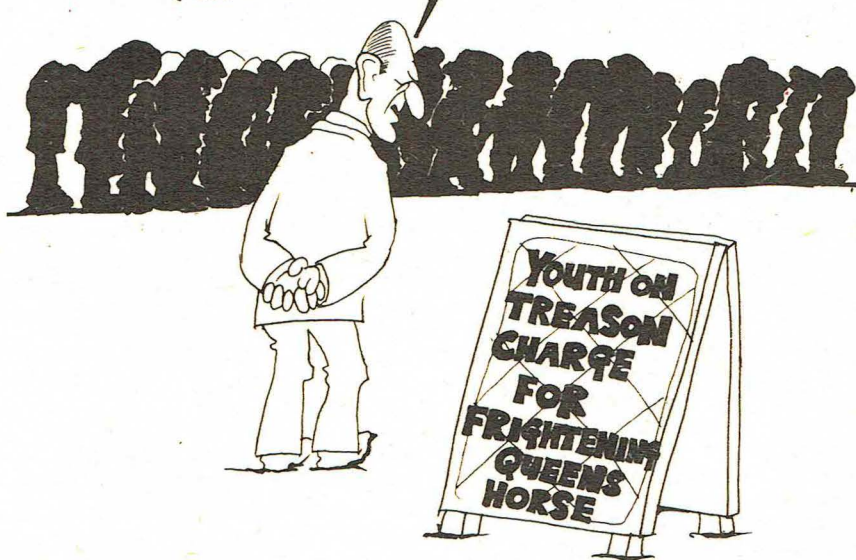


# IDLE RICH ATTACK JOBLESS POOR

## ROYAL ATTACK

YOU UNEMPLOYED CHAPPIES SHOULD  
STOP MOANING AND SHOW SOME GRATITUDE  
FOR THE LEISURE YOU'RE GIVEN



## THIS LOU T MUST STAND TRIAL!

See  
page 2

You can say one thing about the Tories—they've got the cheek of the devil.

A few weeks back, they gave the head of the civil service, Lord Soames a cool £4,375 rise in the middle of a civil service pay dispute.

In their latest trick, social security workers in Tyneside received two official circulars last week. The first reported Soames' refusal to budge on civil service pay—"seven per cent and not a penny more," he said.

The second circular asked for donations to Prince Charles' wedding present!

The circular hoped everybody would have the "opportunity" to give 50p. So 500,000 of the lowest paid workers in the country would be donating no less than £¼ million to the heir to one of the world's biggest personal fortunes!

These last few years, workers have had quite enough unwanted "opportunities" to make gifts to the rich, thank-you.

The civil servants, despite the poisonous propaganda of the last week are not fighting the unemployed. Unemployed workers in Newcastle have given support to the dispute because they see they have the same enemy—the Tories and their system.

By Roger  
Shrives

The Royal Family they want civil servants to subsidise are different. Prince Philip last week launched an attack on those out of work.

"A few years ago," he said, people "wanted more leisure. Now they have got it, they complain they are unemployed."

Well of course His Royal Highness is an expert on leisure—he's been idle all of his sixty years. The subtle difference is that he doesn't have to live on the dole or supplementary benefit. Nor does he face life on an old age pension.

Workers live in a different world from the Prince Philips, Soames, and Thatchers. For us, the fight for jobs and decent wages are vital.

CONTINUED ON  
BACK PAGE

## AMBULANCE WORKERS

# 'Our patience has gone'

Ambulance drivers have angrily rejected the employers' contemptuous offer of a 7¼% increase.

Out of 104 branches of the National Union of Public Employees concerned only four have voted to accept. Our frustration has only been increased by the intransigent attitude of the government.

Government minister Patrick Jenkin claims that ambulance drivers earn '£163 per week'. What is the truth? A qualified driver gets £76.60 a week, while a trainee gets only £62.75!

The wonderful offer from the employers would increase the qualified drivers' rate to £82.49, but even this would be their lot for 15 months!

Now that our patience has gone the media are saying we should negotiate first. But we have been in negotiations since January—all to no avail!

Ron Keating is correct, there is no holding the men now. All the employers will listen to is



Ambulance drivers on picket line in Hackney, East London

strike action. This is reflected in the 24 hour lightning strikes without emergency cover which areas have unfortunately been forced into by the government.

The claim is modest by any standards; we want compatibility with the other emergency services

[and they are not exactly earning a fortune!]

But the only way it will be successful is by going onto the attack. NUPE should now begin negotiations with the TUC to ask for support from other unions, and if and when necessary, to call a 24 hour general strike.

Such a stance would break the resolve of Thatcher's government and pave the way for a working class offensive that could sweep away this terrible government.

Ray Physick interviewed an ambulance driver in Wearside

## TUC MUST CALL 24hr GENERAL STRIKE



# Militant

## HISTORIC VICTORY FOR FRENCH LEFT

Following Mitterrand's Presidential victory last month, the workers' parties have inflicted another decisive defeat on the French ruling class in the Assembly elections.

The Socialist Party especially has made big gains and may even be in the position to command an overall majority in the National Assembly, the first party to be able to do so since the Gaullist landslide of 1968.

The French electoral system is weighted against the left, so that it takes many more votes in the urban areas to return an MP than it does in the more conservative rural areas. But this did not prevent a landslide for the left. Neither did the attempt of the right-wing parties to use scare-mongering tactics to frighten voters away from the left.

The combined vote of all the left parties together is around 55 per cent [in the first round] and that will be seen by French workers as the signal for the government to carry through all its programme of reforms without any hesitations.

Mitterrand had already announced important reforms: the basic minimum wage up 10 per cent from 1 June, pensions, family allowance, disability and other allowances going up by 20 to 25 per cent from 1 July, and negotiations with the trade unions to reduce the working week to 35 hours by 1985.

The mood of elation produced by the Presidential victory was increased by

these reforms and, as the Assembly vote demonstrated, there is now a clear mood in France in favour of social changes. The spell of Gaullism has been broken and France will never be the same again.

But the French Socialist government will inherit an economy in the grip of recession. The official Statistical Institute in Paris published a report only last week which pointed to a sharp deterioration in the French economy in 1980. There is record unemployment, persistently high inflation, shrinking living standards, stagnating production and investment. The recession has shown no signs of ending during 1981.

French workers will take the promises of the Socialist party seriously; they will expect that "their" government will now carry out policies in the interests of workers, to halt the rise in unemployment and the squeeze on living standards and the 55 per cent mandate will only reinforce the expectations of the workers.

But on the other hand, even if Mitterrand carries through the promised nationalisations, the private sector will continue to dominate the economy. Under these circumstances the capitalists will be able to put enormous pressure on for 'moderation' and 'restraint'.

The run on the Franc and the almost 25 per cent decline in the Bourse [Stock Exchange] are indications of the fear that has gripped French capitalists at the scale of the left's victory.

But there is a sense in which these are also warnings directed at the Socialist government. If the economy

of France remains on the basis of capitalism then inevitably the reforms will begin to turn to their opposite, into counter-reforms. Like the wage increases that were granted in the strike wave of 1968, they will be given with the one hand and taken, through inflation, with the other hand.

The only guarantee that the reforms could be meaningful and permanent would be for the French Socialist and Communist Parties to mobilise the support they have, to take over the whole of the economy. The mood for real social change is undeniable. What is more, it would increase further if the workers' parties began a campaign to rally support for the complete social transformation of the economy.

The elections will begin a period of upheaval inside the workers' parties. The relatively weak vote for the Communist Party will provoke repercussions within that party as members will inevitably challenge the bankrupt programme and the policies of their leaders.

But the same will also be the case within the Socialist Party. Every display of weakness that the leadership shows towards French capitalism will be reflected by opposition and dissent within the rank and file.

Whatever the exact course that events now follow, these elections mark an historic turning point for the French labour movement, and the labour movement internationally.



Picket outside first day of Scarman Inquiry this week

# Scarman won't produce solutions

The first two days of the Scarman enquiry have already confirmed the role of the police in provoking the upheaval in Brixton over the weekend of 10/12 April.

Scarman himself has already criticised the "aggressive policing" of the area, and expressed surprise at the insensitivity of the police to the feeling of local people, especially blacks.

But a few comments from Scarman will not convince most of the black people in the area that an enquiry headed by a judge, can examine the real cause of the upheaval from the point of view of their interests.

The black organisations with any real support amongst local black people, especially amongst the "front-line" youth, are maintaining their boycott of Scarman, as are the majority of organisations of the labour and trade union movement.

Scarman may be critical of police tactics, but he has still not guaranteed real immunity from prosecution for witnesses, despite public claims to the contrary. Witnesses can still be prosecuted on basis of "other evidence", and there is nothing to stop the police using evidence given to Scarman to incriminate other people.

Scarman clearly cannot guarantee local people immunity from police action either.

On the 10 and 11 June, just before Scarman's hearings opened, Brixton police mounted another series of raids, arresting 17 people, some of whom had already been arrested once since the upheaval.

At the same time, police spokesmen announced to the press that they expected to "push the arrests up to about 600". So far there have been about 320 arrests.

A "target" of 600 arrests is clearly an intimidatory threat directed against people who may otherwise consider giving evidence against the police to Scarman.

Lord Scarman, as his record shows, is clearly a more far-sighted representative of the British ruling class than his present Tory bosses. He realises that it is not in the interests of big business and their system, for the police to be repeatedly provoking riots and confrontations on the streets.

But what powers will he have to change this?

A Tory government which is pushing through a racist Nationalist Act is hardly concerned about good relations with the black community. Tory economic policies have sharpened the crisis of British capitalism, throwing an even heavier burden of unemployment and cuts on-

to working people in areas like Brixton.

Many Tory ministers, not to mention the reactionary backwoodsmen of the Party, really support repressive "law and order" policies. Even the big-business journal 'The Economist' (13 June) comments that "the present government's policy towards racial minorities is, in fact, embarrassingly similar to that of the metropolitan police: rare top-levels of good intent, little practical action, and racist mutterings in the privacy of the all-white canteen."

Scarman, whatever he recommends, will not change the class character and reactionary policies of the Tory government.

Scarman, however much he laments the appalling conditions in the Brixton area, will not bring jobs, new houses, better schools and adequate amenities.

According to Thatcher, it is not possible to "buy our way out" of the problem. Later, in advance of any enquiry, Thatcher, Whitelaw and Heseltine all blankly refused to channel more resources into the Lambeth area.

A genuine People's Enquiry, based on black organisations and the labour movement, is still urgently required. This has been campaigned for by the Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton, and in the last week there have been significant discussions with representatives of the South East TUC, the Labour GLC and other Labour and trade union organisations on financial backing and support for such an enquiry.

Detailed proposals for the procedure and terms of reference of a People's Enquiry have been drawn up and are being discussed with leaders of the local movement. It is to be hoped that these plans will be put into effect in the very near future.



Photo: A Ward (Report)



# N. IRELAND LABOUR HOLDS THE KEY



Building barricades in Derry last month

Photo: Militant

Six prisoners are now on hunger strike in the H-Block. It is proposed that another prisoner will join the protest each week. One of the present six, Joe McDonald, has already gone 40 days without food.

The present relative lull in the H-Block situation is therefore clearly set to explode again within the next two to three weeks. The prospect of deaths in the prison beginning in July and stretching over the summer months poses the grave danger of a dramatic rise in sectarianism.

The deaths of some hunger-strikers could coincide with the period of the 12th July Orange marches, itself an explicit warning of the dangers.

Yet Thatcher and the Tories are still refusing the concessions which would

By Peter Hadden  
(N Ireland Labour and  
Trade Union Group)

allow some agreement to be reached with the prisoners. All the Tories would need to do is implement basic reforms, especially on clothing and prison work.

If prisoners were allowed to wear their own clothes—the right already enjoyed by women prisoners in Northern Ireland—and if they could negotiate a choice of work, education and training, there would be the basis of a settlement. This would especially be the case if these concessions were granted together with those offered by the government to previous hunger-strikers last December.

But Thatcher has remained unmoved. Her policy, and that of the military, has

been to vastly step up repression in the Catholic areas. The army has been responsible for provoking riots in areas like West Belfast. Even in non-riot situations they have responded with the ready use of the murderous plastic bullet.

The continuation of this policy of intransigence and repression could have catastrophic effects in Northern Ireland. It could eventually create a mood of sectarianism which would seriously throw back the prospects of working-class unity.

## End 'bi-partisanship'

The labour movement in Ireland and Britain have a responsibility to prevent this. Thatcher has been helped to write out the deaths of Bobby Sands and three other hunger strikers by the silence—and in some cases the open support—of

some of the Labour Party leaders.

There are no grounds for 'bi-partisanship'. On such an issue, the Labour Party must immediately re-affirm the stance of its National Executive of last year and press the government to implement the necessary prison reforms.

By fighting for decent conditions for those in H-Block and for all the prisoners in Northern Ireland the labour movement would not be giving support to the policies of the Provisionals or any sectarian or para-military group.

H-Block has proved the futility of such methods. It was because of the sectarian nature of the most prominent H-Block campaigners and of their association with the Provisionals, that the government was able to allow the four prisoners to die.

The labour movement would not be giving credibility to the Provos by

fighting for prison reforms. However, if it remains silent or, worst still, supports the Tories, this will leave the field clear for the sectarians.

An immediate campaign for prison reforms must be coupled with opposition to all forms of repression.

An enquiry by the labour and trade union movement into repression in Northern Ireland could be a preface to a campaign to repeal all repressive legislation, abolish the non-jury 'Diplock' courts, close the police interrogation centres, and end the daily harassment of workers and youth by both police and army.

Part of such an enquiry should be a review by the movement of the cases of all those convicted on offences arising out of the NI troubles. This would determine who are political prisoners, distinguishing those, both Loyalist and Republican, who have carried out deliberate sectarian atrocities and who cannot be

regarded as political prisoners or defended by the labour movement.

The Tories' efforts to change the law and exclude certain convicted prisoners from standing for parliament must be opposed. This restriction of democratic rights could be used against the Labour Party in Britain in the event of a future right-wing government taking legal action against workers in struggle.

Only the labour movement and the unity of the working class can solve the problems of Northern Ireland. The H-Block crisis has demonstrated that the Tories and the ruling class have nothing to offer at this stage except deeper repression.

The sectarian organisations offer only a prospect of further bloodshed. The priority now is the building of a united class movement of Protestant and Catholic workers to end repression and the system which gives rise to repression.

# SUN, SOCIALS and MARXISM

MILITANT RALLY SATURDAY 18 JULY

**BUILD**  
A SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EVENT  
FOR SUPPORTERS, THE LABOUR  
AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT,  
THEIR FAMILIES AND  
THE GENERAL PUBLIC

## Militant RALLY

AT  
FRIENDS HOUSE,  
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### WHAT'S ON-

The event will include—a big meeting, films, folk, food and theatre, bookstalls, badges, banners, cartoons, exhibitions, discussions, seminars on major questions, multitudes of side stalls including literature and posters; creche facilities are available, all day snacks too.



AN EVENT NOT TO BE MISSED

The 'Militant' rally on 18 July will combine films, entertainment, with political discussions. A crèche will be provided, so bring the family.

For tickets and further details contact your local seller or contact:

Rally Organiser,  
Militant,  
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ONE WEEK TO  
**MARXIST  
WEEKEND  
SCHOOL**

JUNE 26-28  
Details p. 13

LPYS  
SUMMER  
CAMP  
August 1-8

# Women back take-over of monopolies

There was a much more militant mood at this year's Labour Women's Conference, held in Buxton, Derbyshire 13-16 June.

This undoubtedly reflects increased activity in women's sections, as working-class women are hit by unemployment and Tory policies. There was also a feeling of frustration, however, at the platform's failure to respond to the delegates' mood.

On Monday, Conference supported the call for the next Labour government to implement a programme including nationalisation of the banks and major monopolies which dominate the economy.

Only then would it be possible, said the resolution, to introduce a socialist plan of production whereby workers not only created the wealth, as at present, but were able to determine its distribution for jobs, health, education, housing etc.

Those supporting the resolution recognised the importance of nationalisation in order to end the serious crisis of capitalism. Oppo-

By Sheila Woodhead  
(Rochdale Women's  
Council)

sition came from speakers who wanted to divide the workforce along sex lines or who felt that the bosses would make mandatory planning agreements and introduce improvements.

## 'Women and Fight for Socialism' pamphlet

But Merle Boddy pointed that although we had to recognise that nationalisation had been made a dirty word, we had to spell out what nationalisation should mean in the transformation of society.

This contrasted with the derisory comments from the platform during the unemployment debate. The proposal that firms threatening redundancies should be nationalised was derided as 'simplistic'. "We have to be

adult about this," claimed Jacky Spence. We would have to nationalise county councils and co-ops, she claimed.

Because of this opposition, this excellent motion was defeated. Ironically, the majority seemed to agree that if we were to support nationalisation we would have to take over the lot.

Despite these earlier setbacks, however, the Conference later asserted the basic reasons underlying the crisis within British capitalism and pointed the way forward with a call for a fight for socialism on the part of the whole labour movement.

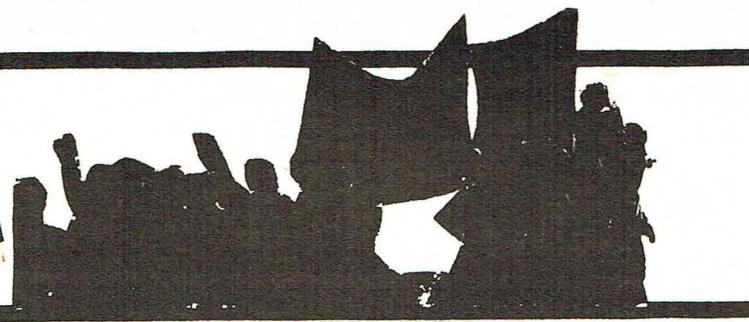
Militant supporters have been prominent in the debates, and Leslie Holt was elected to the Conference Arrangements Committee with one of the highest votes.

Sales of the new Militant pamphlet, *Women and the Fight for Socialism* have been very good.

[This pamphlet is now available, 30p post free from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN]



# WORKERS IN ACTION



# FORGET RECESSION - ENJOY THE WEATHER

## SHEFFIELD TORIES

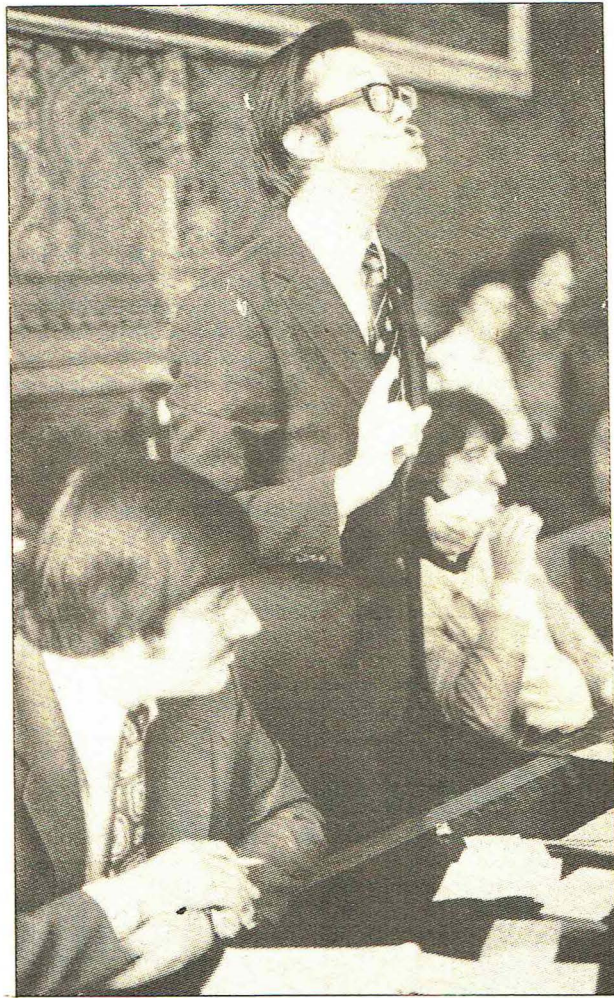
The summer weather should make us proud to be British. That's what young Tories told the LPYS in a debate on 2 June. The Tories told many unemployed in the audience that despite the recession we should be glad to live in an enjoyable pleasant country such as this.

But the working class were being a bit over-demanding. To get Britain back in the "Top League" Maggie has to get inflation under control. To do this the nasty greedy unions must do as Uncle Keith tells them: increase productivity and stop making unreasonable demands like trying to maintain their standard of living.

One young Tory bank worker told us it was ridiculous asking for 25% wage claims—no one needed that much. We were assured that Maggie would get it right before the next election, although of course there would be "unfortunate casualties" on the way.

In their reply LPYS speakers tore into the Tory arguments. Len Cooksey said the 3 million and more on the dole were the "unfortunate casualties" of the capitalist economic system. Now this system can't even provide the minimum needs of working class people.

The logic of the capitalist



One of our would-be rulers, a young Tory, debating with the LPYS in Parliament in 1979. On Wednesday 24 June London LPYS are debating with the young Tories again.

Photo: Militant

system was that whilst millions need decent housing there are over 300,000 building workers on the dole. Where is the democracy for the millions living

in misery on the dole? What freedom of choice do they have?

Gary Bottomley accused the bosses of the mismanagement of their own

system. "They whine about foreign competition; isn't competition supposed to be the 'life-blood' of capitalism? The Tories talked about obligations, what about the bosses' obligation to provide jobs?"

Speaker after speaker from the floor showed the socialist alternative. Workers produce the wealth of this country, it's time the working class took control of society and ran it in the interest of need and not profit. As Martin Hill said, 150,000 people assembled in London on 31 May to tell Thatcher to go.

The leading speaker from the Young Conservatives summed up his party's attitude to the working class; a company director he contributed 6p to the cost of the hall.

By Sue Horne  
(Doncaster LPYS)

## GLASGOW BOSSES

And it's not only in debate with the Tories that you discover the brains of those who run Britain. When Queen's Park LPYS helped organise a factory gate meeting, the local factory manager decided to attend.

Speaking at the meeting were two women from the Lee Jeans occupation force. The factory, a local textile works, is very similar to Lee Jeans and the speakers explained the importance of uniting together.

The factory manager was clearly a bit disturbed by this and when it was time for questions he claimed that current problems were all a result of the world recession. "Whose recession?" demanded one LPYS member.

But before the boss had fully time to explain the factory hooter went and the half-hour lunch-break was over. A collection was taken for the strike fund. But the boss had better watch out; it may not be long before people in his factory get fed up with working from 8 am till 4.30 pm with only half an hour break.

By Frank White  
(Queens Park LPYS)

# RIGHT-WING ONLY OFFER PAST FAILURES

## SOLIDARITY

Capitalists don't like the new policies and leaders in the Labour Party. That was the shock-horror revelation from John Jones, a right-wing trade union official, at a recent meeting of 'Labour Solidarity' in Cardiff.

He preferred to call capitalists 'entrepreneurs', and he warned that dire consequences would follow for the labour movement if it adopted left-wing policies.

Peter Shore's contribution to the meeting was mainly a personalized attack on Tony Benn and his supporters. He didn't explain the Shadow Cabinet's position on unemployment, the cuts or any other important issues.

During question time, Shore was asked whether the fact that the Shadow Cabinet opposed Party policy on so many major issues did not underline the case for greater accountability

within the party.

Having carefully read his contribution from a well prepared press statement, Shore suddenly came to life! He explained that to ask questions like that was to question his right to call himself a socialist.

He then sharply explained why he disagreed with Party policy on defence, incomes policy and the EEC.

Only 30 Labour Party members attended the meeting—pitifully small for an area like Cardiff, which includes Jim Callaghan's seat in Cardiff South East. His agent, Lord Brooks is 'Solidarity's' national organiser, yet even in their own backyard they can't attract a good turnout.

Indeed, the 'Sunday Times' showed that in the May 1981 council elections the biggest swing to the Tories—5.8%, was in Cardiff South East! The biggest swing to Labour—14.8%, was in Brighton Kempton, where the Parliamentary candidate is Militant supporter Rod Fitch.

## SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

The Social Democrats did at least manage to get a high turnout for their meeting in Leeds. 1700 went to the Town Hall to hear Shirley Williams launch the party. Some LPYS members decided to have a 'night off politics' and attend.

They were unimpressed. After a few minor swipes at the Tories she launched into her main enemy, the left in the Labour Party.

She had some novel thoughts on re-selection. She was against it, because "Re-selection on the basis of a person's opinion is a dangerous road to go down."

Clearly it should be left up to the bosses media to decide who our representatives in Parliament should be, and presumably the same arguments apply to voting as well.

But she did have some policies to offer. "We do not

want to withdraw from the Common Market and we don't want unilateral disarmament."

When it came to question time the class attitudes of Shirley Williams came even more to the fore. She was asked why the SDP had appointed Mr Doyle, Chairman of Booker McConnell Engineering as their chief executive. After all, he had been responsible for making over a hundred Leeds workers redundant, so that they ended up with neither redundancy pay nor unemployment benefit.

Williams thought this was a terrible attack on a man who was sacrificing so much to work for the SDP. They might have had a big audience but I doubt that any workers in the audience were convinced by the answers or the contributions, although the Tories must have loved it.

Reports by Andrew Price (Cardiff SE CLP) and Chris Hill (NW Leeds CLP)

# What a difference a year makes

By Tony Cross  
(Nottingham East CLP)

At last year's East Midlands Labour Party Conference the right wing arranged for Shirley Williams to address the meeting and defended her from attacks from the left.

Well this year we won't have the benefit of Shirley's company.

And the local election results showed that voters were not 'frightened off' by the move to the left nationally. In the East Midlands area, three counties swung over to Labour, two are

under no overall control and only Lincolnshire is in the hands of the Tories.

The Regional Executive report shows that the Party is attracting new members, especially into the Young Socialists, who have set up six new branches. People are attracted by the extension of democracy in the Party and the growth of fighting socialist ideas within it.

All efforts must be turned to building a mass democratic Labour Party in the region. Yet many councillors and regional executive members still repeat the Tory press' and Social Democrats' attacks on the leftward shift in the Party.

Resolution 37, from Ashfield CLP, attempts to stir

up a witch-hunt in the Party by demanding stricter enforcement of rules against "groups within the party". The resolution does not have the honesty to spell it out, but this is clearly aimed at reviving allegations against the left, and Militant supporters in particular, and must be opposed.

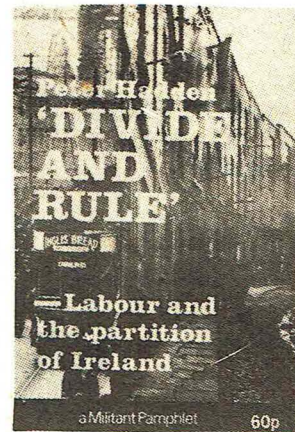
Workers have welcomed reforms introduced by Labour councils, such as Notts' decision to reinstate sacked teacher Eileen Crosbie. To keep defending workers' interests councils will inevitably clash with the Tory government. Only a fighting programme linked up to a national campaign to force a general election can defeat the Tories.

The basis of such a

socialist programme is spelt out in Nottingham East's resolution 13 when it calls for:

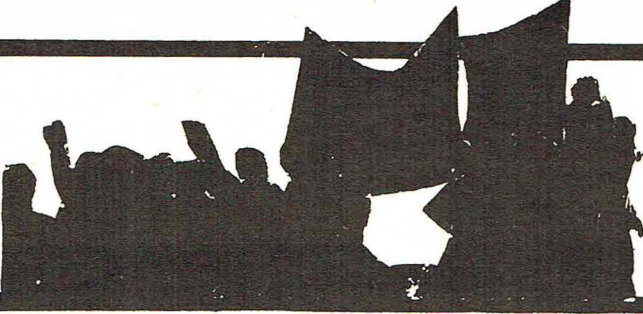
- (i) a 35-hour week with no loss of pay, linked to an £80 minimum wage.
- (ii) a scheme of useful public works.
- (iii) the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy and the banks and finance houses, under workers' control and management, with compensation on the basis of proven need.
- (iv) reduction in the retirement age to sixty.

This resolution must be passed and become the keynote for the region's campaigning in the coming year.



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# WORKERS IN ACTION

# IUSY CAMP 81 RED VIENNA

Inspired by selling a *Militant* to a policeman, one LPYS member attending the International Socialist Youth rally in Austria last week started selling to occupants of waiting cars.

"Oh my God," came the cry from one well-heeled driver of a Volvo, "you're not in Vienna as well!"

Yes we were, or to be exact 50 members of the LPYS were, attending the International Union of Socialist Youth Congress and Camp. And together with Marxists in the Irish Labour Youth, German, Swedish and Dutch Young Socialists we made quite an impact with paper and badge sales, leaflets and interventions during discussions.

Firm links and support for the ideas of Marxism were established among the Austrian Young Socialists from District 10 of Vienna, who were hosts to the LPYS delegation.

At this year's IUSY mass meeting there was a very large turnout of working-class youth from Young Socialist groups, mainly in Europe. It showed the possibility for a mass IUSY, which with Marxist policies would offer youth a real fighting socialist alternative to capitalism.

However, this opportunity was totally lost by the present leadership of IUSY at the Congress. Their attitude was in total contradiction to the fighting mood of the rank and file members.

One vice-president even admitted in his report, "We are at risk of having a little sect of young diplomats."

Kevin Ramage, the national LPYS chairman and delegate to IUSY congress, commented: "While the congress marked a consolidation of the left leadership, gained over the right-wing in 1979, at the same time it showed the failure of the bureaucratic methods of the left leadership to develop IUSY."

"Political debate was minimal. Most of the 2½ days were spent on endless reports and bureaucratic wrangles. The stagnation of IUSY was shown by the fall in the number of delegates—20% down from the 1979 figures, particularly among non-European organisations.

"Following a lead given by the LPYS, a proposal from the right-wing to make the meetings of the congress every three years instead of the present two years, was rejected. Unfortunately another proposal from the right-wing to 'look for other forms of support to IUSY work' was accepted. This

has enormous dangers, as IUSY could again become dependent on government funded bodies or even the CIA, as happened during the 1960s.

"Where there was political debate, on the issue of unemployment, the LPYS and Mick Martin, Chairman of the Irish Labour Youth pointed out that IUSY's campaigning work on this issue over the last two years, consisted of just two seminars! While many organisations spoke of the need to fight unemployment, the only call for action came from the LPYS.

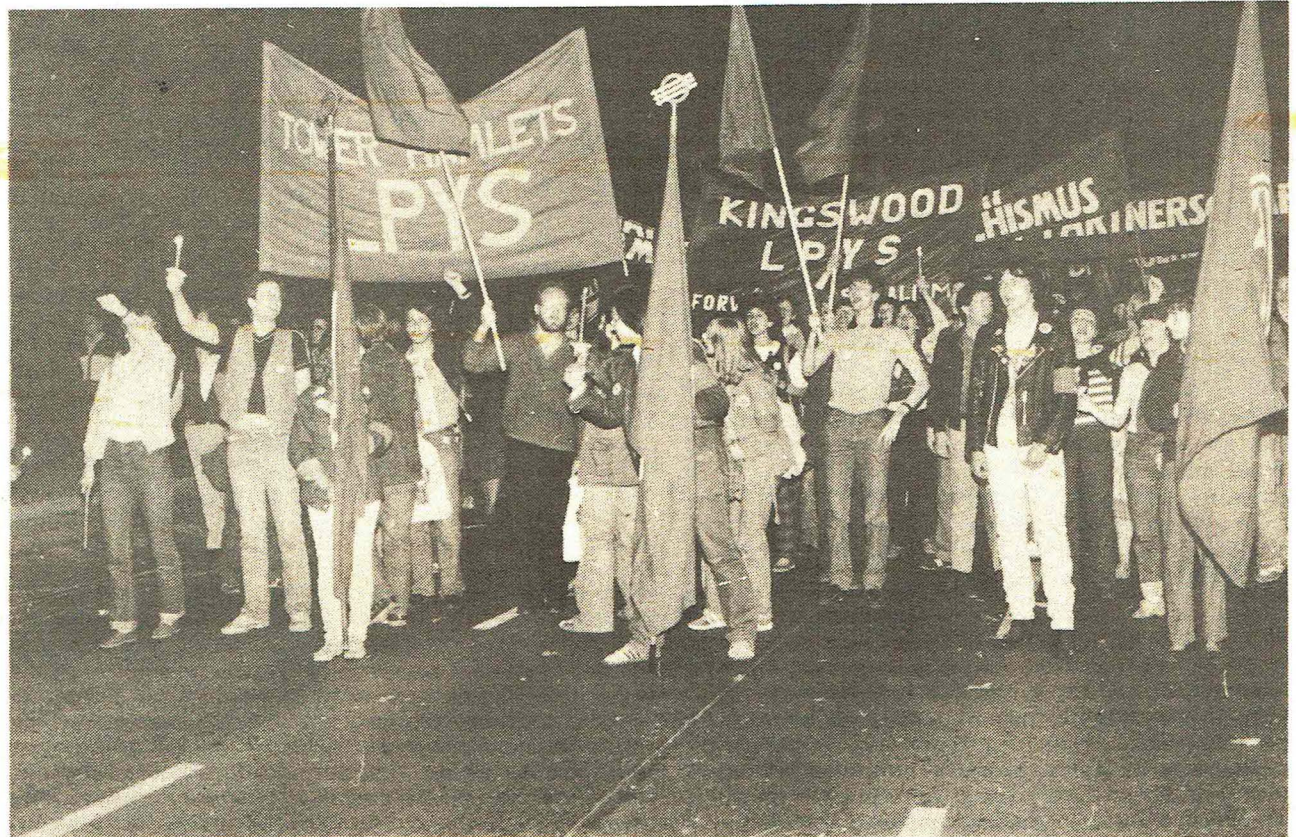
"We put forward a call for a demonstration of unemployed youth in Europe marching to the EEC headquarters demanding a 35-hour week without loss of pay, and jobs for all youth. But like every other call to action on the demands of working class youth, this was 'talked out' and not 'adopted'.

At the mass meetings of the camp following the congress, the LPYS and the Marxists within IUSY attempted to end the waffle of the leadership and put forward clear socialist policies. At one meeting, on 'Economic Democracy', after three platform speakers had delivered a pot-pouri of vague policies, spiced up with a few socialist slogans, Tony Saunois received great applause for his contribution, outlining the socialist case.

**Return to traditions of founders, Liebknecht and Luxemburg**

He explained it was 'abstract and meaningless' to talk of such things as 'planning agreements' or 'self-management' while capitalism existed. He said: "You cannot nationalise on a capitalist basis. We demand the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, for a socialist plan of production run by and in the interests of the working class."

Similarly, at the meeting on youth unemployment, the LPYS contributions brought a blast of reality to the discussion. In his lead



Part of the mass torchlight parade through Vienna during the IUSY camp. Photo: D Harris

off the platform speaker had mentioned he 'thought' unemployment was a consequence of capitalism.

As Ed Waugh from Gosforth LPYS pointed out to applause from the floor, "I know it is!" In all, a dozen or so LPYS comrades came into the debate, which showed the seriousness with which the LPYS considers the issue of mass unemployment amongst working class youth.

Interest in the campaigning work of the LPYS and its policies was reflected in the 600 *Militants*, 340

*Socialist Youths* and several hundred badges sold. A fringe meeting organised by the LPYS on Ireland, scandalously left off the agenda by the IUSY leadership, attracted 130 people.

Over 120 attended a Readers Meeting, with speakers from *Militant*, the German Marxist paper *Voran*, the Swedish Marxist paper *Offensiv* and a member of the Austrian YS.

During the camp over £400 was raised for the *Militant* Fighting Fund.

The highlight for many during the week, was the

massive torchlight parade through the city, where thousands marched for international solidarity of the working class. Before joining up with the main march, the LPYS marched with members of the Austrian YS through the working class area of District 10, where the Austrian Socialist Party received 75% of the vote.

The impact made by the LPYS and the response the Marxist ideas received from the thousands of young workers attending, especially amongst the Austrian Young Socialists—a LPYS

comrade has been invited to address the conference of the Viennese Young Socialists—marks well for the future.

As Kevin Ramage commented, "When the needs and aspirations of these young workers are genuinely reflected within IUSY, then the potential will exist to build a mass, working class youth, in the traditions of its founders, the great Marxists Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg.

## MILITANT MEETINGS

### BIRMINGHAM

**You don't have to go far to see the devastation that unemployment has wreaked in the Midlands. Dave Sarkey from Dudley East Labour Party just told the *Militant* rally in Birmingham about his train journey to the meeting from Wolverhampton to Birmingham New Street.**

Through the Black Country, once the heart of industry, he had looked out over the silent Bilston steelworks, the Patent Shaft plant where 1,000 workers had gone with just a month's notice, and then that vast area where the Cookley works stands.

It was once a giant, owned by Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin. Now only 200 workers pass through its gates each day, stamping stainless steel ashtrays. Earlier, from the platform Dick Murphy, an Ansell's shop steward, had spoken bitterly about the defeat of his members' 3 month fight to save their jobs.

All the MPs, councillors and Union officials could not prevent that closure. "We need to do what the *Militant* are doing in the Labour Party," he said, "change the leadership in the unions."

Les Kuriata, from the LPYS National Committee, described how unemployment in the West Midlands had shot up 114% in just one year. But with the enthusiasm that Midlanders showed in greeting the People's Marchers, a fight back is clearly on the way.

The main speaker, Ted Grant from *Militant's* Editorial Board, explained that despite some setbacks for unions locally, before long the workers of the area would be in the forefront of the campaign to transform the labour movement and then to build socialism.

Earlier the hundred people attending had seen 'Mick the knife'—alias Sir Michael Edwardes, and a parrot called Terry Duffy make an appearance in a play about the sabotage of

British Leyland, entitled 'on the Brink', presented by the Banner Theatre Company.

### BOOTLE

And whilst the Birmingham rally is becoming an annual event, readers meetings in other areas are being established. Bootle, recently had its first ever *Militant* readers' meeting. Over seventy people heard Peter Taaffe speak on 'Which way forward for Labour'.

The audience was a complete cross section composed of youth, women and older members of the

## MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS

**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.

labour movement. For many it was the first time they had come into contact with Marxist ideas, and this added to the liveliness of the ensuing discussion.

A financial appeal raised almost £130, which was an excellent amount to raise in such a depressed area, with an extremely high level of unemployment.

**Reports by  
Joe Foster  
(Erdington CLP)  
and Frances  
Murphy  
(Crosby LPYS)**

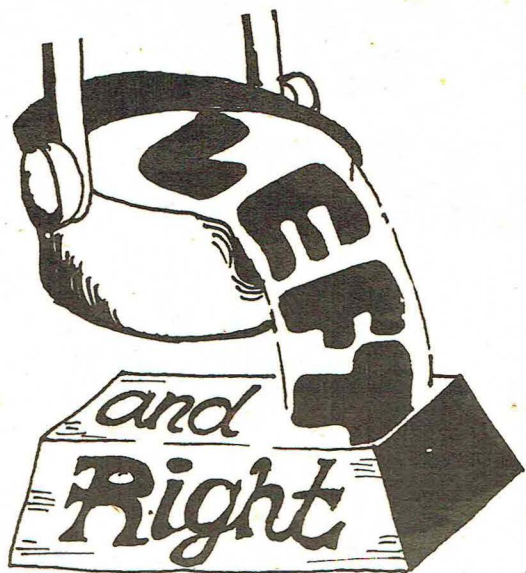
### LEICESTER:

'Transport cuts—for an integrated socialist plan for transport'. Speaker: Tom Doyle, Sheffield Tinsley NUR (personal capacity). Monday 22 June 7.30 pm 'Pineapple' pub, Burleys Way. Further information contact Leicester 28742.

### BOURNEMOUTH:

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





Boots the chemist tell us that its medical profits are down, because massive increases in prescription charges have meant that people don't collect medicine prescribed for them. So much for the efficiency of the market. But don't shed any tears for Boots. Their overall profits stood at £121 million because of their other enterprises.

The shareholders probably don't worry about the low paid going without medicines they need. What might make them worry would be a campaign to nationalise the big companies that make huge profits by selling drugs at high prices to the National Health Service. There'd be no need for prescription charges then.

The Social Democratic Party is a modern party, and opposes "outdated, unnecessary" class conflict, says Roy Jenkins, one of its gurus. The new party certainly has a 'modern' approach to its leading positions. No general secretary for them. They have a Chief Executive, no less, at £20,000 a year.

But as for the class conflict bit, that's more confusing. The new chief, Bernard Doyle was formerly head of the engineering division of the multinational Booker McConnell. Under his chairmanship, the division turned a 1979 profit of £5.88 million to a 1980 loss of £1.35 million. A number of businesses in the group closed and about a fifth of the workers were sacked. Mass redundancies are widely believed to increase class conflict, Mr Jenkins.

Perhaps they ought to have played safe and got an advertising man. Buy SDF with the new miracle ingredient—nothing.

And while we're on the subject of the Social Democratic Party, who wrote this? "A working class party without a socialist philosophy could easily become a front for a combination of vested interests. A social democratic party without deep roots in the working class movement could quickly fade away into an unrepresentative intellectual sect."

That was none other than politics' gift to the claret industry, Woy Jenkins in his 1972 book 'What matters now'. Nine years later, will he confess to the working class electors of Warrington that his party would sell out their interests and fight tooth and nail to defend capitalism? What matters now for us is that in Warrington and elsewhere, the labour movement exposes the SDP for what it is—a second string Tory Party.

For the past twenty five years, hundreds of thousands of men and women, usually heavily armed, have been taking part in illegal, unconstitutional, military operations. They have been sent to Northern Ireland, Aden, Cyprus and Suez. They have been used as strike breakers, for example, in the firemen's strike in 1977, and their use is threatened in the ambulance dispute.

It is, of course "our own" beloved Army. Illegal? Unconstitutional? Well, yes, according to the magazine 'State Research'. One of the provisions of a bill passed in 1688, is that a permanent Army is illegal in Britain during peacetime unless given official sanction yearly by Parliament. This was done every year from 1689 to 1954, but since then there has been no act of Parliament to carry it on.

So, since this act expired on 31 July 1955, the Army has been illegal. Not that this really worries the government or the military bosses. But what do you think will be the justification for the next civilian use of the troops? A "threat to the constitution", possibly?

# POUNDED

Over the past weeks, world money markets have been in a panic. Sterling has come in for a pounding. What does all this mean for the system and the working class?

The immediate causes of the chaos are the world interest-rate war and movements in the price of oil. Behind it all lies the world economic recession, which forces the capitalist nations not just to crack down on their own working class, but also to attempt to unload the burden of the crisis on to one another.

Generally speaking, the strength of a country's currency reflects the strength of its economy on the world market. If a capitalist country imports more than it exports, money will flow out of the country to pay for the extra.

The market 'value' of the pound is determined like everything else in a capitalist economy, by supply and demand.

Since everyone is trying to get rid of sterling, its price will fall against other currencies. But for two years the pound has been riding high despite the chronic inability of British capitalism to export as much as it imports from its competitors.

This in its turn is caused by the failure of the British capitalists to invest, so they can't produce the goods as cheaply as their rivals.

For two years a mammoth deficit on the balance of trade in manufactures has been covered up by the revenues from North Sea oil coming ashore. So the pound has been cushioned from speculative movements—but British industry certainly hasn't.

Manufacturing capital has been strangled by the 'strong pound', which makes their exports much dearer in foreign currencies, so they have been even less able to compete in markets abroad.

Now all of a sudden there is a glut of oil. Since 1973 a pattern has been set of oil prices going up steadily until, every few years, people cut back on oil consumption



The gilt market at the Stock Exchange. High pound or low pound, they can't revive British capitalism.

and the oil companies have to cut their prices to sell their stocks.

At the pumps they give away six-fold stamps, glasses and even, on occasion, slightly cheaper petrol.

Then as consumption increases, the price picks up and resumes its ever upward march.

We are in a glut now, and nobody wants \$37 North Sea oil when Saudi Arabia is selling the same thing for \$32. So the pound stands shivering in all its nakedness, revealing the weakness of Britain's manufacturing base.

The problem is compounded by high interest

rates. When Thatcher and her monetarist friends got in, they jacked up interest rates, because they preferred deflation to inflation. Currency manipulators were delighted to invest in the City of London where they could get the maximum rate of return.

The pound rose because of all the money flooding into the country. Finance capital was happy, but manufacturing had just about had it—they couldn't export with such a high pound.

Then Reagan became President and out-Thatchered Thatcher. He too began his austerity programme by hoisting interest

rates. Funds flowed out of the pound and into the dollar—the dollar rose and the pound fell.

Thatcher and Reagan have been playing 'beggar your neighbour' on interest rates. Meanwhile, everyone else in the capitalist world is compelled to follow suit, and the whole system loses out as industrialists have to pay more and more to the bankers and financiers to borrow money.

You might think that British manufacturing capitalists would be happy to see the pound slide. They have been moaning for years about not being able to export. But not a bit of it. Now they are saying that, though exports will be cheaper, imports will be dearer, so inflation will go up.

So a new refrain is starting up in the financial press—the dangers of a weak pound. It seems we're back to the arguments of 1976, when Healey and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) used the weakness of sterling (at one point at \$1.55 to the pound) to blackmail the labour movement into accepting cuts and wage restraint.

High pound, low pound—some people are never happy. But despite all their inconsistencies, the capitalist class are clear about one thing: the working class have got to be kept down.

In truth, neither a high or low pound is a way out of the system. The root cause of their problem is the long-term lack of investment. The whole pre-history of British capitalism has shown that there is no solution within the confines of the present economic system. That's why we need to change it.

It is likely that Thatcher will bow to the pressure to raise interest rates yet again if the pound comes under any further threat. That won't do industrial recovery any good. And it won't help the working class either.

As the system moves deeper into crisis, the competitors threaten to tear each other to pieces and further worsen the situation for everyone. The anarchy and stupidity of the system is there for all to see!

## Reward for a lifetime - £1

This is the life story of a child named Fred, born into extreme poverty at the turn of the century.

Fred's father was a farm worker. He went to an early grave as did many agricultural workers then. They were overworked, and despite growing food for many, they were undernourished themselves.

All in aid of the profits of the landowners and lords of the manor.

This death left Fred, the oldest surviving son, the breadwinner for his mother and five other children.

For the first winter, Fred used to rise at 4.30am and help milk a local dairy herd

before school. After his schooling finished at the age of 12½, he got a job five miles away. He would walk to work, then trudge all day behind a plough with a team of horses, then walk home again.

And so Fred went through life. As far as I know he never once lost a day's work. He was deeply involved in the Norfolk farm strike in the early 1920s when the bosses decided to cut pay—the reward for feeding the nation during the 1914-18 war.

When I started work on the same farm in 1934, Fred's weekly wage was 30 shillings (£1.50) plus 3/6d (17½p) extra for being a horse man. As a 14 year old

my pay was 10 shillings (50p).

Fred retired in 1963. His reward for a lifetime of toil was a certificate presented to him by the President of the Royal Norfolk Show. The certificate read "For loyalty to one employer or one farm for fifty years, recommended by his employer B.W. Barker, Hall Farm, Fulmodeston."

Now when I first started there in 1934 this place was farmed by a tenant farmer at 7/6d (37½p) an acre. Since then the farm has changed hands three times making a colossal profit.

The last time, just a few years back for £2,500 per acre. Not bad for a 600 acre estate!

Fred died at the age of eighty, and I, his nephew, am next of kin (Fred never married). He liked a pint in the local but he was never a heavy drinker.

When I paid for his gravestone in Fulmodeston churchyard, there was a pound left out of his lifetime's work.

That, comrades, is capitalism at work, and that is the extreme poverty that Mrs Thatcher and her henchmen are striving to turn the clock back to. We must not let it happen.

By Doug Oswick

(Branch Secretary, National Union Agricultural Workers, North Norfolk)



# IRISH ELECTIONS

# No coalition with Two shades of Tory

Fianna Fail, the Irish Tory Party led by Prime Minister Charles Haughey, suffered a defeat in the 11 June general election.

The main beneficiary of the anti-Fianna Fail vote is the country's second Tory Party, Fine Gael.

The failure of the Labour leaders to campaign on radical policies and their continued support for a new coalition with Fine Gael resulted in a very poor result, except where candidates fought on Labour conference policies.

The election has produced a 'hung parliament': no party has a clear majority. Fianna Fail now have ten seats less than the combined opposition, including the independents.

The country is in a catastrophic economic state: this, principally, led to the government's defeat.

In the past year, the numbers out of work rose by 37%. Inflation soared to 21%.

During Fianna Fail's term of office, unemployment rose to 127,000: 10.5% of the working population. This is the worst rate in the EEC.

The budget deficit, £209 million four years ago, is expected to rise well above this year's 'target' of £515 million. Government borrowing is now so high that the entire annual collection of PAYE contributions is not sufficient to 'service', or pay off the interest on, the national debt, now almost £8,000 million.

The vote against the government was, however, largely absorbed by the other capitalist party in Southern Ireland, Fine Gael, whose percentage vote rose by six percent.

Fine Gael's programme is largely Thatcherite and broadly similar to what Fianna Fail would have carried out had they been returned. But the swing does not reflect support for monetarist policies or a move to the right in Irish society.

Rather is the result of the Labour Party being tied to the coat tails of Fine Gael in a coalition strategy. When asked on national television three days before polling whether there was any reason why people should vote Labour as opposed to Fine Gael, Frank Cluskey, leader of the Labour Party, replied that there was not.

He was amongst those Labour MPs (called TDs in Ireland) who lost their seats.

Candidates who stood on the H-Block platform took two seats, both won by prisoners. One, Kieran Doherty, is himself on hunger strike.

In constituencies where H-Block candidates did not succeed in winning a seat

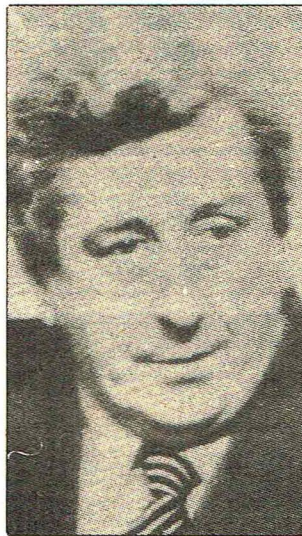
## Militant Irish Monthly Special Conference Edition 'NO COALITION'

Available from local 'Militant' sellers  
and MIM Publications, 75 Middle Abbey  
St, Dublin 1

they got several thousand votes, but this does not reflect any growing support for the Provisional IRA. The victories were secured in the border constituencies of Cavan-Monaghan and Louth, principally at the expense of Fianna Fail.

Four hunger strikers died during Haughey's period as Taoiseach (prime minister). It was clear that his "special relationship" with Margaret Thatcher was a hollow fraud.

In the absence of an alternative, many young people voted for the H-Block candidates as an expression of opposition to the establishment.



Fine Gael leader Garret Fitzgerald

Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have a similar approach to Northern Ireland: to draw together the parties representing capitalism in Britain and in Ireland, North and South, in an effort to find some kind of solution. There is a gulf of difference between this and Labour's position.

The Labour Party's programme declares that the Party stands for an "all-Ireland democratic workers' republic based on socialist principles" and for "the creation of a mass Labour Party in Northern Ireland, to extend the existing industrial unity on to the political plane."

Like other aspects of Labour's programme this was not, however, put forward in the election manifesto. Instead there was talk of unity "through reconciliation" and the "Anglo-Irish talks".

Labour's policy is the only real alternative to Fianna Fail. Yet for the past decade the Labour Party leadership has favoured a coalition with Fine Gael.

This has had a disastrous effect on the fortunes of the Party. Its vote has fallen continuously at every election over the past decade: from 17% in 1969, when Labour stood on indepen-

dent socialist policies, to 10% last week.

Labour stands for the nationalisation of the banks, building societies, insurance companies and sections of industry. Yet the manifesto ignored these and other policies.

The argument put forward by Labour leaders was that 'socialist policies would alienate the electorate and lose votes. The reality proved different.

Dublin's sitting Labour TDs, closely identified with the coalition, either lost their seats or had their vote drastically reduced.

In Galway, where Party chairman Michael D Higgins stood on socialist policies, the Labour vote rose dramatically, and Labour won a seat in the city for the first time since 1927.

The Galway West Labour Party issued election literature which called for "nationalisation of the banks and major industry", "a 35-hour week with no loss of pay" and "a £90 minimum wage". Two hundred workers, including shop stewards in industry, turned out to assist in the campaign.

The Irish Labour Party has suffered a setback, but the effect will be very temporary. Already there is a shift to the left, with the Party ranks and layers of the leadership blaming Party election spokesmen for the low vote.

Spokesmen failed to put forward socialist policies or identify with the struggle of the trade union movement and the youth. 250,000 young people voted for the first time in this election. Yet the total Labour vote was only 169,992.

and today gets most of its support and its finance from the trade unions.

Why then has Labour never had a majority of seats in the Dail (Irish parliament)?

Irish society has changed significantly in recent decades. Over sixty per cent now live in the main cities. Six in ten of the electorate are under thirty years of age.

Southern Ireland is an industrial country. Of the working population, 79.8% are engaged in industry or the services; only one in five work in agriculture.

Sixty-five percent of working people are members of unions, a higher percentage than most European countries (the figure in Britain is 50%). In manufacturing industry, transport and communication, over 80% are unionised.

Here is the real force of change in Irish society.

The power of organised labour was shown in January 1980, in the half-day general strike and demonstration for a more just taxation system. 750,000 workers marched through the streets.

But under the capitalist system, the future looks bleak for Irish workers and their families. A survey conducted by 'Magill' in 1980 found that one million people in the twenty-six counties live in poverty: social inequality is greater here than in any other EEC country. Unemployment will rise to at least 140,000 by the end of the year.

Both Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have promised cutbacks in government services, in an attempt to restore the profitability of big business. Gross National Product will rise by under two percent in 1981.

'Business and Finance', a journal of big business in the twenty-six counties,



Michael D Higgins, the Labour Party chairman, made one of Labour's few gains fighting on the Party's socialist programme.

No party, however, has a majority in the Dail. Fianna Fail has the largest block, with seventy-eight seats. However, even with the support of those of the eight 'independent' TDs who are fellow-travellers of Fianna Fail, Haughey still could not secure a majority.

Fine Gael has sixty-five seats. It could only achieve a majority with the support of Labour's fifteen Dail members, plus the three independents who describe themselves as socialists—Noel Browne, who was not allowed to stand as a Labour candidate in 1977 because he was opposed to coalition; Jim Kemmy, who left the Labour Party in 1971 because of its stand on coalition, and Joe Sherlock, the only member of Sinn Fein The Workers Party to be elected.

In this situation it is vital that Labour retains its independence and keeps clear of any coalition arrangement with Fine Gael, or any support for a minority Fine Gael government.

Fine Gael and Fianna Fail are the twin parties of rent, interest and profit. In their election campaign they each



Charles Haughey, Fianna Fail's prime minister

Labour must put forward its own nomination for Taoiseach (prime minister), and its own programme as the only solution to the country's ills.

That programme, for nationalisation of the banks and financial institutions, leading to a reduction of mortgages and rents, for a 35-hour week without loss of pay to end unemployment, a £90 minimum wage to eliminate poverty and a free comprehensive health service, would win the support of the vast bulk of the population.

Then, if Fianna Fail and Fine Gael came together in a bosses' coalition, Labour would be paving the way for a majority government pledged to breaking the stranglehold of capitalism—and its political representatives—in Ireland.

By Finn Geaney  
a member of the  
Dublin Labour  
Party

### Percentage of Dublin vote for Labour.

1965	1969	1973	1977	1981
18.1	28.3	22.3	17.5	12.1
<b>Labour's percentage support.</b>				
1961	1965	1969	1973	1977
11.6	15.4	17.0	13.7	11.6
				1981
				9.93

Sixteen trade unions are affiliated to the Labour Party, including all the major unions.

The Irish Transport and General Workers Union and the Federated Workers Union of Ireland together have about 200,000 members in the South. In fact forty three percent of all Irish Congress of Trade Unions (TUC) members are affiliated to the Labour Party.

Labour is the party of the trade unions. It was founded by the Irish TUC in 1912

described the economy as "in the most fearsome state" (11 June).

Fianna Fail and Fine Gael have also said they would introduce legislation limiting the right to strike, thus hindering workers in the fight for wage increases to cope with the rapidly rising cost of living.

Already in April, workers fighting against redundancies were sentenced to terms of imprisonment. Among them was Matt Merrigan, regional secretary of the AT&GW.

spent about £1 million, several hundred thousand pounds of which came from business interests in the United States.

As the unions move into action against the employers, this will be reflected by leftward moves in the Labour Party. The special Labour conference on 21 June, called to decide Party strategy in light of the election result, must be turned towards building support for socialist policies and a majority Labour government.



# FRANCE 1936

Analysis of the French Popular Front of 1936 is once again topical in view of Francois Mitterrand's victory in the recent presidential elections, and the likely success of the Socialist Party and Communist Party in the Assembly elections.

We are therefore republishing below extracts from two articles on the Popular Front which were first carried in issues 407 and 408 of 'Militant'.

They were an answer to Communist Party theoreticians Monty

Johnstone and Eric Hobsbawm, who sought to justify the policies of Popular Frontism (coalitions between the leaders of the workers' parties and capitalist parties) in general, and the French Popular Front in particular.

There are, of course, crucial differences between the 1936 Popular Front and the present Socialist-dominated government in France.

The working class today is immeasurably stronger than in 1936. Moreover, the Radical

Party has disappeared as a major force in present-day France.

It was the workers' intense suspicion of the Radicals and fear that the reforms promised by the Popular Front government would not be introduced which prompted the working class to stage their magnificent sit-down strikes.

Today's "Left Radicals" are a mere pimple who would probably not have got a single seat but for the fact that the Socialist Party gave them seats on

their ticket. It is unlikely, therefore, that sit-down strikes will quickly follow the election of Mitterrand.

However, the experience of the workers in 1936-38 should be pondered by the present generation of French workers. Faced with a mass onslaught, the capitalists gave concessions only to cancel them out later through inflation.

The aspirations of the French working class, which have been enormously aroused by Mit-

terrand's victory, can only be satisfied by the socialist transformation of France. This is the lesson of the 1936 French Popular Front.

We will carry a thorough analysis of the present situation in France and the results of the French election in the next few weeks.

But to understand the present situation it is also necessary to understand the rich revolutionary history of the French working class.

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## Workers' power and the Popular Front

The victory of the Popular Front triggered off an enormous mass movement, as the workers moved to implement the Popular Front programme through direct action.

In reality, the titanic sit-down strikes of May-June 1936 stand as a crushing condemnation of the policy of popular frontism.

Yet in recent years, "dissident" members of the British Communist Party, notably Eric Hobsbawm and Monty Johnstone (in articles in the CP magazine "Marxism Today", July 1977 and November 1975) have attempted to refurbish the image of the French Popular Front and provide a new "theoretical" apology for its disastrous policies.

Between 1931 and 1936 the French working class had seen their already meagre wages reduced by an average of 30%. Their growing radicalisation was reflected in the elections of 1936. The Popular Front received over 5½ million votes compared to the 4½ million for the right wing National Front.

The revolutionary ferment amongst the masses was reflected in the Radical Party's loss of a half million votes, its reduction to third place in votes, while at the same time the Communist Party doubled its vote to 1½ million.

This dramatic collapse of the radicals is airily dismissed by Monty Johnstone.

Seeking to justify the C.P. leaders' alliance with the Radicals, Johnstone writes: "Whilst the radicals were to lose one half million votes...the one and a half million votes that they received showed that they were still a force to be reckoned with...whereas between them the Socialists and Communists obtained only 218 out of 618 seats, the Popular Front as a whole won an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies with 378 seats."



Women workers at a 1936 strike meeting—such meetings and demonstrations were a daily occurrence

He does not mention, of course, the gross bias towards the Radicals in the allocation of seats within the Popular Front. Thus on the first ballot they got 25 seats, yet on the second ballot, entirely due to the concessions given by the CP and SP leaders, they got 116 seats. Throughout the election campaign, moreover, the CP leaders covered the Radicals with a revolutionary aura—in complete contradistinction to Lenin, who used elections to unmask liberal capitalists before their middle class supporters.

The Radicals openly boasted that they would be a brake on the "excesses" of the socialist ministers. Thus the Radical leader Daladier

declared: "Whatever may be said to the contrary, the Front Populaire programme is really impregnated with the true Radical spirit" ('Manchester Guardian', 23 May 1936).

This programme promised important reforms, such as the 40-hour week, but came out for the nationalisation only of war industries and the banks.

But the suspicion of the masses—and their doubts about the willingness of their own leaders to implement the Popular Front programme—was shown in the events which followed the election.

Thus on 25 May, 1936, half a million workers marched past the spot where the Communards were shot

"carrying red banners and wearing red flowers, and including many women and children many of them in perambulators..." ('Guardian'). The procession was nearly two miles long and lasted from early afternoon till late evening.

Then, in the last week of May and the first two weeks of June, a mighty wave of sit-in strikes was begun by the French working class. Beginning with the metal workers in Paris, all corners of France and all layers of the working class joined in.

On the eve of the strike, trade union membership stood at 1,200,000, just 20% of the labour force. Yet upwards of 3 million joined the strike. For the first time in French history the trade

unions ran out of membership cards! All those workers, the most exploited and sceptical, were roused to their feet by the sit-in strikes.

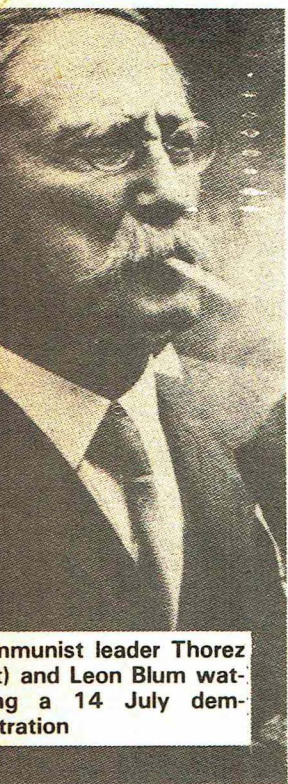
The horror of international capitalism is reflected in the reports of the British press at the time. The 'Manchester Guardian', reporting on the strike in the department stores and the pleasure-spots of the rich, said: "Paris Coty's perfumery workshops; the Galerie Lafayette; all the chocolate factories...the drivers of the 'Black Marias' in Paris struck today and prison vans had to be driven by police inspectors...the Trois Quartiers and other department stores were declared 'occupied' by the

employees this morning...six thousand persons, including 3,500 women, are employed by Galerie Lafayette" (4 June 1936).

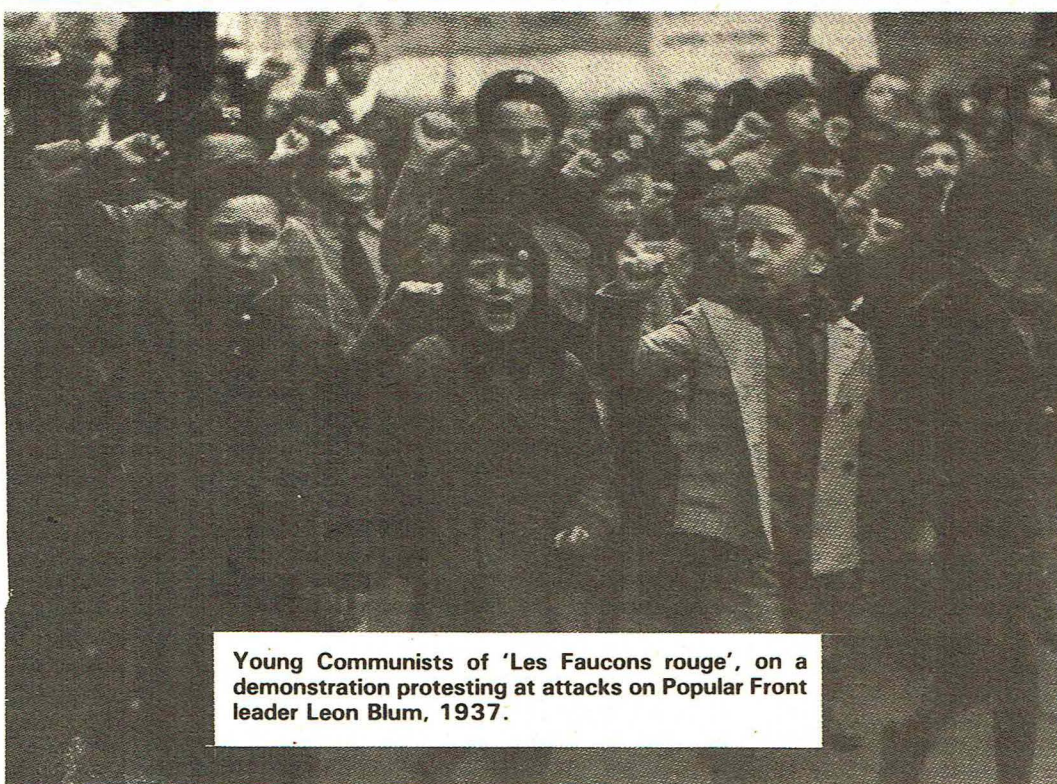
On 11 June the same newspaper reported: "Coachwork factories in Paris, several cinemas and two or three dress-making firms which were 'occupied' by the 'midinettes' went on strike today...the stable lads have 'occupied' the racing stables and several hundred undertaker societies and tombstone manufacturers have joined in the movement...The syndicate of concierges has asked for holiday with pay and automatic buttons for opening front doors at night!"

The loss of production was bad enough, but the oc-

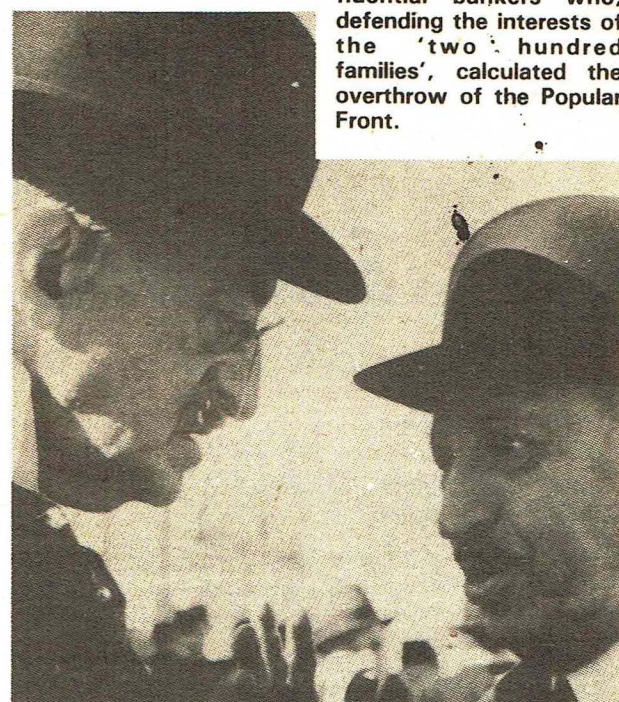




Communist leader Thorez (left) and Leon Blum watching a 14 July demonstration



Young Communists of 'Les Faucons rouges', on a demonstration protesting at attacks on Popular Front leader Leon Blum, 1937.



The Dreyfus brothers, influential bankers who, defending the interests of the 'two hundred families', calculated the overthrow of the Popular Front.

occupations and strikes began to affect the stomachs of the rich: "The rather abrupt manner in which the waiters' strike began in some of the restaurants while some of the customers were in the middle of lunch was rather unpleasant" ('Manchester Guardian' 12 June 1936).

'The Times' reported on 11 June that: "The lifeboat men on the Seine have put up a notice to say that they are on strike and forbidding passers-by to throw themselves into the water. Another warns that so long as the strike continues only mothers-in-law will be saved!"

Nor did religion escape: to the consternation of the local priest, workmen engaged on redecoration at the church of St Vessaine went on strike, occupied the church and slept in the confessional boxes for the duration.

At the same time, "even the rural areas are now infected by the strike virus and in the Seine-et-Oise Department 3,500 agricultural workers joined in" ('The Times', 11 June 1936). In the ports, sailors marched through the towns with arms linked singing the 'Internationale', and the police fraternised with the workers.

Here was a unique opportunity for the French working class to have taken power peacefully! The forces of French capitalism were completely paralysed.

Not so! declare the latter-day attorneys for the pre-war CP leaders—Monty Johnstone and Co. The sit-in strikes, they assert, were concerned not with "politics" but merely with wages and conditions.

**On the contrary, in May/June 1936, the French working class was groping in the direction of power.** All the serious capitalist commentators at the time show this. The 'Manchester Guardian' reporter wrote on 30 May 1936, at a time when the sit-in strikes were beginning to spread: "The Conservative press is greatly disturbed. The 'Intransigent' declared: 'In short the Ministry of the Masses is trying to take the place of the Front Populaire.'"

Even more striking are the comments of one picket to the same reporter: "Our boss," he said, "has been treating us as dictators. Well I told him that we preferred this sort of dictatorship within the framework of a

democratic regime to the dictatorship of Hitler and Mussolini." How much wisdom there is in the simple words of this French worker.

But the leaders of the French workers' parties were terrified by these developments, which had taken them by surprise and were threatening to get out of control: "Several Communist deputies to whom I spoke were visibly embarrassed and alarmed. They declared the strike to be 'untimely', described it as an uncontrollable mass movement, and declined all responsibility for it" ('Manchester Guardian', 3 June 1936).

But, objects Monty Johnstone, any attempt of the French working class to take power would have provoked "Colonel de la Rocque of the fascistic Croix de Feu with his 300,000 supporters trained for civil war by 60,000 officers of the reserve."

This is the usual trick of the Labour and Communist Party leaders who attempt to frighten the working class with "civil war" should they attempt to take power. Exactly the same tactics were used by the Menshevik and Social Revolutionary leaders prior to the October Revolution.

This was answered by Lenin, in theory and practice, in the course of the Russian revolution. In reality the relationship of forces in 1936 was a thousand times more favourable than in Russia in 1917.

The fascists were completely impotent, as were the police and the army. The workers openly ridiculed the Croix de Feu during the occupations. At the massive Renault works, for instance, the 'Guardian' reported the comments of a young worker:

"One of the best shows we put on (during the occupation) was the magnificent trial of Colonel de la Rocque. If you could have only seen de la Rocque (an effigy) locked up in a big cage resting on two drum sticks with heavy chains round his wrists and crying 'Pity me! Pity me' as he was condemned to death. A dummy of de la Rocque with the swastika and Croix de Feu armlets was then hung and burnt."

Monty Johnstone may speculate on the possible use of the fascists and police against the workers, but the capitalists were quite clear

on the futility of such methods. Thus 'The Times' remarked on 28 May: "Police were called out in large numbers but when the management looked over the situation and particularly the extent of the support of the men in the whole locality of the factories they were forced to request that the police be not sent into action."

Nor could the army be used against the workers. The French army was a conscript army, as it is today. Demonstrations and upheavals were sweeping through the barracks precisely at this time, with the conscripts demanding among other things the reduction of army service to one year.

At the Socialist Party Conference, which took place in the midst of the sit-ins, for instance, the leader of the left, Marcel Pivert, "demanded the immediate restoration of one year service...and read telegrams of support from the rank and file of provincial garrisons." ('The Times', 1 June 1936).

Any attempt by the French ruling class to use the army against the working class would have resulted in it splitting in their hands. Like their Spanish brothers a month later, the French workers and peasants in uniform would have paralysed the attempt of the officers to use the army against their fathers, brothers and sisters.

But, argues Monty Johnstone: "Across the Rhine stood Nazi Germany allied to Fascist Italy in the south east, both getting ready to help France smash Republican Spain, whilst the British bankers used every form of pressure to give them a free hand to do so."

In a much less favourable situation than France in 1936, with the actual armed intervention of imperialism, Lenin and the Bolsheviks were not deterred from taking power. The Russian Revolution detonated revolutions throughout Europe.

The reports in the British Communist Party's 'Daily Worker' perhaps inadvertently give the lie to Johnstone's arguments. Speaking of the effects of French events in Germany, it reported on 16 June: "The Nazi press at first 'played up' the strikes saying they were an example of the 'chaos' from 'Bolshevik' in-

fluence in France. After a few days it became noticeable that workers were beginning to say they saw the huge gains won by the strikers as an example it might be a good one to follow."

If the German workers were inspired just by wage increases gained by their French brothers and sisters, imagine the effect on them of the socialist revolution.

Both Hitler and Mussolini would have been overthrown. The Spanish workers, who rose and were initially victorious in four-fifths of Spain just one month later, would have joined, as would the working class throughout Europe.

**'Our boss has been treating us as dictators. I told him, we prefer this sort of dictatorship to the dictatorship of Hitler and Mussolini.'**

On 8 June the 'Daily Worker' itself had a banner headline: "Huge Strikes Sweep Over Western Europe." The Belgian workers, under the direct influence of the French strikes came out in a huge strike wave, with street battles between workers and police in all the main cities of Belgium.

There can be no doubt that if the French working class would have succeeded in carrying through the socialist revolution—which was entirely possible in 1936—the workers and peasants throughout Europe would have followed suit. The May/June sit-in strikes in 1936 could have become the overture to the Socialist United States of the Continent.

The ruling class of France and of Europe, together with their shadows within the labour movement, were paralysed by fear, some of them believing that the hour

of their downfall had arrived. For instance Leon Blum remarked: "I am being spoken of as a Kerensky who is preparing the way for a Lenin."

But there was no Lenin to be found in the ranks of the French Communist Party leaders. The method, the programme and the tactics of Lenin were a book sealed with seven seals so far as the French C.P. leaders were concerned. They bent every effort to derail the movement of the masses. In the process enormous suspicion and hostility towards these leaders developed, at least amongst the advanced workers.

Thus over a headline which said "Revolutionary Temper of Men in the Engineering Works", the 'Guardian' reported: "The revolutionary temper...is undeniable as may be seen by the extraordinary incident that occurred at Renaults yesterday. The local Communist deputy who urged the strikers to resume work on the basis of Monday's agreement...was howled down and driven out of the works. There is no doubt that not only the CGT (the main trade union federation) but even the Communist leaders have no control and no authority over the strikers of several engineering concerns." (12 June, 1936).

Seeing power slip from the hands of his class and no doubt gnashing his teeth one worker commented: "It is strange to think that in a few days everything may go back to 'normal' and Renault will come into their own again; and the posters and drawings and flags and wireless set and everything will be gone. Foremen will be able to order you about and glare." ('Guardian' 3 June)

The French capitalists were forced to give wage increases and concede the 40-hour week, at least in words, as the price of getting the strike called off. The C.P. leader Thorez declared: "One must know how to stop a strike—that is, as soon as the essential demands have been satisfied." ('Guardian' 13 June).

But what the capitalists gave with the left hand, they took back with the right later on. The wage increases were gradually cancelled out through inflation. No sooner was the ink dry on the agreement than the individual employers began to

resist the implementation of the reforms.

'The Times' urged the French capitalists to bide their time: "The general terms of Monday's settlement are being resisted in detail, with the risk that disappointment following apparent victory may produce a fiercer temper in the working class than a period of waiting would have done." (June 1936)

Power for the French working class was there for the taking in 1936, but for the treacherous role of the workers' leaders, particularly the Communist Party leaders.

Hiding behind the Popular Front, the French capitalists prepared their revenge. Later thousands of militants were victimised. In October 1936 further sit-ins took place and this time the police were used to evict the strikers.

The French capitalists moreover, heaped on the shoulders of the working class the responsibility for inflation, thereby alienating the middle class from the workers. Leon Trotsky had warned of such developments in June 1936.

This shows the futility of attempting to win the middle class on a programme which does not go beyond the framework of capitalism. **By taking power, by taking over the assets of the 200 families and establishing a planned economy, the French working class would have shown in action that it was the only force capable of solving the problems of the middle layers.**

A planned economy would have allowed for cancellation of the debts of the small men in town and country and the extension of cheap credit and aid. The social reserves of reaction would have been completely undermined.

Instead Leon Blum was forced out of the premiership of the Popular Front government in 1937 and the Socialists were completely excluded in 1938.

The French working class, as with their Spanish brothers and sisters, were thus delivered into the arms of fascism. The French Popular Front prepared the way for the enslavement of the working class by the Nazis and their French collaborators in the Vichy regime.

**By Peter Taaffe**



# INTERNATIONAL

## USA - workers call for Labour Party

In the months since President Reagan took office there have been large meetings in Washington against his domestic and foreign programme.

Among others, coal miners, railway workers, clothing and textile workers have taken their angry protests against devastating budget cuts to Washington.

And now all of labour are preparing for a massive protest rally against reaction's current policies.

The ninety-seven trade union leaders who met in March at Buffalo, New York, issued the strongest call for a fightback against the offensive launched by Reagan and Co. against the 50-year program of services and labor protection for which labor had fought so hard.

Social security (retirement benefits), wages, labor's rights, OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Act), Medicare (health insurance), and other social necessities are on the block for axing.

The pressure against the conservative AFL-CIO leadership built up powerfully as regional AFL-CIO bodies, international unions, locals (branches), and rank-and-

file committees spoke up.

Democratic representatives, a majority in the House of Representatives, demonstrated their class interests when they joined the Republicans to meat-axe lifeline programs for the poor, the elderly, children and unemployed.

They entirely eliminated 350,000 government-sponsored jobs for the disabled and poor, and cut out extended jobless benefits and national railroad services.

Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO, announced plans for a massive rally in Washington DC, to protest Reagan's budget and economic cutbacks. The date, in the autumn, is yet to be chosen.

The AFL-CIO will enlist the support of the 115 national organisations which are in a budget coalition with the labor movement, to build attendance at the giant demonstration. Kirkland says the AFL-CIO will provide the funds for organisation of the rally.

By Betty Traun  
in New York

Mr Kirkland has faced some sharp questioning on the labor movement's strategy to deal with the policies of the House Democrats supporting Reagan's budget cuts.

He was asked: "In the campaign you are waging against the budget cuts, do you see the labor movement coming into collision with the Democratic Party? And if so, do you foresee a movement for a labor party?"

Kirkland replied: "I see no movement for a labor party. As to coming into collision with the other party, the party has enunciated a position—I believe—on a variety of issues at their last convention, in their platform, that spells out the position of the party.

"Many of the members of the House and the Senate today are showing a conspicuous lack of fidelity to their (Democratic) Party."

Despite well-publicised opposition to increased military spending by several members of the AFL-CIO executive council, Kirkland continues to promote a "guns and butter" approach.

He told reporters that he "might find common ground with (Reagan) in terms of the enhancement of our national defence."



New York, March 1980: angry transport workers demonstrate in support of strike action

On the other hand, the International Association of Machinists (IAM) has initiated a discussion in the April issue of its paper, the Machinist, on the question of forming a "progressive labor party" in the United States.

Last year the IAM passed a resolution at its convention which called for discussion on the possibility of forming such a party. The IAM, with its one-million membership, is the largest union in US labor history to initiate such a discussion, and its president William Winpisinger is favourably inclined toward a

new party.

The Machinist notes that "Since the 1980 elections, a swell of sentiment has been surfacing around the country to establish a third political party."

It points out that "some labor leaders and members see the nearly 55 per cent of the eligible voters who either refused to vote in the last presidential election or who voted for a third candidate, as a base for building such a progressive labor party."

"Others, including the AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland oppose such ideas, seeking instead to try and

bring the Democratic Party back to its founding principles."

An independent party of labor is essential for the US working class to mobilise its forces politically and present a socialist alternative to the crisis-ridden capitalist system.

This conclusion will be driven home to more and more workers by bitter experience as the Democratic and Republican parties unite on the most vicious anti-working class policies to defend the bosses' interests.

# INDIA - the fire spreads

By our Indian correspondent

Reports in the daily press give some indication of the catastrophic crisis of capitalism in India. A year of drought produced an economic slump last year, with gross national product dropping by more than 5%.

Although the 'Financial Times' (27 May) expects some improvement this year due to good harvests and "signs of more determined government"—their term for Mrs Gandhi's efforts to prepare a new police dictatorship—the outlook is far from optimistic.

"Labour unrest", the FT admits, "is beginning to increase ... Bombay port has been badly hit, while workers in the public-sector industries in Bangalore have

been striking for over two months." At the same time the country is plunging deeper into debt, with its trade deficit doubling to \$6,600 million this year.

What the bosses' press systematically play down or ignore is the misery and suffering that these conditions spell for the majority of India's 600 million people, and the magnificent struggles of the Indian working class pointing towards a revolutionary settling of accounts with their exploiters. In this letter our Indian correspondent gives a glimpse of the real situation in India.

The objective situation is more convulsive than ever. In Gujarat and elsewhere, bloody and unending riots as the educated unemployed youth of rival castes fight to divide up the shrinking jobs and training opportunities.

In Assam and many other states, the same thing on national lines. In Uttar Pradesh etc., communal riots. In Bombay recently, a huge Shir Sena (Marata nationalist) march, blessed by the Chief Minister, ending in a classical pogrom-

rampage terrorising non-Marati residents and shopkeepers.

In short, as Marxists have explained, a disintegration into fragments and a resurgence of vile and barbarous phenomena—not only caste and communal conflicts, but sorcery, Godmen cults, ritual child sacrifice, and now the renewed practice of widows burning themselves at their husbands' funeral pyres.

The ruling class is edging nearer to Bonapartism (military police dictatorship). Police savagery has gone right out of control. A Communist Party (India) MP was recently beaten up in Ghaziabad while inquiring into police atrocities

against trade unionists. In Chintamani, working-class activists have been beaten senseless.

Police shootings are literally daily events now. In Kerala, there is gang war between the right-wing RSS and the CP(M), with a dozen deaths in the last four days alone. In West Bengal, the Congress (Indira) has launched a terror campaign and Mrs Gandhi will dissolve the CP(M) government in the next few months.

On the other hand, the proletariat has, amazingly, sustained its heroic energy unwaveringly, despite treacherous leadership. Eight million days lost in strikes over the last four

months, mostly through the great Bangalore public-sector strike of 125,000 workers, lasting 77 days.

The peasants too, are on the move as never before. Opportunities for the development of the workers' organisation and leadership remain superb.

At the Kerala state conference of the Communist Party (Marxist), a leader confessed that "among the rank and file, the CPs of Russia and China are distrusted as enemies of the revolution in the capitalist countries, and it is hard for the leadership to counter the trend!"

This reflects the high level of political consciousness among the active layers of the working class and the revolutionary standards they will set for their leaders in the critical period ahead.

## INTERNATIONAL NOTES

### • COMMODITIES

For generations the capitalists have relied on obtaining secure supplies of raw materials at rock-bottom prices, mainly from 'third world' countries. But a recent article in the 'Financial Times' [2 June] points out some of the problems they are faced with in this crucial area by the enormous head of steam that has built up among the working class internationally.

It mentioned American

lead workers taking action at three plants—a strike at Amax Missouri, on top of a strike at St Joe Minerals, and threatened action at a third company, Cominco, if the workers' demands were not met by Friday [5 June]. All this in the lead and zinc industry follows "supply disruptions" in Australia, Sweden and Italy.

On the same day there was news that the Chilean government had conceded

some of the demands of the striking El Teniente copper miners, while "talks were continuing" with 2,000 process workers.

It is noticeable that none of these countries, with the exception of Italy, is where you'd expect workers to take strike action, judging from the popular press. But even in Chile, under a regime responsible for the murder of tens of thousands of workers, there is sufficient confidence and organisation to wrest concessions from the police state.

This drives home the extent to which the capitalist countries are interlinked—and points at the growing pressures to which the bosses in every country, even the most stable, will be exposed by the struggles of the workers around the world in the period ahead.

### • TURKEY

"After years of chaos, Turkey is moving towards a more secure economic and democratic order", accord-

ing to 'Pamukbank', a major Turkish bank. These words reflect the support of big business for the military regime which seized power last September.

Democracy, however, has no place in the 'stabilisation' of the economy which the Turkish Generals are carrying out in the interests of the capitalist class.

One of their latest decrees lays down that people sentenced to less than three years in gaol will no longer be able to appeal. One victim of this law has been

Luftu Oflaz, a journalist recently sentenced to 18 months in prison for criticising a right-wing party.

All political activity continues to be banned. For the Turkish working people, democracy and security will only be won when they have defeated the bankrupt capitalist class and taken control of society into their own hands.



# SPAIN only workers can crush reaction

Exactly three months after the attempted coup of 23 February, Spain was rocked by a new crisis.

The seizure of the Central Bank in Barcelona by a gang of armed fascists was a new link in the web of provocations aimed at the overthrow of the present semi-democratic order and a return to dictatorship.

In the recent months, fascist gangs have come into the open with increasing audacity. One week before the Barcelona events, fascists armed with chains and baseball bats violently dispersed a mass meeting of workers in a factory in Madrid.

Similarly there have been numerous 'incidents' involving the police and the paramilitary Civil Guard.

A young mother had her brains dashed out by a rubber bullet, fired at point-blank range during a peaceful demonstration. An unemployed Moroccan labourer was murdered by the police in Madrid, for no apparent reason. A youth who dared to argue with a policeman in plain clothes was shot dead.

The mood of reaction in the barracks and police stations has been enormously strengthened since the coup, accompanied with growing resentment against the 'democratic' politicians and King Juan Carlos who betrayed the plotters at the last moment and left them to their fate.

On the other hand, the bourgeois Democratic Centre Union (UCD) government has revealed its total cowardice in the face of armed reaction.

## The capitulation of the labour leaders has given new heart to the reactionaries.

For fear of the anger of the working class, the decisive sector of bankers and capitalists opposed the military take-over.

They understand far better than their short-sighted military brethren the real balance of class forces in Spanish society. They saw that a military coup, even if successful, would lead to an even more unstable government and a regime of crisis.

This would enormously aggravate the pent-up tensions and contradictions in Spanish society, leading to a revolutionary explosion.

The bourgeoisie had a chance to carry through a purge of the officer caste—rotten with fascists and reactionary conspirators—following the collapse of Tejero's coup attempt. Because of the danger implicit in the relative independence of the officer caste, many of the strategists of capital were in favour of clipping the military's wings.

In the event, no action was taken. The lavish conditions of Tejero and the other conspirators in prison are the

subject of permanent scandal. Yet nothing is done about it.

Inside the prisons, Tejero and Co. enjoy privileged conditions, allowed almost unlimited contact with the outside world, feted, praised, wined and dined by fellow military men, bankers and high society ladies.

In the pages of the right wing press there is a brazen campaign to justify the actions of the conspirators and present them as national heroes, or at worst, as 'misguided idealists'. These papers, like *El Alcazar*, and *Heraldo Espanol*, circulate widely in the barracks, and are often the only papers available to members of the armed forces.

There is still no sign that the conspirators will be tried in the foreseeable future. Their lawyers are even talking about putting it off until 1982! Their idea is clearly to delay until public opinion cools off.

In the meantime, the Civil Guards who took part in the rebellion have all been released to boast about their exploits in the bars: "I had my gun pointed right at Carillo's head—just like this!"

Most monstrous of all, the policemen responsible for the torturing to death of ETA member Arregui just before the coup took place have quietly been let out of gaol.

To all this, the response of the workers' leaders has been nil. Since the coup, the leaders of the PSOE (Socialist Party) and the PCE (Communist Party) have drawn all the wrong conclusions, and have moved rightwards at lightning speed.

Immediately after the coup, when the seriousness of the attempt was beginning to dawn on the workers, the possibility existed for an all-out mass offensive against reaction.

The fascists and army generals were demoralised by the failure of the coup. On the other hand, the massive response of the workers to the call of their leaders to come out onto the streets revealed a clear willingness on the part of the class to fight.

Three million workers participated in gigantic demonstrations—one and a half million in Madrid alone.

But even here, the cowardice of the leaders blunted the action of the workers. By calling the demonstration jointly with the two main bourgeois parties (the UCD and the extreme right-wing Popular Alliance led by Fraga, one of Franco's former ministers), and by prohibiting all banners, posters and slogans, the leaders hoped to conceal the fact that these demonstrations were overwhelmingly composed of workers, unemployed, housewives and proletarian and student youth, almost all of them supporters of the PSOE, PCE and trade unions.

The disgraceful spectacle of the leader of the CP trade union, Marcelino Comacho,



The real face of Spanish 'democracy': King Juan Carlos, surrounded by his military tops who hold ultimate state power.

marching literally arm-in-arm with the arch-reactionary Fraga at the head of the Madrid demonstration, summed up the wretched spirit of the leaders.

This grovelling in front of the bourgeoisie, the king and the Army, gave new heart to the fascists and reactionaries.

Prior to the coup, after the sickening revelations of torture in Spanish gaols highlighted by the murder of Arregui, the CP and socialist leaders had hinted that they would not be willing to support the renewal of the infamous Anti-Terrorist Law, which enables the police to keep the prisoners 'incommunicado' in their torture chambers.

Now, the leaders of the PCE and PSOE vie with each other to support the repressive laws introduced by the Calvo-Sotelo government. Opposition to the Anti-Terrorist Law has melted away, and those so-called defenders of democracy have supported the mis-named "Law for the defence of democracy" which virtually suppresses what little freedom of the press existed before the coup.

The complete capitulation of the labour leaders was illustrated by the words of PSOE leader Felipe Gonzalez recently when he stated that he would be prepared to support any legislation "against terrorism" passed by the present (bourgeois) government—even before seeing what its content was!

It is this grovelling before reaction which is responsible for the increasing cocksureness of the fascists and reactionaries in the army. The

police and army officers increasingly regard themselves as a force "standing above society"—a state within the state. This is reflected in the barbarous repression which has been unleashed since the coup, and has overstepped the boundaries of the Basque Provinces.

## Only the working class can carry out decisive measures against the fascists.

The most striking case was the gruesome murder of three working class youngsters in Almeria in the south. One was a member of the Communist Party, one was in the socialist trade union, the UGT, and the other was apparently non-political.

They were arrested without warning by the Civil Guard, acting on false information that they were members of ETA, the Basque terrorist organisation.

What happened subsequently may never be fully known. But their half-incinerated bodies were later retrieved from their car which, according to the police, left the road and ended up at the bottom of a ravine.

Despite police claims that only a few shots were fired "at the wheels of the car", all three bodies were riddled with bullets—and one of them had its hands and feet missing.

Despite the other police claim that pistols were found on the youths, these have never been produced. The confused and contradictory

police stories that the youths were (a) ETA terrorists and (b) common delinquents indicate a clumsy cover-up.

In the parliamentary debate on the case Rosson, the Minister of the Interior, merely repeated the incredibly clumsy fabrication of the police. Yet the PSOE leaders have refused to support even the setting up of a parliamentary commission of enquiry.

Up to the time of writing, none of those responsible for this latest atrocity has been brought to book or even accused of a crime. Rosson merely stated that it had "probably been a tragic mistake" and that he "didn't know whether a crime had been committed or not."

The same eagerness to cover up for the reactionaries was shown by the government in the case of the Barcelona bank seizure.

There can be no doubt as to the political identity and purpose of the terrorists involved. Their main demand was the release of Tejero and other plotters involved in the February coup, and for a plane to fly them to Argentina.

Released hostages stated that there had been 23 terrorists, armed with army sub-machine guns. More than one mentioned that they were members of the Civil Guard.

Yet when the siege was ended, instead of 23 Civil Guards minus one killed, there were officially only 11. According to the Minister of the Interior they were "common criminals and anarchists financed by the right wing."

The absurdity of this 'explanation', of 'anarchists' fighting for the release of the

reactionary Tejero, shows the incredible cynicism of the government and its contempt for the working people.

The events of February, of Almeria and Barcelona show unmistakably that the capitalist state is not prepared to act seriously against the fascists. The capitulation of the workers' leader will not 'placate' the fascists but will encourage them. Only the movement of the working class can carry out the decisive measures against reaction which are demanded by the Spanish Marxist journal *Nuevo Claridad*:

- ★ a purge of all fascist elements from the state;
- ★ disbandment of all repressive bodies (eg. the Civil Guard and the secret police);
- ★ people's trial of all those responsible for fascist atrocities;
- ★ an independent labour tribunal to establish the facts of all these cases.

The PSOE and PCE leaders should call a 24-hour general strike in support of these demands. New elections should be held to bring to power a government of the workers' parties based on a socialist programme.

By Jorge Martinez



Felix Morrow's classic Marxist analysis of the Spanish Civil War Revolution and counter-revolution in Spain.

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# Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Fortitude got us where we are today —Enoch

Dear Comrades,  
While watching BBC's "Question Time", I was intrigued to hear Enoch Powell's answer to a young girl's question: "After all our endeavours, have we no hope for the future, except to see the end of a dole queue?"

Powell paused for a moment, looking to the heavens as if for inspiration, then said he understood, in a sense, how she felt—he had been young in the '30s when inflation and unemployment were as bad, but there was no question of despair in their hearts!

No, comrades, "fortitude, pride and hope" are the answers, it seems, to the ills of our society. Perhaps if we close our eyes and wish as hard as we can, a fairy godmother will appear, and with a wave of her wand, put the 'Great' back in Britain.

Or perhaps we'd do better to go out and campaign on the programme of the Labour Party Young Socialists and the *Militant*, explain what that will mean and rely on the muscle of the organised working class to bring down this vicious Tory government.

A better bet than the pious mutterings of geriatric Tories!

Fraternally,  
Maggie McGinley  
Barking LPYS

## You can't get away from it—

Dear Comrades,  
Recently I fulfilled a long time ambition with a week's holiday in Greece, seeing the famous sights and meeting people from other countries.

I also had the misfortune of overhearing a conversation between two couples which soon brought me down to earth. They were South African and American and also very rich, so you can imagine their political views!

The African talked of how hard they worked and how lazy the "black savages" they employed were: "unclean, uncivilised, backward and totally ungrateful for the prosperity the white man had given them"! They were "a bunch of Marxists fresh from the gutter," he said.

He then said to the American (who nodded in agreement with everything he said) "you should never have given your freedom from slavery!"

As these defenders of freedom carried on their bigoted conversation I couldn't help wondering about the workers on the African farm and in the American factory and what they thought of their 'masters.'

The South African was right about one thing: his fear of socialism. Because pretty soon the African and American workers are going to rise up and get rid of these rich bloated parasites and put them where they belong—"in the gutter".

Fraternally,  
A. O'Malley  
Wakefield LPYS.



## We can all fight

Dear Comrades  
I am full of admiration for the people who took part in the Liverpool-London march. They have taken a stand against this government's outlook on unemployment.

Now we must all stand behind these people and unite for a better world. The thousands who weren't on the march can do their bit, we can all voice our feelings, and must do so in a way that will make the capitalist system shudder and eventually crumble.

Those who are unemployed could gather for rallies and meetings—let the press see them as the large force they are. Those lucky enough to have jobs can fight, through their union, to stop overtime and shorten the working week even further, and to

increase their wages sufficiently not to need overtime.

Housewives like myself are also a force to be united. We grumble about prices, rent etc—well if we refuse to pay out extortionate sums, someone must take notice.

The housewives are bringing up the next generation, and must not allow their babies to grow up into unemployed teenagers.

The time is now: a campaign must be brought about to unite us, to abolish not only this government, but the capitalist exploitation of the people. Unemployment brought about the historic march, but there were not jobs waiting for them in London.

We must back them up, and bring about jobs, in all areas of the country.

Margaret Middlemas  
Castlemilk, Glasgow.

## What price a worker's health?

Dear Comrades,  
While distributing Youth Campaign Against Unemployment leaflets I met Ken Dews. He's not so young, but he's unemployed, a victim of industrial injury.

He was a tanker driver for Whitbread's until in 1978 he damaged his spine while opening the back of the lorry. This put him off work for twelve months: he had to lie on boards to support his back.

When he returned to work, he couldn't do his old job, so he was offered redundancy amounting to £3,000. Not much for someone who'd given over eight-

## One less to worry about...

Dear Comrades  
A report in our local paper described how the director of a North-East firm in financial difficulties coped with the task of making redundancies.

After careful consideration of all his employees he decided the only person his firm could do without was himself! He has gone off to a job in America for a year, after which he hopes to resume his old post.

This must be the only honest company director in the North East!

Fraternally  
Jen Pickard  
Gateshead West CLP

een years to that firm, and he hadn't much chance of another job.

His union, the T&GWU, advise him to reject the offer, which he did. They attempted to negotiate another job at the brewery, on lower wages of course, and he felt insulted when he was told that if he kept his nose clean and worked hard he'd do alright.

I might expect to hear that sort of thing as a school leaver, but not after eighteen years service.

He found the job offer unacceptable and as a result was forced to retire through ill health, awarded the princely sum of £600 for his troubles. He had to spend that before he could claim any social security.

In desperation, he went to the top and wrote to Moss Evans, whose secretary replied stating that his claim had been referred back to his local branch.

I cannot help feeling that Ken Dews, and people like him, have been let down.

If we cannot help him, we

## Maggie's vulture appetite

Comrades,  
Doing some light reading I picked up Patrick Cosgrave's biography of one Mrs Margaret Thatcher.

He attempts to portray the prime minister as an ordinary human(e?) woman, marvelling at "how youthful and how transparent she looked."

should see to it that other people don't suffer the same fate. They don't go to work to get injured, do they?

Yours fraternally,  
P. Turner,  
Wakefield LPYS

## Will Labour buy socialism at Woolworths?

Dear *Militant*,  
Pie in the sky is offered by all superstitions, including some 'political' organisations claiming to be concerned with the struggling masses.

You contend, for some peculiar reason, that the alternative to Thatcherism and capitalism is that it should be run by the Callaghans and Wilsons: Healey, Merlyn Rees, Ennals and the other crooks who have operated through the Labour Party since 1900.

They carried on the system of exploitation more successfully than did the

## School-leaving swindle

Dear Comrades  
Another distasteful policy from this disastrous government:

Teenagers who were sixteen years old in January and February were allowed to leave school at Easter. The rest, 16 between March and Easter, were not allowed to leave until 22 May.

They cannot sign on until September, so disguising the true disastrous unemployment figures. On top of this, if they don't get a YOP job (cheap labour) they are regarded as nothings.

Their parents get £4.75p a week child benefit, to keep their teenagers until September—a pittance.

What we need are socialist policies that will revitalise British industry to get Britain working again; an increase in public expenditure to help achieve this; a 35-hour week with no loss of earnings; a national minimum wage of £100 per week.

Give the youngsters a chance of a decent job, with a realistic training scheme for the new technologies.

Well done to everyone in the county council elections, now let's kick the Thatcherite crowd out, for a decent Britain.

Yours fraternally  
Mike Wright, Plymouth.

Tories. No attempt was made to get rid of capitalism, nor to 'educate' or inform the worker of the role he was being used for in society.

You state that under Labour we could introduce 'Socialism'. You can't buy socialism from Woolworths, nor could it be introduced by the trade unions or political parties.

How the hell can you have a mixed economy—capitalism, and socialism in operation at the same time?

Surely it is the nature of capitalism to have labour power on the cheap. Why not demand full wages when unemployed?

Why shouldn't the spivs cough up some of the surplus wealth to which they claim a right, without making any contribution.

Do you really think the Labour Party or trade unions will help the helpless?

Just look at the people the Labour Party has adorned itself with: Jenkins, Castle, Prentice, Owen, Rodgers, and Shirley. They are all sitting pretty, not padding it from Liverpool to London.

Yours,  
Jim Barker,  
East Molesey, Surrey.

Cosgrave is obviously quite enchanted by her "often bird-like" appetite!

Isn't it sickening? While Thatcher's bird-like appetite is probably due to etiquette (whatever that is), thousands of working class mothers will sacrifice their last crumb to feed their children.

More and more men and women throughout the country are having to adopt "bird-like" appetites for the brutal fact that they

## Silkin's red shirt

Dear Comrades,  
It was unfortunate that as the Notts miners celebrated a hundred years of trade unionism, preparing to enter a yet more turbulent period in defence of jobs and living standards, (See *Militant* 5/6/81), John Silkin should misuse his platform.

Speaking at the rally, he derided the "Nescafe solutions" of the last Labour conference, repeating the now weary refrain of Labour's right that "full employment, the regeneration of industry, and selective nationalisation cannot be achieved in a few weeks."

Apart from being a clear attack on Benn, and reinforcing the belief of many Party and trade union members that his candidacy for the deputy leadership will help the right wing, his remarks, by implication, suggest that decisive socialist measures are impracticable and presumably Labour, in government, should carry on as before.

These statements will confirm the conclusions drawn by Labour's ranks: the necessity to democratise the Party and narrow the divide between parliamentary leaders and the movement, to inject urgency into a socialist fight.

Comrade Silkin seems set to reject his own advice, in an interview to the 'Evening Standard' ten years ago. It was reprinted in the *Militant* (December 1970) appropriately under the headline "The middle class change their ideas like a man changes his shirt." (Trotsky).

"John Silkin, Chief Whip for three years in the last Labour government, has joined the left-wing Tribune group of MPs and attended their first meeting last night.

"I have always been left of centre, really," he tells me. "It's natural to belong to them. In opposition a more left-wing attitude can have a good deal of influence.

"In government it would have been difficult. Of course, then I had to be totally impartial; but what would have been unnatural then is perfectly natural in Opposition." When *Militant* is accused by its opponents of being 'boring' or 'uniform in its ideas', it is an expression of the uncomfortable guilt of those who have 'flinched' and 'sneered' at attempts to keep 'the red flag flying high'.

Fraternally yours,  
Leon Kaplan  
Manchester Ardwick  
LPYS.

The book is, in fact, a cross between a horror story and a 'Mills and Boon' romance, and definitely not recommended reading for those who are discontented with the present system. Reading it, the determination to crush the Tories is even greater, and I'm sure that's not what the author intended—eh, Patrick?

Fraternally,  
Jackie Galbraith  
East Kilbride LPYS



# 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
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Hants & Dorset	1212		2600	5200
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London East	2393		3800	7600
London West	1517		2400	4800
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Merseyside	1761		3300	6600
Northern	2024		4300	8600
Scotland East	1232		2200	4400
Scotland West	1887		3750	7500
Southern	2417		3550	7100
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Wales West	1020		2300	4600
West Midlands	2029		4300	8600
Yorkshire	2453		4500	9000
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**Target for July 11th £60,000      Target for year £120,000**

## YOUR PAPER NEEDS YOUR HELP

**THIS WEEK**  
**£1657**

**“Dunfermline Labour Party Young Socialists are giving the small sum of £55 to prove that ‘Militant’ is not financed by ‘sinister’ sources from Moscow.**

**“The money comes from the pockets of ordinary working class people who are sick to death of the bosses’ rotten system and will sacrifice the maximum resources to lead the labour movement to a socialist society.”**

This donation (far from small) shows real determination to build the resources of our paper. It’s not surprising that the bosses and the right in the labour movement don’t understand how ‘Militant’ can raise these sums. Even with rich backers on both sides of the Atlantic, ‘Socialist Commentary’, the right-wing Labour journal, collapsed.

But then our paper isn’t just a topic for small talk at claret parties. It’s an essential weapon for workers to fight the system which denies us jobs and decent living standards.

In a week when NALGO voted to ballot for Labour Party affiliation, two Merseyside NALGO members R Bannister and L Ahearn donated £28 union expenses. But the largest donation this week came from the POEU Conference delegates and visitors who attended the ‘Militant’ meeting, where £147 was raised. After expenses, and

including other donations from delegates not at the meeting, £226 net was added to our chart!

From the GMWU Congress and the Bakers Union Conference (where expenses are much more limited) we’ve had £35 and £11 so far, with promises of more to come.

Workers at International Harvesters, Bradford, mainly AUEW members, sent in £226.60 donations from strike pay. And TGWU 5/909 branch (Rover, Solihull) sent us the usual £20. Many thanks, brothers and sisters.

Supporters in the Medway area saved up £131 to send us, with £55 from a banner, and over £30 from sales badges, and including a £2 donation from school student M Warner. Money from the West Midlands included £73 from the Birmingham ‘Militant’ Rally, after expenses, and a £134 surplus on the ‘400 Club’ draw, while a Tyneside supporter passed on £55 TV fees. Other readers in the North and West Midlands please copy!

Our thanks are due to the following, and to the hundreds of names space forbids us to mention: Maesteg/Bridgend (Wales) readers £43; M Mackay (Ipswich) £21, profit on badges; S Penhale (Newham NE LPYS) £20; Ellesmere Port readers £21.40; Mole T-shirts (Blackburn) £14; York students £9; Littlehampton LPYS members £5; Walton LPYS £1.40 (any more LPYS branches in a position to assist us?); Grimsby Discussion Group £7.20; Gloucester readers £15.55.

Fivers came from J Men-

### 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 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.

**By Steve Cawley**

nell (CPSA Branch Secretary, London) and from A Smith (Eccles CLP); £3.07 from NUR readers J Maig and J Curtis (Bridlington); £3.80 from C Buxton (Enfield) and £2s from N Gilbert (Bristol), F & B Kidd (S London), B O’Connor (POEU London) and K O’Connor (Southgate).

By the time this column reaches most of our readers, it’ll be three weeks and a day to our half-year target deadline. We’ll accept any money ‘phoned in’ up to mid-day 12 July, so any last minute fund-raising activities on the Saturday night can be included. Already we’ve been told about a number of socials

and parties on for that night—is there one in your area? Ask your ‘Militant’ seller.

We can only keep up and improve the work of your paper with your help. Show ‘Militant’ to your workmates, friends and neighbours. Get them to discuss our articles (if you disagree with us—send us a letter saying why!).

But make the point that we don’t have the millions of the Rupert Murdochs of this world behind us and we don’t make a fortune from advertising. Ask them all to consider a donation to our Fighting Fund. It’s in all our interests!

### MILITANT BENEFIT Live music from WASIMBA featuring SWEET HARMONY

Sunday 19 July 7.30pm—midnight downstairs at the Rock Garden, Covent Garden (junction of King St and James St, WC2). Entrance £2 on the door, £1 unemployed with UB40. Advance tickets £1.50 from Mike Cleverley, 108 Vansittart Rd, E7 (01-519 1978) or your local Militant seller.

**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.

**COVENTRY AUEW Junior Workers’ Public Meeting.** 7.30pm Thursday 25th June at AUEW Hall, Corporation St. Hear Ernie Roberts MP (Ex Assistant General Secretary AUEW) on ‘Unemployment and how to fight it’.

**‘SOCIALISM OR CAPITALISM?’** Debate between London LPYS and Young Tories. Speakers: Kevin Ramage (National Chairman LPYS), Ian Picton (National Chairman Young Tories). Wednesday 24 June, Grand Committee Room, House of Commons (Westminster tube). Get their at 7pm to get a seat!

Readers visiting Margate on holiday can obtain Militant at the paper kiosk opposite ‘Clock Tower’ or phone 21293.

**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.

**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.

### LESSONS OF CHILE

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 Price 25p [+10p postage] from **World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN**

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### 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.

### 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.

### “I’D RATHER BE A MOLE THAN A RAT” T-SHIRTS

Summer T-shirts. Colours—white, yellow, sky blue, dark gree, navy and black. All with red motif. Round neck and short sleeves. Sizes—children’s: 24, 26, 28, 28 and 30 inch chest. £2.80 each. Adults’: small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra large (no dark green)—42-44. £3.25 each. Both costs include postage and packing. Please indicate colour, and size preferred. **ALL PROCEEDS TO THE FIGHTING FUND:**

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



# Industrial

# STOP REDUNDANCIES!

## Holman & Michell

**"With a national strike we will bring the owners to their knees."**

This is the tremendous attitude of workers in St Helens striking to save jobs at Holman and Michell lead factory.

All workers taking action have been sacked (see recent issues). Since the occupation was ended by police and bailiffs, a 24 hour picket has been established, and the strike has now entered its fourth week. Determination to win is stronger than it was on the first day!

This has been encouraged by the bosses themselves as Keith Gore, shop steward, explained: "They have tried every possible way of breaking our solidarity and last week tried to make a personal attack upon myself and our union, saying we had rigged a ballot they say took place on the 15th May."

"There has never been a ballot taken then, or at any other time. The statement they have put out through the local press is an attempt to turn the people of St Helens against us. This has not worked and our support is growing stronger every

## Robb Caledon

Nearly two years after the sentence of death passed on it, Robb Caledon shipyard in Dundee is still fighting for its life. British Shipyards have now once again declared it must close.

The workers responded on Monday with a defiant pledge to go on strike the moment the first compulsory redundancy is announced.

At a mass meeting of the 435 workforce, just one solitary worker voted against the stewards' recommendation to step up the fight. They agreed; the retention of the yard; a new

## JJ Hardy

Workers at JJ Hardy (Engineering) Ltd, Hartlepool, Cleveland, went on strike on 2 June in protest at redundancies announced less than a week previously.

Although only three employees are involved, the dismissals are seen by the workforce to be the application of "selective redundancies".

Despite appeals for negotiations or consultation on short time working or "pay offs" by AUEW officials, the company have stuck to their dogmatic stand.

One of the men to be axed is the sole shop steward at this establishment, and management have intimated that an apprentice will con-

day."

Keith has challenged the managing director to a public debate, so local people can "see whose washing is the cleanest," but since the invitation five days ago, Keith has not received a reply from Holman and Michell.

One of the major problems facing the strikers has been some 23 scabs. Only recently the management hired a coach for the scabs so that they could put "their case" to the T&GWU headquarters in Liverpool.

The scabs are a puppet of management, and must be increasingly isolated. This can be done by stepping up the action.

Workers are determined that a national strike be called against the parent company involving all T&G members. The branch desperately need cash to sustain the struggle.

All donations, messages of support, letters, etc, to Keith Gore, c/o 72 Keysley View, St Helens, Merseyside.

**By Steve Higham**  
(Bootle LPYS)

management committed to finding work for the yard; and a balanced workforce.

The shipbuilding negotiating committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions has already pledged its full support for the Dundee workers. Now is the time to turn their words into deeds and mobilise the whole of the trade union movement in shipbuilding in defence of these jobs.

**By Ewan Duncan**  
(EETPU Robb Caledon, personal capacity)

tinue to do his job in his absence.

The men obviously resent the situation and feel that any future union representation for themselves will be jeopardised, by what they see as blatant victimisation. Despite the severe economic position and the very high unemployment level in the area, the workers are resolved to continue the stoppage, until the situation is negotiated in a more honourable and equitable manner.

The situation in this company is in fact symptomatic of the ruthless action being pursued by managements nationwide, quickly trained in the practical advantage of the government induced recession.

## Southern BR

**British Rail began to work on the new summer timetables on 14 June.**

This normally meant an increase in trains to cover the summer holiday period.

But this year as Southern Region started to implement the first of the cuts, many railworkers and passengers felt the effect of what cutting the services would mean to them. Many BR suburban stations are to close in the evenings, some as early as 7 pm.

## Lawrence Scott

**The occupation by workers at Lawrence Scott at Manchester is now reaching a climax with management naming July 7 as the closure date.**

Talks with Arthur Snipe, chairman of the mining supply company, broke down when he offered to return only ten out of 650 jobs!

The NUM have been approached for support in blacking all machinery from the company and its other subsidiaries. The Yorkshire miners executive have donated £500 to the strike fund and the workers themselves raised £1,661 at the People's March for Jobs rally in London.

With 60% of Lawrence Scott's production going to the National Coal Board, with Arthur Snipe's callous disregard for the workers' future, there is a clear case for a campaign for nationalisation of the firm under workers' control.

Donations and messages of support c/o George Fryer, 20 Roundcroft, Bromley, Cheshire.

Using the fast deteriorating union bargaining position, they have embarked on a campaign centered on the introduction of repressive work practices, whilst shedding union activists amongst the ever growing redundancy lists.

This process is supposed to regenerate and stimulate industrial output, and when the "phoenix rises" apparently greater wealth and prosperity will be there for all to enjoy.

But Mrs Thatcher and her monetarist gurus do not realise that working class resentment is now far deeper than mere financial reward can appease, and they will learn that any lasting achievement will not be gained by use of the "big stick".

**By Gerry Watson**  
(AUEW shop steward)

Those that are left open will in many cases have a reduced service, and suburban services from main line stations after 11 pm will be a thing the past.

Sir Peter Parker, the chairman of BR, has said, "The railway communities' faith in the future of BR depends on squaring up to the realities of running a modern service."

To us this means that if you use the railways to go to and from work the BR Board might supply a service. But if you want to use

trains for social activities then you are penalised.

And what about Thatcher's 'bright' idea of workers travelling around the country to find work? How could you do this on cancelled trains or with dearer fares?

The main effect of these cuts to BR workers and other shift workers has meant that many drivers and guards are finding it impossible to get to and from their depots when they are working either the very early or very late shifts. In some cases it means arriving at their depots at 11 am for a 3 am start, as there are not any more all night services

left.

The strikes on Southern Region both by drivers and guards are a fight against the cuts being imposed by the BR Board.

All passengers should support fully the stand being taken by these BR workers as it is their services that are being slashed and it is up to them to decide what kind of railway system they want.

**By Mick Rogers**  
(Wimbledon NUR)

## Ansells sell-out

**On Thursday 4 June the rug was pulled out from under the 22-week strike for jobs of the Ansells workforce.**

Terry Austin, the District Organiser for Ansells, told the lads on the picket line that National Officer, Larry Smith, and himself had concluded an agreement late the previous evening and that official backing for the dispute would now be withdrawn.

The agreement means that, when a vacancy occurs, previous employees will be offered a job on the basis of length of service.

Understandably anger and disappointment were

rife at this blatant sell-out which caused the lads to walk off the line in disgust.

"Bitter in the stomach"; "Sold for a list of names that will never be used," was one picket's response.

Yet arguably the 5/377 branch was a jewel in region 5 of the T&G with some of the highest wages and best conditions for its members. Branch meetings were attended by nearly all the members with a high degree of participation from the floor of meetings, which usually would last 2½ to 3 hours.

Even after the sell-out nearly 400 of the original 1,000 attended the branch on 6 June. There it was agreed to keep the branch

going and prevent the liquidation and dispersal of the members.

A fuller analysis of the situation will appear next week.

**By Brian Debus**  
(T&GWU)

**Jim McGuinness, the UCATT shop steward victimised at 'International Houses', a Taylor Woodrow site in London (see 'Militant' 555) has been reinstated with no loss of earnings. A fuller report will appear in a later issue.**

## CIVIL SERVICE

### LEICESTER

Civil Service report  
see back page

On 11 June 850 civil service union members crowded into a dance hall in Leicester to discuss the major unions' executive recommendations that members should prepare for an all-out strike.

David Wood, the full-time CCSU official, pointed out that the dispute had reached a crucial stage with Thatcher refusing to budge, although selective strike action so far had placed the government in serious financial difficulties. In these circumstances, he said, it was necessary to escalate and bring all civil servants into the fight.

Militant supporter Richard Edwards, a member of the local CCSU

committee, answered suggestions from the floor that the unions should continue to step up selective action and not go for an all-out strike.

Richard said members should realise that the conditions for such partial action no longer existed. "If we do not accept all-out action as the only course, then we allow the government to mass suspend members in areas on selective strike. Such a tactic on the government's part would see our unions defeated and demoralised."

However, perhaps the most encouraging contribution was made by the member in the local com-

mittee from the First Division Association/Association of Inspectors of Taxes—the union which organises the 'tops' of the civil service.

This colleague impressed the growing need for all-out strike action by revealing that up until this point he had always argued against all-out action on the committee. However, his view had now been changed by the government's steadfast refusal to negotiate.

On being put to the vote the motion was carried by 2 to 1.

**By Tony Church CPSA branch secretary DHSS in a personal capacity.**

### LEEDS

A packed meeting in Leeds heard Ken Thomas (CPSA General Secretary) outline the case for all-out strike action.

The mood of the meeting was angry and bitter against the Tories' attempt to push down our wages and crush trade unionism in the civil service.

During the discussion, speakers pointed out the lasting effects this dispute

would have on strengthening the unity and resolve of the unions.

There is a fund of support from all workers towards those, like civil servants, who are fighting against the Tories.

It was explained we should not do anything to alienate that support. To do so would aid Thatcher and allow her to slander the unions in an attempt to

divide us from the rest of the labour movement—especially the unemployed.

There was substantial support for the idea of a monster rally of parliament during the strike.

It would be possible to get 100,000 civil servants on such a rally—which would really knock the Tories back on their heels.

**By Steve Appleton**



# Reports

## GMWU A Leftward Move

By Clare Doyle  
(GMWU)

The Tory mass media had a field day reporting the attacks on the left made by prominent Labour leaders during the course of the General and Municipal Workers Union Congress in Brighton

Nevertheless their verdict on the debates and the decisions was that the union had undergone a considerable shift to the left.

There was much talk of "socialist planning". A composite agreed to "take all the necessary action to return a Labour government pledged to the implementation of collective ownership under democratic control of the means of production, distribution and exchange".

But while the General Secretary David Basnett supported this resolution, he vehemently argued against a resolution which merely concretised this programme by calling for the nationalisation of the 200 major monopolies, banks and insurance companies.

David Basnett's plan for the economy, his "National Recovery Plan", looked more like a plan for the reconstruction of capitalism than for its abolition and the construction of socialism!

Labour Party" and "it is a trade union party".

Liverpool region attempted an emergency resolution which would allow the membership to decide on which candidates to support in the Labour leadership elections. This was not allowed, and it leaves the decision entirely in the hands of the executive.

Charlie Donett, National Industrial Officer for local authority workers, was given a rough ride, particularly by the Liverpool delegation. They could not see why a National Recall Conference had not been called and why 1.5% had been accepted as "a substantial increase" on 7.5%.

### A 'first' for conference

One of the delegates started his very brief contribution by congratulating Charlie Donett on "an excellent sell-out!" He finished by explaining what local authority workers thought of the last pay settlement: he let off a joke shop laughing bag into the microphone.

This was just one of the many "firsts" that characterised this year's GMWU Congress. It was the first time Congress was opened by a Marxist—'Militant' supporter ANN JONES, President of Brighton Trades Council.

For the first time in 20 years the question of defence spending was discussed thoroughly, though a firm commitment to campaign for cuts in arms spending was narrowly defeated, with the executive's position of no increases in arms spending being carried.

### Visit by Polish trade unionists

Also two members of the Polish trade union Solidarity addressed the conference, the first time any such representative had done so in Britain.

Finally, and maybe most significantly of all, it was a 'first time' for many of the delegates to attend their conference.

But many of the delegates who hear radical socialist alternatives to the leadership's policies at Congress are frustrated by the fact that their delegation has already decided which way to vote, and many of them are bound by mandate.

The outcome of the debates is often quite at variance with the mood of the conference. The GMWU has undoubtedly shifted to the left and all developments augur well for the future.



Delegates vote at the 1979 T&GWU conference: it was the Transport and General which led the struggle in rejecting the policies of wage restraint of the last Labour government.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

# T & G CONFERENCE MUST GIVE LEAD

For the 1,100 delegates attending this year's Transport & General Workers Union conference the overwhelming priority will be what policies and strategy can defend its members.

Since the last conference in 1979 nearly 1½ million workers have lost their jobs.

The TGWU itself has lost over 200,000 members through unemployment. Wages have been held down below the rate of inflation because of the fear of the dole.

All the social reforms gained in boom of the '50s and '60s such as the welfare state are being cut to the bone.

One overwhelming cry is coming from the ranks of our union, "Organise to fight back, organise to bring down the Tory government, organise to ensure an incoming Labour government carries out policies in the interests of the working class."

The TGWU has a block vote of 1¼ million at Labour Party Conference, the biggest of all.

Many branches and district committees have put up emergency resolutions demanding the TGWU delegation uses the block vote in support of Tony Benn in the deputy leadership, "as the candidate who will most likely support the Labour Party Conference decisions in the next Labour government, and who most represents the policies of the TGWU itself."

Yet there is a likelihood of

By Bill Mullins  
(T&GWU, Birmingham Trades Council executive, personal capacity)

the union leadership trying to stop any vote at the conference on the spurious grounds that, "the closing date for nominations is 12 August and the decision should be left till then."

In other words, the decision should be made by the executive rather than the rank and file delegate conference.

The delegates should throw out any attempt to stifle conference on this vital decision.

An indication of the ferment in our union is the number of resolutions—422—on the agenda.

### Fight unemployment

On unemployment, there are 70 resolutions.

But it is resolution 51 that points the real way forward in fighting unemployment, arguing point blank against the demand for import controls as "putting a wall around chaos".

It calls for industrial action like Gardeners to be nationally co-ordinated by

the union combined with "a national campaign for a 35-hour week without loss of pay"... "international solidarity through strengthened links between unions and combine committees" and "the introduction by the next Labour government of a planned, nationalised economy, including the establishment of a monopoly of foreign trade, to control investment and unemployment".

This resolution is further strengthened by resolution 36 which also calls for "a massive spending programme, to include health, social services, education and housing" and a campaign to develop mass support for this programme which would include "establishment of factory branches of the Labour Party and the LPYS."

Resolution 57 from the Manchester District Committee (Local Authorities) goes one step further in this campaign for socialist policies. It adds, "to include a 24-hour national stoppage of work as a protest".

On the economic policy section the executive have put up a resolution, which puts forward the argument for rejecting "the concept of monetarism".

It calls on the TUC to "campaign to bring pressure" on the Tory government to pursue constructive policies." But trying to convince the Tories of the 'error of their ways' is like trying to convince Satan that sin is wrong.

Resolution 206 and 211 condemn any notion of "meaningless discussions" with Thatcher and her cronies. If these two resolutions were composed with the one from the Manchester District Committee, then this could point the

way forward to bringing down the hated Tory government.

Given the decrepit state of British capitalism, resolution 189 outlines the only solution to achieve the aspirations of the working class. It calls for the next Labour government to "introduce a socialist plan of production based on the nationalisation of the leading 200 companies, banks and insurance companies under workers' control and management, with minimum compensation calculated on proven need only".

### No to wage restraint

It is clear that the policies of wage restraint of the last Labour government have been thoroughly rejected by the TGWU—of the 27 resolutions on the union's wages policy, only two raise the demand for wage restraint. Of the 25 resolutions against this, two demand a minimum wage.

For the first time there is a motion which clearly points the way out of the nightmare faced by the working class in Northern Ireland. Resolutions 283 from Branch 1/1951 and resolution 284 from branches 1/1692, 5/909 and 6/587 both call for trade union members in Northern Ireland to be given a political voice which would represent their class interests.

The TGWU conference in Brighton can act as a rallying call for the whole movement.

By adopting fighting policies, we can bring down Thatcher and all her works. No section of society is as strong as a united fighting labour movement.



# CIVIL SERVANTS: No retreat!

Civil Servants—  
West Scotland

The indecision of our union leadership resulted in the first major unofficial action in the civil service pay dispute.

By bringing out on selective strike staff at the benefit-paying computers at Livingstone and Reading, the CCSU leadership confused many of its membership by instructing them to implement emergency procedures.

This decision was taken in spite of massive opposition from CPSA and SCPS members in local offices who felt that to undermine the computer centre strikes by writing manual giro's etc. could be deemed as scabbing.

In spite of warnings from both CPSA, DHSS and DofE Section Executives, the CCSU leadership yet again fudged the issue and pulled out the computers on 8 June.

As a result around 50 unemployment offices mainly in the West of Scotland, ignored the CCSU instructions and refused to write giro's manually. The staff were accordingly threatened with suspensions and walked out of their offices before the threats were implemented.

Even some offices who have been carrying out emergency procedures walked out in support. These walk-outs meant that Strathclyde Regional Council had to set up 36 emergency centres dealing with hardship cases.

D of E strikers have since returned to work to implement emergency procedures, feeling that with the early returns from the consultative exercise showing a massive Yes for all-out action, they have now regrouped to prepare for a further call.

Pat Lavery

(CPSA Strathclyde Central)

Civil servants have refused to crawl back to work on the government's terms.

In ballots throughout the country, the vast majority of civil servants have voted against accepting the 7% offer of the government and for a continuation of industrial action to win a living wage.

For the first time in their history, some unions could well record majorities in favour of all-out indefinite strike without strike pay. Voting in IRSF seems to be close on this issue, but CPSA seems certain to vote in favour.

On Tuesday the votes recorded by CPSA members so far were as follows: 25,175 in favour of an all-out strike, 11,386 for a continuation of the selective action and 16,447 for a return to work.

These votes for action represent the burning anger of civil servants who have come increasingly to understand that the government's aim is not merely to hold down wages temporarily this year.

The Tories hope to inflict a crushing defeat as a prelude to a widespread assault on conditions which

Brian Ingham

(Militant Industrial Correspondent)

would almost certainly include massive job losses and the imposition of a pay bargaining system heavily weighted against civil servants.

When all the votes are counted, the central body of the Council of Civil Service Trade Unions will meet once again to decide on the next stage of action. If the lead from this body had been far more decisive than the government almost certainly would have capitulated by now. Any weakness from now from the COCSU leaders could prove fatal to the dispute.

If CPSA and IRSF have voted in favour of all-out strike action then the members of those unions would expect those decisions to be translated into action.

There has been a growing frustration throughout the unions at the way in which the leaders have conducted the dispute. Their action has usually been too little too late. But at this stage of the dispute if the members do



Determined members of Inland Revenue Staff Federation at meeting in Newcastle, June 12th.

Photo: Militant

not see their leaders recommending action bold enough to shift the government then widespread unofficial action is a strong possibility.

Members, particularly in CPSA, could well in such circumstances feel that they have no alternative left but to push forward the action from below.

This dispute has

developed into a crucial test for the entire trade union movement. Thatcher and the Tories hope to inflict a crushing defeat on civil servants as an example to all other trade unionists, especially those in the public sector.

This is, therefore, not just a civil servants' fight, but one that must concern the whole labour movement.

The TUC must organise any necessary support and solidarity action to help ensure a victory.

Defeat for the Tories in this struggle would inspire every worker in Britain in the struggle to defend jobs and living standards from the onslaught of this government.

## IDLE RICH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

The "employment" minister, Prior, repeated recently the old lie that British workers' wages made them "uncompetitive". Yet a recent survey put British hourly wages ninth out of ten in a list of industrial countries—below Belgium, Sweden, Netherlands, West Germany, Canada, France, Italy, and USA.

The number of low-paid workers zoomed up in 1980. Over half a million more earned under £75 a week. Did unemployment fall?

Quite the reverse.

Yet now the bosses want us to get even lower wages. The CBI want a 3% pay norm when prices are likely to rise by 10% at least.

No, workers didn't cause the crisis. The bosses did, through continual failure to invest in manufacturing industry.

Workers' demands are very moderate. There are plenty of jobs that need to be done. For example, council house building has slumped another 52% this year—and last year was the worst since the war. A programme of useful public works, building houses, schools etc. would be a start.

Neither is it outrageous to demand an £80 minimum wage and a 35-hour week so

that more jobs can be created. But most urgent of all the Tories must be forced out.

The Labour party is organising a demonstration against unemployment in Cardiff on 4 July, and the TUC are organising a series of events this autumn. These campaigns are a step forward. But firmer action is needed from the leaders of the labour movement.

A clear call for a 24-hour general strike should be made as the first step in an intensive campaign throughout the labour movement; to fight for the end of this Tory government and for a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Put the bosses on the dole—not the workers!

## NALGO

Change was in the air at NALGO conference last week. The most momentous change was that NALGO members are to be balloted as to whether the union should establish a political fund and affiliate to the Labour Party.

In an electric atmosphere, an amendment to the NEC report on these lines was moved by Ronnie Stevenson of Strathclyde branch. He showed what affiliation would mean, pointing out the illogicality of the largest union completely in the public sector not being part of the political wing of the trade union movement.

The show of hands in favour was overwhelming and delegates cheered wildly at the result.

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