the paper, of course, carried its usual ration of scandal and sordid titillation.

Such papers, while pretending to be bastions of

decency fighting the proliferation of subversive Marxist totalitarian ideas, in actual fact appeal to the basest side of human nature.

They represent all that is gross in capitalist society and are nothing more than cynical exploitation of working people.

This demonstrates the urgent necessity of removing control of the press from a handful of millionaires and press barons and fighting for newspapers that are owned and controlled by working people themselves.

Yours fraternally
Nige Smith
Hull

...the press distort

Dear Comrades

One sign of the increasing unease of the capitalist authorities I have noticed recently, is the increasingly pitiful and sarcastic attempts by the capitalist press to denigrate the Labour Party and the trade union movement.

Scaremongering about the new socialist mood of the party has been rife, they have reported changes in policy and procedure in such a way as to foster unnecessary and misguided anxiety about amongst the Tory press's readership.

Unfortunately a great number of Labour's voters do read these publications, and some must be taken in by the blatant propaganda.

Another area of concern is the negligible coverage given by the Tory press to the great Peoples March for Jobs. The marchers triumphantly made their way from Liverpool to London with cheers and encouragement at every stop.

At the same time the dailies have also managed to steer clear of the latest unemployment figures, an increase of 30,000 in a month usually noted for falls in unemployment.

Inflation, according to the much publicised Tax and Prices Index (TPI) is at 15%, an increase of 3% in a month, and well above pay settlements. Do we have a series of in-depth interviews and articles pinning down the PM, are the alternative union and Labour strategies for the economy given prominence?

No, of course not. The Tory press continues to highlight the bad weather and Barbara Cartland's exclusion from the 'wedding of the century.'

Yours fraternally
Brian Hedges
London



Feudal relics in ermine

cause for concern, but what are these systems doing on a band which is prone to interference from radio and legal Italian CB transmissions. Any paging systems still using the 27 MHz band use fairly sophisticated coding techniques to avoid interference.

No one defends the use of poorly installed equipment which can cause TV interference, but this would have been less of a problem if the government had not been playing at King Canute by trying to hold the breakers at bay.

They could have allocated a VHF band and introduced a high quality FM system. The resulting delay has allowed the 27 MHz band to become established (albeit illegally) and as a result a 27 MHz FM band will be the order of the day when CB is legalised.

I am sure CB has an important social role to play, if only to give the government a short, sharp lesson in democracy through the actions of 2 million breakers. Indeed once established legally it will be priced well within the means of the majority and because of that must be a positive advantage in the organisation of working people, rather than an aid to strike breakers.

I see CB bringing back a lot of social interaction which we have lost as a result of the isolating effect of private motor car ownership. CB is teaching us to talk to each other again.

Yours fraternally
R Crawford
Society of Post office Executives

Build

Militant ads

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

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 July	Target for year
Eastern	2002		3550	7100
East Midlands	1594		2750	5500
Hants & Dorset	1188		2600	5200
Humberside	701		1750	3500
London East	2263		3800	7600
London West	1491		2400	4800
London South	1529		2750	5500
Manchester & Lancs	1721		2900	5800
Merseyside	1702		3300	6600
Northern	1941		4300	8600
Scotland East	1168		2200	4400
Scotland West	1867		3750	7500
Southern	2241		3550	7100
South West	1085		1750	3500
Wales East	738		1300	2600
Wales West	977		2300	4600
West Midlands	1755		4300	8600
Yorkshire	2377		4500	9000
Others	7996		6250	12500
Total received	36336		60,000	120,000

Target for July 11th £60,000

Target for year £120,000

Don't let our £s slide!

In summer time, the Tory press used to despair of any hard news. It was the "silly season" when minor items were blown up to fill out the front pages.

These days are different. Splits in the Tory Party, a great debate in the Labour Party, and in the unions a growing mood of resistance to the Tories means there'll be no silly season in 1981.

Militant has no silly season. Summer or winter we want to have even more facilities to comment on and participate in the great events. This is where you come in, with your money.

Eastern have broken the £2,000 barrier, thanks to Southend Meeting (£21), union expenses (£20), and Peterborough back copies of Militant (£24.50). £1,548 needed by July 11th. East Midlands are £1,156 short of their £2,750 target—nearly £10 in paper in 'extras' and £2 from A Fortescue, Chesterfield are included this week.

Hants/Dorset sent in £45 this week, but being £1,412 behind target means £282 per week is needed now, comrades. Get out selling those raffle tickets! Humberside are another area with catching up to do. £210 each week for next five weeks would lift them to the target figure of £1,750 by the half-year.

East London supporters sent in £70 this week, including a tenner from P Smith (POEU), a fiver from C Watson, a £5 donation from Tower Hamlets LPYS, and £1s from Cllr B Hicken and M O'Connor (NUPE, London Hospital). West London's total raised of £1,491 means they have £909 to go. Thanks this week to B Hedges (Kensal Green, £5).

South London readers have boosted their line by

£142 this week. However they still need £242 per week to get their half-yearly £2,750 target. Thanks to C Witton (Erith & Crayford LPYS, £25), Wimbledon readers £38, Erith LPYS £3.50, and Anon (Lewisham) £25. Manchester & Lancs need another £1,179, or £236 per week, to reach £2,900 by July 11th. Donations from Altrincham & Sale LPYS and Blackburn LPYS, a fiver from S Scannells (St Annes), were some of the sources. Merseyside's total is now over half way to their £3,300 July target, but still about £320 needs to come in each week now! Thanks to Kirkdale LPYS for two donations.

Northern area's line is still not half way across our chart yet. Despite such support as that from Newton Aycliffe discussion group, Blyth readers and 'Fun to be Young' day (Teesside) and £30 from a Newcastle meeting, the total reached is still £2,359 short of their half-year figure.

Scotland East readers are a bit further ahead. They still require another £207 per week, but with sums like £40 TU expenses from Dundee reader E Duncan, a fiver from T Lees (Stirling USDW) it should be possible to achieve this figure.

West Scotland are almost exactly half way to the target and they have to average £377 in the next five weeks! Thanks for tenners to E Phillips and G Byron, and Scottish Graphical Division/SOGAT for £3.

Southern area leads our chart, and with donations from Oxford readers of £41 and efforts such as the Brighton jumble sale (£61) a regular feature, will stay there. However, £278 per week is still needed to go to the target figure of £3,550!

It's almost neck-and-neck between Southern and South West readers: Bath

West Midlands, too, are

THIS WEEK £1,502

By Steve Cawley

MILITANT MARXIST WEEKEND SCHOOL Friday 26 June-Sunday 28 June

Courses on:
Introduction to Marxism: Ireland; France; History of the British Labour Movement; South Africa. Debates: The Future for the Labour Party; How to achieve peace and disarmament.
Also: Meeting on Poland—The struggle for workers' democracy.

At Goldsmith's College Students' Union, Lewisham Way, London S.E.14. Cost: £4.00 whole weekend, £2.00 Friday evening and Saturday or Sunday only. Half price school students and unemployed. Food for weekend (lunch Saturday and Sunday, sandwiches for Sunday breakfast) £2.00 (no half price). (Cheques payable to Militant).

This weekend school is open to all workers and activists in the labour movement. There is full debate and discussion in each session. Come along and put your point of view.
BOOK NOW! Send bookings to, or for further information write to: Militant Marxist Weekend School, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

LPYS's £10 donation, added to such individual donations as those of Bristol readers W Coombes (£16.80), R Hartill (£13), and K Derrick (£5) and donations from Plymouth and Torbay supporters of £13 account for this fact. But £133 per week must come in between now and July 11th.

Wales East supporters have vastly improved on last year's figure! Caerphilly readers have used their collectors' cards to good effect to the tune of £24.20. Thanks also to Mrs M Jones (Caerphilly CLP) for her £5, and A Mumford (Cardiff NUR) for £1.20. £112 per week is needed to reach the £1,300 July 11th target. Aberystwyth readers such as D Balfour (£5) and Swansea supporters made up the £37 received from West Wales this week, leading to £977 out of a target of £2,300.

West Midlands, too, are

quite a way behind, but donations of £116 in this week from Birmingham readers, (including S Perry and S&N Mextall, TU expenses and LPYS study group) and £12 from Coventry SE supporters show the potential! £494 per week is needed.

Yorkshire readers began well, but there should be no slackening the effort! £424 per week is now required, to bridge the gap between the £2,377 already raised and the £4,500 target. Others goes forward mainly with IOUs in from Readers Meetings at TU conferences, and £147 more is on the way from the meeting for POEU delegates! So there we are—just under £24,000 to get, and five more weeks left.

Send your donation to Militant Fighting Fund, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, making out cheques and Postal Orders to Militant.

WIN A SUMMER HOLIDAY FOR 10p

£500 holiday in resort of your choice is the first prize in our Grand Draw other prizes of music centre, radios etc.

Tickets available now from your Militant Seller—books of 10 tickets for £1. all proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. Militant Supporters Association. Registered promoters:

D Smith 73 Armond Road, Witham, Essex.

or Tickets by post from "Summer Draw"

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Southend Labour Party Meeting "Role and Policies of the LPYS". Kevin Ramage. Labour Hall, Cambridge Road, Wednesday June 17, 7.30pm

GLASGOW LPYS disco and live band, Glasgow College of Technology Students Union. Thursday 25 June. Tickets £1. Late Bar 1.00am. For tickets contact Frances Curran 771 8961.

TYNESIDE Marxist Discussion Group. June 18th The role of the State. June 25th Militant and the struggle for Socialism. Both meetings start at 7.30pm.

TYNESIDE Marxist Sunday School Sunday 21 June: 7.00pm Two part introduction to Marxist Philosophy—1) Historical Materialism. Sunday 28 June 7.00pm 2) Dialectical materialism. Sunday 5 July The Russian Revolution. Sunday 12 July: 7.00pm History of the Communist International. Sunday 19 July 7.00pm The rise of fascism in Germany 1919-1933. Sunday 26 July 7.00pm The Chinese Revolution 1925-27. Sunday 2 August 7.00pm The Spanish Revolution 1931-1939. Sunday 9 August 7.00pm Popular Fronts and France. Venue from your local Militant seller.

Merseyside LPYS Liaison Committee. "Youth march for Jobs" Saturday 13 June from Kirkby Town Centre 10.00am via Huyton 12 noon. Rally: St George's Hall, Liverpool 2.00. Speaker Allan Roberts MP, Terry Harrison (Prospective Candidate Edge Hill) and LPYS speakers.

Liverpool District Labour Party/Northern Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group meeting. "Northern Ireland—for workers' unity and socialism." Speakers: Peter Hadden (LTUG); Richard Venton (Birkenhead Labour Party) and a national Labour Party speaker. Wednesday 17 June, 7.30 pm, Central Hall, Renshaw Street, Liverpool.

Labour Party Young Socialists/Northern Ireland Labour and Trade Union Group Public Meetings. "Which way forward for the labour movement in Northern Ireland" Speaker—Billy Lynn (Belfast Trades Council). Sunday 14 June: Cowane Centre, Stirling, at 7.30pm. Monday 15 June: Ruskin House, 15 Windsor St, Edinburgh, 7.30pm. Tuesday 16 June: McLellan Galleries, Glasgow at 7.30pm. Wednesday 17 June: Kirktonholm Road, Community Halls, East Kilbride, 7.30pm. Thursday 18 June: AUEW Halls, Ince St. Paisley, 7.30pm.

Communist Faction (ex-IMG)/Spartacist League public meetings: "Where is the IMG going? Trotskyists purged—Benn embraced". Speakers: Stephen Harney, Mark Hyde. Birmingham: Tuesday, 9 June, 7pm, Room 47, Dr Johnson House, Bull Street. London: Thursday, 11 June, Library, 115 Essex Road, London N1. Oxford: Tuesday, 16 June, 7.30pm, East Oxford Community Centre, Princes Street (off Cowley Road). Sheffield: Wednesday, 17 June, 7.30pm, Station Hotel, the Wicker.

North West Labour Party Young Socialists DAY SCHOOL

on Saturday, 20 June, at Union House, St Peters Street, Blackburn.

10.30am-1pm— Film "Controlling Interests" (on the role of the US multi-nationals) plus speaker and discussion.
1-2pm lunch (provided at small cost) and bar facilities.
2-4pm—"Should the monarchy be abolished?" Speaker—Josie Aitman and discussion.
Same evening, same place at 8.00pm New Wave and reggae night plus local new wave band "No Entry" and bar facilities. Admission—50p on the door. 20p if in attendance at day school.

If interested, send 50p in advance with name and address to Kay Wright, 44 Mowbray Avenue, Blackburn, Lancs.

OUT NOW!

'A fighting programme for the NUR'
Price 25p [+ 10p postage] from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN

Labour Women's Rally 12 June 7.30pm 'Fight Tory Attacks'. Speakers: Felicity Dowling (NUT Liverpool); Valerie Broome (PPC, Rochdale) and a striker from Royal Pride. Basement Theatre, Town Hall Annexe, Manchester. This is not a 'Militant' rally as advertised last week.

Industrial

DISPUTES

VICTORY AT UNITED GLASS

"A diluted victory." This was how G&MWU shop steward Frank Shields described the ending of the 42 day strike at United Glass, Peasley Cross, St Helens.

Prior to the return on Friday management had laid down 19 conditions as the basis for a return. These included greater flexibility in terms of manning levels, a revision of the facilities for trade union officers and an increase in productivity with less manpower!

Of course this provided some amusement on the picket line. However, the action of the 560 workers on strike to resist compulsory redundancies forced the bosses back. Management have been compelled not only to withdraw compulsory redundancy notices which was the focal point of the dispute but to accept a strengthening of the role of the G&MWU inside the

Steve Higham Bootle LPYS spoke to Frank Shields

Peasley Plant. For instance consultation over planning and investment will now take place.

It was with these points in mind that the strike committee felt able to recommend a return to work. The only 'black' mark during the dispute arose when 45 workers accepted voluntary redundancies.

I asked Frank Shields if anything had been learnt.

"The 1980 conference pledge was to resist compulsory redundancies therefore as far as we were concerned we were fighting for 950,000 GMWU members and expected the national leadership behind us."

"As reported in recent issues the national union leadership had confined the struggle solely to St Helens.

They provided us with duplicating materials, but next time we will picket the G&MWU headquarters first. Our attitude will be we will sow it up in St. Helens you sow it up everywhere else."

Fight not over

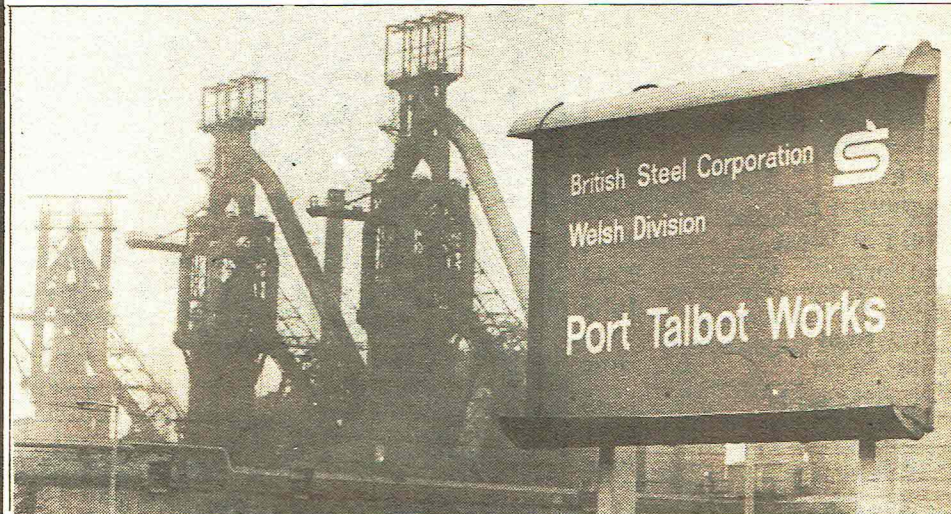
He wished to express his sincere thanks to 'Militant' and its supporters who gave practical support during the dispute as did many other sections of the labour movement.

But Frank was the first to point out that the fight for jobs is far from over. At a small lead company Hollman and Mitchell two minutes from United Glass workers had occupied against redundancies. They were thrown out by police several weeks ago. "But we haven't forgotten them, we pledge all the moral, physical and financial support possible."

STEEL CONFERENCE CAN SHOW THE WAY FORWARD

By Bill Hopwood

Photo: Militant



One of the steel works devastated in the past few years. There must be no more redundancies

The state of the steel industry is a reflection of the crisis of all British industry. The collapse of private industry is crippling BSC.

Workers in the public and private sectors are suffering, with three million unemployed. Manufacturing output has fallen by 14% in two years, worse even than 1929-30. There is no real sign of improvement.

Any effective policy to save steel and defend working people cannot stop short of removing the Tory government. The crisis isn't simply of Thatcher's making, it is a crisis of the system, of capitalism.

The next Labour government must base its solution on socialist policies.

It is therefore vital that the ISTC plays a constructive and active role in the Labour Party. As resolution 9 urges, the union should support democratic steps to strengthen Labour, such as the 40-30-30 formula for electing the Party leader, agreed at Labour's special conference in January.

In the past, union leaders have used our votes to back those 'Social Democrats' now stabbing Labour in the

back. This must be changed.

In the election for Labour's deputy leader, the ISTC, as an affiliate part of the Labour Party, should back Tony Benn, the only candidate unequivocally committed to Labour Conference policy.

The ISTC has an important part to play in defeating the Tories. The passing of resolution 34, calling for conference to become the union's policy-making body, would strengthen the voice of the membership in the fight for jobs, a strong union and a socialist way forward.

With each round of cuts and closures, steelworkers are told: "after this your jobs will be more secure." But cuts are followed by ever more cuts.

It is two years since the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation held its last conference. In that time the British Steel Corporation workforce has been halved, with the loss of over 70,000 jobs.

Output for the entire steel industry was only 11.3 million tonnes in 1980, little more than half the 1979 level. There is no prospect

of a recovery.

The private sector does not escape. Even Duports at Llanelli, a modern plant, is being scrapped.

BSC blames the workers. All the facts show this to be untrue. The real problems are the huge debt and interest repayment burdens, bad management and the overall decline of British manufacturing industry.

The union must adopt a policy of 'no more redundancies'—and campaign on it. There must be no more Consetts, fighting alone; we must halt the 'continuous 'slimming down' operation.

The Triple Alliance of steel, coal and rail unions to fight closures is an important step forward. The miners showed that it is possible to force the Tories to back down.

To wield our strength effectively, the Alliance must now be strengthened by involving all members. The South Yorkshire initiative, linking the ISTC, NUR, and NUM branches, must be repeated throughout the country. Other unions in the industries also need to be involved.

CANNON AND STOKES

By John Merrill

The eighty striking TASS members at Cannon and Stokes, Leicester, recently sent a delegation of twenty to put their case to workers at the company's head office in Yeadon, near Bradford.

The outcome—four hundred workers refused to go in that day. The rest of the workforce, including the nightshift, soon joined them.

After fifteen weeks of official strike action, the strikers hope to repeat such shows of solidarity in other places, stepping up pressure on management to settle the strike.

Members have voted unanimously to continue the

dispute until a settlement is reached leaving their 'fringe benefits', such as non-fixed holidays, intact.

Talks have been taking place, with TASS members in one room, company officials next door and the union divisional organiser acting as the go-between. No agreement has yet been reached over the two members given redundancy notices early in the dispute.

Management are now resorting to the oldest tricks in the book. Though they repeatedly maintain that

production is unaffected by the strike, they are appealing to members' consciences.

Their circular claims the strike is giving the company a bad name—though they're clearly not willing to settle it to guard their reputation! They make veiled threats of one hundred and fifty redundancies across the company before Christmas.

Money is coming in from generous union members elsewhere, but resources are scarce so your help would be gratefully appreciated. Please send donations to: The Treasurer, TASS Cannon and Stokes strike fund, AUEW Building, Vaughan Way, Leicester.

READING BUS STRIKE

By Ben Rayner

Reading bus drivers decided to take industrial action last week, angry at the Transport departments lack of consideration for them.

Plans had been announced for new drivers to work a five day week while the existing drivers work a six day week. The union want a 5 day week but not if it means a cut in wages.

Management's plans would create 32 jobs but the bus drivers would be paying their wages through a cut in their own earnings.

Reading Transport management's attitude towards

its drivers is highlighted in the case of an Asian worker who had applied for leave to see his dying father. He was refused but felt he had to go, and was subsequently sacked. An industrial tribunal decided he was unfairly dismissed but management have ignored it. The drivers are taking up

his case in their strike.

No negotiations have taken place as yet, in spite of the union's efforts. In fact the Executive Officer of the Council conveniently took a holiday (in South Africa) two days after the union gave its ultimatum.

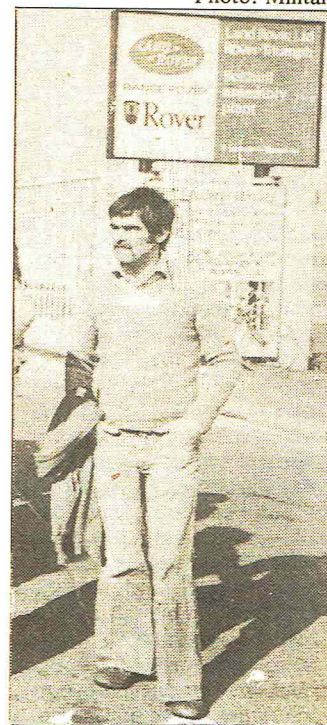
The pickets has been established from 5am till 11 pm and the official strike has been very solid with 200 drivers involved. The strikers are prepared for a long strike if management don't change their attitude, treating the drivers like machines rather than human beings.

Messages of support via Brian Rebell, IGWU District Officer, Kings Road, Reading.

ROVER Occupy to save jobs

By Bill Mullins

Photo: Militant



Rover workers protest at redundancies, April 1980.

On Thursday 4th June the 'posh', upper-middle class roads of Solihull echoed, to the cries of workers demanding the right to keep their jobs.

To chants of 'Edwardes Out', four thousand component and supply workers marched from the plant to Solihull town centre.

The mood was one of outrage. As Peter Trodden, AUEW shop steward, said the only way now is occupation.

Following a meeting last Saturday, the unofficial combine committee have called for a public enquiry into the long-term strategy for the company.

At the rally following the march, Mick Clarke, Rover plant convenor, called for a 'community fight' against the closure, adding this meant involving "Tories and

Liberals, as well as Labour Party people."

But the speaker from the Lawrence Scott occupation in Manchester said, "Thatcher and the Tories completely backed Edwardes. Therefore it is a political fight. Edwardes is just a puppet for Thatcher. Kick out the Tories!" This was met by the biggest cheer of the day.

The shop stewards' committee at Cowley have promised that they will refuse to accept any work from Rover. There is also a plan to link up with other shop stewards in Birmingham, whose plants face closure.

The last word should be left to one of the marchers. "Edwardes said do it his way. We did—and we got the sack. We've had enough."

Reports

CIVIL SERVANTS Reports from the areas

This week has seen an angry response to the governments refusal to increase their pay offer to Civil Servants. Nationwide, Civil Servants have been walking out of their offices, demonstrating and calling on their union to declare an all out strike.

In Manchester last Saturday over 100 members from strike committees all over the country came together to organise action.

On Monday there were mass meetings and rallies:

LONDON — saw a demonstration over 1,000 strong march down Fleet Street chanting anti-Tory slogans and demanding an all out strike.

At the rally afterwards the leaders of the unions reaffirmed their intention to press for 15%.

LIVERPOOL — 3,000 Civil Servants met in Liverpool town centre. This was the first of a series of consultative meetings which will be held throughout Merseyside in the next week.

Speakers from the floor demanded all-out action provided emergency cover is maintained for payment of unemployment and Social Security benefits. Many were highly critical of the lack of national leadership.

The general mood was for all-out action and the issue will now be put to branches.

GLASGOW.

Two mass meetings took place in Glasgow on Monday. A motion from the floor calling for all out action was carried almost unanimously at one meeting attended by over 2,000.

At the other meeting attended by 2,500, the mood was the same—"we don't want to strike, but if we must we will."

EDINBURGH — 2,500 attended a mass meeting. A large majority were in favour of all-out action. There is no mood for compromise now — 1 or 2% more will not be enough.

Pickets reported that they were not worried about being left off the honours list!!

Reports from Dave San, John Ellis, Tam Burke, Pat Byrne, Barry Fuge, Eddie Phillips and Alistair Nicholson

NEWCASTLE — The branch committee of CPSA in the gigantic complex of the Social Security HQ's which employs 12,000 voted to recommend to the mass meeting that all-out strike action be supported.

READING — the local DHSS office has already responded to Thatcher's threats. 72 of their members have come out on indefinite strike and are calling for an all-out national strike.

The type of support which Civil Servants can expect is indicated from Newcastle. There the unemployed Centre has leafletted the doles giving support to the Civil Service Unions and advice to claimants.

The response was 95% support, with remarks like "we need you lot to bring the Tories down".



Pickets at Longbenton DHSS, Newcastle on 9 March, the first day of the civil service action

Over 100 members from all the 9 Civil Service unions attended a meeting in Manchester on Saturday, called to consider the latest developments

The meeting was originally organised by the local Manchester strike committee and the union members who attended represented 24 out of 40 local strike

committees set up by the Civil Service Trade Unions.

A second meeting has also been organised and this will be held on Saturday 20 June in Manchester.

CONFERENCE ROUND UPS

Post Office Engineers

The result for the voting for the National Executive Committee positions of the POEU shows no change from the positions last year. An unprecedented campaign of vilification against the Broad Left supporters by the right wing has failed to unseat the nine Broad Left supporters on the 23 man Executive.

Indeed, two Broad Left supporters Terry Wild, and Militant supporter Phil Lloyd actually increased their votes by several thousand. As one delegate put it, "the Daily Mail and Woodrow Wyatt must be sick as parrots."

The other main highlight of the conference so far, has been the Broad Left meeting, where 500 delegates and visitors heard Tony Benn. To great ap-

plause he stressed that "Welfare Capitalism was no longer on offer to any party". Because of the slump of world capitalism the next Labour Government could only succeed if it made fundamental changes to the economy

This also set the scene for the discussion which was held on Monday to formulate the unions policy on the make-up of the electoral college and which way the unions votes would be cast for the position of the Deputy Leader of the Labour Party.

To the intense disappointment of many delegates (and the TV cameras) these two burning issues were not reached.

However, the conference earlier kicked out an attempt by the NEC to authorise them "to join with other unions in securing a change in the decision regarding the election of the leader and the deputy leader of the Labour Party taken

at the Special conference of the Labour Party on the 24th January 1981 (i.e. 40% trade unions, 30% CLP's and 30% PLP)". The result therefore, is that the union has no policy on the election of the deputy leader or the make up of the electoral college.

This leaves the decision in the hands of the union delegation to the Labour Party Conference. This delegation is made up from six elected lay delegates, five unelected officials, the General Secretary and the President. The blatant abuse of the the conference has not gone unnoticed. The response to Tony Benn's remarks, the numbers at the Broad Left meetings, and the rising sales of the Militant show clearly the growing political maturity of the Post Office Engineering Union.

By Wayne Jones

Bakers Union

The trend to greater control in the labour movement was applauded at the Bakers and Allied Food Workers' Union Conference, by both Joe Marino, General Secretary and Terry O'Neil, President in their opening addresses.

On the first day an executive resolution was overwhelmingly carried, which called for the union vote for Labour Party leader and deputy leader to be decided at the union's annual conference. Nominations were asked for during the conference and delegates voted to back Michael Foot for leader and Tony Benn for deputy leader.

Last year's decision calling for the TUC and the Labour Party to launch a

campaign aimed at bringing down the Tory government and replacing it with a socialist Labour government was reaffirmed.

The idea that import controls offer any answer to workers' problems under capitalism was roundly rejected. Jean Mayhew from Blackpool pointed out that much of the trade in the cake and biscuit side of the industry was for export. Restrictions and retaliation would undermine the jobs of bakery workers.

Keith Albinson said that the crisis was international and that the working class must respond with an international approach. Socialist policies and not tinkering with the system is what is required.

The union again went on record in favour of the 35-hour week with no loss of pay. Although another resolution was carried which called for a maximum shift pattern of 5 x 8 hours. The long overtime hours worked, particularly on the bread side, featured in the discussion. Many delegates spoke of the reluctance of members to accept lower hours as

this meant a cut in take home pay.

The debate on nuclear weapons took place the day after many delegates had seen the War Game film. The effect was visible on the delegates who voted overwhelmingly to back CND.

The need for increasing involvement in Trades Councils and local Labour Parties was also discussed.

The mood of the conference showed that whilst all the wounds are not yet healed the fighting spirit of bakery workers is still there. An emergency debate on the fight against redundancies at Mothers Pride, Salford, showed this spirit. A small group of workers backed by the union not only took on the giant Rank Hovis Mc Dougall but also secured important victories (see Militant 554).

By Gerry Lerner

Trades Councils Ireland debate

The attempt of Len Murray the TUC General Secretary to pre-empt the debate on Ireland at the National Conference of Trades Councils, last weekend caused a sensational upset and wide spread resentment amongst conference delegates.

Brother Murray used his privilege of addressing the conference to attack a

resolution on the issue of Ireland. Almost half of his speech was devoted to denouncing this resolution which was not debated until the last day of conference.

The main points of the resolution were for:—

★ A British government commitment to withdraw from Northern Ireland.

★ A bill of rights for Northern Ireland.

★ The ending of the non-jury Diplock courts, and a review of all cases tried under Diplock courts and restoration of special category status to detainees.

Brother Murray informed the delegates that if the resolution was carried in opposition to what he said

was TUC policy, then the General Council would completely ignore the opinion of the delegates.

Nevertheless the resolution was carried by a big majority and is now the policy of the Trades Councils.

Despite short comings in the resolution it now means that debate on Northern Ireland will be opened up in all Trades Councils, Trade Union branches and at the Trade Union Congress.

By Dudley Edwards
(Brighton Trades Council)

ASLEF

This year's ASLEF conference has reflected the growing anger of railway workers towards the British Rail management. As such it has represented a step forward. Throughout the conference the softly softly approach of the executive committee has come under heavy fire from the delegates on a number of important issues.

This was highlighted by the rejection of the Standing Orders recommendation that they should leave the question of cuts in the hands of the Executive

Committee. A motion from the floor calling on the Executive Committee to initiate industrial action to fight rail cuts was carried despite strong opposition from the platform.

Delegates were particularly angered by suggestions that there was apathy amongst the membership. They felt that there was apathy in the leadership.

The lack of a lead on the TUC day of action, the threatened closure of the Manchester-Sheffield-Wath line and lack of support for the recent industrial action in the Southern Region were pointed to. The Executive Committee are now committed to lead a fight using the industrial muscle

against further cuts.

Another encouraging aspect of the conference has been the increased political discussion. ASLEF was the first union to invite Tony Benn to address the conference from the platform. He received a standing ovation. Conference later voted to back him in his campaign for deputy leader of the Labour Party.

Conference also voted with reservation to back the TUC decision to set up a federation of three rail union. This must be the first step towards the formation of one democratic union for railway workers.

By Stuart Hammond
(Stratford ASLEF)

Civil Service- PREPARE FOR ALL OUT STRIKE



Picket line at Southend computer centre in March

Photo: Militant

Throughout the thirteen-week civil service strike, the Tory cabinet has stood rigidly by its contemptible offer.

Their cynical attitude has been met with growing anger and resentment.

The civil service dispute has now reached its most critical moment. In my own union, the CPSA, and other major unions, the members are voting this week on the issue of all-out strike action. We must record a massive vote against the 7% offer and in favour of the strike. We have no alternative.

Spontaneous unofficial action greeted Lord Soames' statements of "7% and no more." Later mass demonstrations took place in most parts of the country (reports page 15).

Before Soames' announcement there was speculation that he was moving away from the hard-line stance. But it is clear that the Tories are intent on breaking the civil service trade unions, and of using this to frighten other workers considering industrial action to protect their living standards.

By Kevin Roddy
 (DHSS Section organiser
 personal capacity)

Even concessions made informally during the negotiations have been snatched away.

All-out indefinite action without strike pay is extremely difficult for civil servants, especially the hundreds of thousands who are very low paid. So far, the official selective action has been financed by strike pay. Many civil servants will be wondering if they can financially afford to strike without strike pay.

The government and the media will try to apply maximum pressure in an effort to stop this action. To lose this battle will mean a drastic cut in living standards and the introduction of a heavily-biased pay-bargaining system.

Victory for the Tories will whet their appetite for

STOP PRESS: A mass meeting of 5,000 at Newcastle Central Office DHSS voted over 2 to 1 for all-out strike.

further attacks on manning levels and jobs.

A landslide vote for industrial action would answer the taunts of well-heeled Tory ministers that there is little support for the pay claim. The so-called "Iron Maiden" has already been melted by the actions of the firemen and miners.

Civil servants possess a tremendous degree of industrial power. So far this has only been used in a piecemeal fashion. If now used it can have a major impact upon trade, commerce and revenue collection.

The leaked reports that strikers will be denied "honours" will have little effect on clerks and typists. But the Tories have shown the vindictive attitude they will adopt should they win this battle. They have decided to freeze promotion for those taking part in industrial action and also to give back-pay on any increase only to non-strikers. No doubt they hope to frighten off civil servants

from ever taking action again.

Militant supporters have advocated emergency procedures in the Department of Employment and the Department of Health and Social Security, to help sustain the poorest and most needy sections in society.

The Tories and the media intend to launch a barrage of hypocritical propaganda if emergency procedures to pay out benefits are rejected by our members.

The Tories have forced millions to rely on the dole and other state benefits. But they will try to use these workers to drive a wedge between civil servants and the wider labour movement.

The arrogant attitude of the government has already provoked some of our members into refusing to operate emergency procedures.

Should the government respond with a wave of suspensions then widespread industrial action is highly likely. Even before the ballot an all-out strike could begin.

Civil servants must stand firm. A record vote must be recorded for industrial action.

Civil servants can win: we must win!

STRIKE BACK

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

preparing to defend services, pay and jobs.

Train drivers, ignoring union leaders' appeals for caution, are ready to strike against rail cuts.

Next week's nationwide strike by ambulancemen is in answer to a derisory £5 wage offer.

Civil servants are walking out of offices all over the country in disgust at the wage cut being forced down their throats.

They are determined to make the Tories change course.

And at British Leyland's Rover plant in Solihull, workers are ready to fight against closure. They have no

Tories.

A twenty-four hour general strike, called by the Trade Union Congress, would rock Thatcher's crisis-torn government.

Concerted action by workers could halt the slide into poverty and mass unemployment.

The unions must use that power, to bring to office a Labour government committed to socialist action.

Industry must be taken out of the bosses' hands and put to work, with a national plan releasing resources for much needed homes, schools, hospitals—and jobs.

A challenge to the Tories must mean a challenge to their system—to the bosses, banks and financiers who

Either someone will buy this place and run it, or the old owners will keep it open. Nothing else can happen: we will never give up. We know there'll be victory.

Margaret Stevenson, member of Lee Jeans occupation committee

Edwardes said do it his way. We did—and we got the sack. We've had enough.

British Leyland worker

choice.

Unemployment in the industrial Midlands has doubled in the last year—it now equals Scotland's. 52,000 BL jobs have gone since Michael Edwardes came to 'save' the company.

The Triple Alliance of rail, coal and steel workers, pledged to a joint fight against closures, would be an invincible weapon for the labour movement—if the idea was acted on.

The trade unions have the power to sack the

run the economy, with no regard for working people.

In Tory Britain the meek inherit nothing. A socialist Britain with an end to low pay, long hours and dole misery; the poor the old and sick put first at last. That is an inheritance it's worth fighting for!

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