

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

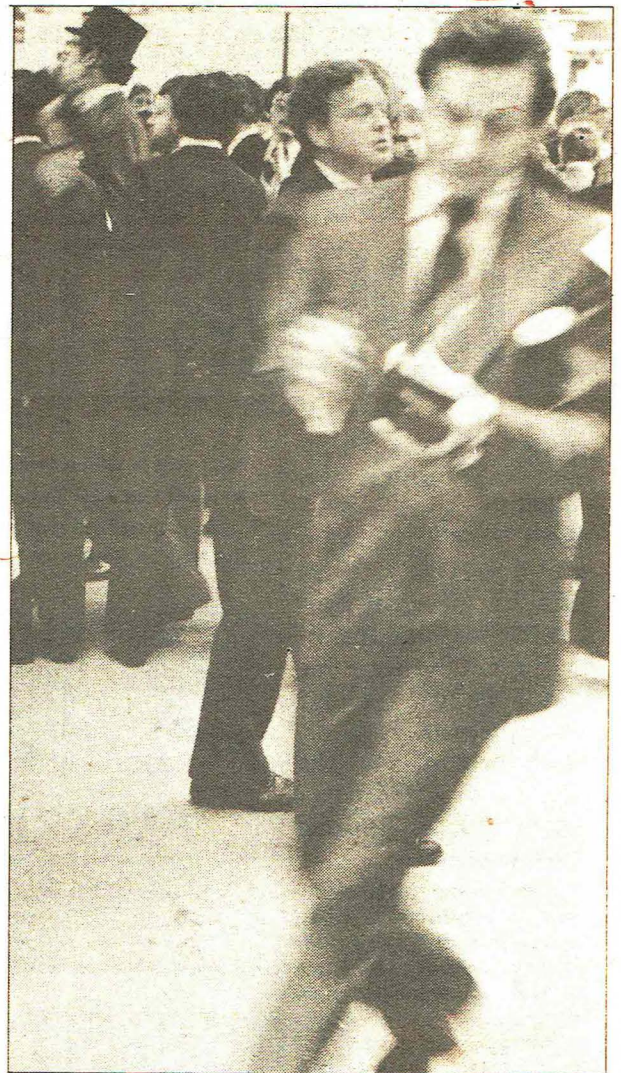
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20p

Message from Labour's Ranks

UNITY: YES

BUT ON SOCIALIST POLICIES!!!



Jobbers
on the run

STOCK EXCHANGE INSANITY

By Mick
Brooks

Panic has gripped investors on all the world's main financial markets. The feverish selling of shares is a symptom of the creeping paralysis of production and trade.

It also marks the collapse of the business barons' confidence in the monetarist quacks.

Only months ago, big business was full of confidence. A dose of nasty medicine for the workers from Thatcher and Reagan would soon revitalise the market economy they thought.

But last Monday an astronomical £3,600 million was wiped off the value of shares on the London Stock exchange. The Hong Kong and

Tokyo markets registered record falls. European Bourses also followed marked declines.

Now, London shares have made a record 'recovery'. But this 'yo-yo' action itself shows its underlying instability.

The immediate reason was that investors feared that Wall Street share prices would plunge again. It is from the United States, the heartland of capitalism, that the financial crisis has spread, reflecting growing big business doubts about Regan's

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Delegates cheer Tony Benn as he addresses the Labour Party Conference at Brighton this week Photo: MILITANT

Fight to bring down the Tory government with bold socialist policies! That is the overwhelming mood of the Labour Party delegates at Brighton.

The narrow 0.8% defeat of Tony Benn in the deputy leadership election confirmed the overwhelming support of

By Roger
Shrives

constituency party delegates for the democratic reforms

and radical policies on which his campaign was based.

Denis Healey's narrow victory was nevertheless a disappointment, and the removal, through right-wing trade union votes, of five left wingers from the NEC is a serious blow.

But this can only be a temporary reversal. It will not fundamentally change the Labour Party's leftward march.

On policies, conference consistently en-

dorsed radical, left-wing proposals.

In the key economic debate on Monday, Conference underlined the movement's rejection of the disastrous policies of the last Labour government, and enthusiastically supported the radical measures outlined in "The Socialist Alternative".

"Clause IV," said Tony Benn to massive applause, "has been taken out of the constitu-

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LPYS Labour Conference meeting

Thursday 1 October, 7.30pm in the Clarence Room, Metropole Hotel, Kings Road, Brighton. Speakers: Bernard Dix (Assistant General Secretary, NUPE), Andy Bevan, Tony Saunois.

'ORGANISE TO END
UNEMPLOYMENT'

Militant

NEC setback for left...but

SUPPORT FOR MARXISM WILL GROW

After every revolution—a counter revolution.

Last year's 'October revolution' at Blackpool confirmed the re-selection of MPs, introduced the election of Leader and Deputy Leader, and reinforced the Party's commitment to a radical programme

This year, after three years of continuous defeats, some of the right-wing trade union leaders have managed to stage a minor coup on the NEC.

Norman Atkinson has been replaced as treasurer by Eric Varley. Bernard Dix and Charley Kelly in the trade union section and Renee Short and Margaret Beckett in the Women's section have been replaced by right wingers. This leaves the left with a marginal majority on the NEC.

This change, achieved with the block votes of several big unions, was engineered by Duffy, Weighell, and other right-wing supporters of the misnamed 'Campaign for Labour Victory.'

This shift to the right, however, is not a true reflection of the mood of Labour's rank and file. Over 80% of the Constituency Labour Parties, reflecting the mood of the activists throughout the country, supported Benn for Deputy Leadership. And the CLPs gave even higher votes in the NEC poll to Tony Benn and Dennis Skinner (with a fall in votes for Neil Kinnock and Joan Lester, who were among the second-ballot abstainers who allowed Denis Healey to take the Deputy Leadership).

The Constituency activists, moreover, are far more representative of the unions' rank and file membership than the right wing leaders who have ousted the lefts from the NEC.

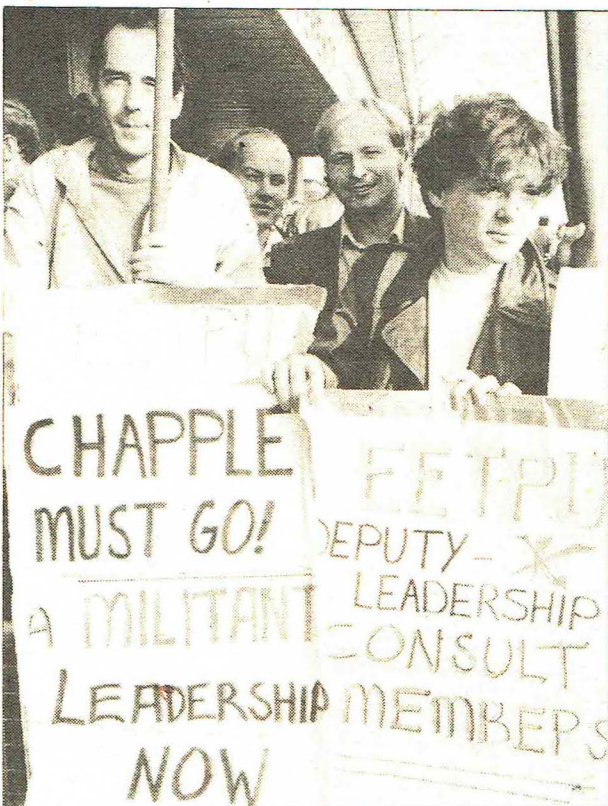
Unfortunately, some on the left of the Parliamentary Labour Party have echoed the argument that Tony Benn's campaign has provoked a 'reaction'.

In reality, there has been enthusiastic support for Benn's candidature, which was identified with defence of democratisation of the party and radical policies. At a number of union conferences, there were huge enthusiastic meetings in support of Tony Benn—despite the fact that the leadership of the unions refused to support Benn.

The capitalist press, echoed by some of Labour's right wingers, have attacked Tony Benn's campaign, not because of its tactics—which were based on democratic discussion and campaigning—but because they are vehemently opposed to the radical policies that he has defended.

This year's conference,

Does the EETPU leadership speak for all its members? Picket outside Brighton Conference Centre, Monday



despite the change in the NEC, has reaffirmed the Party's support for these policies.

After three years of defeats, some of the right wing have managed to re-group themselves. But the ranks of the unions will not allow their leaders to reverse all the advances that have been made. Trade unionists, too, want to get Thatcher out. But they are not prepared to return to the policies of the last Labour government.

Throughout unions like the AUEW and the NUR there is burning anger at the lack of a fight against massive job losses and cuts in living standards. Why, the ranks are increasingly asking, has there been no real fight? When will there be a lead from the top?

The swing to the left in the labour movement has not been the work of 'infiltrators' or 'conspirators'. It has been brought about by the crisis in British capitalism—and workers' search for a viable, socialist alternative.

The right have gained a temporary victory on the National Executive. But the present balance of forces within the trade unions will not last very long. There will be a continued swing to the left in the unions.

Duffy, Weighell, Sirs, and other 'moderates' much praised by the Tory press claim to be defending 'democracy' within the Labour Party. Their members, they claim "don't want left-wing policies."

But they are conspicuously reluctant to trust their members and allow fully democratic discussion and decision-making within their own organisations. Just as there has been a fight for democracy in the Labour Party, there will be a fight for trade union democracy in the AUEW,

the NUR, ISTC, and other unions in the next period.

According to reports, Duffy, Weighell, Sirs and others now believe they have a free hand to begin a witch-hunt against the left in the Labour Party.

Weighell's attempt to refer back Conference arrangements to allow discussion on a resolution calling for a witch-hunt against the Marxists was overwhelmingly defeated on Monday.

Nevertheless, Weighell, Sirs, and others have indicated that they intend to initiate a purge—particularly a purge aimed against the *Militant*.

But Labour Party members and active trade unionists will not tolerate such a move. They understand that, if it was allowed, it would be *Militant* today and the rest of the left tomorrow.

Never again, can there be a return to the Gaitskellite 'thought control' and the old bureaucratic manipulation of the party.

It is also possible that the right wing are contemplating moves against the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Again, most trade unionists instinctively understand that a party that cannot win the youth is finished. They know that you cannot win the youth with right wing ideas and organisation.

In recent years the LPYS has conducted a number of magnificent campaigns. Currently, they are conducting an enormously successful campaign to recruit YOPS workers into the trade unions.

The LPYS has recruited thousands of youth, won scores of LP members, and rebuilt moribund wards and CLPs in many areas.

If the right wing were able to fetter the YS and purge the Marxists from the

Party, in many areas they would be destroying the active core of the Labour Party.

This will not be tolerated by LP members, nor by the ranks of the trade unions.

Right wingers like Duffy have recently been trying to whip up scare stories about 'sinister funds' for the *Militant*. These people, who are prepared to accept funds from NATO, a capitalist military alliance totally hostile to the aims of the labour movement, cannot understand that thousands of ordinary workers are prepared to sacrifice cash to support ideas which they believe in.

Support for the *Militant* has grown enormously in the recent years because more and more workers have come to see that only the programme and perspectives of Marxism can provide a way forward.

Marxism has deep roots in the labour movement, where it has always played a part—even in Britain, contrary to what the right wing thinks.

Militant is not intimidated by the right wing's threats. They will not destroy the influence of Marxism. On the contrary, as the crisis of British capitalism deepens, workers will increasingly turn towards Marxism as the only way out.

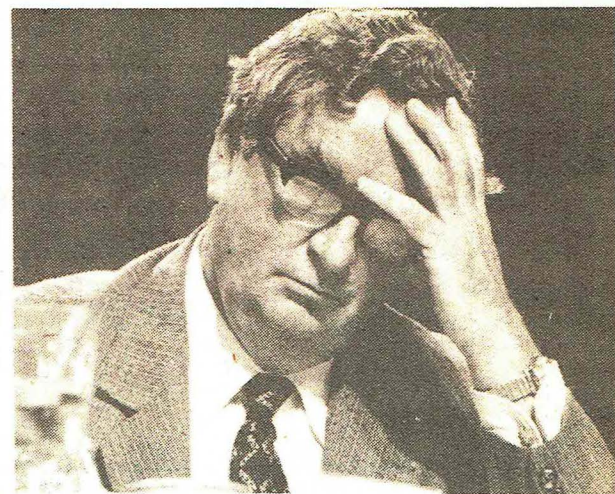
Far from being diminished, Marxism will grow from strength to strength throughout the length and breadth of the labour movement.

The result of the Deputy Leadership and NEC elections are undoubtedly a set back. But they will only strengthen the resolve of Labour Party members and active trade unionists to campaign for a change next year, both in the Labour Party and in the unions.

There is no question of slackening the campaign as far as the left is concerned. The task of the coming months is to take the issues and the policies to the ranks of the labour movement, as well as to wider layers of working people in the factories, on the estates and in the streets.

MILITANT MEETING

Well over 150 attended the Militant meeting on Tuesday. "After the defeats in Conference today, the meeting was a real boost," said one delegate. The meeting heard Ted Grant and Rod Fitch, parliamentary candidate for Brighton, Kempton. Enthusiasm for *Militant's* Marxist ideas was expressed in a collection of over £700.



UNITY-YES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

tion and put back on to the agenda."

Conference overwhelmingly passed a resolution which recognised that there is no way forward for the working class within the framework of capitalism and pledged the next Labour government to "bring into public ownership the commanding heights of the economy."

In all the debates, speaker after speaker hammered home the devastating effects of Tory policies. They are a disaster for working people, with all the labour movement's past gains being threatened by Thatcher's vandals.

Conference supported motions calling for the trade unions to back local Labour councils in fighting the cuts—and in refusing to comply with Heseltine's new legislation to force cuts on Labour councils.

Conference also called for a stepping up of the fight against unemployment, with a campaign to reduce working hours and for a programme of public works to create new jobs.

No going back!

Conference committed the next labour government to repeal a list of reactionary Tory measures, like Thatcher's anti-trade union legislation and Heseltine's Bills.

There was enthusiastic support for steps to abolish the public schools and put far more resources into education at every level.

The Tory press and television has gloated triumphantly over Healey's win, and especially over the ousting of five left NEC members by right wingers.

But the serious capitalist press has ruefully noted that the Labour Party is still committed to the policies championed by Tony Benn, rather than those identified with Healey.

Conference gave a lukewarm reception to Denis Healey's half-hearted support for the "alternative economic strategy", and completely rejected Peter Shore's defence of incomes restraint and other discredited

measures.

Denis Healey and Michael Foot, in his speech on Tuesday afternoon, have appealed for unity against the Tories.

Labour Party members and active trade unionists want unity to bring down the Tories as soon as possible. But they are still not prepared to accept unity at the cost of backtracking by the leadership on key policy issues.

The radical policies adopted by successive conferences together with the democratisation of the Party, are vital to an effective fight to wing mass working-class support to bring down the Tories and return a Labour government.

A myth

Some of the right-wing trade union leaders have managed to engineer a minor coup on the NEC.

But the rank and file of the trade unions will not for long tolerate an attempt by their leaders to turn back the clock as far as the Labour Party are concerned.

There can be no return to the policies of the Wilson/Callaghan period, let alone a return to the undemocratic party regime that prevailed under the old Gaitskellite leadership.

It is a myth that the broad layers of workers are against radical policies. On this, right wingers have swallowed the propaganda of the Tory media.

The response to the mass Labour Party demonstrations against unemployment in Liverpool, Glasgow, Birmingham and other cities is an indication of far greater support than ever before.

Mass support

So too is the growth in Labour Party membership, and the mass audiences which have turned out all over the country to hear Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner and other left-wing speakers.

These rallies and meetings have been some of the biggest in the post-war period, completely unprecedented as far as some of the areas are concerned.

Despite the set-back at this year's conference, it is still radical socialist policies and party democracy that point the way forward.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE REPORTS

IRELAND - Support for party of labour

Overwhelmingly supporting the National Executive's statement on Northern Ireland, Conference recognised that withdrawal of the troops and the unification of Ireland could come only through forging working class unity as a basis for socialist solutions.

Conference also enthusiastically endorsed encouragement for the trade union organisations coming together to form a new party of Labour in the six counties.

Like many other speakers, Mick Martin

(Fulham CLP) welcomed the NEC statement and Tuesday morning's debate as a big step forward.

A bi-partisan policy with the Tories on unemployment, housing or other vital issues would be unthinkable, Mick said: it must be rejected on Ireland.

Composite 25 called for the re-unification of the 32 counties; for the next Labour government to begin the process of full political and military withdrawal, and for support for the demands of the H-Block hunger strikers.

Composite 26 also called on the next Labour government "to set a programme for withdrawal." Moving this, Anne Lamming (St Pancras North CLP) argued that the NEC Statement was "contradictory", supporting the aim of reunification but not calling for political and military withdrawal.

The argument that Irish re-unification was impos-

ible for economic reasons, she said, was invalidated by the development of the South compared to the North.

Taking up her condemnation of Northern Ireland's terrible economic conditions, however, Ronnie Stevenson (Glasgow Central) moving Composite 11, emphasised that these conditions fed the sectarianism originally fostered by British imperialism. There could be no capitalist solution. If protestant workers did not want to be united into a capitalist Ireland, would they then be driven into the sea?

Only the organised working people could stop the sectarian killings and provide a solution. Ronnie pointed out that, whenever a lead had been given, there had been a magnificent response from the NI trade unions—on industrial issues, against cuts, and against the Tories generally. This industrial unity must

now be translated into political activity; steps towards a new party of Labour based on the trade unions, as outlined in Composite 11, were vitally necessary.

Supporting Composite 26 Peter Hain, (Ex-Officio, Putney) said that this did not mean supporting terrorism, and although a programme of withdrawal did not mean instant withdrawal, the next Labour government must take steps towards withdrawal.

He envisaged a "constitutional conference" which would discuss future policies and guarantee minority rights, possibly with an international peace-keeping force, as in Zimbabwe. Without a commitment to withdrawal, he said, the statement's policies were "pie in the sky."

This point was taken up by Hugh Henry (Renfrewshire W CLP). Conference should support Composite 26's call for an end to bi-partisan policies, an end to repression, and a solution in the H-Blocks.

But the policy of withdrawal was itself pie in the sky "unless the strategy is based on working class solutions."

Withdrawal of the troops on a capitalist basis, Hugh

said, would mean a bloody civil war. The working class must be armed with a political programme capable of providing an alternative. Only class unity could end sectarianism, and a party of Labour should be given every possible encouragement and support by the Labour Party.

Replying for the National Executive, Alex Kitson, who chaired the NEC's Study Group, rejected the idea of withdrawal of the troops, or of setting a deadline for withdrawal. "There are no simple solutions," he said; withdrawal of the troops would mean a bloody civil war.

An independent Northern Ireland would be unviable. It would be a totally dependent statelet, and sectarian violence could even be intensified.

"The object of a united Ireland could be achieved only if we first unite the working class, and win the consent of working people."

The NEC recommended opposition to Composites 25 and 26, and these were both lost.

Asking for the remission of Resolution 164, which called for further discussion throughout the LP and a one-day special conference on Northern Ireland, Alex Kitson said the NEC would

give careful consideration to these proposals.

On the question of H-Blocks, Alex Kitson said the Labour Party could not support "political status" for para-militaries, some of whom, both Protestant and Catholic, were responsible for brutal and sectarian murders. But we must demand the improvement of conditions for all prisoners to resolve the conflict in H-Blocks.

The next Labour government must also completely repeal the Prevention of Terrorism Act and review the Emergency Powers Act. Labour should check the methods of the security forces, and ensure the safeguarding of democratic rights.

Asking Conference to remit Composite 11, which called on the NEC to provide political and material assistance to NI trade union organisations to discuss the formation of a trade union based party, Alex Kitson said the NEC supported the principle of developing a class position on Northern Ireland. The Labour Party would support the development of a class-based party, and supported the idea of a trade union conference of Labour to discuss the setting up of a new party.

A MAN WAS SEEN BEING DRAGGED BEHIND A CROWD. ASKED WHO HE WAS, HE REPLIED, I'VE JUST BEEN ELECTED THEIR DEPUTY LEADER.



The defeat of Tony Benn by 0.8% in the Deputy Leadership election was a great disappointment to the majority of Constituency Party and many individual trade union delegates.

But it certainly cannot be taken as a big defeat.

The result in the second ballot was Healey, 50.426% against 49.574% for Tony Benn. For Denis Healey, the incumbent Deputy Leader, once hailed as the next Labour leader and future Labour Prime Minister, backed by the capitalist media, a 0.8% margin was a massive blow.

Tony Benn himself summed up the feeling of the CLP delegates at the London Labour Briefing meeting on Sunday evening: "Today was an enormous victory for us, we won the argument. Fleet Street had

hailed Roy Jenkins' defeat in the Warrington by-election as a 'great victory'. For us slightly under 50% of the vote was a great achievement."

The vote confirmed that the overwhelmingly majority of Constituency Labour Parties (83%) supported Tony Benn because his candidature is identified with the fight for party democracy and for radical policies.

The ballot result also underscored the gulf between the Party and the Parliamentary Labour Party. There is nothing new in this.

However, there was anger amongst CLP delegates that some of the Tribune Left in the PLP had abstained; this in effect was a vote for Denis Healey in the second round.

It was noticeable that during the Sunday evening election, the seats reserved for the Parliamentary Labour Party were packed

83% CLPs BACK BENN



CLP delegates at this week's conference

full, a very strange sight at Labour Party Conference; the next morning they were 80% empty again.

It was also noticed by delegates that members of the PLP gave rapturous applause for the leader of the

Norwegian Labour Party who spoke of the need for an "inch by inch advance towards socialism." She attacked the "ultra left" but forgot that she had just led her Party to defeat in Norway. (see page 11)

Photo: Militant

It is reported that about 30 left MPs, including Neil Kinnock, Joan Lester, Judith Hart, Jeff Rooker, Stan Orme, Norman Buchan and others actually abstained. Healey's margin of victory was the equivalent of about 3½ MPs.

In other words the abstention of the left cost Benn the victory in the election.

It is also noteworthy that some of John Silkin's supporters also transferred their votes to Healey and not to Benn. These reportedly included Frank Field, a Tribuneite who also belongs to 'Solidarity', and Oonagh MacDonald.

The trade unions which constitute 40% of the electoral college voted 24.994% for Healey, and 15.006% for Benn.

The Transport and General Workers Union delegation, after several votes in the delegation and despite a massive campaign to win their votes for

Healey, eventually decided to vote for Benn in the second ballot. Tony Benn also gained the votes, perhaps unexpectedly, of the Boilermakers and the building workers' union UCATT.

However, on the other hand, the votes of the public employees, NUPE, which has recently supported left wing policies in the Labour Party, swung against Benn, after a union ballot which gave a majority to Healey. NUPE accounts for 600,000 votes or 4% of the trade union electoral college.

The lesson of the ballot is the need for a campaign within the unions on the issues. The process of politicisation of the trade unions has only just begun. If only there had been a campaign to explain the issues and the policies at stake at the rank and file level of all the main unions, the results could have been very different.

Economy - 'MODEST DEMANDS REQUIRE RADICAL CHANGES' — Benn



Ray Appes speaking during economy debate.

Photo: Militant

Opening the key economic debate on Monday afternoon Denis Healey made an impassioned appeal for unity on the basis of "the alternative economic strategy."

The leopard appeared to have changed his spots but few delegates were thrown off the scent.

Conference accepted the need for a united struggle against Thatcher's vicious economic policies and delegates were prepared to give Dennis Healey some credit for his new found (but carefully phrased) support for the alternative economic strategy, which he said was the only alternative to Thatcherism.

But the applause for the newly confirmed Deputy Leader was far outweighed by the massive applause and support given to **Tony Benn** when he replied to the debate, and for a number of *Militant* supporters who spoke of the need for a socialist transformation of society.

Youth unemployment was discussed first. **Composite 27** drew attention to the disgrace of 70% young people on the dole.

Philip Hope (Kettering CLP) rejected YOPs as "totally inadequate", a

point repeated by other speakers. **Charlie Robertson** (Glasgow Provan CLP) emphasised the importance of the party supporting the LPYS, who, in conjunction with the trade unions, are helping organise YOPs workers into the unions.

The debate came alive with a speech by **Ray Appes** (Brighton Kempton) moving **Composite 41** who called for the next Labour government to implement a crash programme of reindustrialisation, and concluded that "There is no way forward for the working class within the framework of capitalism and (conference) pledges the next Labour government, under Clause IV part 4 of the constitution, to bring into public ownership the commanding heights of the economy."

Conference had listened carefully to Dennis Healey's speech, said Ray to applause, but there had been no indication that he had learned the lessons of past Labour governments. Ray gave facts to emphasise the depth of the present crisis which posed enormous pro-

blems for the next Labour government.

But, he concluded, there could be no question of a solution on the basis of the capitalist system. The present slump was deeper than the 1929/31 slump.

We should support the reforms of The Socialist Alternative and the TUC/Labour Party statement but with the decisive levers of power in the hands of the capitalists we would once again face economic sabotage and be forced to retreat.

To enormous cheers, Ray asked, "When will we understand the days of welfare capitalism are over? There must be no more retreats. Dennis Healey had been the first monetarist Chancellor and had begun the cuts in public expenditure and the first cash limits."

"Why don't you attack the Tories?" somebody heckled to cheers.

"Because unless we learn the lessons we are doomed to repeat the same mistakes," replied Ray, to even bigger applause.

"We're living in a crazy system. In the 1920s and '30s we failed to change the system and this led to Hiroshima and Auschwitz. If we do not achieve the transformation to socialism in the next 20 to 30 years we will face the end of mankind," Ray concluded, to prolonged applause.

The motion was seconded by **Cathy Wilson** (Isle of

Wight Labour Party), who also received prolonged cheering from the conference. She was "sick and tired of changing things bit by bit, slowly." The next Labour government, as in 1974, would face a choice; capitalism or socialism. "I need socialism," she said, "do you?"

David Basnett, of the G&MWU, moved **Composite 42** which set out the main points of the alternative economic strategy. He called for a massive increase in public expenditure to make the state once again an engine of economic policy.

However, most of his contribution was an attack on those who were "peering into the future" which "won't solve the problems faced by workers now." The divisions within the party, he said, were a self-indulgent luxury.

Ron Todd, T&GWU, also reiterated support of the basic policies of the AES. He took up the question of incentives which the Tories claimed were necessary for the people at the top.

Yet the £100,000 given to people like Michael Edwards, MacGregor of BSC and Walters, Thatcher's economic advisor, were incentives to close down and destroy British industry. "But what about incentives for the people who do all the work?" he asked.

Following this, **Eric Winterbottom** (AUEW TASS) moved what was probably conference's shortest resolution, which simply stated that conference rejected an incomes policy.

In a well argued speech, he demolished all the arguments normally used to back up incomes policy, which invariably means incomes restraint in a capitalist economy. The purpose of the resolution, he said, was to cut off any possible escape route, i.e. right wingers in the PLP, implementing incomes policy in a future Labour government. This motion was also supported by **Arthur Scargill** of the miners.

In the debate, **Joan Coyle** (East Renfrew CLP) said that she was 19 years old

but had only had one short job since she left school two years ago.

"We are not living in a system of booms and slumps now," she said, "but one where slumps are followed by even bigger slumps. The labour movement has a duty to take up the problems facing youth. If it failed it will be answerable to the whole labour movement."

In one of the few speeches openly attacking the AES **Peter Shore** (MP Stepney and Poplar) criticised the policies as "simplistic". He said the problem for the next Labour government would be creating wealth and organising its distribution.

He implied that some form of incomes policy or order of priorities would be necessary.

We have the outline of a policy, he said, but we must put flesh on the bones—implying, however, that there would be an evolution back to the old policies of past Labour governments. This received a very unenthusiastic response from the delegates.

Taking up the question of YOPs again, **Val Dunne** (Bakers Union) gave examples from Withenshawe and Manchester area, of the appalling problems faced by young people on these schemes. "We must insist," she said, "that it is made clear that YOPs is voluntary and not compulsory."

The YOPs committees which are made up of ex-directors of monopolies and other dignitaries was a farce. "It is about time," she said, "that we ask young people what they want."

Standing up to reply for the debate, **Tony Benn** received enormous applause from the delegates, underlining the overwhelming support that he enjoys among CLP delegates and many individual trade union delegates. Tony Benn gave the recommendations of the NEC which included support for resolution 217 (against incomes policy) and for both composite 27 (outlining the AES) and composite 41.

"The latter," he said,

"takes Clause IV from the constitution and puts it back on the agenda. Brighton Kempton," he commented in passing, "was nothing if not persistent!"

A return to full employment was a primary objective of the next Labour government; the AES had been confirmed by events. The policies advocated by the Social Democrats had been proved completely bankrupt.

He commented on the fall of 30 points on that morning's London Stock Exchange. He said that it was appropriate that the television news was switching from the Stock Exchange, where people gambled with the wealth of the nation, to Brighton where the Labour Party represented the people who created the wealth.

He also touched on the question of trade planning and reiterated the call for Britain to come out of the EEC. However, he said that coming out of the Common Market meant that the workers of Europe needed a new structure free from the Treaty of Rome.

To applause, he said that the conference had recognised that a Labour government in office did not necessarily mean the labour movement in power. If the Labour government did not succeed in bringing about a real shift in the structure of wealth and power then there was no real change.

Modest demands, because of the crisis being so great, now require radical changes. Attacking the capitalist press and television for their constant propaganda against the labour movement in general and the left in particular, Tony Benn emphasised that it was vital for the Labour Party to go out and campaign for mass support for its policies so that they could be implemented under a Labour government.

To massive applause, by far the biggest in the conference so far, Tony Benn concluded, "We stand for a just and fair society and we mean to get it in our lifetime."

GREETINGS

Greetings from Old Swan Labour Party, Liverpool to all socialist comrades. Labour's democratic advances can only strengthen the party and take us forward to socialism.

CPSA Avon Broad Left sends comradely greetings to Labour Party Conference. See you there in 1982...

"JOBS NOT BOMBS" Bedwelty CLP

Blackpool LPYS extend fraternal greetings to all comrades and supporters. Unite! An organised working class will never be defeated.

LPYS Launch new Youth Charter

The Labour Party Young Socialists have launched a nation-wide campaign around a ten-point YOUTH CHARTER.

We want to commit trade unions, local Labour Parties, students' unions and unemployed groups to fight for these policies—and in particular for Labour to fight the next elections with the demands of the Youth Charter included in the Manifesto.

The problems facing youth to-day require an urgent response. The LPYS welcomes the TUC decision to campaign amongst youth this Autumn.

November 23rd will see the departure of the TUC 'Jobs Express' from Newcastle on its 'crusade against youth unemployment.' The four hundred 'Jobs Crusaders'—unemployed youth, young workers, YOP trainees and students—are to call on eleven cities around Britain.

After a week of events, including a torch light procession through Glasgow and evening rallies en-route, the original four hundred youth will be joined by thousands of others in London for a festival, a demonstration and on Monday 30th November a lobby of Parliament.

Undoubtedly this campaign will win wide-spread support and sympathy from working people, especially youth. But if the campaign is to be really effective in drawing youth into the struggle for jobs and decent living standards, the TUC

must adopt a strategy to defeat the Tories and bring to power a Labour Government pledged to defend workers' interests.

Unfortunately the TUC leaders are insisting that the campaign is 'non-political'. Although the idea has since been dropped, it was originally planned to invite Margaret Thatcher and David Steel to meet the 'Jobs Crusaders' at a rally in Trafalgar Square.

Yet ask virtually any unemployed youngster today—'who's to blame?' You'll get one answer: 'Thatcher and the Government!' The message of this campaign must be clear—the Tories, their class and their system are responsible for unemployment and the crisis in society.

Without a programme of demands relating to the day to day needs of youth and linking these to a struggle to change society, large numbers of youth will inevitably fall back to frustration and despair, as was seen in the summer riots.

It is therefore vital that all sections of the Labour movement champion the ten demands spelt out in the LPYS Youth Charter. The Charter, which deals with the problems facing youth in school, work, college and on the dole, features the ruthless exploitation of youth on YOP schemes.

Right-wing trade union leaders such as Terry Duffy, Tom Jackson and Sid Weighell should be shamed at their public support for a programme which has

By Lawrence Coates

(LPYS representative on Labour's NEC)



Youth unemployed march in Newcastle, organised by LPYS earlier this year

Photo: D Doran

resulted in 100,000 full time jobs being replaced by young 'conscripts' on £23.50 a week. The LPYS demands trade union rates of pay for all trainees and calls for YOPs to be replaced by a massive scheme of useful public works and training under trade union control.

A call to action around demands such as these would draw millions of youth behind the movement's banner. Already YOP trainees around the country have seen the need to go beyond simple protest actions and have begun to take industrial action to

force an improvement in their conditions.

This determination must be matched by the TUC leaders—the Jobs for Youth Campaign must be linked to preparations for a 24 hour general strike. Decisive action by the TUC's 11½ million members would demonstrate to the country's 1½ million unemployed youth that the Labour movement means business.

For more details of the Youth Charter, copies of the new Socialist Youth Broad-sheet: contact Andy Bevan, 150 Walworth Road, London SE 17.

'Youngsters earn too much' — Thatcher

It's only just over a month since the Tories suggested that employers paying young people less than £40 a week should be given £15 a week subsidy and already in the careers office where I work we are getting a number of employers phoning in and offering vacancies at £39.50 a week.

Thatcher's solution to massive youth unemployment is to cut wages and try and set young workers

against old. She told Parliament: "more needed to be done to help school-leavers into jobs. Because the wages of young people were often too high in relation to those of experienced adults, employers would not afford to take them on—even though it was clear that many employers would like to help (1)."

"This situation has come about because of the unrealistic pay bargaining over the years. It contrasts vividly with the situation in Germany where the wages of young people are much lower than those of adults, and where consequently they have less youth unemployment."

The £15 subsidy for wages

under £40 is only a start. For wages between £40 and £45 a subsidy of £7.50 per week to the employer is paid.

For years the trade union movement fought for decent wages. In the 1960s apprentices struggled to bring poverty wages up to a decent level.

Now the Tories want to thrust young people back onto poverty wages. I'm surprised that Thatcher did not say that wages for young people shouldn't be abolished altogether, and that they or their parents have to pay the employer to take them on.

In fact some employers seem to be looking to Victorian novels for such

inspiration. A West End hairdressing Salon are already asking for a down payment of £200 by would-be apprentices. This £200 they say will "go towards" their training, equipment and wages—£22 per week.

Some unions are now beginning to take up the fight of the YOP workers for better pay and conditions, but there are still many workers particularly young workers who are paid appallingly low wages and often work in terrible conditions.

By a NALGO member

Amongst the ten demands of the Youth Charter are:

★ A guaranteed minimum payment, covering 52 weeks in the year, for all in full-time education over the age of 16 linked to the YOP allowance and a full, mandatory grant for all students over 18.

★ A new deal at 16—legislation to guarantee everyone leaving school a job at a decent wage OR training on full pay OR to stay on at school or college with a grant. A youth employment service to administer this scheme under trade union control.

★ Full trade union rights for members of the Armed Forces with the right to leave at any time and the right to refuse to break strikes.

★ A crash building programme of one million houses a year, including provision of single accommodation for young people, on the basis of nationalising the construction and building supplies—industries, the banks and insurance companies—with compensation only on the basis of proven need.

GET MILITANT WEEKLY

Our six week sales campaign has been taken up enthusiastically by our sellers up and down the country.

This was well demonstrated by the numbers of people selling 'Militant' at the Birmingham demo, where included in the hundreds of sales was a motor cycle policeman! It's not just at big events that new sales are being made, for in Brentwood sellers used their spare time during the day and on their way to meetings to do estate sales and sold 30!

They intend to make this a regular feature of their sales each week. What better time to start than with this issue, when millions of workers up and down the country are discussing the events at Labour Party Conference.

Many of our sales are at Labour Party meetings; is the 'Militant' sold at your Labour Party? If not why not take out a bulk order to sell to your Labour Party members? These can be supplied sale or return at no

cost to yourself.

Labour students at East Anglia University are getting prepared for a new term with indispensable campaigning material—weekly bulk orders of 'Militant'. Make sure your Labour Club bookstall is well stocked!

Every week we are hearing of new ways to boost our sales. Since the sales campaign started we have had two new orders from newsagents who have been asked to stock 'Militant'; ask your newsagent, what can you lose?

Nationally the 'Red Star' award for increased sales goes to the Thames valley sellers who have gained 3 new bulk orders. Other new bulk orders, as 'Militant's' Marxist message spreads include Maldon [Essex], Goole, Kirkaldy, Preston and Harrogate.

Fight back against the Tory press. Build the sales of 'Militant' and fight to kick out the Tories. For bulk orders or more information about selling 'Militant' contact: Circulation Dept, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986-3828.



Twelve-year-old Jacob Rees-Mogg the son of the former 'Times' editor has been moaning on the radio that dividend payments in the past year had been pathetic. Having inherited £50 he has made about £1,000 profit which he uses to buy antique silver which "looks a lot nicer than share certificates."

The only cloud on his horizon, he sobbed, was a Tony Benn led government which might nationalise firms like GEC which he hopes to be running by the time he is 30. Not to worry. Militant calls for shareholders to be compensated according to proven need—though with Daddy on GEC's Board he will need a good advocate if he wants any money.

Young Jacob consoled himself though, the Conservatives would come back and put everything right. What better incentive is there to make sure that the next Labour government organises a socialist plan of production to raise living standards and prevents the Tories ever being re-elected?

If you're twelve years old and haven't got the Rees Mogg wealth, life is far from being all antique silver, though. Even in formerly affluent America, Reagan has told the Department of Agriculture to recommend new meals for school students. A typical meal will now be a hamburger on half a roll, six chips [long ones of course] nine green grapes and half a glass of milk. Eleven and twelve year olds get the same amount of meat and vegetables as five year olds.

Twenty seven million children get school meals in the USA, nearly half of them qualifying for free or cheaper rate meals. All, paying or not, will now get meals supplying less than one third of the nutritional value needed and only 17% of the daily calory level. Tomato ketchup and pickles are now counted when calculating food values.

Of course, Reagan is suffering too. He entertained the Sadats recently and gave them smoke fillet of mountain trout, roast supreme of duckling a l'orange, wild rice with raisins, assorted cheeses, melon glaze and fresh raspberries—all on the federal budget of the budget conscious, welfare-slashing Reagan administration.

As any reader of the capitalist press could tell you, the Liberal Social Democrat alliance [LSD for short] is a modern twentieth century party, not concerned with outmoded concepts like class. They only want to put over clear helpful policies. Bill Pitt, the Liberal candidate for Croydon North West for instance, has called unambiguously for unilateral disarmament—provided it is carried out by all countries.

If you want to know where the LSD get their modern ideas from, look no further than their ex-Tory convert Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler. He is a great believer in astrology and always asks for peoples' date of birth because "basic characteristics do tend to have a relationship to the time of year you were born." As a Capricorn he always tries to employ Virgo, Cancer or Taurus secretaries. With a scientific basis like that the LSD will soon lead boldly into the fifteenth century.

If any readers of Militant are delegates to the Social Democratic Party's three conferences, we have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that like a truly egalitarian party there will only be one class of compartment on the special trains they have laid on. The bad news is that they are all first class. Still, never mind. You can always pay by credit card.

Tory students move to the right

By Peter Mumford
(NOLS National Committee, Militant supporter)

Last term the Chairman of the Tory students at the Polytechnic of North London, wrote a letter to the Student Union to tell them he was going to set up British Movement branch in the college.

This threat is an indication of the moves to the right in the student section of the Tory Party. The savage cuts in education have made it impossible for Tory students to keep up the pretence of being 'liberals' in favour of expanding education. Colleges this year face cuts of up to 25% in their budgets—meaning over 12,000 fewer university places this year.

The Federation of Conservative Students is the official Tory student organisation. Former chairmen of the FCS include Edward Heath and several of Thatcher's cabinet.

At its last national conference there were reports of people being paid to act as delegates to the conference to ensure the right wing kept control. Also, disgusting racist songs were sung. These were the actions of people supposedly fighting for 'law and order' and 'democracy'.

But most dangerous of all has been the fascist influence in FCS. According to the 'New Statesman' (24/4/

SHOULD YOUR UNION BE RUN BY A 161 YEAR OLD CORPSE FROM HIGHGATE CEMETERY?

WORKERS OF ALL LANDS UNITE
KARL MARX BORN 1818 DIED 1883

Conservative student poster, but whose ideas are they following?

PS: The Tories didn't circulate this poster, for as you can see above, they can't add up the years since Marx died.

81) "one skinhead youth wearing a blackshirt and a large Union Jack paraded around," and at private parties Tory students sang the Hitler Youth anthem.

Whilst they represent a tiny minority of students at the present time, it is possible that certain sections of crazed middle class youth may look to the ideas of the extreme right wing as the crisis deepens.

In the 1930s, when the labour movement failed to give a positive lead to students, large numbers looked to the right for a solution to their problems. The Corporate Club at Oxford University was one of the bodies associated with Mosley's British Union of Fascists in the 1930s, and students were at the forefront of both the Hitler and Mussolini youth move-

ments.

Today the labour movement is far stronger, and it is unlikely that the extreme right wing would get any mass base amongst students. But even now, if the National Union of Students does not give a fighting lead, it will be possible for the Tories to damage the union. After failing to get any base of support inside NUS (their vote has fallen by two-thirds in four years), the Tories have now turned to a policy of pushing for colleges to disaffiliate from NUS. Last year Heriot Watt university left NUS following an FCS campaign. Only three out of the eight Scottish Universities are now affiliated.

It is the duty of the leaders of NUS, members of the 'Left Alliance,' and of the National Organisation of Labour Students in particular, to launch an offensive against the Tories—and their reactionary representatives in the student movement. It is no solution to attempt to appease the Tories. Last year, Dave Aaronovitch, Communist President of NUS attempted to defend attacks on student grants by speaking on a joint platform with an FCS member on the NUS executive.

This is no way to defend the interests of students! The only way to ensure the defeat of the right wing, is for NUS to launch a mass campaign against the Tories of demonstrations, rallies and lobbies, tied firmly to the demand to link with the labour movement in the struggle to throw out the Tories, and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

UNIVERSITIES UNDER ATTACK

A local branch of the LPYS has produced a leaflet, in the form of a 'school report', on the record of the Thatcher government.

Certainly, on the report's showing, she would have no chance of going to University! And to make up for this humiliation Thatcher and the Tories have made sure that thousands of real prospective students will have no chance of going to University this year.

The Tories have made savage cuts in spending on Universities. Ten Universities are to have their student numbers cut by a tenth or more within the next five years. Salford University has been told to cut its student places by 30% by 1983-4. Keele University has had its budget cut by £1 million while Bradford University will suffer a 25% cut in student numbers.

But conditions for those who manage to get to University are far from perfect. The 7% 'increase' in the grant announced last April amounts to a further reduction in students' living standards. Even the former Education Secretary, Mark Carlisle, conceded that this

was a cut in living standards. He described it as 'a contribution to curbing public spending'!

The real value of the student grant, given inflation, has fallen drastically since the Tories came to power in May 1979. The National Union of Students' leaders have argued that the grant should keep pace with inflation. To match those words NUS should launch a campaign now for a £2,000 grant (plus London rating).

Students should not make any forced 'contribution' to the vicious cuts of the Thatcher government.

The cuts in University spending have also hit campus workers. Three thousands lecturers jobs and four thousand non-academic staff jobs will be lost over the next three years. In addition, the Tories have taken steps to attempt to undermine joint opposition to the cuts by college workers and students. Last year they decided to place the funding of Students Unions in the hands of the college authorities. The cuts will be used in an attempt to play off Students Unions' demands for funds with campus unions' opposition to redundancies.

Given this prospect, it is all the more vital that students link with the labour



Years of fighting education cuts; 1974 Essex NUS demo. Photo: P Harrap (Report)

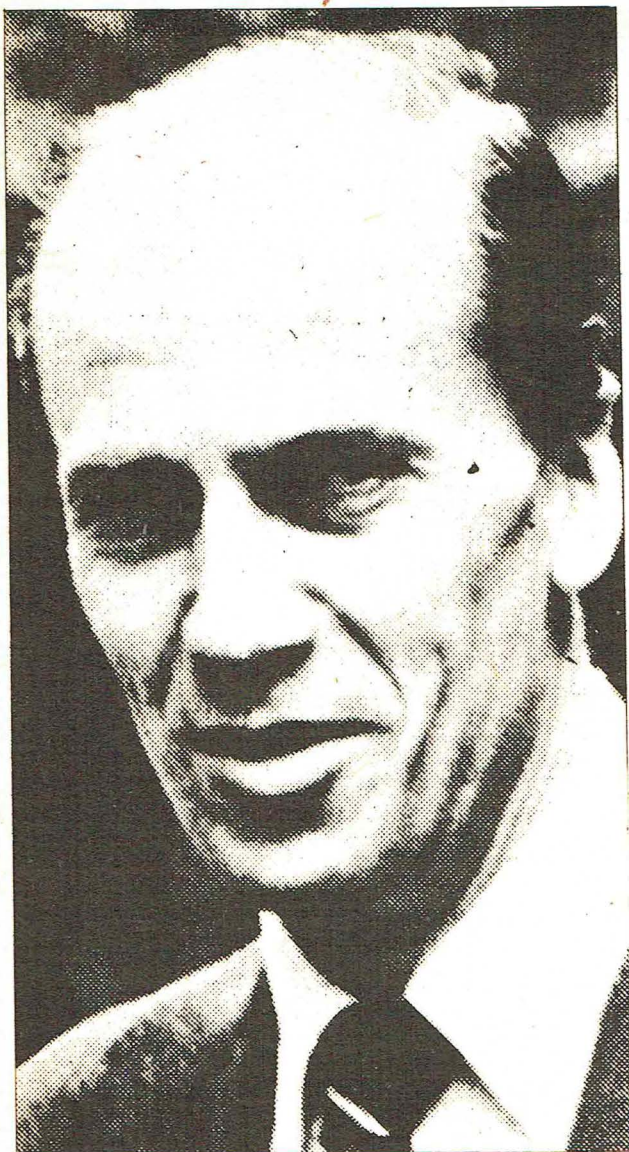
movement to defeat the Tories. Labour Clubs can play an important role in forging links with the campus unions. Joint meetings must be organised on the cuts and the socialist alternative. This is especially important in the run-up to the February ballot of NALGO members over the question of NALGO affiliation to the Labour Party. Stirling University Labour Club has already organised a meeting with a speaker from the University NALGO branch and the 'Campaign for NALGO Affiliation to the Labour Party' (CNALP).

In their campaigns against the cuts Labour Clubs must also raise the demand for NUS affiliation to the TUC and Labour Party: to concretise the links between

workers and students. The labour and trade union movement has the power to defeat the Tories. Keith Joseph, the new Education minister, learnt of the power of the miners when he was forced to back down over pit closures earlier this year.

But trade union activity by itself is not enough to permanently defend living standards. That was why the trade union movement, in the late 19th century, set up the Labour Party as its political wing. The NUS leaders must explain, in the fight against the cuts, the need for affiliation to the TUC and the Labour Party.

By Clive Heemskerck
(Militant supporter, NOLS NC)



Tebbit—giving skinheads a bad name

SUBURBAN SKINHEAD LOOKS FOR BOTHER

The Thatcher government showed its real nature with the appointment of Norman Tebbit as "Employment" Minister. He is one of the most vicious and rabid anti-trade unionists in the Tory Party.

Tory wets and 'Times' leader writers may weep that the government's attempts to revitalise industry are giving it the vitality of an Egyptian mummy.

But deep in her monetarist bunker, Thatcher is reassured by the hard liner Tebbit who has replaced the waterlogged Prior.

Tebbit has no doubts who the culprits are in the economic mess. It's the workers. "All the talk about less hours and more money is moonshine" he says "The way to a job is to work harder and better".

The 'Times' is no friend of the working class. But even they had to point out that UK workers worked 44.8 hours a week in 1977, far longer than workers in the USA and even the reputed 'workaholics' of France, West Germany, Holland and Switzerland, with fewer public holidays and shorter annual breaks as well.

By Roger Shives

Tebbit will be unimpressed. Reputedly, he doesn't read much apart from official papers. And he has always "known" the workers were to blame and set himself the task of curbing the power of the unions.

Tebbit has been labelled the "conscience of the Tory suburbs" and his views seem tailor made to reflect

every last prejudice of an estate agent in his Chingford constituency.

In the gentlemanly world of parliament, few MPs can have attracted so much dislike. Michael Foot called him "the most studiously offensive of MPs" a "semi-house trained polecat" and a "suburban skinhead".

The new cabinet wants to introduce a four per cent pay limit and it will be the job of 'Four per cent Norm' to try to emasculate the union opposition. He finds the idea of manacled unions 'attractive'. He always has. In 1971 he described the UCS workers' sit in as 'criminal industrial anarchy'.

When Grunwick workers tried to form a union, Tebbit supported the notorious owner George Ward in meetings of the reactionary National Association for Freedom.

"The cloth cap colonels use their industrial power for political ends. They insist on conscription, the

conscription of the closed shop. But if Ward and Grunwick are destroyed, then as in 1938 we shall have to ask whose turn is it next?"

If Tebbit thinks he can easily defeat the unions though, he should brush up on his recent history. Workers have organised for years to defend themselves against the likes of George Ward and Norman Tebbit. The unions will not be emasculated by a wave of Tebbit's pen.

Tebbit claims he doesn't see signs of confrontation in the country. But if he tries to carry his plans through, he soon will do.

The Tories have only resorted to such brutal policies and such crude figures as Tebbit because of the crisis British capitalism has reached. A united fight will be needed, both to defeat Tebbit's plan—and to throw out the class which can only gain salvation by destroying the rights of working people.

How to beat Heseltine

With mounting attacks on the Labour Greater London Council (GLC) and the virtual certainty that the Tories will introduce new legislation this autumn to further control local councils, the Greater London Labour Party Executive has debated what strategy the GLC should follow.

Three motions were before the 14 September meeting: from John Spellar of the electricians' union, the EETPU, from the GLC Labour Group, and from 'Militant' supporter Bob Labi. The EETPU motion, which opened the door to retreats from the Manifesto commitments, was overwhelmingly defeated while the other two motions were carried.

The GLC Labour Group's motion arguing that the council was entering into the "final phase" of the battle with Heseltine and that the trade unions had to "take industrial action to defeat the government" did not explicitly rule out making cuts or rate increases in the face of the Tory onslaught.

The other motion (shown here), which was passed by 15 votes to 6, sharply posed the alternatives before the GLC. It was built upon the GLC manifesto which had stated that "mass opposition to Tory policies led by a Labour GLC could become the focal point of a national campaign, involving other Labour councils, against the cuts and for an

London Labour take up the fight

61. This Executive reaffirms section 1.11 of the Finance and Administration chapter of our GLC Election Manifesto. Noting Heseltine's recent statements this Executive believes that the central issue facing the GLC is how to resist the government's imminent attack and defend Londoners' living standards.

2. This Executive calls on the GLC not to follow the example of the Lothian Regional Council which at the last minute bowed to the government and made large cuts in spending.

3. This Executive

recognises that rate increases cannot provide a way of replacing the money withheld by the government because of the harsh effects rate rises have on many workers' living standards and the new legal powers the Tories are expected to take. Therefore the choice before the Labour GLC is either to make cuts and put charges up or to consciously enter into an all-out struggle with the government.

4. This Executive, in line with our Manifesto, calls on the GLC to declare now its refusal to bow to government pressure to make cuts and to begin a campaign to

secure an increase in its government grant. This refusal to make cuts will provoke an open confrontation with the Tories which the GLC will only win if it is supported by a mass movement which is clearly prepared to take action including industrial action, in the GLC's defence. Only through a show of strength can the Tories be forced to retreat, as the miners and railway workers' victories earlier this year demonstrate.

5. All sections of the Labour Party have a responsibility in building such a mass movement. Simultaneously the Labour GLC has to give a firm unwavering lead in this fight against the government and the Labour Party and trade unions must do all that they can to build popular support for the Labour GLC through mass propaganda and activities. 9

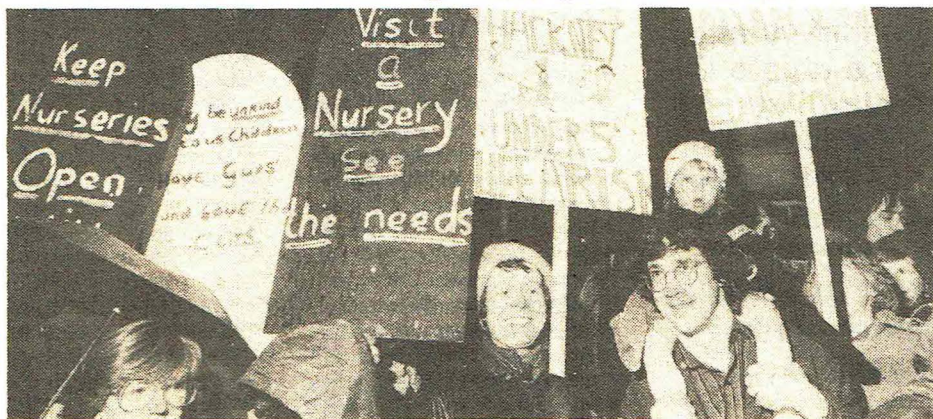


Photo: Militant

What the fight is all about—vital services in working class areas like Hackney

immediate general election and the election of a Labour government."

The decision of the GLLP Executive must now be taken to all parts of the London labour movement and made the basis of a

serious preparation for the coming battle with the Tories. Its stand must be echoed in borough councils' manifestos which are now being drawn up for next year's elections. At the same time all Labour GLC

members should be committed to stand by the Manifesto on which they were elected and refuse to carry out the Tories' dirty work.

SHOWING THE PALE PINK FLAG

By Andy Holloway

Andover Militant supporters are still reeling from the crushing defeat inflicted on them by leading Social Democrat David Owen. He bored us half to death.

Instead we got half an hour of 'breaking moulds' and 'new approaches'. We were assured that the Social Democrats were not a soggy middle of the road party, but they had hard pr-r-actical policies, which would eventually revive the country, though difficult decisions would have to be made.

Having imparted the surprising information that the C.B.I. were more enthusiastic about the Social Democrats than some of the delegates to the T.U.C. conference, he went off to answer questions from those at an overflow meeting, who had to make do with watching the doctor on video.

We now had a pale imitation of a Militant fighting fund appeal. A local insurance broker addressed the meeting, welcomed local Liberals for the umpteenth time, and told everyone what an exciting day this was for Andover. I remembered the story of the man who went to sleep and dreamt he was at a test match watching Chris Tavere bat for an hour without scoring and woke up to find that he was.

The insurance broker set a target of two thousand pounds. Buckets were passed among the audience (some being pass-

ed with all the speed of the Welsh three quarter line in full cry). Later it was revealed that just under four hundred pounds had been raised.

He harked back to the good old days of the latter part of the last Labour government. This nostalgia was shared by a woman sitting in front of me. Funny I didn't see her helping out the party in '79; still, time's a great healer or so the doctor hopes.

However it was while he was answering a question on Northern Ireland that the Liberal veneer of Owen and several members of the audience slipped. After expressing the need for more 'new approaches and initiatives', his blue print for the future of Ireland went roughly thus: the people of Northern Ireland would be given a sum of money for housing, social services, industry etc but if they persisted in petrol bombing each other they could expect no more handouts! This drew a loud sustained round of applause.

The good news from the Andover meeting is that there were few working class people in the audience. The bad news is that the SDP have already assembled a slick machine (video systems and all) and are not going to blow away as some in the Labour Party hope. It is up to the Labour Party to unite behind bold socialist policies that will expose the bankruptcy of these pale pink Tories and sweep them away.



MAKE POLICE ACCOUNTABLE

By Lynn Walsh

Two faces of the police.
Left: Notting Hill Carnival, 1978
(Photo: J McKittrick).
Right: Brixton, 1981
(Photo: A Wiard, Report)

The riots which erupted in Brixton, Toxteth and other cities this summer have once again focused attention on the role of the police.

In particular, they have highlighted the almost complete lack of accountability, and of the need for the labour movement to campaign for the democratisation of the police.

The explosion of anger on the streets arose from the terrible conditions faced by workers in the inner-city areas, especially black workers and youth: mass unemployment, rotten housing, inadequate education, health and social facilities, etc.

But the clashes on the streets also reflect widespread resentment and anger at the police, which has built up over a period of years.

The labour movement, while defending workers' rights to defend their areas from attack, cannot support looting, arson, and petrol-bombing as forms of protest. However, it has to be recognised that in almost every case the riots were sparked off by provocative police action.

In Brixton, as was soon revealed, there was the intensive 'Swamp '81' operation, and a number of brutal arrests and raids. Similarly, in Toxteth a number of arbitrary, heavy-handed arrests sparked off the conflict.

These particular incidents, however, were only the tip of the iceberg.

In March 1979, Lambeth Labour council, completely dissatisfied with its lack of control over policing in the area, set up its own Working Party on Community/Police Relations. It

concluded (in January 1980) that there was evidence of widespread racism by the police and that they were regarded, particularly by black people, as "an army of occupation."

In London and other cities there has been growing anger at the racial bias of the police. The increasing number of "passport raids" has highlighted the police's role in enforcing racialist immigration laws.

There is also anger over racial attacks. In the past five years 26 black people have been murdered, with only one or two arrests for these crimes. In the London area there were 2,426 violent attacks on Asians alone in 1980. Very few of these crimes were solved.

In Brixton and other areas of London there was also a strong reaction against the intervention of the Special Patrol Group. Few of the black youth or Labour activists could forget the SPG's responsibility for the killing of Blair Peach after the anti NF demonstration in Southall (23 April 1979).

Before the Brixton upheaval, the inquest on the Deptford fire emphasised the inability and apparent reluctance of the police seriously to investigate this horrendous crime as a racist attack.

Protest from Labour MPs and civil rights groups had also drawn attention to the scandal of deaths of suspects in police custody. Between January 1970 and June 1979, 245 people died in police custody, with the rate rising from seven a year

to forty-eight a year.

It was the refusal of the Liverpool police chief, Kenneth Oxford, to reveal the contents of an internal inquiry into the death of Jimmy Kelly which brought about a head-on collision between the Labour councillors on the area police authority and the Chief Constable.

Oxford arrogantly expressed the attitude of hard-line police chiefs towards elected police committees. He attacked some councillors for their "vituperative, mis-informed comments," and reportedly told members of the police authority to "keep out of my force's business."

Liverpool councillors decided to set up a working party to look into the "role and responsibility" of the police authority. After this reported in February 1980, councillor Margaret Simey, a long-standing member of the authority, commented:

"I realise now that there is no hope of running a big modern police force on rules that are no more than a gentleman's agreement" ('Weekend World', ITV, 23 March 1980). "Mr Oxford does not seem to think the police committee is worth proper consideration, and the Tory majority do not seem to think that there is anything wrong with that" ('Observer,' 21 October 1979).

'The clashes between Labour councillors and police chiefs in Lambeth in 1979 and Liverpool 1980 were early warnings of the explosions to come in Brixton and Toxteth.'

The clashes between Labour councillors and police chiefs in Lambeth (Brixton) and Liverpool (Toxteth) were early warnings of the explosions to come. The conflict over the role of the police authorities in these two key areas, as

well as in West Yorkshire (where there was also a council enquiry in 1978) and Lewisham (where in 1980 the council threatened to withhold its contribution to the Metropolitan police), underlined the complete lack of democratic accountability as far as the police are concerned.

Yet the police were not always unaccountable to local authorities.

When, after the formation of the Metropolitan police in 1829, police forces were gradually created in the boroughs, they were under the control of "watch committees" made up of council members, who appointed the constables, and their officers, and fixed their pay and controlled their work.

When the county councils were reformed in the 1880s, 'standing joint committees' were created, comprising of half county councillors and half local magistrates, with similar powers to the borough watch committees.

"The control of the watch committees was absolute," writes one historian of the Police (T.A. Crichley, 'History of the Police in England and Wales'). "In its hands lay the sole power to appoint, promote, and punish men of all ranks, and it had powers of suspension and dismissal. The watch committee prescribes the regulations for the force, and subject to the approval of the town council determined the rates of pay."

In some boroughs the chief police officer was required to report weekly to the watch committee. There was, however, continuous pressure from the government to establish stronger central control of the police; but this was resisted by local interests. Throughout the 19th century the Home Secretary's main role was that of ensuring all areas recruited and maintained adequate police forces, which was carried out through the inspectors of constabulary.

This relationship was not just the product of administrative convenience. It reflected the balance of class forces, and the political relations flowing from them.

The borough councils were dominated by the industrial and commercial capitalist class. They paid for the police through their rates, and therefore they insisted they controlled the police. The industrial middle class were suspicious of central government, which they associated with extravagant and unnecessary expenditure, and which they feared would interfere in their affairs on behalf of the aristocratic oligarchy which dominated central government.

The propertied middle class which championed parliamentary government took it for granted that a body like the police, which potentially had enormous power, should be democratically controlled.

Capitalists change attitudes over police control

This, however, was in the era before the working class had become an independent political force. Even at the end of the 19th century only a small minority of workers had the vote.

When the great majority of the working class men gained the vote in 1918 (all women in 1928) the property owning classes changed their tune. They were no longer concerned about the aristocratic oligarchy, which had been eclipsed by industrial capitalists, but they certainly feared the growing strength of the labour movement.

The end of the first world war in 1918 brought a massive radicalisation of the workers, with enormous struggles and strike battles. Labour councillors began to be elected in many towns and cities, with the emergence of a number of Labour-controlled councils.

The attempt of the state to take control of the police out of the hands of local government and concentrate it centrally was also made more urgent by the police strikes of 1918 and 1919.

After the strikes, the Desborough Committee was set up to overhaul the whole police structure, and many of its recommenda-

tions were adopted. One recommendation was that the power of appointment, promotion and discipline, should be transferred from the watch committees to Chief Constables.

This, however, was still resisted in Parliament, and the powers remained formally in the hands of watch committees until 1964.

However, in one way and another the powers of Chief Constables were considerably strengthened. So too was the "informal" central influence exerted by the Home Office (and the Scottish Office), especially as central government now provided half the cost of maintaining local forces.

The element of democratic control through the watch committees was slowly but surely strangled. The last vestiges of accountability, moreover, were allowed to disappear largely without opposition from the labour movement, controlled in that period by the right-wing leadership.

The 1960 Royal Commission on the Police concluded that the main problem of police accountability was controlling chief constables. They "should be subject to more effective supervision," said the report—but this was to be done by making Chief Constables more accountable to central government, not to local watch committees.

The Royal Commission's recommendations were put into effect by the 1964 Police Act (and the Police (Scotland) Act, 1967).

Borough watch committees and county standing joint committees were replaced by police authorities, made up of two thirds councillors and one third magistrates. Local authorities still paid for half of the cost of the forces, but their Chief Constables, backed up by the Home Office, quickly established the principle that "operational questions" were outside police committee's scope.

In practice, the 1964 Act institutionalised and legalised the situation established after 1945. The new police committees are not even committees of the local councils, but independent statutory bodies. This effectively divorces them from



Trade union rights for police

Workers taking industrial action, particularly when organising picketing, a vital trade union right, have time and again come into conflict with the police.

With the Tories' new anti-trade union legislation, and the threat of worse to come with Norman Tebbit at the Department of Employment, there are likely to be even bigger battles.

Trade unionists defending jobs and living standards face the threat of jail either through non-payment of fines or 'contempt of court'; or through collisions with police trying to enforce limits on picketing or alleging 'obstruction; or 'public order' offences.

Ironically, however, one of the last groups of potential strikers to be threatened with imprisonment were the police themselves, under the right-wing 1974-79 Labour government.

"The chairman of the Police Federation, Jim Jardine, was threatened with imprisonment as recently as 1977, though the threat was kept a secret at the time," revealed the 'Sunday Times' recently (9 August).

"It happened when police, angry at low pay, howled down Merlyn Rees, the Home Secretary of the day, at a meeting in Westminster Hall. Jim Jardine (a serving police constable) was told by a senior officer that calls for strike action would have to be strongly resisted otherwise he would be taken to court and face imprisonment under the 1964 Police Act" (under section 53 which prohibits "causing disaffection").

Strike action by the police was headed off with an immediate 10% rise and the promise of an inquiry into their pay. When the Tory government returned in 1979, Whitelaw announced the big increases recommended by the inquiry with a fanfare, clearly attempting to buy the police's loyalty for future confrontation with the labour movement.

However, it is clear that in the period of police discontent before 1977 police were leaving at a rapid rate, not only because of pay and conditions but because of disquiet at the way they were being used against strikes and demonstrations.

The 1977 episode points to the contradictory character of the police. While an arm of the state—increasingly one of the 'armed bodies of men' who make up the capitalists' repressive apparatus—the police, like the armed

forces, are composed of men and women drawn from the working class, with their own interests and demands as workers.

It is vital, therefore, that while campaigning for democratic accountability of the police, the labour movement must also call for trade union rights for the police, with the replacement of the Police Federation with a genuinely independent union organisation.

'It is ironic that one of the last groups of potential strikers to be threatened with imprisonment were the police themselves in 1977.'

It is not only a question of defending the economic interests of the police, but of working to bring the ranks of the police into the orbit of the labour movement.

This has been opposed by some on the ultra-left as utopian. They want to write off the police as an homogeneous, reactionary force for repression.

There are undoubtedly reactionaries in the police; clearly there are also racials and some fascist sympathisers within the ranks, and democratic accountability would be used to make sure that they are weeded out.

However, the mood and outlook of the police, the balance between their repressive role and the police ranks' own class demands, depends on the balance of class and political forces in society.

The 1968 May events in France are an example of the way the police can move in a period of crisis.

The mass strike movement involving 10 million workers was acutely 'detonated' by police repression of student demonstrations, particularly by the brutal action of the riot police, the paramilitary CRS.

However, as one writer on the police comments (Tom Bowden 'Beyond the Limits of the Law'): "...while the police were prepared to brutally subdue one of their natural opponents, middle-class students, they were most unwilling to batter those whom they felt to be their worker brothers into submission...Accordingly, they

tacitly let it be known that operations against workers could not only cause a grave crisis of confidence within their ranks but also the possibility of what would be in effect a police mutiny."

In fact, leaders of one of the police unions made clear statements that they would not move against workers

Thus the police were neutralised or even drawn behind the workers movement, and De Gaulle's regime was suspended in mid air.

Another example was in Germany at the end of the First World War. In the crisis, the labour movement took over Berlin, appointing Emil Eichorn, a left-wing Independent Social Democrat, as police president. "Under his command," writes one of Rosa Luxemburg's biographers, "the police seemed to be turning into a revolutionary institution" (P Nettl, 'Rosa Luxemburg').

It was the move of the reactionary central government under the right-wing Social Democrats Ebert and Noske to depose Eichorn which precipitated the 'Spartakist' uprising in January, 1919.

In Britain, too, the mass struggles of the working class gave rise between 1913 and 1919 to a struggle within the police for an independent trade union. The illegal Police and Prison Officers Union gradually built links with the labour movement, and its leaders called for the democratisation of the police.

There had been strikes of the Metropolitan police over pay in 1872 and 1890. But the most significant strikes were in 1918 and 1919, during the post-war crisis. In 1918, almost all of the Metropolitan force of 19,000 came out in sympathy with their leaders who had been victimised. However, in 1919 a second strike, which led to battles with the army in Merseyside, was broken by the authorities.

The government made concessions on pay and conditions, but purged the militants and completely smashed the union. The Police Federation was then established as a tame substitute.

These examples should be enough to show that the police are not one, unchanging reactionary mass. The police, too, are affected by the crisis in society—and can be influenced by the labour movement when it moves into action.

The labour movement must adopt a clear position: while opposing the repressive role of the police, it must champion the democratic trade union rights for the police ranks.

council control In some authorities, like Liverpool, the councillors are not even allowed to ask questions on the police authority.

In theory, the police authorities appoint the chief constable and can dismiss the chief constable "in the interests of police efficiency." But these powers are strictly subject to the Home Secretary's agreement.

In theory, the police committees can question the Chief Constable on his annual report, or ask him for special reports. In practice, this is very difficult. Most Chief Constables' annual reports give very little information on policing methods, and they particularly avoid the most contentious areas of policing.

The police chiefs and the Tories invariably reject all calls for accountability as sinister socialist moves to undermine "the fight against crime."

Contrary to Tory mythology, however, Marxists are not opposed to the police taking action to catch criminals and to protect people's safety and personal property. Working-class people are naturally concerned about crime, and especially alarmed about increasing violence.

But what are the police chief's real priorities?

Speaking on 'Question Time' (BBC-1, 16 October 1979) Anderton said: "I think that from the police point of view that my task in the future...that basic crime as such—theft, burglary, even violent crime—will not be the predominant police feature. What will be the matter of greatest concern to me will be the covert and ultimately overt attempt to overthrow democracy, to subvert the authority of the state, and, in fact, to involve themselves in acts of sedition designed to destroy our parliamentary system and the democratic government in this country."

Clearly, for Anderton the defence of 'law and order' is not really the same thing as catching criminals.

Overcoming crime, for socialists, means fundamentally the eradication of the social conditions which pro-

duce crime. But within the present society, democratic remove the obstacles created by an undemocratic, unaccountability of the police, far from undermining "the fight against crime", would remove the obstacles created by an undemocratic, unaccountable and increasingly repressive police force.

The police chiefs are vehemently opposed to any public enquiry and to any form of democratic accountability.

Even the 'liberal' Alderson opposes any democratisation of the police. But the new breed of hard-line police chiefs, like McNee and Anderton, regard Alderson's ideas as quaintly old fashioned. "Community policing" may be all right for rural areas like Devon and Cornwall, they say, but are totally inapplicable to the present-day urban areas.

The "iron fist" thinking of the Andertons reflects the outlook of the strategists of the ruling class themselves.

They have recognised that the relative social peace of the post-war period ended with the ebbing of the economic boom. They see that the coming period, with the continued catastrophic decline of British capitalism and the inevitable erosion of living standards, will be one of head-on conflict with the working class. They have therefore discarded the old 'liberal', 'democratic' face of the British ruling class and instead are presenting a brutal, repressive visage.

These developments, particularly with the perspective of the Andertons, make it vitally important for the labour movement to campaign for the democratisation of the police.

If the working class is to preserve the economic gains and the democratic rights that it has wrested from the capitalists in the past, it must carry through the social transformation of society. Past gains cannot be preserved indefinitely within the rotten framework of a crisis-ridden capitalism.

In transforming society, it is utopian to think that

the existing apparatus of the capitalist state can be taken over and adapted by the working class. In a fundamental change of society, all the existing institutions of the state will be shattered and replaced by new organs of power under the democratic control of the working class.

The campaign for this should go hand in hand with the battle to extend democratic control over the existing state institutions. In the case of the police, a lead has been given by the Greater London Labour Party, which included in its last GLC election manifesto proposals for democratisation of the Metropolitan police.

The key elements of a programme for the democratisation of the police must be:

□ The police must be returned to the authority of local government police committees, with powers like those of the original watch committees. The local police committees should have the power to appoint and dismiss Chief Constables and senior officers. They should be responsible not only for the police's physical resources but for "operational questions", ie. day-to-day policing policies.

□ The police committees should ensure a genuinely independent complaints procedure under the complaints boards composed of democratically elected representatives. They should ensure that the appropriate disciplinary procedures are implemented.

□ The police committees should ensure that any racist elements or fascist sympathisers within the police are weeded out of the force.

□ The abolition of the Special Patrol Group and other similar special units.

□ The abolition of the Special Branch and the destruction of all political files and computer records not connected with criminal investigations.

□ The right of the police to an independent, democratic trade union organisation to defend their interests as workers.

SPAIN

Social Contract will not end crisis

The Spanish Labour leadership signed a social contract in June which limits 1982 wage increases to 2% below the official inflation figure for the year.

This 'realism', which the leaders of the CCOO (Workers commissions led by the Communist Party) and the UGT (Socialist led trade union federation) say will avoid conflict, will in fact prepare the way for more violent struggles in the future.

The situation facing Spanish capitalism is one of chronic disorder and desperation, reflected in a constant drop in private investment since 1974 and a balance of payments deficit of £4,000 million.

Instead of fighting to defend living standards and take direct action against redundancies, the trade union leadership has looked to the pacts as the way of preventing social storms, hoping that a way will be found out of the crisis on a capitalist basis.

It was argued that the Moncloa Pact of 1978 would maintain living standards and employment. In fact, the internal market dropped by 4% as a result of falling living standards.

Unemployment has tripled since 1977 as a result of the pacts.

After saying that they wouldn't repeat the experience of the Moncloa Pact, the trade union leaders have now signed a more developed version of the same thing. Given an even more disastrous economic situation, this could lead to a cataclysm in the next year.

The salary increases of 9-11% will be 2% below the official inflation rate expected for 1982. Public sector workers will receive only 8% with a further 1% negotiated on the basis of productivity.

Even this is bad enough, but the actual situation is still worse. The official inflation figures in a semi-bonapartist country like Spain are systematically falsified. A few years ago, five directors of the National Institute of Statistics resigned in protest at the government's falsification of figures.

Workers in companies seriously affected by the

By Pedro Rodriguez

crisis such as steel, shipbuilding and even car companies such as SEAT, Chrysler and Pegaso will not be negotiating even this rise but a lower one, according to the state of their industries.

The minimum salary, which is ridiculously low at less than £5.00 a day, isn't touched in the Pact. Yet 2 million workers are receiving this.

Six-month contracts legislated for in the reactionary employment law will remain.

Pensioners will receive similar rises, further reducing their meagre buying power. The pensioners still not covered by a pension scheme and without family support will have to continue selling sweets and cigarettes in the streets in order to make a living.

The employers will have their part of the social security payment cut by 1%. This will be paid by the state from taxes, which incidentally are 80% paid by the working class.

The trade union leadership have tried to sell the pact on the basis of 'concessions' made by the ruling class.

They said that more unemployed workers would be covered by unemployment benefits and that others would have theirs extended. This is obviously important in a country in which half the unemployed don't receive a penny.

In fact this measure had already been contained in the Employment Law passed months earlier. But neither the new pact nor the law guarantees anything when this extended period is up, and workers who are not credited won't receive anything at all.

The leaders centred their campaign on the argument that the government would create 350,000 jobs in 1982. In fact the agreement is that the number of jobs would be maintained, creating new

ones only where jobs are lost. This doesn't solve anything for the 250,000 young people who swell the labour market every year.

The Minister of Trade, Garcia Diez, said that the government wasn't going to create the majority of these jobs through public investment but only create the conditions for increased private investment.

Meanwhile the president of the Bank of Madrid and ex-Trade Minister, Lopez de Letona, let the cat out of the bag: "It is clear that the trade unions can persuade the workers to accept the wage reductions. What isn't so clear is whether management can persuade their affiliates to create jobs."

But the main fear at this stage is unemployment, which stands at 1,740,000 (13.5%). The UGT-PSOE (Socialist Party) leadership headed off an all-out strike in SEAT by promising that there would be no redundancies. Meanwhile the Industry Minister claims there are 10,000 excessive workers in the company. Obviously the labour leadership will be under pressure if widespread redundancies come through.

On 21 January a day of action called jointly by the UGT-CCOO leadership was answered in strike action by 200,000 workers, especially those in public companies.

60,000 turned out at a meeting in the Asturian miners area and 20,000—mainly steelworkers—demonstrated elsewhere in the province against redundancies. 12,000 shipyard workers struck in El Ferrol and thousands more in Cadiz, Cartagena and the Basque Country.

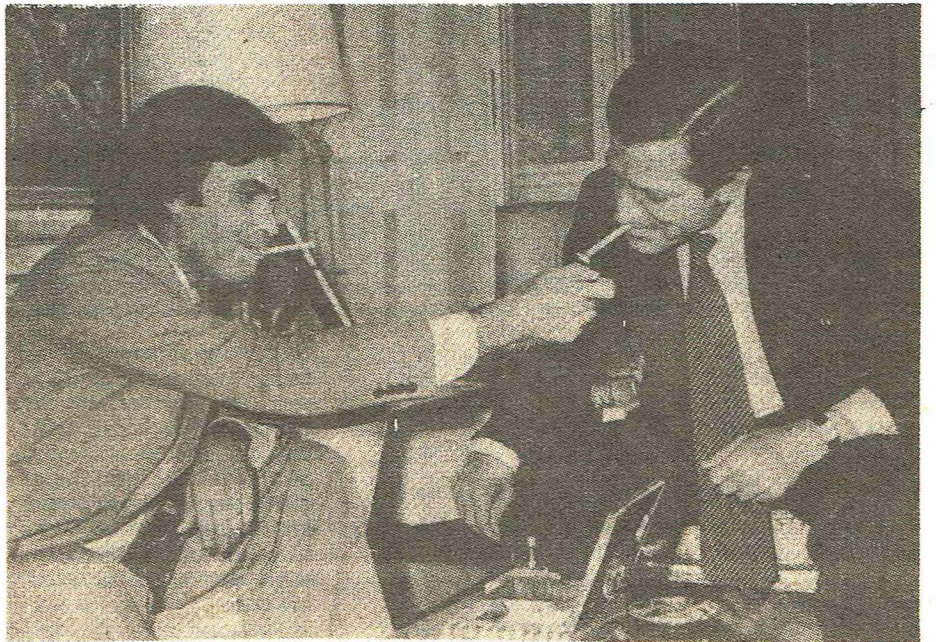
The ruling class hasn't made a direct attempt against any strong section of the working class. This is yet to come.

The development of the capitalist crisis and the need to mobilise the labour movement in defence of jobs and living standards will be reflected in growing militancy among the working class.

As a Pegaso worker said during the one-day strike in January, "up to now we have used the forces of right. Now we have to use the right of force."



(Below) Socialist leader Gonzalez with former capitalist prime minister Suarez. (Above) Workers' demonstration in Madrid.



SOUTH AFRICA

TRADE UNION WEEK OF ACTION 24 - 31 October

The Anti-Apartheid movement is calling on trade unions to make the last week of October a special week of action against the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Apartheid is an important issue for the labour movement. The essence of the apartheid system is the massive exploitation of black workers. Wages as low as £6 per week were paid to women workers by the construction firm Murray and Roberts last year.

British companies make enormous profits out of the cheap labour system, playing off British and black South African workers against each other. £7,000 million of British capital is invested in South Africa.

British and South African workers need to join hands against their common exploiters. Vigorous campaigning on this issue during

the week of action will gain an enormous response.

The campaign will be followed by the AAM Annual General Meeting on 1 November, where the tasks of solidarity with the South African struggle will be debated. Trade union branches, CLPs and LPYS branches can make an important contribution to the struggle by affiliating to the AAM, sending delegates to the AGM and actively carrying the issues to the labour movement rank and file in the year ahead.

A special leaflet has been issued by the Labour Party Young Socialists putting forward a programme of working-class action against the apartheid regime.

Order copies now for distribution in the labour movement in the period

leading up to the week of action. Available FREE from Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, The Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS
APPEAL TO TRADE UNIONISTS—
ISOLATE APARTHEID



APARTHEID MEANS:
• Official minimum wages as low as £5 per week in some industries.
• Over 250,000 workers arrested each year under the Pass Laws for trying to find the women under 16 years old living with their husbands in the townships.
• 20,000 black students on the apartheid system, while school children in the townships are denied the right to attend white schools.
• 200,000 black workers using strike tactics between July 1976 and December 1976, when 100,000 were killed.
• APARTHEID MEANS THE RACIST SEPARATION OF THE BLACK WORKERS OF SOUTH AFRICA TO MAINTAIN A PERPETUAL SOURCE OF CHEAP LABOUR FOR THE BOSSSES.

SO WHAT'S IT GOT TO DO WITH YOU?
...AND WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT? (See over)

AUSTRALIA: UNIONS PREPARE WAGES CAMPAIGN

In Australia, the winter of industrial discontent is likely to turn into a torrid spring.

Transport workers, air hostesses, dockers, engineers—these are only a few of the sections that have moved into action against the Liberal (Tory) government's efforts to implement massive spending cuts and wage curbs.

During the first eight months of this year, Australian ports have been hit by 67 disputes. Not a single day has been completely free of strikes.

Together with wage demands to keep up with inflation, the demand for a 35-hour week has been pushed to the fore by the Melbourne dockers' strike. With millions of dollars' worth of cargo held up, the Arbitration Commission (the government's wage-control body) was forced in July to lift its ban on negotiations over shorter hours.

The silence of the British media over these struggles has not been accidental. The Australian workers' successes are clearly giving the lie to Tory Employment Minister Tebbit's claim that demands for shorter hours and pay increases are

By George Collins

'moonshine'.

The strike wave has been fuelled by the sharp upturn of the Australian economy last year, based on the country's mineral wealth and a strong inflow of foreign capital. Growth reached 6% in the second half of the year, with overseas investment flooding the stock market and pushing up the money supply well above the government's target.

Now the workers are demanding their share. The government's efforts to limit inflation by forcing a cut in real wages has been massively rejected—especially after MPs and top civil servants were awarded 20% in July.

A similar trend could result in Britain if, despite the measures of the Tories, there is a small upturn in the coming year.

At its September conference, the Australian Congress of Trade Unions decided to organise a campaign for pay rises of \$10-\$30 a week (up to 15% on average minimum wages) for six million workers in all industries. With a



Melbourne 1975: 15,000 workers protest against the Governor-General's dismissal of the Labour government.

total population of 14 million, this campaign will involve virtually the entire working class.

An amendment to bypass the Arbitration Commission completely and hold general stoppages was rejected by 601 votes to 389. Instead it was decided to conduct the campaign both inside the Commission's

framework or, if necessary, outside it.

This decision is a further nail in the coffin of the government's wages policy and its discredited arbitration machinery. The defiant and confident mood of the workers was reflected by the secretary of the striking aircraft engineers when the government ordered their

suspension:

"We are out on strike, so it doesn't really matter what they do. They could declare us dead, or anything."

With the growth rate slowing down to 1.5% in the first half of this year, a stormy period lies ahead. The government has responded with a deflationary budget in August, while

mining profits have fallen. Determined struggle will be needed under these conditions to enforce the workers' aim of restoring buying power to the level of 1975.

These strikes and battles mark a further polarisation in Australian society. In the Labour Party (now in opposition), clear divisions are opening up between the left and right.

At the Labour Party conference earlier this year, the right wing narrowly won a vote to water down the nationalisation demands in the party's future programme. But this setback will only be temporary. The experience of Britain has shown that 'moderate' policies, which offer no answer to the problems of working people, cannot command the support of the active rank and file for long.

Increasing support for left

There is a growing anti-government feeling among the mass of workers. In Victoria, despite a bitter press campaign against Labour for its support of the rail workers' action, a public opinion poll shows that Labour is likely to win the next State elections for the first time in 27 years.

A fighting socialist programme is needed to channel the militancy of the Australian workers into a national Labour victory. The present Labour leadership, unfortunately, is failing to rise to the challenge.

ACTU president Dolan, far from giving a lead, was critical of the recent strikes and would like to see central bureaucratic control over action by member unions. But such was the mood at the mood at the ACTU conference that he was forced to express his criticism in guarded, roundabout terms.

The experience of the workers in the period ahead will further isolate the right wing leaders and increase support for the left.

NORWAY:

Right Labour Policies Rejected

The Norwegian elections on 13-14 September resulted in the Labour Party being pushed out of office by the Conservatives, who along with the Christian and Centre Parties now hold the majority (80 out of 155 seats) in the Storting (Parliament).

This means another one of Scandinavia's Labour governments — following the defeat of the Swedish Social Democrats after 43 years in power — has been rejected. In the past it was always towards Northern Europe that Social Democrats turned to prove that if given enough time,

By Peter Jarvis

capitalism could be transformed and the bosses would still be smiling.

Norway had all the advantages of an oil and gas bonanza. The revenue from this source increased from 14.2 million kroner in 1971 to kr 6,481.9 million in

1979, representing 13% of state budget.

Every year the country's needs of oil and gas are produced ten times over. Gross National Product is \$13,500 per head of the population, making Norway one of the richest countries in the world.

Oil has acted as buffer against the worst effects of the world recession. Unemployment is only 1.1% (22,300).

But this new-found wealth is causing problems, especially for the traditional industries. Oil is taking a greater share of the export market, rising from 5.6% in 1975 to 22.6% in 1979. Although it employs only about 2% of the working population, its higher wages are pushing up wages in all sectors.

The oil wealth has resulted in a 20% decline in the competitiveness of manufacturing industry, which is

being priced out of foreign and even local markets.

The new Conservative government will look for cuts in social services, (running at present at 52% of Gross National Product), reducing income and corporate taxes, and allowing private industry into the oil fields.

Tory policies

They will look at ending the subsidies for older, ailing industries. Their policies will push up the unemployment rate. This, they hope, will help Norwegian industry to stay competitive.

The Labour Party's response to these problems, while in office, has been to tinker with the capitalist economy. Prices and incomes were frozen. Along with an 8.5% devaluation,

these measures did little to help—but instead brought the pot to the boil.

It limited the inflation rate to 4.8% for 15 months; then because of strikes and industrial pressures, controls were lifted. Inflation shot up to the present level of 15%, putting Norway among the tops in the OECD (advanced capitalist countries) inflation league.

In the elections the Labour Party failed to present a clear socialist alternative in the interests of the working class. The voting age was lowered in 1979 from 20 to 18. This should have been an extra bonus for Labour since many youth naturally look for radical solutions. But Labour is seen as part of the establishment, and is blamed for what youth see as growing bureaucratisation.

The result, however, was not the massive defeat which opinion polls pre-

dicted. The Labour Party retained 37.4% of the vote (65 seats), still making them the largest party in the Storting.

This shows the loyalty of the Norwegian working class to their traditional party, and confirms that it is to the Labour Party that fresh layers of workers will turn in the battles of the crisis years ahead.

The left in the Labour Party must take the opportunity to go further than criticising the anti-inflation and defence policy of the leadership. The task is to work out a fighting socialist programme that can mobilise the rank and file.

In 1973 a large section in the Labour Party, especially the youth, split over the pro-EEC stance of the government. If they had remained it would have strengthened the weight of the left to effect a change in the Party's course.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Spot the difference

Dear Editor

A strange difference exists between the bosses and the workers. In an article in the Telegraph it is reported that British Leyland workers are to be offered 3%-5%, their fourth year of single figure pay increases. In the same column it is reported that British Airways intends to freeze pay for 12 months, as does Pan-Am. It's even worse at Hoover—they have been asked to accept a pay freeze until 1985!

Yet the chairman of British Rail, Peter Parker,

gets a 25% rise this year from £48,000 to £60,000 and will be allowed to earn a further £15,000 from part-time jobs!

The reason for this is in the Times where it is reported that Peter Parker "...has been under some financial stress with a family of four and homes in London and Oxfordshire."

If a few more of the rich elite in this country had to survive on low wages or unemployment benefit I think their views of the greedy workers would change quickly. Peter Parker may even have to give up one of his houses!

J Carey
Newport
Gwent

Fight for justice!

Dear Comrades

I've just been to sign on the dole, and at the social security I inquired about a clothing grant for myself, as I live at home, and have to manage on £19.20 a week.

The lady-official at the desk told me my Giro-chque covered clothing allowances as it is included in the payments. £19.20 is supposed to clothe and feed me and keep a roof over my head.

My parents are not rich, but because I'm unemployed under their roof they don't mind my poverty-stricken suffering in a lengthening dole-queue as they are themselves Labour voters. This story of hardship has a familiar 'timeless' ring to it in 1981. Tory government gets the blame because of their economic cutbacks that hit the poor and needy first, whilst 'featherbedding' wealthier Tories.

I don't intend doing nothing for the next few years. I will work with the Young Socialist movement to make the changes in a corrupt capitalist system. Enough is enough. In Thatcher's Britain, because of the Tories' economic policies, poorer people are being screwed something wicked, with cuts after cuts, and an army on the dole. Do we wait with the losers, or organise ourselves and fight for changes and social justice and for a socialist country.

Stephen Draper
Grimsby

Support GEC stewards

Dear Comrade

Being a regular reader of Militant, I wondered if you might give a mention in your paper to the efforts being made by the GEC National Shop Stewards Committee to widen its support.

At the moment although GEC consists of over 150 operationally subsidiary companies under various names, there is only a small minority affiliated to the committee.

We have produced 'Info', our first effort in producing a newsheet which we are attempting to circulate to all known GEC factories. But this is difficult because of the lack of contacts.

Along with the circulation of the paper we are inviting those factories who are not yet affiliated to send delegates to the next meeting of the committee to be held at Wortley Hall, Sheffield, Saturday 10th October at 10.30am.

I was prompted in sending you this letter by the report in Militant on the 14 August of the AEI Cables dispute.

Yours fraternally
WJ Brown
AUEW Convenor,
Liverpool Works and
EC member GEC NSSC

UCW—not postmen

Dear 'Militant'

An article in a recent issue of 'Militant' referred to Tom Jackson as General Secretary of the Postmen's Union.

I am a member of a Counter and Clerical branch of the UCW and it has long been a source of annoyance to my colleagues that the old UPW was invariably referred to by the media as the 'Postmen's Union'. I might seem a small point to make, but it is important to note that the membership of the UCW encompasses many grades in the Post Office other than postmen [counter

staff, clerical workers, doorment, typists, canteen staff and so on].

Furthermore, it is significant that with the split between Post Office and Telecommunications, many UCW members are not employed by the Post Office, but by British Telecom—hence, Union of Communication Workers.

The split between the two sectors, undesirable in itself, has paved the way for the hiving off of profitable sections to private industry. The extent to which this will take place is not at the moment apparent, but it, together with the development of new technology, is a constant threat hanging over the heads of our members, lending strength to management demands for cuts and productivity deals.

A recent development has been the decision to split our pension fund—directly contrary to the desires of the members expressed by our union leaders and through a widely supported petition which was literally ignored.

And that broadly is why I think it is important to realise that the UCW is not just the 'Postmen's Union':—it is necessary that communications workers of all grades, in both the Post Office and in British Telecom, must be unified if we are to combat and overcome the threats that face us, to protect and improve the living standards of our members, and to achieve a shorter working week.

Yours fraternally
Nigel Smith
Hull C&CS Branch
UCW

Capitalist murder

Dear Comrades

"Mrs Cosgrove had heart disease, a drink problem, was in debt, had a son who was in trouble with the police and a daughter suffering from brain damage after a car crash." Her husband was unemployed—he was left a suicide note; "I didn't do it, love."

Mrs Cosgrove was due to appear in court eight days before she gave up on life—the terrible crime that this woman committed was of stealing a 64p steak and kidney pie!

Scandal is too mild a term to use to describe this murder—what future after the humiliation of a court case could this woman look forward to? Perhaps around the corner was a well paid job for her husband, an apprenticeship for her son? A training centre for her daughter? A decent health service to care for her? Not under capitalism there isn't.

Mrs Rose Cosgrove gave up her struggle to despair—but socialists should feel angry at this situation and redouble our fight to get rid of this system.

Fraternally
Louise Birch
Birmingham

A 'real Labour paper'

Dear Sir

I buy three copies of Militant each week from my local Labour Party Young Socialists. A young man delivers them each week. May I say how marvellous it is to see a real Labour paper full of truth. I always give my brother and a friend a copy and today my brother asked me to send you the enclosed cheque for £5.

Keep up with the good work—we will win the day.

Kind regards
Betty Rodgers
Rotherham



The Guinea pig

Dear Comrade

A young unemployed YS member from Clydebank received a letter from the careers office asking him to come for an interview at 2.30pm on that Friday.

About 1pm on that day he had a phone call to check that he was still coming.

"Was it another Youth on Poverty Scheme?" he thought, or would there be a real job on offer.

Yes—there was a real job on offer, but not for him! He was there to be used as a guinea pig to test the interviewing skills of a careers officer applicant!

Yet another example of the scant respect some people have for unemployed youth.

Yours fraternally
Danny O'Donnell
Clydebank LPYS

Greetings from Sweden

Dear Comrades

I'm writing to you from the town of Skellefteå in the northern part of Sweden. Skellefteå is a town dominated by large industrial factories, which is suffering enormously under the capitalist crisis. Workers, especially young ones, are out of work and the unemploy-

ment rate has reached an all time high. It is obvious that the only solution that is socially acceptable is the planned economy under workers' control.

Swedish capitalism can only offer the workers a situation of diminishing jobs, lower wages etc. On the local political arena we have a very strong Socialist Party (60% of the vote) and a small Communist Party (10% of the vote) but neither of the parties have a programme that can deal with a rotten capitalism.

I have been selling the Swedish Marxist paper cal-

led "Offensiv" and strongly agree with the political views which the paper carries. After discussions with other comrades they recommended me to write to your paper, because Britain we feel seems to be some years ahead of Sweden in the crisis of capitalism and in political developments. And there seems to be much experiences that we could use up here in the north. So along with my best socialist wishes I send you £20 for a year's subscription.

Lennart Nilsson
Skellefteå
Sweden



Swedish labour movement in action

Don't write off your parents

Dear Comrades

I just thought I'd write and tell you of something which happened to me with my dad.

My dad is an AUEW steward at Fords and has been a trade unionist all his working life. So when I told

him I was going to join the Labour Party, he was quite enthusiastic about it. But when I joined the YS and was convinced that the only solution to bad wages, bad housing and unemployment was Marxism, we had quite a few difficulties.

Over the months it's been really difficult discussing with my dad because he brings things up like Jesus Christ was a socialist and Adolf Hitler was a great man. So you can imagine my surprise when I pointed

to an article on the forthcoming elections in the AUEW (issue 567) and my dad was really interested. So interested that as far as I know that article is still on the notice board in the tool plant of Fords Dagenham to this very day.

So finally the point I'd like to make is don't write your mum and dad off, because even they can change!

Yours fraternally
Ian Wyborn
Romford LPYS

Build

MILITANT

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 10 Oct	Target for year
Eastern	3844		4970	7100
East Midlands	2846		3850	5500
Hants & Dorset	2107		3640	5200
Humberside	1423		2450	3500
London East	4082		5320	7600
London West	2316		3360	4800
London South	3438		3850	5500
Manchester & Lancs	2404		4060	5800
Merseyside	2882		4620	6600
Northern	3281		6020	8600
Scotland East	1669		3080	4400
Scotland West	3118		5250	7500
Southern	4249		4970	7100
South West	1769		2450	3500
Wales East	1114		1820	2600
Wales West	2080		3220	4600
West Midlands	3973		6020	8600
Yorkshire	4035		6300	9000
Others	10345		8750	12500
Total received	60,975		84,000	120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

DOUBLE OUR MONEY

I was sitting down to write this column, and record the excellent £25 from Stafford LPYS plus £5 lodgings during a YS demo, when the phone rang. It was a comrade from Poole to say that over £120 was in the post from Poole LPYS, mostly from a jumble sale with a successful tombola.

This shows our supporters in the Hants/Dorset area have responded with a vengeance to our appeal last week. In addition, £63 has come from Portsmouth from a sponsored walk to Tolpuddle by Ann and Kit.

The biggest contribution this week was £464 from West Wales, mostly from the summer camp 'surplus',

By Steve Cawley

with more on the way.

Other LPYS branches to support us included, Springburn (Glasgow) £20 from jumble sale, Stockton and Eastleigh. Trade unionists who donated their expenses, or part of them, were from South London, East Leeds, and Birmingham: many thanks; and also to Merseyside print and NALGO workers for over £27.

Thanks also for individual donations which included, R Crawford (SPOE) £30, Y Mundy (West Germany) £25, F&B Kidd (London) £12, J Bleaken (Bristol) £8, H Colleyshaw & B Rodgers (Rotherham) £5 and Hove/Brighton readers C Baker, B Hatchard, J Scrase and N Farrow, whose donations come to £11.65.

As Lenin always made plain, it's papers that rely on a large number of small contributions that can also be relied on to put the political ideas of the 'small people'. The four supporters in Stockton LPYS who donated or raised sums such as 60p, 40p or even 20p may well be sending us a larger percentage of 'spare' money than the larger donations above.

The near £1,300 raised this week also included cash from socials, skittles evenings, video film shows, a meal (S London: £25), sale of buckets (Rovton: £105), sales of books, badges, (£3: Llanelli), pontoon tickets, transporting furniture, etc. There's a hundred and one ways to raise money, but one of the best is simply to point out to your mates, friends and relatives the financial battle we wage so that a Marxist analysis can get a proper hearing in the labour

THIS WEEK
£1229

movement.

Explain that although various people employed by the capitalist press have asked who's 'behind' Militant, the answer is on this page every week. Our readers are 'behind' us—all the way!

The notion that mere workers would be prepared to finance 'Militant' is completely alien to the rich, so they have to invent some other explanation. But Militant is the only paper that makes it clear each week who is giving us their hard-earned cash.

John Wobey - Tribute

"A life filled to such capacity that when it was over there could be no regrets." This quotation from Ossovsky's poem 'The Meaning of Life', read by Peter Taaffe at the funeral of John Wobey last week, aptly summed up John.

His interests and energy were immense, despite a major heart operation eight years ago. John was always an active socialist, both as a trade unionist and as a long standing member of the Labour Party.

His activities stretched back to the 1946 'Indian Mutinies,' when demobbed airmen in India rebelled against their delayed return home after the war. Returning home he became active against Mosley's fascists,

when they attempted to gain a base and march through Hackney. He was a shop steward in the electricians' union and latterly an active member of ASTMS and a regular conference delegate.

He had been a Hackney councillor since 1953 and also served on the old London County Council for eight years. As he often commented, on the LCC he was the only electrician, in solidary splendour amongst the plethora of academics and administrators. This year he was chairman of Hackney Council's contract services committee [the only chair he ever held] and in that capacity had rapidly won the respect of the men in the direct labour organisation.

As a former member of the old Trotskyist organisation, the Revolutionary Communist Party, he maintained the basic principles of Marxism at a time when,

throughout the '50s and '60s, many in the movement sneered at those 'outdated ideas.' Though under the heavy burden of long isolation on the council, he sometimes foundered in later years, he never lost faith or confidence in the working class and always saw the necessity for a bold socialist programme to change society.

Together with his wife, Hilda, he was a long standing regular reader and financial contributor to the 'Militant.'

But as Trotsky wrote in 'Problems of Life', man does not thrive by politics alone and John was a prime example of the ability of working men to enjoy a wide range of interests.

He appreciated life to the full, from nature—as an enthusiastic gardener and wild life spotter—to music [from brass bands to Mozart], he played the mouth

organ and trumpet; to art—he was a talented artist; and also as a keen cyclist and until recently, youth hosteller. Widely read he was almost a walking encyclopaedia, his store of information being so immense.

But above all, his nature was such that even his political enemies [in the movement] remained friends. He was a testament to the words of Trotsky: "Socialism, if it is worthy of the name, means human relations without greed; friendship without envy and intrigue; love without base calculation."

Though he believed no-one was indispensable, his death will leave a big gap in the lives of all who knew him.

[In last week's report of John's death, the name of his eldest daughter, Shirley, was inadvertently excluded from the list of condolences].

MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS After the Party Conference—which way for Labour?

SUNDERLAND

Speaker: Ray Physick (delegate at Conference) at Sunderland Supporters Club. Wednesday 7 October, 7.30 pm.

S DURHAM

Speakers: Ron Graves, Neil Whittaker at Beveridge Hall, Finchale Road, Newton Aycliffe. Wednesday 7 October, 7.30 pm.

CLEVELAND

Speaker: Ray Physick at All Saints Centre, Grange Road, Middlesbrough. Thursday 8 October, 7.30pm

OLDHAM

Speaker: Viv Hall (delegate, Sale and Altrincham CLP) at St Andrews Parish Hall, Middleton Road (near bypass). Monday 5 October, 8pm.

BIRMINGHAM

Thursday 8 October, 7.30 pm, Lecture Room 1, Digbeth Civic Hall.

Speaker: Ted Grant

ads

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

PORTSMOUTH

Speakers: Alison Hill (Gosport CLP) and Andy Allenby (Havant CLP and Chairman, Southern Region LPYS) at 84 Kingston Crescent, Portsmouth. Thursday 8 October, 8pm.

MERSEYSIDE

Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, 'Militant'), Tony Mulhearn (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Toxteth), Chris Williams (Delegate, Tobacco Workers' Union). Chairman: Councillor Derek Hatton. All speakers in personal capacity. Thursday 8 October, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

EASTBOURNE CLP. We are in the process of selecting our Parliamentary candidate. Nominations close October 22nd. Applications please to: The Secretary, Eastbourne CLP, 155 Northbourne Road, Eastbourne, E. Sussex.

NALGO to join the Labour Party? Rally, TUC, 23 Gt Russell St., WC1, Thursday 8 October, 7.30 pm. Gerald Kaufman MP, Alf Dubs MP, Peter Morgan. Entry with LP or NALGO membership card.

OUT NOW!

Import controls or socialist planning? New 'Militant' pamphlet. Price 25p (+ 15p p&p) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

BLACKPOOL Militant supporters limited draw. Prize £50.00 worth of books from World Books. Tickets 50p each. Send for yours quickly, before we sell out. All proceeds to 'Militant Fighting Fund'.

Tickets available from J. England, 7 Claremont Road, Blackpool. Draw to take place 10 November 1981.

HASTINGS CLP

We are in the process of selecting our Parliamentary candidate.

Applications please to: The Secretary, Hastings CLP, 25 Wellington Sq., Hastings E. Sussex

SCOTTISH LPYS - WEEKEND SCHOOL

* Debate: Solidarity vs. LPYS
* Film: 'The War Game'
* Lecture: 'The Life and Times of James Connolly': speaker Benny Adams (Northern Ireland Young Socialists)
* Plus Disco
* Plus five-a-side football
Date: Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 October. Venue: Dounans Centre, Aberfoyle. For further details contact: Francis 041-771 8961 or Jackie East Kilbride 23371

THE SECOND STAFFORDSHIRE MILITANT RALLY Saturday 17 October starting 1 pm in Stafford. Speakers include Ted Grant. More details next week, or contact D Griffiths, Stafford 48400.

Trotsky on the Communist Manifesto To-day

Leon Trotsky on 'The Communist Manifesto today'

Available price 15p plus 15p postage and packing from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Industrial

WE CAN BEAT THE TORIES

By a conference delegate

The conference of local authority manual workers met in London last week to formulate its 1981/82 wage claim on behalf of 300,000 workers, members of the GMWU.

The National Industrial Officer and leader of the trade union negotiators, Charles Donnat, told delegates that they have to formulate a claim set against the background of massive public spending cuts, attempts of privatisation and a 4% cash limit.

The union's ten regions had submitted claims which vary from a rise in line with inflation, a £75 minimum wage, and an £80 minimum wage. After declaring total opposition to the 4% limit, the NI officer went on to say that while he agreed with an £80 minimum wage, he did not feel that we could achieve it because of the

government's attitude and the threat of further job losses.

He added if we went on strike it would provide an ideal opportunity for local authorities to introduce private contractors.

He recommended that we submit a claim for a rise in line with inflation, in order that our members 'kept their heads above water'. A delegate pointed out the majority of our members took home between £45 and £55 a week—'many of them drowned a long time ago'!

Several delegates spoke of mobilising the low paid workers in order to smash the 4%. We cannot mobilise the low paid if we put forward a percentage claim. Percentages help the higher paid, we need to establish a decent minimum wage.

It was also pointed out that last year we were told to



GMWU members march alongside NUPE during the '78/79 pay campaign. Unity amongst public sector workers will beat the Tories. Photo: MILITANT

accept 7½% in order to 'preserve jobs'. Yet the National Officer had just told us that job losses had doubled over the past 12 months! After a long debate conference decided to put forward a claim for a £75 minimum wage.

One thing that came across clearly, from every

delegate that spoke, was the need for an alliance of the public sector workers to take the government on. A motion which called for an alliance with the public sector workers—miners, railway workers, steel workers, gas workers, electricity workers, water workers, local authority

workers and health service workers, civil service, firemen—was carried unanimously.

A motion which called for lay members to participate in wage negotiations was also carried. Wages are at present negotiated by full-time officials.

We are sick and tired of

being battered by the government, we are ready to fight back, and we can win by mobilising all sections in the public sector to defeat this government's wages policy an even the government itself.

Support John Macreadie

In the last few years the Civil and Public Services Association has come of age as a union.

As a result of attacks on the pay, jobs and conditions of members by successive governments, members have been involved in numerous battles to defend their interests. The 1981 Civil Service pay campaign was the most recent example in which CPSA members have been steeled in battle.

The experiences that members and activists have drawn from these battles have led to successful steps to democratise the union, and the need to arm it with a fighting programme.

In the coming months the union and its members will come under increasing attack from the Tory government as the Tories try to cut living standards, axe jobs, sell off part of the civil and public services to their rich friends in private industry and shackle the trade union movement.

It is essential therefore that the union has a fighting leadership—a leadership which has confidence in its members who support the conference policies and who will give the members a firm lead. Without such a leadership the task of the rank and

By Alistair Nicholson

(CAA Manchester Airport Branch Secretary, CAA Assistant Group Secretary, in a personal capacity)

file and the unions in general will be much more difficult to achieve.

That is why the Broad Left in the union must stand a candidate for general secretary, who has shown he is committed to the aspirations of the rank and file, who supports Conference policies such as election of officials, free collective bargaining, no loss of jobs and a 35-hour week.

Given the advances which the Broad Left must have been responsible for in the past, the task and responsibilities which it has before it, it is necessary for the Broad Left to stand a candidate for this crucial post. The election will also provide an opportunity for Broad Left policies to be placed before the union's 230,000 members, with the Broad Left seeking to build mass support.

The Broad Left should give massive backing to John Macreadie when its special conference is held on



John Macreadie

Photo: MILITANT

10 October in Manchester.

In his five years as a CA Group Secretary, John Macreadie has shown that he has the necessary qualities and experience to carry out the position of General Secretary.

His record in the CAA is a good one. He has resolutely defended jobs and conditions, which included leading the successful Air Traffic Controllers Assistant strike in 1977 against the Labour government's incomes policy. He has demonstrated his total commitment to the aspirations of the rank and file and the sovereignty of conference. He played an unparalleled part in securing the unity of all CAA trade unions with the civil servants in the 1981 Pay Campaign, and strongly opposed accepting the government's pay offer.

His record in fighting for democracy in the union, for membership control of the union and the need for the CPSA to play a full part in the labour and trade union

movement is a proud one.

The policies, experience and commitment of John Macreadie make it vital that

he receives the massive backing of the Broad Left. If the Broad Left works hard and enthusiastically for

John Macreadie then we can win the election and go on to tackle the many issues now facing the CPSA members.

At a meeting of the Manchester CPSA Broad Left group on 23 September a motion welcoming the announcement that John Macreadie intends to stand in the election for the post of CPSA General Secretary was overwhelmingly carried.

The motion endorsed John's candidature and called on the special national Broad Left conference scheduled for October 10th in Manchester to do likewise and to give a commitment to vigorously campaign on his behalf.

Local activists are also deploring the decision of the CPSA's national executive

[NEC] to interfere in the election processes by making a 1,000 word recommendation in favour of their preferred candidate.

The rules relating to the filling of the senior officers' posts are those which apply to the National Executive Committee elections, and there is no provision whatsoever for the NEC to offer advice on how members should cast their votes.

Undoubtedly the NEC will be receiving motions from branches expressing outrage at this attempt of the right wing NEC to load the dice in favour of their candidate.

ORGANISE YOPS

Some months ago Tom Jackson, General Secretary of the Union of Communication Workers together with many other leading trade union officials, social workers, members of the CBI, leading industrialists and Tories, appeared in adverts in many of the national daily newspapers, praising the Youth Opportunities Scheme.

Assuming that the UCW was supporting the scheme the union committee in

Oldham agreed with the Post Office, for the employment of eight youngsters on a YOP scheme. We then planned to operate the closed shop agreement, and take these young workers into union membership.

But when we contacted union headquarters, we got an astonishing reply.

We were told that "the union would not take these people into membership on the basis it would be unfair to do so as we would be totally unable to improve their conditions due to the fact that their pay and conditions are controlled as part of government legislation which runs the

By Eddie Thorpe
(Branch Sec. UCW, Oldham Indoor)

scheme."

But the reverse is the case. The labour and trade union movement must bring into its ranks this whole new layer of young workers and join the fight to improve their conditions.

If this is not carried out with some urgency, the trade union movement in the future will be faced with an army of disillusioned youth which the bosses will be only too ready to try to capitalise on and turn against the trade unions.

Reports

'WE'RE READY TO FIGHT'

By Dave Nellist
(Chairman, Coventry SE
Labour Party)

The implementation of a package of £2.36 million in spending cuts, mainly in education and social services, by Coventry's Labour council was due to be formally decided at a council meeting on Tuesday, 29 September.

Many of the cuts however, were implemented several weeks before they received full council approval. As predicted in last week's 'Militant' this pro-

voked fierce resistance from public service workers.

A mass meeting of 2,500 T&GWU members on 23 September voted with about 6 against for immediate strike action if the council made any members redun-

dant or the cuts resulted in a cut in wages.

50 cleaners at Coventry Technical College, members of NUPE, went on strike for 6 days over a 10% reduction in hours.

Three schools and another Technical College were due to be brought out in support when the council agreed to return to negotiations.

A mass meeting of NALGO was held on September 30, and of NUPE on 1 October.

Dave Nellist, Chairman of Coventry South East Labour Party, spoke to John Doran, NUPE senior shop steward.

Is the return to work seen as a victory?

"To a certain extent, yes. The council is obviously frightened by the strength amongst the part-time cleaners, many of whom are single parents, and also from the support immediately offered from other schools.

"But in negotiations they will go down to seek, perhaps through less cleaning or redeployment, to effect the same savings. Our members will have to be on their guard."

What is the mood likely to be at the mass meeting on October 1st?

"I expect massive support for bluntly telling the council that industrial action will follow any implementation of cuts. Our members know

only too well that this round is only the thin end of the wedge, and that if we don't fight now we will be weaker when future cuts are proposed."

How else should the cuts be fought?

"The more members we can convince to join the Labour Party and struggle to strengthen the opposition to the council implementing the cuts, the better.

"The decision of the party conference to back Labour councils refusing to implement the cuts, will strengthen both our unions and those in the party who have consistently explained the need for the whole movement to seriously impose the Tory government's

policies.

"Until we get rid of the Tories, however, there is always going to be pressure for cuts, but our leaders never seem to propose cutting council expenditure like the £30 million in Coventry that goes in debt charges.

"It is always social services, or education; vital services for working people are getting hammered.

"Our members won't be prepared to sacrifice services, or jobs and conditions to satisfy Heseltine or allow the council to duck out of the fight to stop the Tories killing the welfare state."

NUR BTH - a warning

British Transport Hotels Ltd., the hotel company owned by the British Railways Board, is now in the process of being split up and sold to private enterprise.

The first stage of this asset stripping has begun with the sale of the Caledonian and North British Hotels in Edinburgh and the world famous Gleneagles Hotel in Perthshire, for the scandalously low price of £12 million.

NUR leader Sid Weighell threatened to "barricade Gleneagles Hotel" when the sale was first discussed. This statement no is laughable as the NUR have a major shareholding in the company "in order to protect our members' interests".

Members' interests are already declining under private enterprise. Although staff transferred to the new company have kept their present conditions of service (at least for the time being) all new employees earn the same wages without the ad-

ded benefits of cheap rail travel which is an asset now lost.

Retired staff are not being replaced by permanent staff but by casual staff, who have not been recruited into the NUR, even though the majority of them work the necessary number of hours per week on a regular basis to necessitate union membership under the closed shop agreement. Is this how 'members' interests' are to be 'protected'?

Nationalisation of a hotel company has been proved to work by the profit making British Transport Hotels. The blame for the failure and neglect to reinvest these profits back into the company must be laid on the shoulders of the highly paid senior management who were too far removed from the opinions of staff and local management and did not carefully consider long-term planning.

The staff in the hotels are now paying for these failures. Their conditions will deteriorate in time in line with the majority of hotel and catering workers. Although conditions in

these hotels are by no means perfect, they are considerably better than in other privately-owned hotels.

Average gross weekly earnings are lower in the hotel industry than in any other industry in the country. The majority of hotel and catering workers are earning below the poverty level.

One of the priorities of the next Labour government must be the return of all de-nationalised industries to the state, including Thomas Cook Travel Agencies now owned by the Midland Bank, with an increase in workers' representation at all decision making levels, with trade union control over all decisions on future planning of these industries.

The conditions 'hived-off' the BTH workers when the private enterprise parasites moved into hive off the profitable sections of the nationalised industries, must be a lesson to all workers whose industries are faced with denationalisation.

Strong arm tactics

By Bryan Beckingham

The NUR signalmen grade conference held recently at Western Super Mare is unable to be reported by any 'Militant' correspondent as the officials refused us any press credentials. Whilst other grade conferences have welcomed a fraternal address from a LPYS local speaker, the leadership of the signalmen grade turned us firmly away.

We arrived half an hour before the conference opened to sell *Militant* and hand out *Militant's* state-

ment for NUR members on Labour party democracy. We were rudely told to remove ourselves from the entrance foyer of the Winter Gardens.

We proceeded to sell to the delegates as they arrived. Officials appeared and told us we were not allowed to sell even on the pavement outside. We told them they were insulting their members' intelligence who could decide to buy or not.

The officials then called the police. In the light of the right-wing claims of democracy, the decision of the NUR officials to call the

police to attempt to stop socialist paper sellers not only betrayed a lack of confidence in their own ideas, but also showed their hypocrisy.

However, when police arrived the sergeant actually agreed we had the right to sell papers outside the conference. He said he had no objection (as long as we did not disturb the peace) and we continued to sell to delegates. Apparently the police on this occasion had more understanding of democracy than NUR officials!

NO WITCHHUNTS

The attempt to regurgitate the atmosphere of a witch-hunt against the left in the Labour Party failed at this week's party conference.

The resolution from the National Union of Railwaymen, backed by the ISTC, which called for the re-introduction of 'bans and proscriptions' in the Labour Party, failed even to get on to the agenda! The clear mood of the rank and file delegates at conference was the need to discuss and for-

mulate socialist policies that will bring down the Tories and transform society; not waste time talking about disproven Tory press inspired fairy tales of 'bed-sit infiltrators' etc.

This shows how out of touch the right-wing leadership of the NUR are with the rank and file of the labour movement, including their own members, as a resolution recently passed by the Deptford NUR branch shows:

"Deptford branch condemns the attacks made by the general secretary in statements to the press and at the AGM on the left in the Labour Party, on the *Militant* newspaper, and on Tony Benn.

"This branch suggests that instead of attacking others within the labour and trade union movement, the general secretary should be showing the lead in an attack on Tory policies."

Robb Caledon — stick together

By Pat Craven

Support for the Robb Caledon workers in Dundee is growing. On Monday 28 September, the first one-day national solidarity strike was a tremendous success. All over the country, 70,000 shipyard workers are banning overtime.

On Monday, a busload of workers from Swan Hunter, Newcastle, visited the occupation (see back page). The following day, shop stewards from all the major factories in Dundee held a conference to rally behind the Caledon fight. Speakers from Timex, Michelin, Bonar Long, NCR and Kestrel Marine pledged

their support and financial backing.

The speech of Stan McLaughlin of Kestrel was particularly significant. His firm only exists as a result of another occupation six years ago, when the old ship repair firm of Smith and Hutton went bankrupt. "Our 13 week sit-in led to 900 jobs today."

He stressed that they were totally opposed to any move by Kestrel to take over the Caledon; "We want to see Caledon remain—90% of the men at Kestrel owe their positions to the training given them as apprentices at Robb Caledon."

Earlier, the shop stewards' convenor, Bob Barty, outlined their case, producing figures to prove that British shipbuilders' argument for closure were false.

There was a pre-

meditated decision to close the yard, he said. No enquiries about possible contracts for the yard had been followed up at Director level. "I believe we could have worked for nothing and still they would have closed the yard."

The highlight of the meeting was the presence of delegations of shipyard workers from Robb Caledon's other yard in Leith, Yarrow's on the Clyde and Abbeldore in Devon.

Three workers from Abbeldore had travelled 525 miles to express their support, because, as their spokesman, Vic Matthews, said, "We know we are the next on the list."

Joe McGovern from Yarrow's referred to the 1979 Blackpool agreement with British Shipbuilders, which committed them to a policy

of no forced redundancies: "we are here to maintain that agreement."

That fight is now reaching its climax. It has the official support of all the shipbuilding trade

unions, but it also has the kind of support which is typified by a woman who as the workers were going into Tuesday's meeting, stopped to give a £10 note.

Add your support. Send

resolutions and money to: Shop Stewards' Committee, Robb Caledon Shipyard, Stannergate, Dundee. Telephone 0382-459066 (24 hours).

The Tyne shipyard workers are shown around the occupied Caledon site. Photo: Denis Doran

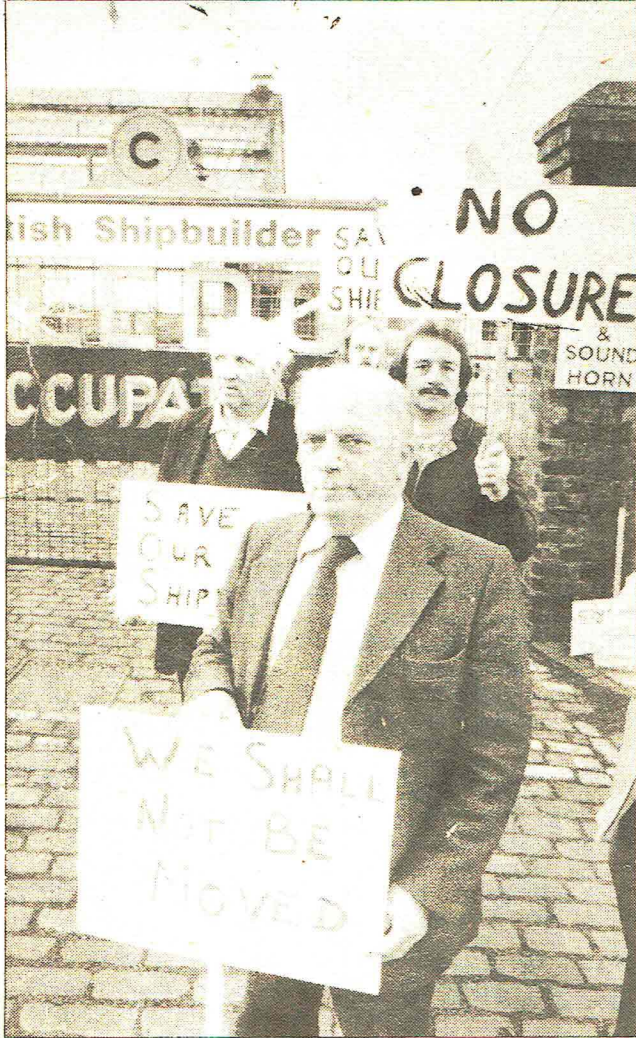


ROBB CALEDON

UNITED WE STAND

Scenes from Robb Caledon this week

Photo: Militant



DIVIDED WE FALL



The sounding of the yard's siren welcomed the forty men from all four nationalised shipyards on the Tyne as they arrived outside the Robb Caledon yard in Dundee.

The Tyne Stewards' visit was part of the national action in support of workers occupying the Dundee yard.

They decided not only to comply with instructions to strike on Monday 28th, but also that a delegation should travel to Dundee that day to express their solidarity in person.

The fight to save Caledon yard is seen on the Tyne not as one individual battle. As a Tyne steward said, "if they close Robb Caledon: where will be next?"

They fully recognise that if the British Shipbuilders'

Now British Shipbuilders have announced 700 lay-offs at the Tyne Ship-repair yard and 50 more at Grange-mouth. This is obviously an attempt by BS to break the solidarity of the shipyard workers nationally, to force them to work normally, leaving Robb Caledon to fight alone.

management get away with closing Caledon it will only be one of many swings of the axe, as has happened in other nationalised industries, such as steel and British Leyland.

As Dave Hall, AUEW Chairman, Swan Hunter said "If I was in the same position as these lads, I'd appreciate knowing we had full support of other yards. That's why we decided to come, to represent the Tyne yards and ensure that the Tyne is fully in support of the occupation."

The Caledon workers gave the delegation a guided tour of the Tayside yard and told of the £½million sub-assembly line installed only 18 months ago but never used to this day.

The board room walls were covered with pictures of numerous shops built at the yard, recording its traditions. But this was not the end of the story. As Caledon boilermaker

By Norman Hall
 (Wallsend CLP)

More Robb Caledon reports, page 15

Charles Ryle said, pointing to the Tay bridge, "we built that as well."

Three Swedish girls involved in an occupation of their textile factory Eiser's in Solleflea in northern Sweden since June, were also visiting the yard.

After the tour all the visitors were guided to Dundee Trades Council Club to sample the hospitality of the Caledon workers, who laid on food and refreshments before holding a short meeting.

Bob Barty, the Caledon yard Convenor thanked the Tyne workers for their support and nailed on the head some of the press distortions, in particular that men had been offered transfers to other yards.

What the papers didn't say

What the papers didn't say was that the other yard is in Leith, 60 miles away, a daily round trip of 120 miles, he said.

Margreta Bergman, on behalf of the Eiser workers thanked the meeting for their support and wished the Robb Caledon workers good luck in their fight.

Robbie Graham, AUEW, Dave Hanson, EETPU and Joe Auchterlonie all spoke on behalf of the Tyne yards pointing out the need for a united struggle.

Although morale at the Robb Caledon yard was already high the visible support from the other areas can only boost it even higher. The Tyne workers also received a tremendous lift from the visit and Caledon workers' determination would be reported back to meetings in the Tyne yards.

The Tyne shop stewards were the first to arrange a visit—hopefully they will not be the last. As Joe Auchterlonie said during the meeting "United we stand, divided we fall." The Robb Caledon men must be given full support from every region.

STOCK EXCHANGE

CONTINUED
 FROM PAGE ONE

economic policies.

Reagan was swept to power on a programme of tax cuts for the rich, to be paid for by government spending cuts on the Thatcherite model.

He has laid into welfare benefits for all he's worth. But he's made a mistake in the arithmetic. Arms spending is spiralling while Congress is resisting the worst of his cuts.

So government is now borrowing \$90,000 millions, twice as much as two years ago. Borrowing on that scale has inevitably boosted interest rates throughout the USA.

Reagan has deliberately pushed up interest rates to 'squeeze demand out of the economy,' in accordance with monetarist doctrine.

Reagan's policies have triggered off 'an interest rate war' between the major capitalist powers. As American rates went up, money flowed into the USA and the dollar was riding high.

To stop their own currency from collapsing, Thatcher and her ilk have had to follow suit and raise interest rates.

British capitalism is on the rack. Inflation is already set to start rising again, and a falling pound would make imported goods even more expensive. British manufacturers, however, want a cheaper pound to make their exports more competitive on world markets.

Rising interest rates, at a time of stagnant profits, has brought share prices tumbling down.

In the United States at the moment investors can

get a 16% return on government securities, while shares only yield 7%. Hence the stock exchange collapse.

The interest rate war threatens even the feeble revival projected for later this year.

Industrial profits are already very low, and are being ground down even further by the rates at which manufacturing capitalists have to borrow.

The massive post war expansion of capitalism was lubricated by the creation of credit. High interest rates threaten to bring down the whole pack of cards, with the prospect of a financial collapse that could take large chunks of manufacturing industry with it.

But the nervous psychological state of investors and speculators is rooted in the very real, catastrophic decline of British capitalism. The 'collapse of confidence' represents a vote of 'no confidence' in Thatcher from big business.

Inflation is now going up again. Despite twelve years of sacrifice to the monetarist god there is no real end in sight to the recession.

Workers, however, do not invest in shares or government bonds. Do massive Stock Exchange losses really matter to working people?

Undoubtedly, they must herald further attacks on workers' living standards. Workers don't share the profits made on the Stock Exchange. But the bosses will certainly try to make them pay for the losses.

It is crazy that the production of real wealth, and the living standards of millions, should depend on Stock Exchange gambling. Such a system can never work in the interests of working people.

The crisis on the world's financial markets is yet another warning of the terrible crises and convulsions which will hit the working class—unless we carry through the socialist transformation of society.

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