

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 584
15 January 1982

20p

INSIDE PAGES

Militant trade unionism
page 8

Stalinism
page 10

Poland/Ghana
page 11



British Rail management and their Tory friends call the Conditions of Service Agreement won by rail unions in 1919, 'outdated'—they want to bring back the conditions worked in 1881!

But their attempts to break the train drivers guaranteed eight hour day—which will mean yet more rail jobs lost and increased unsocial working hours—is meeting firm resistance from the train drivers union, ASLEF.

And the BR bosses have further enraged train drivers by renegeing on the 1981 pay deal withholding our 3% pay increase due last week.

This contemptuous gesture by management was unanimously rejected in my region when 70 representatives from 10 depots in Scotland met to discuss the issues.

By Jim Sharkey
(Polmadie ASLEF)

They had no doubt what action was needed to bring BR and the Tories to heel—they voted for a national call for all out strike action from Sunday 17 January to ensure we get our 3% and our demand for a 39 hour week.

At the meeting Bro. Rogers of the Executive Committee for Scotland, outlined methods of ensuring a swift victory, which should be taken up by the union leadership.

These were appeals to other unions for help—the other rail unions, and the lorry drivers to ensure none of our goods are moved.

And the full power of the Triple Alliance should be put into action. Support can also come from the wider labour movement through trades councils, factory gate meetings, and the movement's political organisations.

Another point raised at the meeting, was the furious reaction of NUR members—drivers and guards—to the rostering agreements agreed to by their union leadership.

This anger must be channelled into the ASLEF struggle to defend the 8 hour day and use the unity in action throughout the strike to build a real federation of rail unions.

Aslef strike: SUPPORT THE



Photo: Denis Doran

RAILMEN

Cuts means winter chaos

Tory polices have turned the problems brought on by the severe weather into a disaster. The savage cutbacks they have inflicted upon the welfare state, transport, and the artificial rise in heating prices have cost lives.

Dr Geoffrey Taylor, a leading researcher into hypothermia, has claimed that up to 700 old people are dying every day from the cold. If there was a decent pension of £90 a week and an expansion of social service provision most of these deaths could have been prevented.

When public sector workers took industrial action three years ago against cuts and for a decent wage, the Tory Press screamed that they were putting lives at risk. But there is not a squawk now from the Press

By Jim Chrystie

barons of how their government's policies are actually causing deaths.

More public expenditure is needed to protect the old and the very young, who are at most risk. Yet Thatcher still complains (on BBC radio last Sunday) that public opposition prevented her from cutting public expenditure even more!

The Tories have deliberately forced up the

cost of gas and electricity making many, especially old people reluctant to turn on fires because they are unable to pay the bills. In order to get profits of £1,000 million in three years, the Gas Board, has been directed against its will to put up the cost of gas by 60% in the last two years. This year gas prices are going up by 12% in April.

Yet this week the South of Scotland Electricity Board is having to pay out £100m to the privately-owned British Aluminium Company as part of the handout for closing their Invergordon plant (and part of this £100m was borrowed from the government in the first place).

Whilst the Tories have rushed to help their business friends, they have turned

their backs on those in need. They have ignored last week's call from the British Pensioners Trade Union Association for a £20 emergency heating grant.

£10 billion
wasted on
Trident

At present OAP's get less than £2 a week heating allowance, which only pays for five hours heating on a single-bar fire. Often restricting themselves to one room to save on heating, and worried about accidents if they do go out, old people have been especially hard hit by the Tory cutbacks in social services, home helps and meals on wheels.

Denied a right to live in dignity the Tories force them to die a cold and lonely death. And such tragedies are not confined to the old. In Braintree a ten-month old baby was found frozen to death in his cot. The parents had complained to the council about the problems of heating, but had been told nothing could be done.

Yet whilst councils are starved of cash, the Tories are quite prepared to lash out money on the Trident missile system, although its cost has doubled to £10,000m in recent months. But the cost of the Tories' attacks on the social

continued on back page



A record week and a record year for Militant's fighting fund! Now build for 1982 (see page 13 for details).

The informal agreement reached between the representatives of the Labour Party NEC and the 'Trade Unions for a Labour Victory' at Bishops Stortford will be given a guarded welcome by the rank and file of the party.

Welcome—because the agreement will be seen as the beginning of a trade union-based campaign against the Tories and because there has always been a strong urge for unity within the ranks of the party.

But guarded—because it still remains to be seen whether or not the campaign will be based upon party policy and whether or not the right-wing will cease their witch-hunting campaign against the Left.

The campaign proposed at Bishops Stortford is the biggest the Labour Party has ever waged, except in a general election. There will be up to 23 regional rallies, and the trade unions will start a massive drive to recruit their members into the Labour Party.

Political education will be stepped up, including holding meetings for party workers and the use of slide shows, dealing especially with unemployment. The TULV has given a commitment to fund this campaign.

In addition, the trade union leaders have suggested that the TUC might conduct a 'parallel' campaign against unemployment and the industrial policies of the government, which, because it would be based on 'industrial' rather than 'party political' questions, could be funded from the unions' general funds rather than the political funds.

It was suggested that such a massive campaign, costing anything up to £2 million, would rival the Mr Cube anti-nationalisation campaign of Tate and Lyles in the 1950s and 1960s. All of these proposals will be enthusiastically welcomed by Labour Party members.

In return for this financial backing from the TULV, the NEC have given an undertaking that there will be no further decisions on constitutional changes, at least for the time being. It is also understood that Tony Benn privately indicated that he will not run for the Deputy Leadership this year, although he would stand if the Right refused to honour the agreement by trying to carry through a witch-hunt.

It is clear that the Bishops Stortford 'accords' represent a defeat for the right wing. It has been the Right who have condemned the agreement—in effect bet-

BISHOP'S STORTFORD Set-back for the right

ween the left and the centre of the leadership—as a 'sell-out'. The right wing press have been unanimous in declaring their cynicism over the 'truce' which clearly means a set-back for them also.

But the agreement has not come about by accident. It is clear that there was massive opposition developing in the CLPs against witch-hunts.

Walworth Road received over 300 resolutions condemning the NEC over the Tatchell affair and the decision to conduct an enquiry into *Militant*. A further 600 letters and telegrams were received; and all these in the space of only a few short weeks immediately before and after the Christmas break.

It must have become obvious to the leading NEC and TULV members that a witch-hunt would plunge the party into chaos, inflicting enormous damage. In

the words of one trade union leader, the Labour Party and the unions "reached the edge of Dante's Inferno, peered into it and have now pulled back in horror at what they saw."

If Bishops Stortford stops the witch-hunt and the consequent plunge into party civil war—and that is not a foregone conclusion—then it will have done a great service to the movement.

But there is still a very strong possibility that the right of the party will not go along with the agreement. They bitterly resent the fact that the constitutional changes achieved in the last year—the electoral college and re-selection—will in effect become permanent.

The Right will press hard to reverse many policy decisions carried in recent years: on the economy, the Common Market and unilateral nuclear disarmament.

Above all, there is no indication that the right-wing will not continue their attempts to hound *Militant* supporters out of the party.

Pat Wall not yet endorsed

Roy Hattersley said, after Bishops Stortford, "I do not believe the reports that there has been any deal made between the leaders of the party at Bishops Stortford over the inquiry into the Militant Tendency and other elements in the party or over the question of possible expulsions." Weetch, secretary of the Manifesto Group of MPs said of the agreement, "It's a bluff."

Despite the compromise agreed over the selection of Rob Clay in Sunderland—not endorsing him, but in effect inviting him to stand again, and then be endorsed—there is still no indication that the NEC will

endorse Pat Wall in Bradford or Peter Tatchell in Bermondsey.

The Right will be pushing on the NEC for the enquiry into *Militant* to become a purge.

David Basnett explicitly stated that the enquiry (into *Militant*) would go ahead but that "there will be no witch-hunt." There was never any need for an enquiry in the first place. However, the party membership must now insist that the words of David Basnett, that there will be no purge, are made binding.

The Bishops Stortford 'summit,' therefore, marks an important stage in gearing up the Labour Party to fight the Tories and prepare for the next election. But the rank and file must remain on their guard against those on the right of the party who still believe that a wholesale purge is more important than a campaign against the Tories.

In its front page lead story, the *Guardian* of January 4th. reported that there was 'clear evidence of infiltration by the Militant Tendency' into the National Union of Railwaymen. The article went on to quote Sid Weighell who accused Militant supporters in the NUR and one EC member of flouting the union rules.

The allegations of infiltration, the article went on, followed complaints from over 50 branches of the NUR and seven district councils. When the NUR executive set up an eight-

man investigation committee, it split, and in fact the majority (five) produced a report recommending 'no action'. It was the minority report which was given all the publicity in the press—yet this was rejected by 17 to 7 in the full executive.

We reproduce below replies that were published in the *Guardian* from the editor of *Militant* and from Ian Williams, NUR EC member, both of which answer the accusations and smears carried in the original *Guardian* article.

Sir,—It is completely false to suggest that *Militant* is somehow "infiltrating" the NUR as Sidney Weighell suggests (*Guardian*, January 4). In writing to NUR branches we were exercising our democratic right to reply to the allegations about *Militant* made by Mr Weighell at the NUR conference in 1980.

He used a resolution calling for the reintroduction of bans and proscriptions within the Labour Party to launch a ferocious attack on *Militant*. He questioned the source of *Militant*'s finances.

Militant was never warned that such attacks were to be made, nor were we allowed to explain our point of view. We were determined to exercise our democratic right to explain the truth to NUR members.

The NUR resolution did not go to the Labour Party conference until October 1981, but the press pointed out that, given the growing strength of the left in the NUR, that resolution "might not have been approved" if it had been discussed at the NUR's 1981 conference. Such is the so-called "firm support" for the efforts of some NUR leaders to undermine the democracy of the Labour Party.

It is particularly hypocritical of Sidney Weighell to attack the finances of *Militant*. Every penny which *Militant* receives comes from ordinary workers. Sidney Weighell, on the other hand, was a past vice-chairman

of the "Labour and Trade Union Press Service," an organisation funded by NATO, which is certainly no friend of the Labour Movement and in which the traitors who deserted to the Social Democratic Party are still listed as collaborators.

Sidney Weighell has worked closely with these traitors. They fought against the ideas of socialism when they were members of the Labour Party, and now they have stabbed the party in the back.

Militant supporters have fought for the return of a majority Labour government. We are helping to build the Labour Party, and we are fighting for the implementation of the idea contained in Rule 4 (A) of the NUR rule-book: "To work for the supersession of the capitalist system by a socialist order of society."

Those on the right wing of the Labour movement, like Sidney Weighell, have lost the argument on policy and on the issue of party democracy. Their only answer to *Militant* is an attempted witch-hunt and purge.

We are confident that NUR members, with the rank and file of the movement, will defeat this right-wing assault on the democratic rights of the Labour movement.—Yours faithfully,

P. Taaffe.

(Editor, *Militant*),
London E8.

NUR 'infiltrators' reply to the 'Guardian'

Sir,—One of the more distressing things about witch-hunting is that, apart from considerations of whether witches should be burned at all, many non-witches are also delivered to the flames.

As the National Executive member of the NUR mentioned in your articles (January 4 and 5) about alleged "infiltrators", I come into the second category. I am not, nor have I been, involved with *Militant*, except insofar as I have worked with it in my local party where I found their members to be loyal and hard-working.

Of course what my own personal witch-finder, Sid Weighell—in his defence of the "democratic traditions of the movement"—means by a *Militant* supporter is any Labour member to the left of Denis Healey. I can think of no other reason for his reference to myself as "openly involved in *Militant*," because it is only a few short months ago that he wrote to Toxteth Labour Party offering NUR sponsorship for the parliamentary seat to me against the eventually successful *Militant* supporter.

The reality of his democratic traditions is called into question by the origins of the union's special subcommittee, and the bizarre way in which the two conflicting reports were treated. Far from a spontaneous upsurge by 50 branches, not one branch had written on the subject until after Mr Weighell had sent a circular to all branches—more than 600—asking them to report to him any leaflets or circulars.

The eight-man subcommittee set up as a result of this bureaucratic demand—management after being subjected to many hours' display of Sid's obsessions, split to

produce two reports. One supported by three members, actually found me guilty of more rules breaches than I had originally been charged with—and no evidence was taken from me.

This latter report then had the names of the president, general secretary, and one of his assistants appended to it in a vain attempt to disguise it as a majority report, while the president ruled out the other to make doubly sure. Despite this sophistry—indeed possibly because of it—it was thrown out by the full executive, because no real evidence had been offered. This happened before Christmas, and there the matter rested until it was resurrected, presumably in time for the Bishop Stortford TULV/LP meeting this week.

I have a personal interest in this—even expulsion is possible if a successful appeal against the executive's decision is engineered at the annual conference—but I am more concerned that my union and its members are being sold short by the general secretary's obsession with this matter while, as your own columns reveal this week, our jobs and wages are so much under threat: 12,000 have gone this week alone, with more to go this year.

Our general secretary would be better employed trying to create some jobs on the railways than using an organisation of underpaid railwaymen as a platform for his own peculiar political predilections—and using your front page to do so!

Ian Williams.

The National Union of Railwaymen, London NW1.



"Our general secretary would be better employed trying to create some jobs on the railways than using an organisation of underpaid railwaymen as a platform for his own peculiar political predilections."

RIGHT EXPEL COUNCILLOR - for fighting Tory cuts

Ray Davies is councillor for Bedwas and Machen on Mid-Glamorgan County Council, a member of Bedwelty CLP and ISTC.

Recently Ray was expelled from the Labour Group for the second time in two years for his stand against spending cuts. Ray spoke to Frank Cuthbert.

"The Labour Group had already decided its budget when the Tories took power in 1979. Along with others, I persuaded the group to stick to its budget policy.

"I thought that the group would lead other Welsh local authorities on the cuts issue, but it soon became clear that the group bureaucracy were doing all in their power to undermine the situation.

"After six months, a decision to fully implement Tory cuts led me into sharp opposition, my expulsion from the group and my subsequent appeal to the NEC. The NEC upheld my appeal, and instructed the Labour Group to accept me back without delay.

"In the meantime I was removed from two important committees. On the day of my readmission, the group leadership proposed a 3% cut in expenditure, which the leader said was nothing to worry about.

"But September 1981 saw a clear loss of job oppor-

Roy Davies spoke to Frank Cuthbert (Caerphilly LP)

tunities for youngsters as a result of these cuts. I could not stand by and see the Tories, with the group bureaucracy, plundering services, so I proposed total non-cooperation with the Welsh Office.

"A whole range of arrangements with the government would have been brought to a standstill, and this would keep faith with Labour policy at national level. I voted against the group's proposals and 3 others abstained. Within 18 hours I was suspended from the group.

"The group leaders then gave misleading reasons to the County Party for my suspension, and expelled me from the full Labour Group.

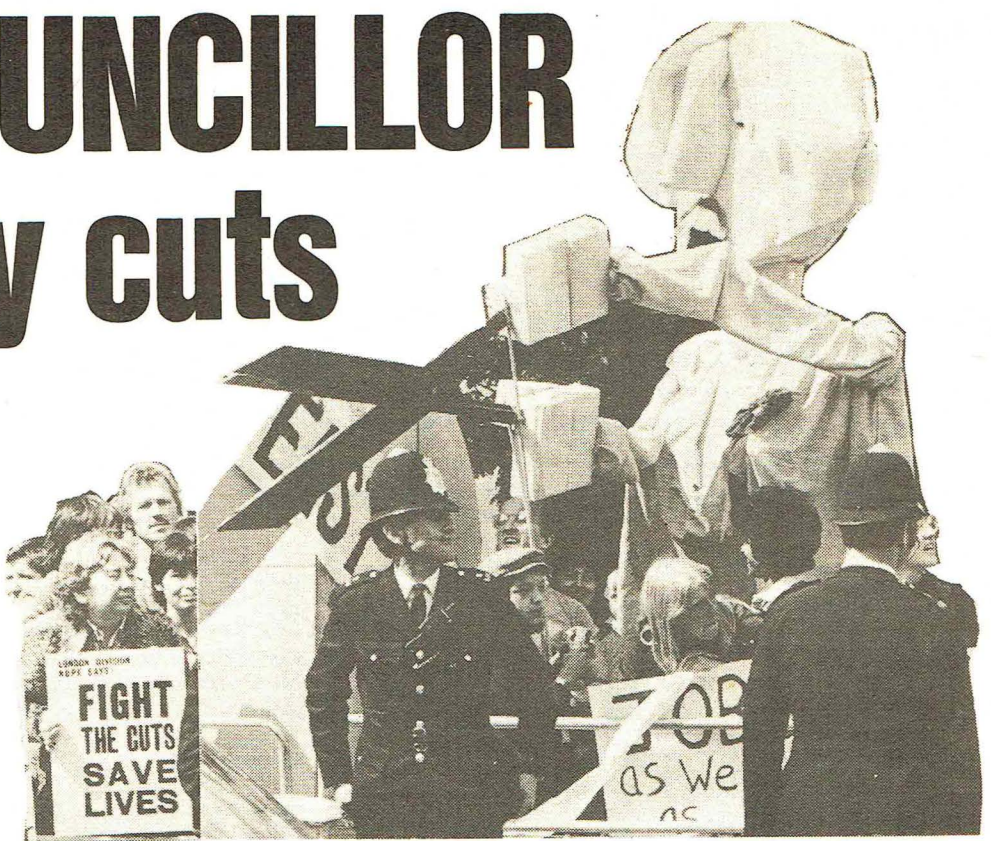
"There has been a cleansing operation in the Party over previous years. Local government is now in the front line, and the way local government is run prevents opposition, even through up to a third of councillors would love to support Labour Party national policy. The cleansing operation must take place at local level to effectively fight the Tories.

FC: Should central government cuts be offset by massive rate rises? Or should Labour Councils refuse to implement cuts, and organise a mass movement to prevent a Clay Cross situation arising?

RD: I do not think it right to introduce massive rate rises, but I think we should refuse to implement and then if the central government prevented further borrowing, they would have to send in the commissioners. There must be no fudging of the issues.

FC: What should the NEC say to Labour Groups and the local government conference?

RD: "The NEC should fully commit themselves to the resolution passed at LP conference and not hedge their bets. We have had a conference of Welsh Group leaders and trade union leaders but we need a proper conference, not a rally because the voice of the rank and file would be strongly behind a no cuts



Fight the axe-wielding Tories, not the socialists

Photo: Militant

policy.

FC: The cuts began under Denis Healey's Chancellorship, and there has been some debate over whether the party can commit itself to a reversal of the cuts in public spending. Neil Kinnock has refused to pledge the reversal of the education cuts.

RD: "The LP should pledge to restore all the cuts from the people under this Tory government. It seems that our own right wing leadership always introduces things which the Tories can use against us. "In place of strife" gave the opportunity for the Tories to introduce their present anti-working class legislation.

FC: What do you think is taking place in the LP today? Are there parallels between a right wing

Labour Group excluding you and the general intolerance of opposition in the Labour Party nationally?

RD: "A right wing attitude dominates the top of Labour groups, and I am afraid that the groups at local level may start disowning people like me despite what the NEC say.

"This right wing faction goes right through the Labour Party. They want the same privileged position in the council chamber as in the PLP. They implement the Chancellor's cuts, then wait for the next round of cuts. There are definite parallels between what happened on the NEC recently and what is likely to happen in Labour Groups.

FC: Neil Kinnock's vote was decisive in launching an enquiry into the Militant. Do you feel that Kinnock

really remains on the left?

RD: "His performance over the last 18 months has been a great disappointment, because he has led the campaign of the "respectable" left in the Labour Party against Tony Benn. The Deputy leadership result was so close that it could only have been a result of hard work by Mr Kinnock.

"Neil Kinnock chairs the Chartist rally every year, which commemorates those brave, courageous people who marched for 2 days to Newport and were then shot down by soldiers, fighting for the right of people like Neil to sit in Parliament. To oppose Peter Tatchell for advocating less radical extra parliamentary activities is appalling".

GLASGOW HILLHEAD Dark blue, pale blue CHUCK THE TORIES OUT!

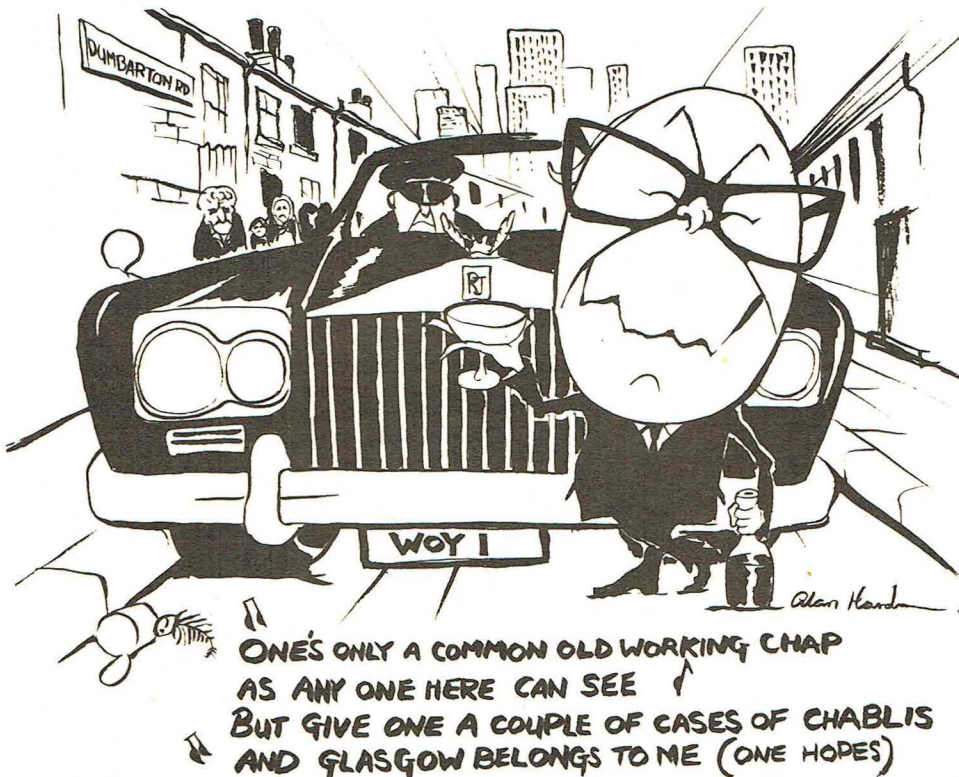
Voters in the Glasgow Hillhead constituency will soon have the opportunity to give their verdict on two and a half years of Tory government.

With the recent death of the Tory MP, the signal has been given to the SDP bandwagon to roll into town, led by their guru, the claret swilling carpetbagger, Roy Jenkins.

Already the national media have mounted enormous coverage in his favour, anxious to prevent a Labour victory in this highly marginal seat.

The Labour Party in Scotland will wage an all-out campaign in order to ensure the decisive defeat of all the Tories, pale blue and deep blue. But to overcome the huge media campaign, the Labour Party will have to fight the election by offering the voters a clear alternative to the horrors of Thatcherism.

Hillhead has suffered cut-backs in council house building and modernisation, recent years have seen



a steep increase in the cost of public transport, and even in this reputedly 'affluent' area of Glasgow, unemployment is well above the national average.

Few working people believe that the Tories will do anything to solve the area's problems, and they

will probably lose the seat by a large margin. The SDP will offer no solution either. It is only the Labour candidate, David Wiseman, who can put forward any kind of answer to the voters.

The SDP can and must be exposed for what they are.

A Labour victory in Glasgow Hillhead will be an enormous boost to all working class people in Britain, and will put paid to the SDP bandwagon, once and for all.

By David Williams (Hillhead CLP)

CRAMLINGTON & BLYTH LPYS one-day conference on 'Jobs, Youth, the Tories and Labour's Alternative'. Saturday 17 January, 10.00 am at Cowpen Miners Welfare Hall, Blyth. Speakers: Dennis Skinner MP, Joe Marino (Gen. Sec., Bakers' Union), Laurence Coates (LPYS Rep on LP NEC). Contact Joe Cox, 27 Coomside, Cramlington, Tel. 712035; Peter Marsden, 94 Disraeli Street, Blyth, Tel. 62098.

London LPYS Weekend School. Friday 15th January 1982-Sunday 17th January in Canterbury. Lots of discussion around topics like the development of mankind and Marxist economics.

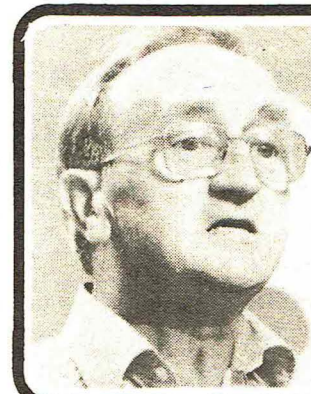
Club night, excellent food, total cost £12 includes a meal on Friday night and all meals and transport (from London) for the weekend. For more details, send deposit of £2 to Anne Beales, Chairman London LPYS, c/o 150 Walworth Rd., London SE 17.



New 'Militant' pamphlet
Price 20p from local 'Militant' seller
or from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace,
London E8 3PN
(Add 10p p&P.
Orders of 10 or more post free)

Democratic rights... Improved conditions... Public services...

GAINED BY WORKERS' BATTLES



By Stan Natrass
(Arundel Labour Party)

Member of Labour Party for 40 years. For 15 years a full-time Labour agent

Once again, the 'Bully Boys' on the right wing of the Labour Party have triumphed and have stopped the endorsement of a Labour candidate, constitutionally chosen by the Bermondsey Labour Party.

In Peter Tatchell's article which the right seized upon to character assassinate him—aided by a grateful Tory press whose avowed aim is to bury the Labour Party—what did he say which was so terrible?

Did he advocate a 'gunpowder plot' or a march on Parliament with guns and fixed bayonets? Of course not.

He outlined what Labour

MP Dr Alfred Salter had done before the war on behalf of Bermondsey's working class electors which had resulted in him being gaoled six times. He set out the record of Bermondsey Labour Party who had nineteen members imprisoned and tortured as conscientious objectors, and how Bermondsey Labour Council repeatedly clashed with the Tory governments of the 20s and 30s over the right to clear slums.

He showed how it clashed with the Tory government and defied it by sending TB

cases to Switzerland on the rates and how they set up their own Municipal Health Centre in advance of the NHS, and how Bermondsey refused to provide a Civil Reception to celebrate George V's Silver Jubilee.

Mr Tatchell said 'Labour seems to have lost this radical and defiant spirit of its early pioneers.'

He went on to advocate what is called extra-parliamentary opposition. "Perhaps we should be thinking more in terms of a 'siege of Parliament' to demand jobs—a march on the House of Commons led by 250 Labour MPs and a thousand Labour Mayors and Councillors and involving an afternoon sit-down occupation of the Westminster area."

After a meeting I helped organise in the Tonbridge By-Election in the '50s, Nye

Bevan and myself discussed the meeting and questions he'd had.

"You know lots of people talk as though we have had parliamentary democracy for a thousand years, we have had a parliament for hundreds of years, but not democracy, that is really a very recent thing. It was only as recent as 1949 under the Representation of the People's Act by Labour that everyone over the age of 21 had been given the vote in both parliamentary and local government elections."

He also agreed that the privileges we now enjoy were not the result of some generous Tory government, or because capitalism had gone soft and were feeling sorry for the workers, but the results of hard fought battles by working people.

They had to be wrested

from the ruling class by such extra parliamentary activity as demonstrations, strikes etc., and—yes if they were bad ones—by sometimes breaking laws as anyone familiar with the history of the labour movement knows well.

But would anyone dare call Nye Bevan 'anti-parliamentarian'?

Why do you think Labour was able to build up massive votes in places Bermondsey? Because they had MPs and Councillors like jelly-fish, such as Jenkins, Williams, Owen and Rodgers and other traitors to the movement?

Of course not. It is because they had women and men of vision and principle, who were prepared to stand up to, and if necessary, defy Tory governments who were crucify-

ing the working people they represented.

Once in the fifties, I was reading 'Tribune' and was told by another Party member to 'watch it' or I might find myself expelled. I was told I was—with my other Bevanite comrades—a Party within a Party.

My reply was that I had spent nearly seven years in the RAF fighting another guy who stopped people reading papers and books he disapproved of, and then he burnt the books, and then he burnt the people, his name was Hitler.

I hope we are going to stop this nonsense of trying to get rid of people whose sole crime is that their policies don't fit in with what the right wing want, but are good socialists and work like hell for the Party.

No to bans and proscriptions

John Golding, one of the most enthusiastic proponents of the witch-hunt, does not command complete support in his own constituency.

Over the past couple of weeks, Militant supporters in North Staffordshire have called a meeting in Newcastle-under-Lyme to explain the ideas of the 'Militant'.

On the Saturday preceding this meeting 39 copies of 'Militant' were sold in two hours in the centre of Newcastle. Whilst flyposting with "Dump the Tories" posters, the comrades were cheered by passers-by who didn't seem too keen to wait until the next election to get rid of Thatcher.

The meeting attracted 20 people, most of them new

By Dave Campbell

(AUEW-TASS and Stoke North LP, personal capacity)

to the ideas of 'Militant', including members of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Labour Party. The ideas were enthusiastically received—as shown by the collection which raised £23. An LPYS branch is hopefully going to be established following this meeting.

Militant supporters in the area will continue this "Extra-parliamentary activity" in Newcastle to ensure that our socialist ideas are heard and we intend to hold estate paper sales and further meetings.

We warn John Golding and others of the same ilk that he will not defeat our ideas by bans and proscriptions.

mass YOPS lobby of Parliament on 25 February.

In Bristol NUPE are sponsoring a 57 seater coach. In Renfrew and Central Scotland the T&GWU are sponsoring coaches. Has transport been organised from your town to the lobby? If not get organised now, make sure YOU are there on 25 February.

Leaflets, posters, petitions and trade union letters are available now. For further details or orders contact YOP TURC, c/o LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE7.



1970: The first of many major extra parliamentary activities against the Tory Industrial Relations Act

PHOTO: Gail Clarke Hall (Report)

Eastleigh

Typical of many resolutions passed is this one passed by the GMC of Eastleigh Constituency Labour Party recently and sent to the NEC.

"This GMC is totally opposed to any witch-hunts or expulsions of supporters of the Militant newspaper in the Labour Party. We believe that political differences within the party should be resolved by debate and discussion in the traditions of the labour movement and not by ban or proscriptions.

"We feel that the Labour leadership should concentrate on fighting the Tories and the traitors in the SDP instead of attacking hard-working party members."

Leeds

The press may talk of a

"growing feeling against the left within the party" in recent days, but they can draw little comfort from North West Leeds CLP, which is not known for its left-wing majorities.

The following two motions were passed at the 17 December GMC with one vote and three votes against respectively. The first was: "This GMC requests the NEC to reject all proposals from either right or left wing to institute a witch-hunt which will lead to the exclusion of party members who accept the rules, constitution and policy of the party."

The second was, "This CLP fully supports the right of a constituency to select the candidate of its choice and expresses no confidence in the NEC for its rejection of the candidacy of Peter Tatchell. We are also against any attempt to proscribe any group or individual."

MEDIA DISTORTIONS CAN'T STOP MARXISM

Media coverage of the witch-hunt against 'Militant' has been grossly distorted and trivialised. Only rarely have 'Militant' supporters been given any access to the press, radio and television to answer the barrage of Tory propaganda.

But when 'Militant' speakers have been able to speak, the effect of putting forward our socialist policies and explaining the causes of the witch-hunt has been remarkable. As we reported ('Militant', 8 January), Huyton Labour Party was given widespread press publicity because in sharp contrast to the majority of Labour Parties, it supported attacks on 'Militant'.

Delegates from Cantril Farm Ward on the General Committee opposed the resolution, and for their next ward meeting asked 'Militant' supporters in Merseyside for a video tape of a Granada TV interview where Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', confronted Sean Hughes, prospective parliamentary candidate for Huyton, one of the main supporters of the witch-hunt.

After seeing the film the ward unanimously voted to oppose the witch-hunt.

YOP TURC 'Activists Conference' Saturday 23 January Manchester Town Hall, Albert Street Time 12-5.30 pm

On Merseyside YOP shop stewards meet for the first time this week. But already they've booked a coach to the YOPS activists' conference in Manchester on 23 January and have booked 100 places on a train to the

YOUTH WANT REAL JOBS!

"Give us a future" was the slogan of the youth on the TUC 'Jobs Express' last November.

What future do the Tories and the bosses offer youth?

This year 582,000 school leavers will sign on the dole, but only one-third will find work. 770,000 youth or 58% of those under 18 will be unemployed.

This year the government are spending £400m to provide 550,000 places on the Youth Opportunities Programme. The abuses of YOP are well catalogued. The MSC estimate that for every five YOP trainees taken on, one worker is replaced.

So this year YOP will throw 110,000 out on the street.

The National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers (NAAAW) have documented cases where neighbouring farmers took on each others sons and where WEEP trainees replaced apprentices.

Only 26% of those who complete the 6 month course get offered a job. Many employers can't resist the idea of free labour, they take on batches of YOPsters and replace them after six months.

Horror stories of conditions on some schemes abound. One youth in Nottingham lost a limb when he was caught in a machine without a safety guard, and 5 YOP trainees were fatally injured last year.

Complaints about primitive canteen conditions or the lack of boots and anoraks for those working outside are common. Petty discipline too. One trainee was suspended with half a day's pay docked for the crime of going for a Mars bar without permission and another for taking too long in the toilet.

Despite the increase in allowance to £25 per week YOPs still means Youth On Poverty Schemes. The increase of £1.50 (6.3%) is the first for two years, while inflation over the same period has gone up by 30%. Just to keep up with inflation YOPsters need a rise of about £8.

"Employment" minister Norman Tebbit announced details of a new youth training scheme designed to replace YOP just before Christmas. The new scheme will cover all 16 year old unemployed school leavers.

Others who leave school after 16 and cannot find a job within 12 months will be offered a place. 100,000 will join the scheme in 1982-83 and thereafter 300,000 young people are expected to go on the course every year.

Training allowance for those joining at 16 will be £15 per week (£750 per year). For those who join at 17 or 18 the allowance will be £25 per week (£1,250 per year).

The government argue those on the new scheme are 'akin' to those who at 16

By Willie Griffin
(Secretary, YOPS
Trade Union Rights
Campaign)

stay on at school or FE college. In other words, they should carry on being dependent on their parents and should not have access to supplementary benefit in their own right.

Legislation will be introduced making 16 year old school leavers ineligible for supplementary benefits until the 1st September the year after they leave school.

This means someone who leaves school in July 1983 will not be eligible for benefit until September 1984. It amounts to economic conscription, forcing youth on to poverty wage schemes.

Karl Marx in his writings over 100 years ago talked about wage slaves—youth will realise the truth of this more than anyone. How is it possible for a family with both parents unemployed to keep a 16 year old, in effect another adult?

The main reason thousands of working class youth leave school is because they can't afford to stay on. But the government steadfastly refuse to pay an allowance to those who stay on. If an unemployed 16 year old is "akin" to a school student why don't the government pay £15 a week to those who stay on at school?

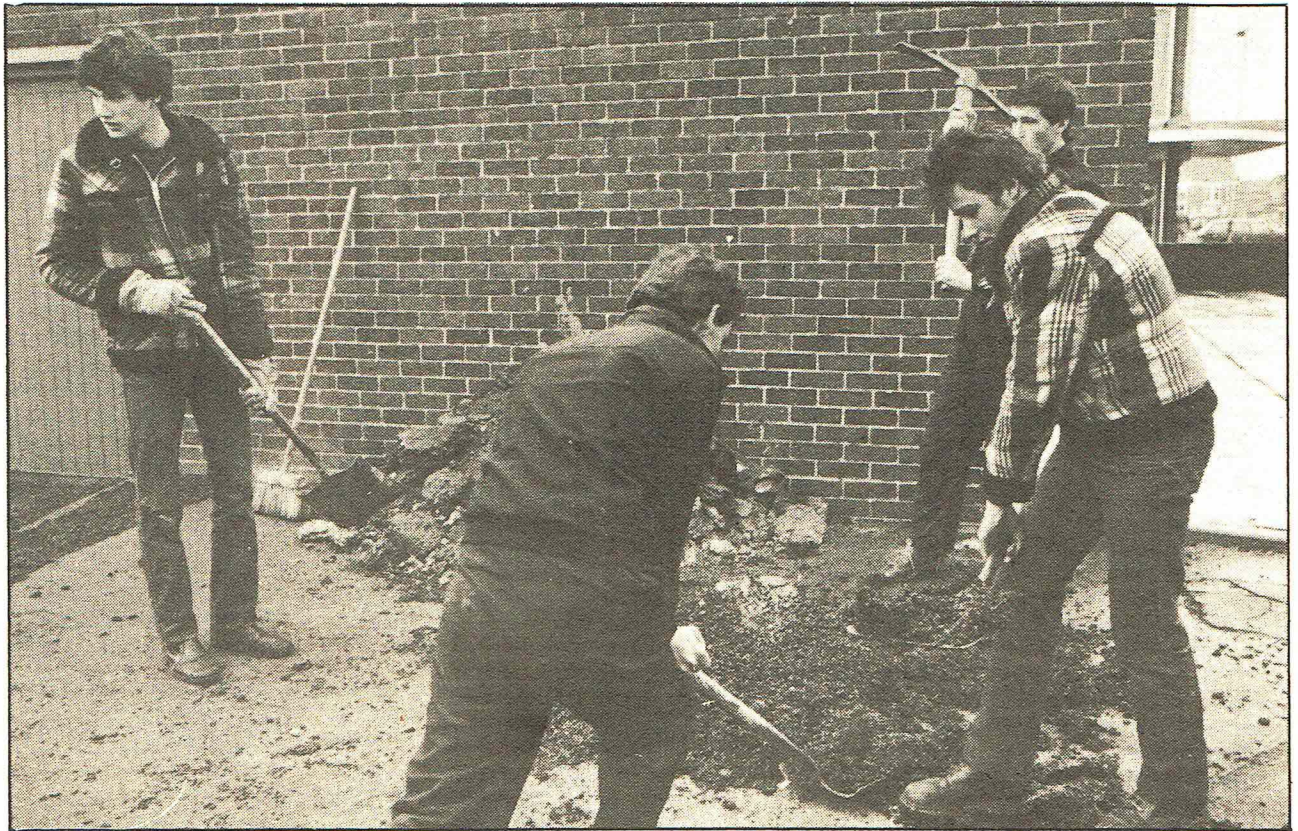
Supporters of the "Youth Training Scheme" argue that despite the allowance trainees will be 'better equipped for the job market'. The problem is that there are not enough jobs on the market.

The only measure the government have taken to create jobs for youth has been "the young workers scheme": where employers are paid £15 a week to take on a young worker but must pay him or her less than £40 a week.

In reality the scheme will provide no new jobs. It is an attempt to divide young and old worker with the aim of driving down wages. The 'Financial Times' summed up what Tebbit's "new deal" would mean for youth—"The new measures will take unemployed youth off the unemployment register for the 12 month duration of the course bringing them back as adults at 18."

But in between the unemployment figures are 'doctored' and the youth are subjected to the worse Victorian-style of exploitation.

The LPYS have declared their opposition to such schemes. The trade unions must also solidly oppose their implementation and demand: Decent jobs for youth!



YOPS workers on Tyneside

Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)

LIVERPOOL

In Merseyside recently the TGWU held its first ever YOP shop stewards' course.

The course, attended by ten YOP shop stewards from all over Merseyside, lasted for three days, covering many different topics ranging from the history of

the TGWU to grievance procedures with management.

There were lots of different opinions on the way to go forward for YOP workers, how they could recruit members, and the best way possible to represent them in the workplace.

But one increasing demand is that there is no use just recruiting YOPS locally and nationally, unless there is an on-going campaign to help YOP workers coupled

with massive support for the YOPS lobby on 25 February.

YOP workers can show the way to organise to kick out the Tories who time and time again are aiming to divide working class youth from the trade union movement.

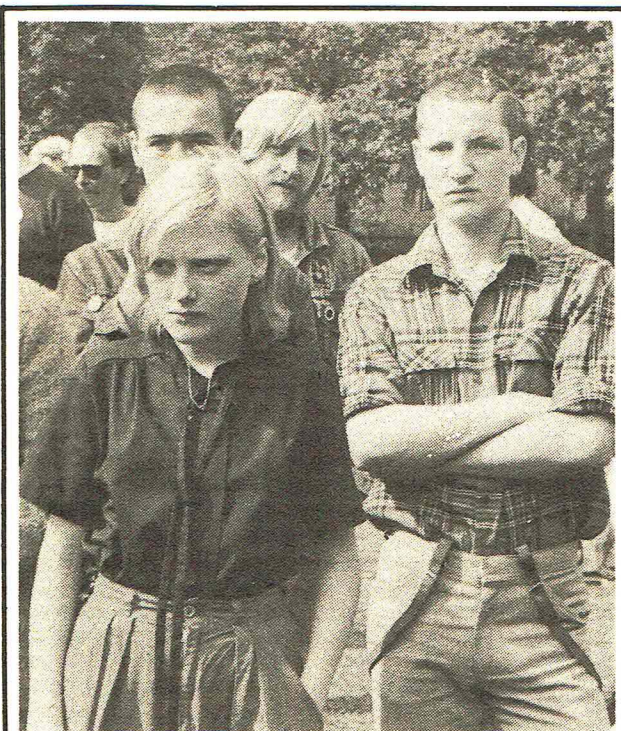
But the trade unions must give a decisive lead by recruiting into its ranks the half a million YOP workers and the 1½ million or so youth who today have no

future.

In 1983 half of Britain's labour force will be under 25. The trade union movement must wake up to this fact. The TGWU must show the way. We must organise YOPS into the union and fight for the better society we all want to live in.

By Shareen
Blackall

Photo: Denis Doran (Militant)



Of an estimated two and a half million 16-19 year olds, this year 16% will stay on at school, 9% at Further Education college, 12% in apprenticeships, 3% at university or polytechnic. 21% are young workers in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs and the remaining 40% are unemployed or on the YOP.

Due mainly to the collapse of manufacturing industry the number of semi-skilled or unskilled jobs is disappearing rapidly. From 1971 to 1978 600,000 of these jobs disappeared and the figure is expected to be higher for 1978-83. The Manpower Services Commission estimate the number of white collar jobs will outnumber blue collar by 1985.

Apprenticeships are becoming relics of a bygone age. In the late '70s the number of apprenticeships stood at 100,000. In 1980-81 this fell to 90,000 and is expected to fall further this year. In 1981 3,000 apprentices were made redundant before they completed their training.

MANCHESTER

The Greater Manchester Transport Committee agreed at its meeting on 15 December to give all YOP workers in the County either free or concessionary travel by the middle of 1982, subject to MSC approval and the government allowing the council to finance the scheme.

The Labour Party Young Socialists and the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign have been fighting for such concessions for some time. YOPsters are expected to pay up to £4 a week for their own fares out of wages of £23.50.

Many pay more than this and find it difficult to obtain the refund to which they are entitled.

The deal is worth up to £9 million for YOP trainees and the unemployed in Manchester.

The lobby outside the meeting was over 40 strong, with YOPS trainees, busworkers, GMWU stewards, LPYS and Labour Party members present.

Banners and placards from the YS and TGWU made it a colourful affair. A delegation of 10-6 YOPs, 2 YS, 1 GMWU steward, 1 supervisor—had

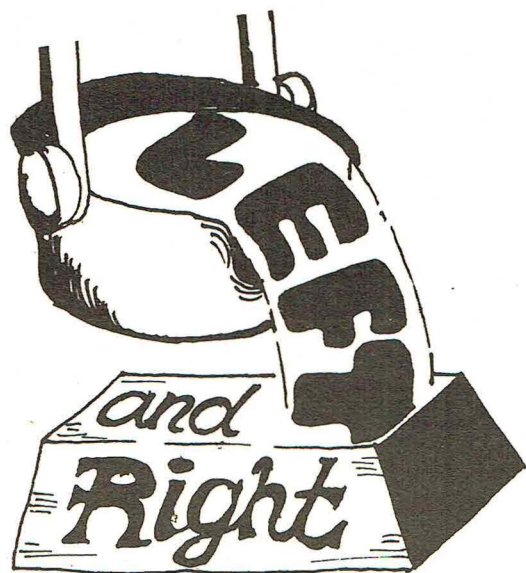
made prior arrangements to meet the committee in private before it's official meeting.

It was there that it gave its pledge to implement our demands if they were able. While the lobby was going on a YS member from Wythenshawe was being interviewed on Piccadilly Radio News about the campaign.

The only possible obstacle to outright victory for our campaign is government opposition to paying for the schemes implementation. We will now be pressing Labour MPs in Manchester to bring pressure to bear inside Parliament.

Labour MPs from every part of the country should be asked to do the same to get that obstacle removed. On a national scale we will step up the campaign in the unions to try and push free travel for YOPs through to full and speedy implementation.

By Malcolm
Clark
(LPYS National
Committee)



Golden handshakes

Militant (11 September 1981) told you of the bad luck of Jack Gill. He had been sacked after twenty-five years with Lord Grade's Associated Communications Corporation, ending up as a director. The poor man had been fobbed off with a mere £500,000, a British record golden handshake. Christmas saw Lord Grade's icy heart melt at Mr Gill's poverty. Despite his company losing £8 million in the first half of 1981, his Lordship upped the offer to £560,000 compensation for loss of director's office plus interest from 7 December at 6.25%.

The firm are also selling the company-owned house to Mr Gill for £165,822, when the official value is £275,000, and giving him a pension worth £72,823 a year. Gill may pay less than £100,000 income tax on the whole deal, by taking his pension as a lump sum.

The press report that some of Lord Grade's shareholders are furious when they have no dividend from the company for a year. They did not mention the feelings of the millions of unemployed who don't get golden handshakes. They 'celebrate' the start of 1982 with the ending of Earnings Related benefits and the real level of unemployment pay falling fast.

Divine intervention

"This year for the first time, the Post Office monopoly of Christmas deliveries has been lifted. It is now possible for charitable organisations to make charges for a delivery service and without a license." This was the 'good news' given to the people of Bristol before Christmas. The city's Methodist Central Hall had undertaken to deliver Christmas cards anywhere within the city boundaries for 5p.

New Angle, the evangelical paper bearing this gospel of hope said that it would increase the greetings sent to the sick, the housebound and the elderly and possibly give a 'Job' to the unemployed. They probably mean well but what will be the effect of a local Yopster or unemployed person taking on these tasks for 5p a go. Precisely to help post office management cut back on temporary and permanent staff.

Will the church donate to the strike fund when the next round of Post Office redundancies occur? Or even join the fight against unemployment and the cuts which are hitting out at the 'sick, housebound and elderly' they claim to be helping?

Bureaucracy gone wild

The 'Sunday Times' this week exposed a case of incredible bureaucratic bungling in the decaying capitalist state of India. A plantation worker is to stand trial in February for travelling without a ticket on the railways—an offence he allegedly committed on 5 March 1953; and he has been in gaol waiting for trial ever since then! He was held in custody for 29 years simply because the files of his case were lost. Therefore he didn't exist. This small incident is yet another indicator of the increasingly decrepit state of Indian society, with its bureaucratic capitalist elite totally incapable of running society, let alone taking it forward.

50 years ago

The first two weeks of 1932 resulted in 740 deaths from influenza, which doctors attributed to inability to resist the germs because of hunger. Whilst the bosses made vast profits, the workers' health suffered. A report from the Medical Research Council stated that "a young worker's expectation of life is lowered by 30% when he enters a cotton mill." Mill workers had six times more chance of dying from bronchitis than the ordinary population and heart disease was double those in other jobs.

Tories racist NHS plans - A CHARTER FOR HARASSMENT!

The Tories' plans for health service charges will soon mean that black and Asian workers will have to prove their identity and nationality before they get NHS treatment.

Even workers with foreign names or foreign accents will be under suspicion and will have to prove their eligibility for NHS treatment. These will be the inevitable results of the Tories' plans to charge overseas visitors for their treatment from the National Health Service.

Overseas visitors cannot be detected automatically, so inevitably all those workers with a coloured skin, a foreign name or a foreign accent will be 'under suspicion' of being a visitor. The new Tory plans are a charter for harassment.

With the additional introduction of the Nationality Bill, black people will face almost police state conditions from their birth to their death beds.

An average of 17 million people use the NHS facilities every year and it is obvious that these will not all be checked to see if they meet the new criteria laid down by the Tories for free NHS treatment.

In a hushed-up trial run in four hospitals in Southampton, Birmingham and Oxford last September, hospital clerks were asked to assess people to look out for foreign-sounding accents or names. Of four thousand people checked, only eighty-one were foreign visitors.

Even the government admit that its pretext of saving £5 million is false. £5 million may be saved—out of a massive £11,500 million spent—but it would be more than offset by the costs of implementing the procedures.

When Patrick Jenkin introduced the proposals for the first time last March, he said that they would have a 'deterrent' effect, because there was a 'widespread feeling of abuse' of the NHS by foreigners. Yet the government has brought forward no figures to show the extent of the 'abuse'; indeed hospital administrators have described the misuse of the NHS as negligible, and not affecting hospital waiting lists at all.

Some of the Tory backwoodsmen have long claimed that pregnant mothers have been parachuting into Britain for the NHS pre-natal services, but it is precisely these services which are being exempted from the charges.

If there is any deterrence, it will be on the black and Asian population, who will face the prospect of continued harassment or shelling out for private health insurance schemes.

At present, free NHS treatment is available to four categories of overseas visitors: (a) ordinary residents of Britain; (b) long-stay (over a year) visitors; (c) those employed in Britain; (d) visitors from countries with reciprocal health arrangements (eg EEC and Eastern Europe).

By Phil Frampton

Until recently, however, the government operated a 'Good Samaritan' policy which was at the discretion of the Secretary of State. But this policy which extended free NHS treatment in the case of emergencies and illnesses contracted in Britain, and to chronically deteriorating cases, is now to be ended.

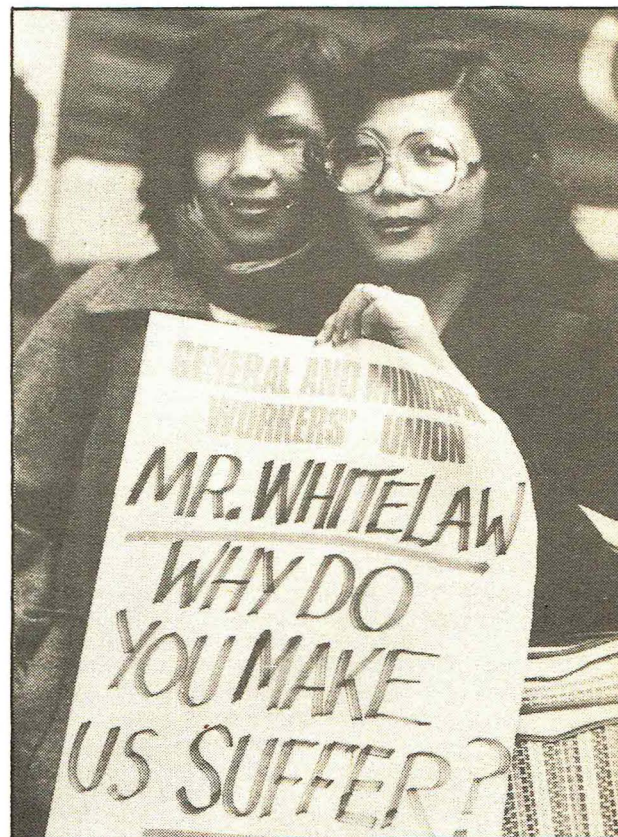
Also the Tories want to increase the long-stay stipulation to three years. This means that almost all foreign students will have to pay for their NHS treatment. They also propose to establish a minimum working period of six months. The onus of proof of eligibility will be placed on the patient requiring treatment.

In the hospital trials, many coloured workers have already had to face questions from over-suspicious clerks. Unless black workers can provide passports, work permits or something of that kind, they may have to face steep hospital charges.

In the private health sector an appendix operation costs about £800, a bed for a week might cost between £500 and £1,600, an X-Ray costs £12.

The new charges for overseas visitors will also be spread to include family doctors and all community health services, so despite an NHS campaign to encourage them, black and Asian families will be deterred from going to ante-natal clinics.

The labour movement must step in to prevent these measures. They were the subject of a conference



Philippine workers demonstrate against deportation outside the Home Office in March 1981. Here the local authority union, NUPE, took up their case—the hospital unions must now protect immigrant workers who face harassment with the Tories' new plans for the health service. Photo: Militant

called recently by trade unions in the Manchester area. It was pointed out there that if the Tories could get away with these measures in the NHS, they could introduce similar procedures for the population as a whole.

The proposals are clearly a part of the Tories' overall aim to increase the scale of private health treatment, initially to twenty-five per cent of the total. It has been reported that in anticipation, private clinics are already being set up at airports.

The Bill is expected to be introduced this Spring unless there is a massive trade union campaign of non-cooperation.

It is vital that all NHS unions call meetings in the

workplace to inform their members of the dangers. Committees representing trade unions, ethnic minorities, students and Labour Parties should be established in every area to monitor developments and to conduct a campaign against the measures.

Labour Parties and LPYS branches should organise public protest meetings especially in those areas with large numbers of black and Asian workers.

The scheme should be boycotted by the NHS unions. Labour's NEC should give a firm commitment that the next Labour government would reverse the measures and provide free health care to all those who need it in Britain.

The labour movement demonstrates against the Nationality Bill last year—yet another piece of racist Tory legislation. Photo: Militant



No to judges rape ruling

NO CURFEW FOR WOMEN

If you want to go out in the evening, then whatever happens don't miss the last bus home.

Because if you do, and you haven't enough money to get a taxi, and you are faced with no alternative but to hitch-hike, then "you are asking" to be raped, according to former High Court Judge, Sir Melford Stevenson.

The ruling by Judge Bertrand Richards, earlier this week, that Allen, a wealthy businessman, need only cough up a £2,000 fine for raping a 17 year old girl, has led to an outburst of fury,

By Vicky Matthews

especially amongst women. By only fining Allen £2,000, (in ten monthly installments) a man who drives a Jaguar XJS and leads a very comfortable existence, Judge Richards is implying that the fault lies not only with Allen, but also with the girl.

80 year-old ex-Judge, Sir Melford Stevenson, jumped to Richard's aid by saying that to hitch-hike at night was "the height of imprudence...she is in the true sense asking for it."

These statements show

these judges are even incapable of giving sentences in accordance with general sentencing practice. It is very unusual for a prison sentence not to be given for rape and extremely rare where the offence has been committed by a stranger. Last year 1,114 men were sentenced for rape; only one was fined.

But clearly some judges are totally unable to understand the vile trauma for a woman, that rape entails. More often than not, women who have been raped suffer a feeling of guilt; that somehow what happened was her fault, was she dressed provocatively, did she encourage her attacker in anyway?

This feeling of guilt is hypocritically played upon by the press and the media. The gutter press publish pictures and articles, focusing on women as mere sex ob-

jects, encouraging men to adopt the attitude that women are only good for one thing. Last week in the two days before the rape case, the gutter press used up acres of print about a woman who streaked at Twickenham.

Then, when a woman is raped, the fault is hers. She went out late, she wore provocative clothing, she was asking for it.

During the hunt for the Yorkshire Ripper, a number of films were released including "Dressed to kill", "My bloody Valentine" and "Violation of the Bitch", whose sole purpose was to make profits by degrading women. These films help stimulate the warped fantasies of the unbalanced individuals responsible for brutal murders and sexual attacks.

Judge Richards thinks that £2,000 is the correct monetary value for a vicious attack on a seventeen year old girl, who has since had a nervous breakdown. In fact the whole legal system reflects the class nature of society, with the priority being given to property, not people.

Fined for rape, jailed for shoplifting

This last week a young mother of 22 was jailed for six months for shop-lifting; with no relatives to care for

him, her three and a half year old son was taken into the care of the local Social Services department.

A number of MPs and organisations have called for the retirement of Judge Richards. Whilst this is to be welcomed he and the courts are only the tip of the iceberg.

Violence against women, reflects the social tensions created by the crisis in capitalism. A hundred years ago Engels pointed out that the progress of society could generally be measured by the progress of women towards their real emancipation. By this measure, present day capitalist society stands condemned, and cries out for social change.

As unemployment grows to nightmare dimensions, so does poverty, and battering of wives and children. Already 10,000 wives and 17,000 children pass through refuges for battered women each year—a refuge is a last desperate resort. Many more women stay at home because there is no prospect of escape.

With the rapid rise in women's unemployment, and the lowest number of council house starts for decades, there is even less possibility of some sort of financial independence. Women's escape routes are being cut off.

The cuts in health and education effect women particularly because the majority of jobs in these areas are done by women. Working-class and many middle-class women also have to cope with the effect

of the cuts on the family and the social pressure this bears.

Cuts in transport and maintenance of street lighting can mean in effect a curfew for many women. After the Law Lords decision to withdraw fare subsidies, London Transport are threatening to axe late-night services. Cuts will especially hit working-class women, unable to pay for private transport.

Women are increasingly afraid to go out at night. Thousands of women were frightened off the streets during the Ripper hunt. In Sheffield, where there have been two recent rapes, women have been warned not to carry protective 'weapons'. But Sheffield's police chief has warned that 'women could be charged if they carry knives, bags of pepper or anything like that'. S Yorkshire police advise screaming as the best way of resisting attack!

The labour movement must defend the right of women to walk alone in the streets in safety and their right to protect themselves. Arranging lifts and escorts to meetings is important, as is campaigning for improved street lighting and public transport.

If these issues are fought for by the labour movement it can win the confidence of millions of working class women, and involve them fully in the struggle for a socialist future, which will ensure the true emancipation of women and the whole of the working class.

In International Year Tories hit disabled

Last year the Tories made a mockery of the Year of the Disabled. Ever since coming to power they have slashed benefits and services for disabled people.

Their 1979 manifesto promised to "provide a coherent system of cash benefits to meet the cost of disability, so that more disabled people can support themselves and live normal lives." But instead of improvements they have made matters worse for Britain's 3½ million disabled, a million of whom are badly handicapped.

In 1981 they were clobbered by a Tory government who not only cut benefits and services but whose draconian measures paved the way for increased future disability. In November 1980, long term invalidity benefit was uprated by 5% less than inflation. Dependants' allowances were increased by only 5.5% instead of the 16.5% needed to keep up with the cost of living, and the previous allowances were in no way sufficient.

The link between disablement and poverty is clear. The old saying 'if you see a disabled father look for a poor child' is as true as ever.

Adaptations to housing, aids and appliances, additional heating, special diets

Fiona Winders
(Hackney Central LPYS)

entail extra expense. Restricted access to goods and services increase costs for those unable to shop or use public transport.

Yet in the International Year, the Tories made it more difficult for disabled people to make ends meet. Apart from reducing the real value of benefits the Tories have cut services such as meals on wheels and home helps provided under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act. A 600% increase in prescription charges under the Tories has had a devastating effect on the thousands of disabled people not exempt from charges.

A telephone is vital to ensure that disabled people do not become isolated in the home. Yet under the axe of public spending cuts, telephone installations have fallen from 19,000 in 1979 to 15,000 in 1980. The number of holidays for disabled people fell from 97,000 to 89,000 in a year.

Hugh Rossi, Tory Minister for the Disabled, has "protested": "It is impossible to contemplate the enormity of what is required without a deep sense of frustration at the current lack of resources to do it." This is sheer hypocrisy.

The Tories spend millions of pounds on the weapons

of destruction. For the cost of one Challenger Mail battle tank (£1.5 million) it would be possible to pay for improvements to the homes of 300 disabled people. Nearly 20 times the amount is spent on defence research and development than on the Medical Research Council!

In the International Year of Disabled People, Thatcher's government wept crocodile tears over the plight of disabled people as if it was an act of god. Yet all the evidence shows that 90% of disability is preventable!

The Spastics Society reported that with sufficient screening machines in hospitals, foetuses with disabilities could be seen before birth and, if necessary, aborted. Yet because of cuts in health spending there are hardly any screeners available and needless suffering goes on.

But even more important, disability is a product of poor social conditions. In India there are more disabled people than there are people in Britain, some 60 million out of a population of 650 million, a horrifying human experience due entirely to the profit system, which treats human beings as expendable 'labour units'.

Under the Thatcher government the British working class have seen their wages driven down, public services cut and

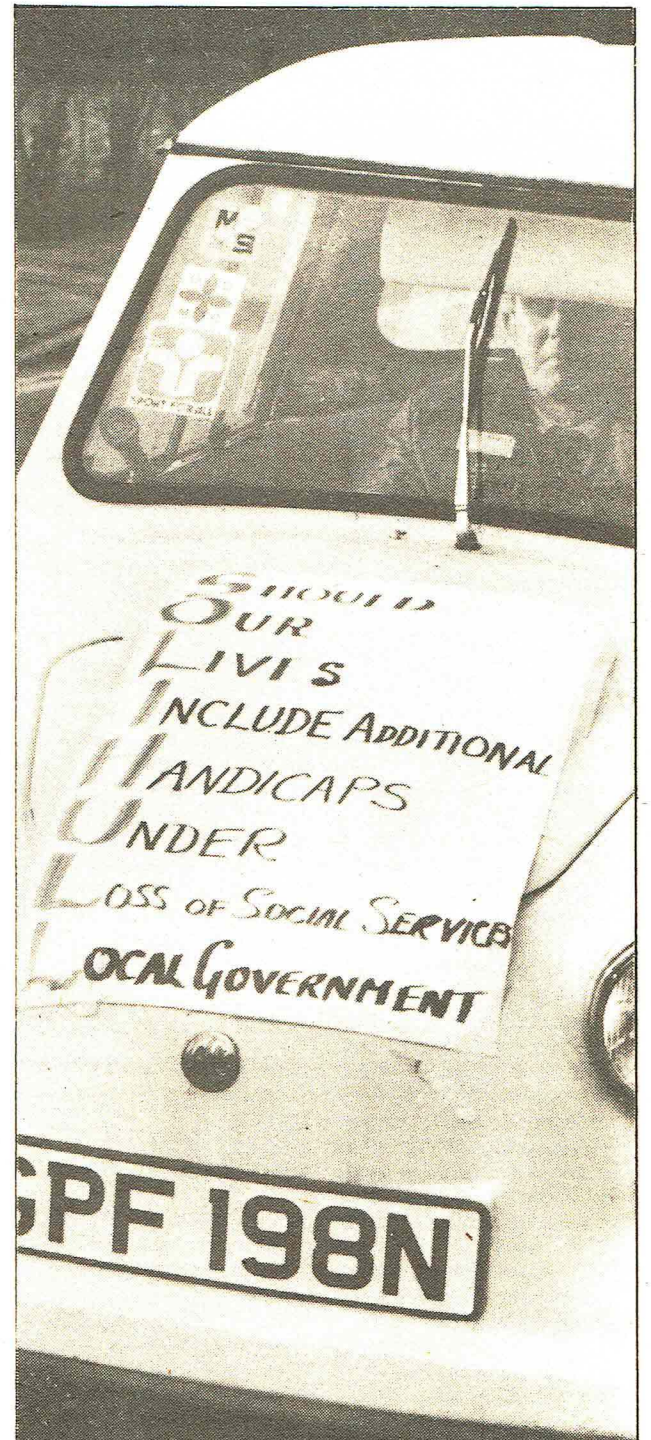
unemployment rocket. This has led to increased illness, deaths and suicides and the reappearance of diseases such as rickets, diphtheria and whooping cough which we were told had gone forever.

Now the working class have to pay the horrific price of capitalism in decline—increased illness and disability. As socialists we have nothing in common with the Tory charity ladies and philanthropic businessmen, for whom the International Year of Disabled People either salved their conscience or was good publicity.

The labour movement must demand:

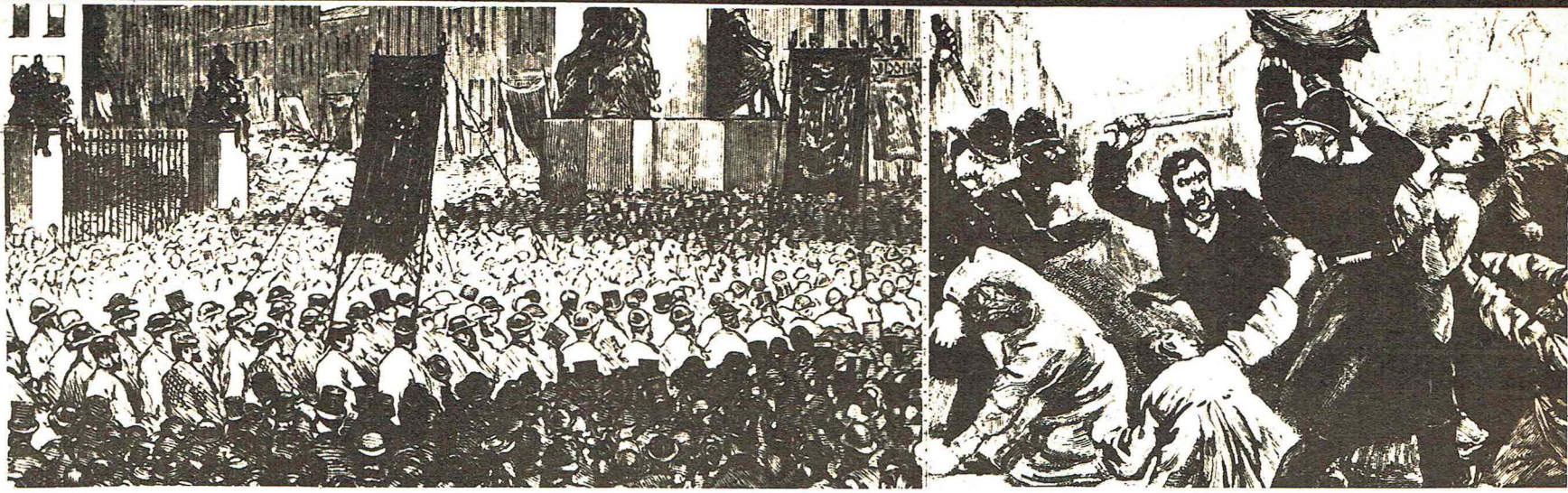
- introduction of a comprehensive system of benefits based solely on the degree of disability.
- massive public spending to restore and extend services for disabled people,
- jobs for those 55% of severely disabled people out of work.

But most of all we need socialism and a socialist plan of production both to prevent disability and to provide dignity for those who are disabled. A piece of graffiti in Hackney says "for you it's the International Year of Disabled People—for me it's the rest of my life!" Don't drop pennies in a charity tin—we can make a more lasting contribution by doing away with the Tories and their callous system.



Demonstration last year against the cuts imposed by Solihull's Tory council. Cutbacks have particularly hit services for the disabled. Photo: Militant

Trade union rule books show



MILITANT TRADITION

"Fellow workers, trade unionism has done excellent work in the past, and in it lies the hope of the workers of the future; that is the trade unionism which clearly recognises that today there are only two classes, the producing working class, and the possessing master class. The interests of these two classes are opposed to each other. The masters have known this for a long time; the workers are beginning to see it.

...The immediate objects of this union are the improvement of the material conditions of its members; the raising them from mere beasts of burden to human beings...

...It is important that all members should understand the necessity for and the aims of this union; that they should accept and loyally carry out its rules; that they should remember that the interests of all workers are one, and a wrong done to any kind of labour is a wrong done to the whole of the working class and the victory or defeat of any portion of the army of labour is a gain or a loss to the whole of the army of labour, which by its organisation and union is marching forward to its ultimate goal—the emancipation of the working class. That emancipation can only be brought about by the strenuous and united efforts of the working class itself. Workers unite!"

This was the original introduction to the rule book of the General and Municipal Workers Union. It clearly states the aims and aspirations of the entire organised working class.

Unfortunately it was deleted from the GMWU rule book as "no longer applicable" in 1947.

The whole history of the labour movement in Britain has been steeped in anti-capitalist struggle. From the early roots of the trade unions, through the Labour Party to the struggle for real socialist ideas and policies that are being fought over at the present time.

At all stages workers have been confronted by fierce opposition, and now no less than in the past. The need for workers to be refreshed in the ideas and

Steve Amor
(Stevenage Labour Party)

origins of the struggle begun by our forefathers is of vital necessity today.

The origins of the labour movement lay in the struggles fought by the workers under the mass factory system of the nineteenth century. But they were very much political struggles.

The early Chartists in Britain saw the need for socialism and equality, the 'Charter' being an early manifesto. Two Chartists, Hetherington and O'Brien started a journal in 1830, aiming to put forward basic socialist ideas, called 'The Poor Mans Guardian'.

This quote from the issue of October 19th 1833 is an example of the line taken.

"A grand national organisation (The Grand National Consolidated TU of Robert Owen) which promises to embody the physical power of the country is silently but rapidly progressing; and the object of it is the sublimest that can be conceived, namely—to establish for the productive classes complete domination over the fruits of their industry."

"To...ultimately give the workers ownership and control of industry
—EETPU rulebook

Unions began the organisation of the skilled;—the craftsmen and tradesmen. Despite the craft insularity which affected some of these unions their political aims are nevertheless stated clearly. The AUEW (formerly the AEU) Rule 1, for example, "(2) The control of industry in



Banners and sashes became the standards of the 'army of labour' and they proclaimed their objectives magnificently in large glorious expanses of cloth

the interests of the community."

National Society of Metal Mechanics; Rule 1, Basis 2. "To secure the ultimate control of industry by the workers."

ASLEF (Train drivers) Rule 5—Objects, "(1)...To assist in the furtherance of the labour movement generally towards a socialist society."

The EETPU (formerly ETU), whose members used skills in early electronic industries, states Rule 2. Principal objects. "...To improve members financial and social conditions especially by supporting policies which will ultimately give the workers ownership and control of industry."

Banners and sashes became the standards of the 'army of labour' and they also proclaimed their objectives magnificently in large glorious expanses of cloth.

"The only wealth is labour", proclaimed a National Winding and General Engineers Society banner, around 1859.

"We seek knowledge that we may wield power." T&GWU banner circa 1920.

"Producers of the nations wealth "unite" and have your share of the world", Wandsworth branch, General and Municipal Workers Union.

Towards the end of the last century, bigger and bigger sections of workers came into organised struggle. These layers of unskilled were in urgent need of radical union organisations.

The new unions, as they became known were formed in struggle, and did not have the traditions and habits of the older craft unions. The leaders of the General Unions were mostly conscious and active Marxists, men such as Will Thorne, Tom Mann and Ben Tillet.

They had become active in the early socialist groups like the Marxist Social Democratic Federation and the Independent Labour Party. Some had even subscribed to the International Workingmans

Association (the 1st International led by Marx and Engels).

Historic strikes and conflicts in 1888 such as the Bryant and May matchgirls strike, the 'Dockers tanner' strike, and the Beckton gas workers strike, were led by socialists and with Marxist ideas.

In the year 1889 over 200,000 labourers were brought into the ranks of trade unionism. Engels wrote; "These unskilled workers are very different from their fossilised brothers of the old trade unions; not a trace of the old formalist spirit, of the craft exclusiveness of the engineers for instance; on the contrary, a general cry for the organisation of all trades unions in one fraternity and for direct struggle against capitalism".

Their rule books again reflected consistently the aims of the new general workers organisations;

GMWU, rule 2 objects, "(4) To secure the return of members of the union to

public authorities, and to parliament providing the candidates are pledged to collective ownership, under democratic control, of the means of production, distribution and exchange".

The National Union of Railwaymen, rule 1 (4a). "To work for the supersession of the capitalist system by a socialist order of society."

Even the white collar workers began by the turn of the century to see their identity in society. CAWU (now APEX) Rule—"to assist members of the union to obtain democratic control over their several industries and services."

More and more the question was now arising of direct political representation of the organised workers at the highest level.

The Labour Representation Committee broke the workers general trend of voting for Liberal candidates. The LRC was initiated by the TUC, but under great pressure from some radical areas such as



ON

industries in which the members are engaged." In today's terms, with 2 million members, that would mean a substantial part of industry.

These present-day giant unions stem directly from their 19th Century predecessors. USDAW (shop workers) part 1(3) objects "...to work consistently towards securing the control of the industries in which the members are employed".

UCATT continues the tradition of its forebearers in its objects rule 1 (IV) "the furtherance of, or participation in...the work or purpose of anybody furthering the interests of labour, trade unionism, or trade unionists, including the securing of a real measure of control in industry and participation by the workers in the management, in the interests of labour and the general community."

The Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering has as its object (Number 5) "to propagate the principle of control of industry by and for the benefit of the workers."

The amalgamation statement of the Transport and General Workers Union formalised on 1st January 1922; states in part; "if vested interest stands in its (the union's) way then vested interest will be swept aside by force of events."

Even recently, a relatively 'new' union, NUPE adopted a new clause in its rule book the same as Clause 4 part IV of the Labour Party constitution.

Attempts by the right wing of the labour movement to subvert the true traditions of the workers' organisations are doomed to fail.

All sections of industry must be reminded of the statements made by generations of workers before us.

The tremendous latent power in the organised working class can be seen in the fact that the TUC now organises some 12 million workers, who with their families, represent the majority of the population.

The Tories and the capitalist class have discovered to their discomfort that despite the recession of the last decade, despite the rise in unemployment (and recently, even a slight temporary fall in trade union membership) nevertheless, the trade unions remain intact: there has been no collapse in membership and trade union morale as there was after 1926 or in the 1930s.

The rules of the trades unions established in the last 150 years all point in the direction of militant action and political objects. The social conditions of the 1980s will force the mass of trade union members to take those traditions to heart once again.

The firemen's constitution states:- "The FBU recognises that workers, however employed, can only improve their lot by their own endeavours and organisation. A richer and fuller life can be achieved only by similar means.

To this end the FBU is part of the working class movement and, linking itself with the international trade union and labour movement, has as its ultimate aim the bringing about of the socialist system of society."

Forward to the FBU rule book!

Liverpool and Scotland where local labour movement had already created their own LRC's.

Events and experiences again pushed workers into political action. The infamous Taff Vale judgement of July 1901 making the railway union pay damages for strike action led directly to the Swansea TUC affiliating to the LRC in September 1901.

"To work for the supercession of the capitalist system by a socialist order of society"

—NUR rulebook

Affiliations to the LRC jumped by 100,000 within a year. In the period of 1902-03 the affiliated figure was almost 850,000.

Later with the trades unions backing, the LRC stood candidates in by-elections. Startling success was achieved in the General Election of 1906. Out of 50 candidates, 29 were returned for Labour.

Those early workers MP's shook Parliament with regional dialects, working mens clothes, and even caps. The ruling class must have shaken in their boots at the prospects.

More and more workers, men and women joined the organised working class. Many of the trades, industries, and jobs were covered by several or more unions. Strength to achieve the aims could be increased through amalgamation. These new giant unions did not ease the discomfort of the bosses. Especially as the experiences of the war and the example of the Russian Revolution of 1917 brought new militancy into the labour movement.

Clause IV Part 4 of Labour's constitution

In 1918 the Labour Party introduced the now famous 'clause IV part IV' into its constitution. It has remained a thorn in the flesh of right wingers ever since.

The Giant T&GWU (GB and Ireland) established itself in 1921; Rule 2(a) stating "...and to endeavour by all means in their power to control the

TV preview....

WORKERS EXPLOITED in ASIA

If you manage to see this TV programme, about how western firms operate in South Asia, it will make your blood boil.

Teenage girls, separated from their families, are forced to live in glorified chicken-coops and work, under intense pressure, for 50p a day. But trade unionists will also understand what must be done to end this exploitation.

Many of the firms are British owned. Dunlop the British rubber company has sacked thousands of workers in the UK over the last few years, and has opened a factory in the Philippines. It is making the same goods with the same machines, but in the Philippines the workers are not allowed to strike, have not trade union rights and are paid £1.14 a day.

Children's health has born the brunt of this profiteering. A combination of low industrial wages and peasants being forced off their land at gunpoint for American fruit plantations (to employ labour at 50p a day) has led to severe food shortages. In the Philippines 78% of children under 6 are under-nourished and 1.5 million of those under-12s have become mentally retarded due to malnutrition!

The Tories have announced with fanfares their new solution for unemployment: so-called "Enterprise Zones". Thames TV's programme shows how such 'Free Trade Zones' have operated in the Philippines and Sri Lanka.

In Sri Lanka the right-wing UNP government has already destroyed many of the gains won by workers in the welfare system of free health and education, food subsidies and other reforms which improved real living standards for three decades. It has opened a Free Trade Zone where foreign firms can make big profits by cutting costs on safety, training and working conditions, and of course add the magic ingredient—cheap labour.

And just to make sure nothing can upset things for the "capitalist robber barons" he invited, President Jayawardena has banned the right to strike. Jayawardena boasts: "we give them the run of the works—we give them cheap labour", and that his labour is even cheaper than his Asian rivals. The owners of these factories are just as blatant: "We pay \$1.20 a day—that's only 15-20% of wages in Hong Kong".

The market for the textiles they produce is Europe. They are sold through Littlewoods and

Brent Kennedy
(British representative UFL)

C&A. Next time you go into one of these stores look at the price they charge, think of the wages they pay, and you'll get an idea of the super profits being made.

Sri Lanka used to have the highest wages in Asia after Japan; now they are about the lowest. One worker describes her life of drudgery, 9 hours a day, 7 days a week for about £3.50.

But what the film doesn't tell you is that in order to force down wages the UNP government had to destroy much of the traditional democratic rights, unleash racist pogroms and attempt to completely smash the workers' own organisations, the trade unions.

Trade unions are incompatible with these new schemes during a world economic crisis. That's why the UNP regime has banned the right to strike for the majority of the working class.

It tried to smash opposition unions in a purge of workplace union organisers which led to the general strike of 1980. 20,000 trade unionists are blacklisted and still out of work 18 months later, with no means of subsistence except from the solidarity of fellow workers in Sri Lanka and Europe. If the UNP is not stopped, it will take Sri Lanka along the road to South Korea or the Philippines.

Only the labour move-

Sri Lankan President J.R. Jayawardena



Sri Lanka used to have the highest wages in Asia after Japan, now they are about the lowest

'A Small World'
ITV (Thames)
Tuesday
19 January
10.30 pm

ment can prevent Sri Lanka's slide towards such a dictatorship subject to the every whim of Western businessmen and governments. Only the joint action of the trade unions on an international level can successfully combat mass unemployment and misery wages.

The message of this programme is that capitalism has welded the planet into one market with a world division of labour. The economies of the European and Asian countries are completely interdependent. Workers are exploited by the same companies operating in different continents, and it is up to our unions to organise joint action to combat this exploitation.

The bosses who own these companies care as little for the 60,000 British textile workers made redundant in the last two years, as for the Sri Lankan girls whose lives they ruin in near slavery. Any attempt to win back jobs in Britain at the expense of these girls through import controls would further divide the international workforce.

If successful it would complete the destitution of those workers and their dependents. Instead, British trade unionists should give support to the unions in Sri Lanka and elsewhere trying to get these workers organised and fighting for higher wages.

The United Federation of Labour is making efforts to organise the workers in the Sri Lankan Free Trade Zone in spite of the bosses' and government's use of victimisation, blacklisting, security guards ringing the perimeter wire and the banning of trade union rights. The FTZ has given jobs to 15,000 girls who have no experience of factory work and would not otherwise have been on the labour market.

But the tax concession, subsidies and low costs have already led to the closure of three large textile factories outside the Zone with a loss of 7,000 jobs! Just as the workers in the rest of the island have a common interest in bettering the wages and conditions of those in the FTZ, so the British unions have a common interest in helping their Sri Lankan brothers and sisters put an end to the days of cheap labour.

Please send messages of support and financial donations from your LP or trade union branch to the United Federation of Labour, 17 barrack lane, Colombo 2, Sri Lanka.

STALINISM LIVES ON



With the clampdown by the regime in Poland, the wheel of Stalinism has once again turned full circle.

During the period of Solidarity's growth, the air in Eastern Europe had thickened with promises of reform. 'Liberal' elements within the regime, as well as Walesa's misguided dissident advisors, tried to convince the workers that their hard-won independent trade unions could exist side by side with the Stalinist state.

Also in other Eastern European countries, such as Hungary, the ruling bureaucracy had to admit that bureaucratism, repression and gross privilege had been rife in the past. But now, they falsely claimed, these 'mistakes' were being corrected and the interests of the workers and the rulers were as one.

Even today in Poland, the military rulers keep up the pretence that they are continuing the 'reformist' line which the bureaucracy was forced to adopt by the workers' mighty movement following July 1980. This reflects their fear of continuing unrest and resistance among the workers, with deepening political instability and economic chaos.

The repressive and parasitical nature of the Stalinist regime in Russia and Eastern Europe, as well as its ability to beat tactical retreats, have been demonstrated over and over again in the post-war period.

Tragically the leadership of Solidarity failed to learn

the lessons of history and prepare the Polish workers' movement for the life and death struggles it faced. This created the possibility for the bureaucracy to strike viciously when the workers' movement began to ebb.

To prepare for the even greater struggles impending in Poland and Eastern Europe in the period of crisis and instability that lies ahead, it is necessary that any mistaken belief in the ability of the Stalinist regimes to be democratised should be dispelled.

No clearer lesson in this regard will be found than the original exercise in 'destalinisation' by the Russian bureaucracy, which also created enormous illusions among sections of the Communist parties and the labour movement internationally that the repressive rule of Stalinism could be phased out from the top.

At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1956, three years after Stalin's death, the new First Secretary of

Personality cult condemned, but caste privileges remain

the Russian Communist Party, Krushchev, dramatically condemned the 'cult of the personality' surrounding Stalin. Many of the policies of the despot who had strangled the world revolution came under attack.

By
Roger Shriver

For three decades, the privileged and viciously repressive bureaucracy had been eating away at the enormous gains the working class had made in the October revolution of 1917. As a result of the isolation of the revolution in a backward peasant economy with a small working class, an elite of millions of officials took power (and still holds power) in the Soviet Union.

The countless acts of treachery to the world revolution committed by this bureaucracy and their main representative, Stalin, did not worry the new leadership in 1956. What did concern them was the devastating effect this had on the Soviet economy.

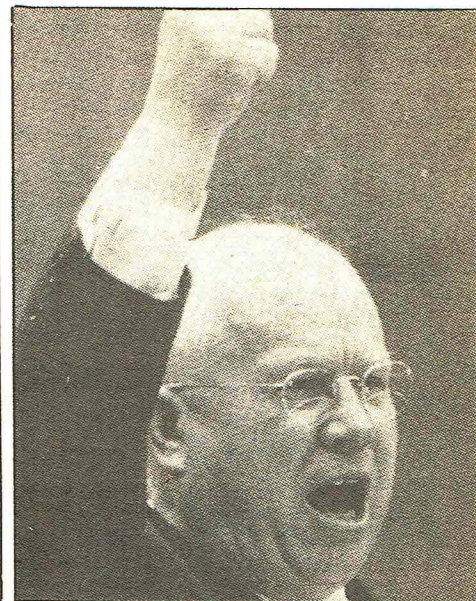
Dictatorship by committee

Not only was the economy stifled by the lack of conscious planning by the working class, but Stalin had taken into his own hands enormous powers of decision over all aspects of policy. This was an absurd situation in a country where technique had been raised to such a level that Russia, one year later, became the first country to launch a satellite.

From the early period of the revolution, Lenin and Trotsky had learned of the dangers of bureaucratisation. Trotsky devoted the last years of his life to fighting the corruption, the policy zig zags and betrayals of the socialist revolution by Stalinism. His aim was to forge a new revolutionary force which could restore workers' democracy in Russia.

Krushchev and the new generation of Soviet leaders had no such objective. They wanted to replace the arbitrary rule of Stalin by a 'dictatorship by committee' more suited to a modern industrialised economy.

Even leading bureaucrats had felt insecure under Stalin, in constant fear of an increasingly deranged dictator whose arbitrary arrests, demotions, sackings and execution did not encourage inventiveness in the ruling circles. Relaxing the police state apparatus was the only way short of political revolution, to let some fresh air into the system.



How is it that nearly thirty years after his death, Stalin's political system lives on in Russia and Eastern Europe? Although denounced by Krushchev (above right) in a secret speech in 1956 and subsequently by Krushchev's replacement, Brezhnev (left) there has been no fundamental change. This article examines why.

At the same time workers in Russia were beginning to rebel against the slave labour conditions of the factories. The leadership had to change at the top if it was not to be overthrown from beneath.

Denunciations of individual bureaucrats or groups of officials were not new. They had even served Stalin himself as a safety valve to divert the anger building up against the ruling bureaucracy as a whole. Krushchev went much further, however.

Out of the mouth of this leading Stalinist functionary, an abject time-server of the ex-dictator, came accusations that had before been denounced as 'Trotsky-fascist lies'. He exposed the 1935-38 purges, as Trotsky had done at the time.

Trotsky's exposure of the bankruptcy and of the river of blood which separated Stalinism from Bolshevism had led to his hounding and murder by Stalin's agents. Now Stalin's successor was saying that his old mentor had invented the term 'enemy of the people' to justify repression against loyal revolutionaries.

"The only proof of guilt used, against all the norms of current legal science, was the 'confession' of the accused himself and, as subsequent probing proved, 'confessions' were acquired through physical pressure against the accused. Many innocent people were victims," Krushchev said.

Bureaucracy's surface reforms

His allegations were accompanied, according to the official transcripts, by 'indignation' and 'tumult in the hall'. The Russian masses, fed on a diet of hymns of praise to Stalin, may have had cause for shock. Likewise if the 'Communist' Party had been a real workers' party genuine surprise might have been reflected at the congress.

But in fact, most delegates floated to the top of the bureaucracy like dead rats in a sewer. Many, like Krushchev, had had to crawl, claw and fawn their way up the apparatus.

Krushchev denounced Stalin's failure to hold even one CPSU conference from

1939 to 1952, compared to Lenin's meticulous attitude towards Party conferences even during the wars of intervention when the Soviet Union was fighting for survival.

Workers' democracy suppressed

Stalin had been turned into a superman, Krushchev complained, who "knows everything, sees everything, thinks for everyone, is infallible in his behaviour." But before and during the war, the 'infallible' Stalin not only executed most of the experienced fighters in the USSR military general staff but through his trust in his criminal pact with Hitler and his determination to personally conduct the war, was responsible for many of the 20 million Soviet war dead.

The nauseating self-praise of Stalin, his gross ignorance of agriculture (he had not visited a single village from 1928), his remoteness from the true situation in Russia were all major impediments for the bureaucracy.

But the bureaucracy's reforms were on the surface only. Krushchev at this congress spoke hopefully of reconciliation with Tito and the dissident national bureaucracy of Yugoslavia. But there was to be no rehabilitation of Trotsky. Krushchev praised Stalin for his fight against the man who embodied the revolutionary power of the working class, the leader who was the real inheritor of Lenin's method.

A few months later in Hungary workers were to learn of the new leadership's attitude to genuine workers' democracy. 1956 saw a forced adaptation by Stalinism, not its end.

The need to reforge the bureaucracy led to the reprint of Lenin's last testament, his letters and articles showing even in 1922-23 his distrust of Stalin and his fear of a growing bureaucracy.

But Krushchev merely ended with a call for unity around the central committee and a fight against the 'cult of the individual'. The system was to be fundamentally unchanged.

The new leaders did not

denounce the servitude of the official trade unions in the USSR. There was no criticism of the treacherous policy of 'socialism in one country' and the murder of revolution in China, Germany, Spain, Greece, etc.,. The working class, socialist revolution and Marxism were anathema to the bureaucracy as much as to the capitalist class.

Krushchev could not explain the social basis of Stalinist bureaucracy—the isolation of the Russian Revolution in a backward country, the political degeneration of the revolution etc.—because he himself represented the same bureaucracy, only without Stalin.

Political revolution required

Stalinism was already beginning to show its arthritic joints in 1956. Today, with the Soviet Union's economy growing at the same miserable rates as the capitalist powers, it is barely hobbling forward. The crisis in Poland has even more clearly exposed the bankruptcy of the 'Communist' officialdom with their special privileges.

Krushchev could not bring about a return to the policies of Lenin as that would have spelled an end to the caste whose interests he represented. The working class will have no such inhibitions.

As in Hungary in 1956, the workers' political revolution will pose the demands for real workers' soviets (councils) with elected lay officials recallable by the workers, for the arming of the working class instead of a standing army, for a rotation of official duties, and for no official to receive more than the average skilled worker.

The autocratic party leadership of Brezhnev and co., the army, police and secret police tops, the bureaucratic caste which is increasingly becoming fossilised and hereditary would shiver at the principles put forward by Lenin. It will be the workers moving into independent action, and no treacherous 'reforming' bureaucrats, who will settle accounts with Stalinism.

POLAND

The West's hypocrisy

The imposition of martial law in Poland has meant the trampling underfoot of all the brief freedoms won by Polish workers over the last eighteen months. But not only that. It has given the capitalist press in the West a field day to use the Polish events to discredit the ideas of socialism.

The Tory newspapers are very happy indeed to cover Jaruzelski with the mantle of orthodox "Marxist-Leninism" precisely in order to hold the general up as a true representative of "socialism". This military bureaucrat, who in fact has nothing in common with socialism, is thus used as a scarecrow to frighten workers in the West away from socialist ideas.

In doing this, we might add, they are indirectly assisted by the Morning Star, newspaper of the British 'Communist' Party, who continue to refer warmly to Poland as a "socialist" state, albeit one that has committed "mistakes".

The Tory press is now foaming at the mouth about the lack of democracy in Poland, yet it carefully avoids highlighting the real aims of the Polish workers—democratic workers' control and management—and the same press would fight tooth and claw against the British workers if they were in the same position as their Polish brothers and sisters before the military takeover.

A 'Rally for Poland' held two weeks ago in London was addressed by Denis Healey and Frank Chapple. But also speaking were Bernard Braine, and Geoff Rippon, Tory MPs, Bill



Pre-war military dictator Piłsudski



Army tanks in Gdansk

Rodgers, SDP MP, and Vladimir Bukovsky. Among the organisers of the meeting—all hypocritically sporting 'Solidarity' badges—were representatives of the 1939 Polish "government-in-exile"—the government of Piłsudski, itself a brutal military regime responsible for vicious repression of workers' rights.

The Polish workers were never at any stage fighting for a return to capitalism in Poland, they were not fighting to have the nationalised press taken over by millionaires, they were not fighting for their mines, shipyards and factories to be handed over to a handful of shareholders.

On the contrary, they were making demands and groping in the direction of a political revolution: for the retention of state ownership of the economy, for the

retention of a national plan of production—but for the establishment of democratic control and management by the workers themselves, not the state bureaucracy.

In their general outline, the demands put by the Polish workers were those predicted by Trotsky when, he said, the workers in Russia would move to restore the genuine soviets and workers' democracy that existed from 1917 to 1923.

Whereas the programme of Trotsky expresses the real needs of the Polish workers today, the policies of Bill Rodgers, Bukovsky, Rippon, and Co. are a piddling irrelevance to them.

When Labour and trade union leaders do protest against military rule in Poland, as they should, they should do it from the Polish workers' standpoint, and that does not mean rub-

bing shoulders with the people who would suppress the rights of British workers without batting an eye.

But the capitalists' real lack of concern for democracy in Poland is best seen in the attitude of the banks. Those Western bankers who are owed money by the Polish government are enormously relieved that 'discipline' has been restored in that country so they can now see the prospect of having some of their money back.

Poland owes a total of \$27,000m to the West, the bulk of it to over 500 private banks. Last year's re-payment of \$2,400m was deferred after negotiations, but only on the condition that the \$350m. interest for 1981 was paid. In the event, even that was not paid in full and the banks are now facing the prospect of having to re-negotiate all the

\$10,000m. of interest and capital due in 1982.

Before the military takeover, bankers were clearly hoping for some form of intervention to overcome the crisis in the Polish economy. One banker was reported in the Sunday Times—on the day of the 'coup'—as saying, "it would be a good thing if Russia invaded, because then she would be obliged to honour Poland's debts."

A Wall Street banker commented: "If the Polish government is successful in gaining better control, or if the Russians take over, it will be unfortunate for the Polish people, but the loans will be paid off." (Guardian 9. 12. 81.)

Putting it more crudely still, another western banker declared: "If a few people are shot in the cause of getting the economy moving again, then it would

be a small price to pay." (Sunday Times 20. 12. 81)

It is quite clear from this that despite the propaganda churned out daily by the capitalist press, there is a real identity of interest between the capitalist class in the West and the Stalinist bureaucracies in the East. Both would be bitterly opposed to the formation of a socialist government run democratically by the working class: both would be threatened by it.

The capitalist class uses the totalitarianism of Eastern Europe as a bogey to frighten their own workers and the Stalinist bureaucracies of the East use capitalism as a threat to frighten theirs. The capitalists and the Stalinists need each other. Workers need neither, and one day will do without either.

By John Pickard

GHANA

Which way forward?

The New Year's Eve coup in Ghana, led by Flight Lieutenant Jerry Rawlings, made an end to the corrupt regime of President Hilla Limann and the People's National Party government.

The coup, the second in two years led by Lt. Rawlings and the latest in a long series since 1966, reflects the terrible crisis in Ghanaian society.

The economy is in chaos. The world crisis of capitalism and falling commodity prices have severely hit Ghana, which depends on a single com-

modity—cocoa—for 70% of its export earnings.

The national currency (the cedi) has collapsed, with foreign currencies changing hands at up to 20 times the official exchange rate. In the capital, Accra, four out of five children are suffering from malnutrition—while in the countryside crops are rotting due to broken-down machinery, lack of transport and impassable roads.

Limann's government, reflecting the interests of the capitalists and the urban elite, was completely incapable of improving these nightmarish conditions. The coup undoubtedly has the support of the majority of the workers and peasants. Rawlings, while

banning all political parties—which are now viewed with complete cynicism by the masses—has come out as the champion of democracy and promised to sweep up the corruption of the previous regime.

The new military government, however, is confronted with the same enormous problems as its predecessor. As yet it has developed no clear strategy or programme to tackle these.

Rawlings himself still has illusions in the possibility of reforming the capitalist system. In a broadcast on 2 January he declared: "The business community has nothing to fear so long as it is honest and law-abiding."

It is possible, however,

that the pressure of the masses could force the military rulers to act against the capitalists, nationalise the main areas of the economy and bring production under state control.

While such measures would make possible limited reforms, it would not in itself eliminate corruption or solve the basic problems of poverty and underdevelopment. Unless genuine control by the working masses is established, the danger will remain of a new military-bureaucratic elite establishing itself in power.

In Liberia, for example, the popular military government established by Sergeant Samuel Doe quickly degenerated into a

dictatorship.

On the road of capitalism there is no way out for the workers and peasants of Ghana. But socialist change involves not only nationalisation and state planning; its essence is workers' democracy as the only means of ensuring that production and society are run in the interests of the working people.

Nor can socialism be built on a narrow national base, let alone in an economy as weak and underdeveloped as Ghana. Socialists in Ghana must link their struggle to that of the workers and peasants in other West African countries, especially Nigeria, and the labour movement internationally.

The working class in Ghana is the key force in the revolutionary situation which is now developing. The Ghanaian workers have long and militant traditions. Victory for the masses over poverty, exploitation and repression will only be possible if the working class, organised on a socialist programme, takes its place at the head of the struggle.

By George Collins



Flight lieutenant Rawlings

CHILE

Support Chilean miners

More than 3,500 miners at Victoria de Lebu and Schwager mines in Chile have gone on strike for a living wage. The miners earn only £40 a month with which they have to feed themselves and their families.

Action: Send telegrams and letters of support to: Federation Minera de Chile, Calle San Antonio 726, Departamento 56, Santiago, Chile.

Both mines are situated in the coal mining region of Chile and the strikers are demanding a seven per cent increase in wages and no loss of bonuses. So far the employers have offered only a 2% increase.

"Lessons of Chile" pamphlet. Price 50p (plus 20p p&p) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

If they really cared...

Dear Comrade

In the 'Militant' (4 December) Caroline Wright referred to the sanctimonious hypocrisy of the Tories and other reactionary organisations who pretend to be concerned about the 'sanctity of life', whilst they cut to the bone social expenditure, or remain silent about it.

Just after reading the 'Militant' I saw an article in the 'Guardian' (5 December) which highlighted this sort of crime even more graphically. Over the past five years, it said, no less than 97 children have died quite unnecessarily because Westminster Hospital could not afford to carry out enough of the expensive bone marrow transplants required to save their lives. No headlines, just half a dozen column inches because a millionaire had donated £100,000 to help the hospital in future. Until the money runs out, a few lives will be saved.

When there is an alternative, depriving hospitals of the necessary money and thereby causing deaths, is not merely the 'unfortunate' consequences and 'harsh realities' of the recession. It is murder. For the price of a single tank, or for much less than that of a missile, the Westminster Hospital, and all the other

under-equipped hospitals, could be staffed and equipped permanently.

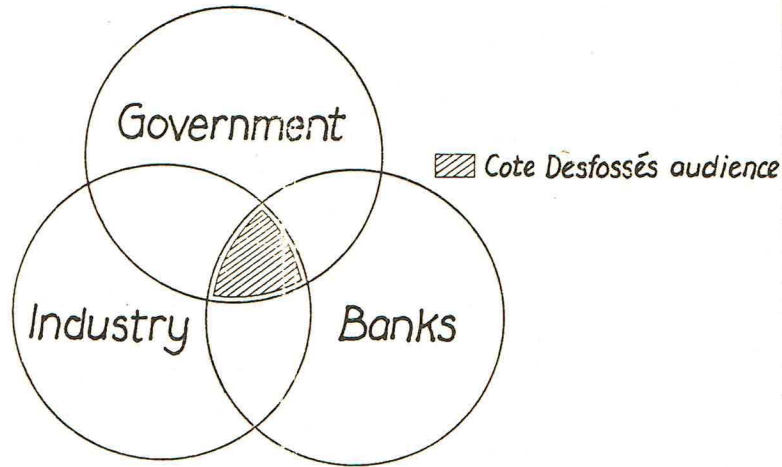
What a condemnation of our society that the lives of ill or handicapped children often depend on whether or not this or that millionaire makes a suitable donation! Meanwhile the resources of the economy are squandered. Thirty per cent of industrial capacity is left idle, 3 million able bodied people are without useful work. All this in aid of the bank accounts of the millionaires, philanthropic and otherwise.

Labour must parade in front of all workers the waste and corruption of private 'enterprise'. It must expose the way that the banks and monopolies strangle and milk the NHS for super profits. It must expose the fact that, for example, the total deposits in tax-haven banks amounts to no less than \$500,000 million ('Economist' 22 August), money which should be expropriated and put to use!

It is about time that the vast resources of the TUC, the unions and the Labour Party were mobilised to lay bare the crimes of capitalist society. A few Party political broadcasts committed to this task, and the political attention in this country would begin a rapid transformation favourable to the ideas of socialism. More broadcasts for the LPYS!

Yours sincerely
Steve Appleton
Leeds NE Labour Party

THE DECISION-MAKERS OF FRANCE ARE FEW AND CLOSELY CONNECTED



AND THE DAILY NEWSPAPER AT THEIR PLACE OF DECISION-MAKING IS COTE DESFOSSÉS

Bosses show off their academic intellect

Dear Comrades

The old Tory myth goes that our captains of industry got where they are today not only by their hard work, but through their intelligence, intellect and academic abilities. Being born into the right class, going to the right schools and knowing the right people has nothing to do with it of course.

Recently a letter was circulated to the business community in the UK

canvassing for advertising for the French newspaper 'Cote Desfossés', no doubt worried that British investors may have been put off by the election victory of the French Socialist Party.

Aimed at the executive who has trouble reading the written word, 'Cote Desfossés' summoned all their academic resources to explain the class nature of French society; "As you know the REAL DECIDERS IN FRANCE ARE THE FINANCIAL MEN." You can't be much clearer than that. They even put it in capital letters just in case our puzzled execu-

tive couldn't quite get the point. But if he was still struggling to digest this piece of information, no matter. All he had to do was turn over the A4 size paper and study the diagram overleaf, reprinted above.

However, while this may have taxed the brains of our bosses and business tops, if simplistic diagrams such as these were used in infants schools to explain to working class children the class nature of society, the socialist transformation of society would be that much nearer!

Yours fraternally
Pete Greatrex
Sheffield

From Star Wars to Class Battles

Dear Comrades

No doubt as trade unionists get wise to the prospect of helicopters being used to break their picket lines, such as that used in the Laurence Scott dispute last year, the employers through the state will resort to ever more bizarre methods in defence of private property and privilege. Straight out of 'Star Wars' Security Equipment Supplies have sent three police forces the 'Valkyrie'. At £350 a time, weighing four pounds with a range of 40 yards it has been designed to "look outwardly much like a science fiction 'death ray'." ('Manchester Evening News' 7.11.81)

It is a strobe gun whose 5 flashes-a-second flickering effect, borrowed from the disco, is designed to make people sick, and induce a mild form of epilepsy. It is to be used to control rioters.

Democratic control of the police, including its weapons and operations, needs to be fought for by the labour movement as a matter of urgency if science fiction is not to be turned into fact.

Yours fraternally
Leon Kaplan
Manchester-Ardwick YS

The socialist traditions of Ireland, North and South

Dear Comrades

You may have watched the television documentation of the novel 'Strumpet City', which deals with the lock-outs and general strike in Dublin in 1913. In Britain the serial was shown at night, while in Northern Ireland it was buried amidst the drivel of afternoon television. Why?

Larkin led the Belfast police strike of 1907 when he demanded they be unionised. He gave fiery and potent expression to the aspirations of the oppressed workers of Belfast and Dublin at the early part of this century. The bosses haven't forgotten and they don't want the workers to know. That is why at peak viewing time on television they show garbage like 'Crossroads' rather than the bitter class struggle portrayed in the series 'Strumpet City'. Yet what is more dramatic, Benny's rabbit face fumbling around the Crossroad's Motel, or the real-life story of the fight of Dublin workers for bread and socialism?

We have great socialist traditions in Ireland. Jim Larkin, who supported the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, formed our biggest union, the Transport and General Workers, while Connolly thought and fought with both the Marxist pen and sword.

The labour movement in the North will echo Larkin's past louder than ever, with the formation of a mass socialist party based on the trade unions.

Yours fraternally
Glen Simpson
Antrim Labour League

Don't let youth get crushed by Tebbit's law

Dear Comrades

Once again the capitalist and Tory sergeant at arms (namely Norman Tebbit) has launched another serious attack on the working class. Not only has he attacked the trade union movement in general with his trade union legislation, but he has now directly attacked the unemployed youth. They are one of the weakest sections of the working class through isolation and inexperience in labour struggles.

Tebbit's proposals for the government's new national training scheme is doing nothing more than press-ganging the youth into slave labour. The £1 billion a year plan is being partially financed by the money saved from not paying the unemployed youth unemployment or supplementary benefit. Instead of paying the full entitlement which is the unemployed's by right they are being forced to take approximately a 25% pay cut and forced to do 40 hours work! It appears slave labour is once again being legalised.

Remember, unemployment or supplementary benefit is supposed to be the minimum of money people need to survive, and this is set by the government.

These new proposals will also be used to distort the unemployment figures as people, forced or otherwise, who join this training

scheme are not employed as such. They are undergoing one year's intensive training with no full time employment guaranteed at the end.

It is the duty of the labour and trade union movement as a whole—and not just the LPYS as it has been in the past—to actively campaign using bold socialist policies against Tebbit's new proposals. By doing this the youth will be won to the ideas of socialism, as socialism is the only way forward for the working class. The youth will become educated in, and armed with bold socialist ideas and policies that will ensure victory in the coming battles.

The youth are the leaders of tomorrow. They must not be crushed now.

Yours fraternally
B Johnson
unemployed electrician
Scunthorpe

Dead-end for youth in Tory Britain

Dear Comrades

When flyposting we met four young people hanging about killing time. Whilst putting up posters, chatting, and trying to sell them papers they said that they were opposed to Thatcher but were 'into glue sniffing.'

As soon as we moved away they started sniffing the wet glue. When we finished the next display they ran down the tunnel and pushed their noses into those posters. Is this the only thing that dead-end, no job Tory Britain offers

youth?

The LPYS must get to the youth on YOP courses, on the dole or lucky enough to have a 'proper' job and show them a future worth fighting for. We must push the Labour Party and the trade union leaderships into taking action to get this government out and to involve youth in that struggle. We cannot let our generation waste themselves. The future is ours—let us make sure we win it.

Yours fraternally
a Leicester youth

'Extra-parliamentary action'—where would we be without it?

Dear Comrades

I wonder if the leaders of the EETPU support Michael Foot's stand against 'extra parliamentary activity'? They don't, judging by a recent donation of theirs to the National Museum of Labour History.

They gave four paintings of landmarks in our movement's history. One is of the transportation of the Tolpuddle Martyrs—an example of early trade unionists who were prepared to stand up to the ruling class's law, without whose self-sacrifice in doing so we would have no labour movement today.

Another is of electricians cutting off the power supply to the Albert Hall when the management refused to allow George Lansbury to speak there. Doubtless such

action would cause the same hysterical denunciations from the Tories and their press today as it did then. I wonder what our union and labour leaders would do about this sort of interference with the rights of the Albert Hall's management against the right of free speech for the labour movement?

There never seems to be a shortage of big names in the movement who are ready to make sentimental gestures of respect to the sacrifices and struggles of the past. Without them they would not have their careers and positions. But when the ranks cry out for the same boldness in the cause of socialism when it's time for a firm stand against the ruling class today, all too many leaders say 'What put my neck on the line? That's old fashioned!'

Yours fraternally
Tony Cross

Still waiting for Jerusalem

Dear Editor

The events within the Labour Party during the last few weeks have prompted me to write to you.

I joined the Labour Party over 17 years ago fired with enthusiasm over the 'promised land' that was to come from 'the white hot heat of the technological revolution' proposed by the 1964 Wilson government. Since then Labour governments have come and gone and the promises are now a dismal memory. Every attempt to run the capitalist system

more efficiently than the Tories has ended in failure.

Yet our leaders never learnt the lesson. They still maintain the illusion that a 'reformed' capitalism can take us to the new Jerusalem. There are none so blind as those who don't want to see. The right wing of our party have now lost all the political arguments. Their policies are discredited. They have nothing to offer the millions of unemployed, the youth, the homeless or those on poverty wages. They no longer advocate any policy to solve the crisis we are in.

But do they make way for those who have an answer? No! They would rather destroy the Labour Party by bureaucratically expelling those who do have an answer.

The rank and file of the Labour Party, however, will resist the machinations of the right wing with all their power. The future belongs to us and not to those whose past policies have served the interests of capitalism and imperialism. Please find enclosed £30 for your fighting fund. I wish you every success in 1982.

Fraternally
D.R. Cozens
Vice-chairman
Coventry SE CLP

Seen a good film, play or TV programme recently which would be of interest to other socialists? Write a review for Militant

Build

MILITANT

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

ads

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target for year
Eastern	5990		7100
East Midlands	4525		5500
Hants & Dorset	3641		5200
Humberside	2302		3500
London East	7054		7600
London West	4264		4800
London South	6145		5500
Manchester & Lancs	3657		5800
Merseyside	5212		6600
Northern	5695		8600
Scotland East	3268		4400
Scotland West	4975		7500
Southern	6690		7100
South West	3439		3500
Wales East	2054		2600
Wales West	3534		4600
West Midlands	6706		8600
Yorkshire	6018		9000
Others	19894		12500
Total received	105,063		120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

FUND OF SUPPORT FOR MILITANT

Over £9,000 in one week for Militant's Fighting Fund; that's a record! So is the 1981 total of £105,000! Very many thanks to every contributor.

Despite the problems of having to use skis or waders to get round to see people, and the difficulties with the post, our supporters have done a tremendous job in the last few days.

Record prizes for the 'Winter Draw' also brought record ticket sales. All this in some of the worst weather conditions this century!

One reader in Port Talbot was unable to attend a meeting owing to trains and buses being stopped, but instead walked or waded round to other readers in the town and collected over £90 for the fighting fund!

That's the example we want followed for the whole of the first quarter of 1982.

We've had appeal sheets back, with cash, from numerous towns and villages, including Hadleigh (Essex), the Isle of Wight, Poole, Hounslow, Manchester Chorlton and Wythenshawe and Birmingham. Three large donations of £350, £300 and £200 have been promised or sent by readers who obviously are going without holidays or similar in order to support socialism.

Also, £40 from supporters of 'Inqaba ya basebenzi', the journal of the Marxist Workers' tendency of the ANC, came with appreciation of the role that our paper has

played in reporting the growing support for free trade unions in Southern Africa.

The attacks on 'Militant' in the last few weeks again had an answer at Labour Party meetings in Nottingham, W London, Lambeth, Deptford, Shepton Mallet, Coventry SE Party (£27 at GMC), among others.

Young Socialists' branches to support us include Coventry SE, Bexley, Littlehampton, Neath, Birmingham Ladywood, Northampton South. Coventry SE LPYS tell us they are going to make a weekly donation—does your LPYS branch support the ideas put forward in 'Militant'?

Trade unionists to support us include TGWU 5/909 branch £20, ISTC members T Mellon and T Sharkey (Corby), two UCATT members from East Ham (both called Jim) sent £45, T O'Sullivan (Convenor, P B Cows), Dave Smith (Area Officer), S McKenzie (both NUPE), C Tindley (NUTGW official), Knowsley Militant NALGO supporters, Brit. Leather Shop Stewards (Birkenhead), 'Geoff & Ron' (Huddersfield AUEW), money collected at a recent BIFU educational by a supporter, and K Pattison (Leeds TU expenses passed on).

Christmas socials included £16 raised in 'pints for Militant' at a social organised by Cardiff SE CLP members, £23 from Chatham, £25 in Birmingham Selly Oak, 'Ashington Class Struggle' £7, Blyth social £12.52, Chester-le-Street £35, and "party games" in Canterbury and a film night in Wandsworth. £28 from a New Year social in Harlow and nearly £15 collected at Janice and Steve's wedding (Stevenage), plus the pro-

RECORD WEEK £9128

The MILITANT WINTER DRAW raised nearly £2,000 after all expenses were paid and the first prize winner, P Giblett, donated £300 straight to the Fighting Fund.

MILITANT WINTER DRAW 9 JANUARY 1982

Many thanks from the Militant to all those who participated in selling and buying tickets to raise funds for our paper. The winning tickets were: 1st Prize Video System or £1,000 403447 P Giblett, London. 2nd Prize TV/Radio/Cassette or £100 02004 B Johnstone, Newcastle. Plus, for a cassette recorder or £25 of socialist literature: 32212 L Lowe, Nr. Bolton, 07795 A Rudd, Hackney, 33162 C Laris, Bristol, 46114 R Gallacher, Stirlingshire, 73093 R Cura, London, 11761 P Skyte, Leeds, 77168 S Naik, W Bromwich, 37262 C Hodson, Cardiff.

ceeds of a party in Ipswich all also boosted the contribution from the Eastern line on our chart.

We can't mention all our individual contributors this week, but a special thanks to P Taaffe £25 (fee for Granada's "Week on Friday"), M Campbell (Headingley LP) £23, B Parslow (Bristol), B Buitekant (Southend) £52, J Lerner (Salford) £10, F Andrew (Denny) £2, C Patel (Peckham CLP), M Wallis (London Tenants Organisation) and M Fisher (Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton) all three tenners and R Goodspeed and J Boadle gave us £20 each from tax rebates and a sponsored slim respectively, while a Bradford supporter has raised £23 from a sponsored swim.

J Bulmer (Stockton LPYS) sent us £1.50, being back on the dole after a YOPS scheme: we appeal particularly to our older

readers who won't ever have to work on a YOPS scheme to contribute at least this amount regularly.

In fact 'Militant's' next target of £35,000 by Easter will mean raising even more each week than we did in 1981! So the work starts now!

Whatever the weather every 'Militant' supporter must seek out ways of 'making money for 'Militant.' £1 raised each week by just 2,700 of our readers would keep us on target—socials, jumble sales, sponsored events would be welcome extras.

This year is already making big demands on 'Militant's' small resources—the fight against an attempted witch-hunt is not the least of our activities.

In 1982 the enormous fund of support for 'Militant' must be tapped to build 'Militant's' funds!

LEEDS MILITANT RALLY/ FOLK NIGHT

Sunday 17 January 1982

Guilford Hotel, The Headrow, Leeds

"WHAT WE STAND FOR"

Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor of Militant) 6.15pm-8.15pm

Exhibition on "Marxist traditions of the Labour Party"

Photographic display; book stall

FOLK NIGHT WITH "WHISKY GROG" 8.30-10.30pm

Tickets £1 (50p for unemployed)

from Jane Ingham. Tel: Leeds 741961

'WHAT WE STAND FOR' MEETINGS

HAVANT Militant Readers Meeting: 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Nick Brooks (Militant Editorial Board). 8.00 pm, 18 January 1982, Focus, Lea Park, Havant

LANCASTER Militant Readers Meeting: 'What Militant really stands for'. Friday 15 January, 7.30 pm, (back room), 'Ring of Bells' pub, Lancaster. Speaker: Gerry Lerner.

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY Militant Supporters Society. Monday 18 January: 'What future for Poland?' Debate between Ralph Simons (Area Secretary, Communist Party) and Gerry Lerner (Eccles Labour Party).

Monday 25 January: 'What is Trotskyism?' Speaker: Tony Aitman (Liverpool Kirkdale Labour Party)

DERBY: Thursday 21 January, 7.30 pm. Speakers: Dave Nellist and Malcolm Bryan (NUR) at Trent Social Club, Charnwood Street.

GRANTHAM: Tuesday 26 January, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Brian Ingham. Venue to be announced.

NOTTINGHAM: Wednesday 27 January, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Brian Ingham. Albert Hall Institute, Derby Road.

SUTTON IN ASHFIELD: Thursday 28 January, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Brian Ingham. At Sutton Centre.

SWANSEA Militant Public Meeting: 'Fight the Witch-hunt!' Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor, 'Militant'). Monday 25 January, 7.30 pm, Main Hall, Dynevor School, Swansea

DAGENHAM Militant Public Meeting: 'What we really stand for'. 8.00 pm sharp, Tuesday 19 January, Marsh Green School, Whitebarn Lane (off New Road), Dagenham. Main speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant)

Anglo/Irish Social. Sat. February 20th, 7.30pm. "Crusheen" as at LPYS Summer Camp, and other guests and stars at Fairholt house, Whitechapel Road (opposite Aldgate East Tube). Tickets available from Anne Beales: 474 6584, £1.50 and 50p unwaged (£2 at the door).

'Introduction to Marxist Economics'—South Yorks reprint of original. 35p each or 10 for £1.80 inc. p&sp. P Greatrex, 14 Harcourt Rise, Chapeltown, Sheffield.

1981 MILITANT Index. Precise guide to issues 534-582. 20p each (+ stamp). Orders: Rich Lee, 28 Harrington Road, Bridlington, Humberside.

LIVERPOOL Militant Readers meeting, 'What We Stand For'. Speaker: Ted Grant. Wednesday, Jan. 20th 7.30pm, Central Hall, Renshaw St.

BRADFORD Militant Readers Meeting: 'What we stand for'. Hear Ted Grant (Political Editor of Militant) at Room 1, Floor 2, Central Library, Bradford, on Monday 25 January, 7.30 pm.

BRACKNELL Militant Readers Meeting: 'What we stand for'. Thursday 21 January, 7.45 pm, Griffin House (opp. Red Lion pub), High Street, Bracknell. Speaker: Peter Jarvis

HUYTON Militant Readers Meeting: 'What we stand for'. Speaker: Ted Grant. Chair: Irene Buxton (Chairperson, Knowsley JSSC, personal capacity). Monday 18 January, 7.30 pm, The Rose & Crown, Derby Road, Huyton Town Centre (opposite shopping centre and dole).

MANCHESTER Militant Rally 'What we stand for'. Speaker: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant). Chairman: Eddie Furey (FOC SOGAT). Wednesday 27 January, 7.30 pm, Hulme Labour Club, Bonsall Street, Hulme, Moss Side, + exhibition showing growth of 'Militant'.

LEWISHAM Readers Meeting: 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Wayne Jones. 7.30 pm, Monday 25 January, Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road, London SE14

Militant 'What We Stand For' meetings in Devon and Cornwall

Monday 18th January, 7.30pm, London Inn, Paignton, Torbay. Speaker: Bryan Beckingham.

Tuesday 19th January, 7.30pm, Co-op Education Hall, 11 Western College Rd., Mutley, Plymouth. Speaker: Bryan Beckingham.

Wednesday 20th January, 7.30pm, Camborne Community Centre, Camborne, Cornwall. Speaker: Bryan Beckingham.

Militant Marxist discussion groups, every fortnight in Waltham Forest. For details contact: Janice Dale or Mike Cleverley (01) 519 0961.

Robb Caledon:

Photo: MILITANT



Most of the Robb Caledon workers have retained their jobs—but it is also a defeat as British Shipbuilders have managed to shed the yard, setting the future scene for privatisation of BS yards

If you fight you can win!

The Robb Caledon shipyard fight is over. On Christmas Eve, after 14 weeks of occupation, the 127 workers agreed at a mass meeting to accept a settlement worked out by union officials.

It is part victory, part defeat. For the workers themselves and for the Dundee labour movement, it is a victory.

Eighty-six workers, including all the apprentices, are to be employed immediately by Kestrel Marine, who have taken over part of the yard and will be using it to build eight oil rig modules for BP.

The remaining 41 workers will be temporarily unemployed, but provided that agreement can be reached by the unions involved, they will be taken on by Kestrel and retrained in other skills in a phased programme.

Although working for a private company means a step backward, with less job security, Kestrel have a good record for pay and conditions. They are a somewhat unusual company in that they came into existence after another occupation six years ago.

In 1975, the workers at Smith and Hutton, a ship-repairing firm, occupied their yard and won a victory

By Ewan Duncan (EETPU, Kestrel Marine, Dundee, personal capacity)

when they were taken over by the new firm of Kestrel Marine.

They are now one of the most profitable companies in the North Sea oil industry. In addition to the BP order, they are believed to be after another big order for British Gas, which only they are big enough to take on.

For the workers of British Shipbuilders, however, this settlement is a defeat. BS management, headed by their new hard-line chairman Atkinson, have not conceded an inch. They have got rid of the Caledon and all its workforce. A very dangerous precedent has been set for the "privatisation" of the industry.

Workers in other yards are already under threat. 100 redundancies have been announced at Scott Lithgow on the lower Clyde; the Barrow yard is under threat of closure—there will not be a Kestrel Marine to take on all the other shipbuilding workers whose jobs are under the threat of the axe!

The main lesson of the Robb Caledon struggle is that when workers fight, they can win. Two years ago, the yard's fate seemed to be sealed. Even a national union delegate conference agreed to a corporate plan for the industry which excluded the Dundee yard. Only the workers' resistance, with the invaluable support of the Yarrow yard in Glasgow, kept the fight alive.

They forced BS to agree to a "reprieve", but after eighteen months of futile attempts by management to win new orders, the final closure was announced for 18 September 1981.

Again the future looked grim, with the prospect of the dole for all the workers and the yard going to waste. It was the workers' determination, aided by a national overtime ban and a series of one-day strikes which kept the struggle going.

Against this background, the settlement is no small achievement, but the struggle to save British Shipbuilders goes on. Other yards will now have to learn from the struggles of the Caledon workforce.

Stop the flags of convenience

In November last year the 'Antama', a Turkish owned ship flying a Panama flag, sailed into Hull docks to unload. The following day the Turkish crew asked the National Union of Seamen to assist them.

They hadn't been paid for 6 months and when they had it was below the agreed International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) rates.

On 27 November the cargo had been discharged and the lockgate men—members of the NUR—blacked the ship. The crew went on strike.

Three days earlier, the ship had transferred to a Maltese flag. The owners refused to negotiate on the grounds that under the Panamanian regulations, the change of flag allowed 'non-articles' (contracts of employment) to be signed.

The IFT, which mainly deals with seamen's pro-

blems, were also involved. The NUS were taken to court to stop asking the NUR to black the ship. In fact, almost everybody in sight had injunctions placed on them!

The Turkish crew were even threatened with being shot or jailed on return to Turkey; it is 'illegal' to strike on a Turkish ship. However the Turkish seamen's union said technically it was legal because of the flag of convenience.

Court's decision on Hull docks sets dangerous precedent

However, in the end, a disastrous precedent was sent in union law. Up till now, many ships have waited in Hull, or other enclosed docks with a militant tradition, where the ship can be kept in by refusing to open the lock gates until the owners cough up. This was the first case lost in Hull. The court decided that workers can picket at the place of work but not on the place of work.

The 'flag of convenience' ships have become a tremendous problem,

undermining all the gains made in pay and conditions. Third world crews are used on appalling rates of pay and even under threat from their own countries. The Phillipines must be the worst example, where the promise not to take industrial action has to be signed and incredibly no man can go to sea unless a guarantor is left behind in the Phillipines!

Flags of convenience also threaten safety conditions. Six months' provisional registration of ships under a flag is available without inspection. This means that older boats can escape regular inspection by changing flags every six months. The 'Antama' itself is 22 years old (a ship's 'life' is usually around 25 years), yet through registering under different flags it can escape inspection.

The NUS, with the help of dockers, are fighting a tough, drawn out battle on this issue. A vigorous international campaign is needed to crush the 'flags of convenience' practice of the shipping bosses.

Jane Hartley spoke to Ken Turner, full-time official, NUS, Humberside.

SAVE SEALINK!



Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

The crew occupying the Sealink ship 'Senlac' discuss tactics and the situation

By Bill North (Brighton Trades Council, personal capacity)

The strike called by the Merchant Navy and Airline Officers Association in a bid to save the threatened Sealink services has received total support from the membership.

They are fighting Tory plans to axe 450 jobs and cut the Newhaven-Dieppe service as well as two ships on the Harwich-Dunkirk/Zeebrugge line.

The seamen correctly see this run-down as the start of Tory plans to privatise the company—by slimming down the service the Tories hope to make it economically attractive to

'private enterprise' to take on the service.

Supportive action has been taken by workers at other Sealink ports, and members of the National Union of Seamen have joined the sit-in by workers on the Newhaven ferry Seniac. An historic meeting is hoped to take place this week between the NUS and the MNAOA, the first time such close co-operation has been planned between the two unions. Meetings are to be held too with the French seamen's union in Dieppe, who also face redundancy threats.

It is through the labour movement that the Tories' plans can be turned back and jobs saved. The Sealink workers must be wary however, of involving local

Tory MPs in their campaign. The Tory MPs in the area are worried about their future election prospects as the local population will quite rightly hold the Tories responsible for the run-down of jobs in the area. These MPs are acting hypocritically as it is the political doctrine they support and campaigned for in the '79 election that is responsible for the situation. With the massive redundancies at British Leyland, British Rail, British Shipbuilders and so on it should be crystal clear what the Tories' attitude towards the nationalised industries are—the workers must rely on their own organisations to beat them back.

'We'll not let conditions go back 70 years'

ASLEF lobby

ASLEF members are in no mood to compromise in their fight to defend the guaranteed eight hour day and to win the 3% rise due to them.

This feeling was clearly shown when members from branches in the London area were joined by representatives from the Scottish Region in a lobby of the union leadership. As one Scottish member explained, they had come down to ensure that the Executive Committee did not back down during the last minute talks.

Unfortunately, the leadership of the union, far from meeting and welcoming this show of support, attempted instead to give them the runaround. The

waiting members were outraged; "I didn't travel 400 miles to be treated like this," said one Scottish ASLEF member.

As one, the meeting set off from the union headquarters in Hampstead for the talks in Euston. At Euston the members piled into the plush foyer of the newly built Rail House, whether talks were to be held. Branch banners went up and a meeting was held on the spot.

Jimmy Traun, Scottish District Council got roars of approval when he reported the decision of the Scottish membership to call for an all out strike.

Also cheered was Steve Forey, Kings Cross ASLEF Branch Secretary, when he reported that guards (NUR members) at Kings Cross had rejected flexi-rostering and also planned to take strike action.

When a member of the BR management attempted to intervene by asking the members to be 'reasonable' this was greeted with laughter, jeering and cries of 'you be reasonable, honour the pay settlement!'

Eventually, Derek

Fullick, newly elected ASLEF President, appeared to assure the membership that there would be no compromise on the eight hour day. He was left in no doubt about the feelings of the members before he hurried back up to the talks.

The management and press who were swarming around like vultures were also left in no doubt about what the membership felt! When Lew Adams, another ASLEF Executive Committee member came out of the meeting to report on the situation he was ringed by members who kept away the press and shielded him from the cameras. Railwaymen have experienced the lies and filth of the Fleet Street propaganda machine on many occasions in the past.

With the ASLEF Executive still locked in interminable talks, the lobby was wound up. But there is no doubt that if the fighting spirit of those locomen is matched by the ASLEF leadership then the British Rail Board can be beaten and the justifiable claim won in full.

By Martin Elvin



jobs are under threat

Photo: MILITANT

No to rostering

'Nomadic gypsies—that's what we'll be if management get their way.'

So rail workers explained the anger they felt about British Rail's attempts to break the 8 hour day and enforce 'flexi rostering', at the Ripple Lane depot in Barking, East London.

As Bob Lilly, an ASLEF chairman, said, "The management won't want to break our 8 hour working agreement just so they can introduce 7 and 9 hour shifts; that's just the start. It could lead to the 4 and 12 hour shifts that they are determined to introduce. Our shifts are flexible enough now!"

The rail workers quoted a typical week's shifts;

MON
Rest day
TUES
start 01.14
WED
Midnight/04.00
THURS
01.13

FRI
02.05
SAT.
00.53

"They don't give a damn about us. They don't work unsocial working hours and conditions. Their social life isn't ruined as ours is. In 38 years on the railways I have never known the blokes so determined to beat management."

The workers added, "The NUR drivers are backing us to the hilt. And the guards are far from happy at their union leadership accepting the flexi-rostering."

"The media of course won't print the truth—they're always having a go at the workers. They don't print the problems we face. For instance, staff trains not being laid on even when management pledged they would be improved. Imagine walking a mile or two to the station in this weather at midnight then waiting two hours for a train to get to work!"

"Even then we have to pay for this 'privilege' if we live 12 miles from our depot. I pay £27.40 every three months for this 'free'

work pass." The workers were clear that the government are behind BR's attempts to tear up work practice agreements won way back in 1919 by the rail unions.

As one ASLEF member stated, "We're not going back 70 years for 300%, never mind 3%!"

NUR

Members of the National Union of Railwaymen have been angered by their leadership in not taking the road of ASLEF in fighting 19th century working practices coupled with low pay.

What it means to train crews especially is that the Guaranteed Day agreement of 8 hours won in 1919 (which went some way into protecting the rank and file workers against excessive hours) has been thrown out of the window.

Now the management has a free hand and can roster men between 7 and 10 hours a day. The social life of the men does not matter it seems, and we also work the most appalling unsocial hours at the moment. So any further degrading of working conditions will only add to the stress and strain. Many redundancies will also occur.

NUR train crews are now seething over these management tactics and the lack of union leadership fight. A resolution has been sent from our union branch calling on the General Secretary of the NUR to resign, as we have no confidence in his leadership.

By David Hardy
(Nottingham & District Rail NUR)

personal capacity

ANGER AT FORDS

According to the union leadership, our negotiators achieved a change in the Ford Company's proposals for efficiency in last minute talks which led to the leaders urging acceptance of the 'offer.'

This change, as far as I can gather from a lot of the lads who voted for acceptance, was what decided their vote. But what would have been the result if the workers knew exactly what the bosses were proposing? They can term virtually anything as part of the efficiency programme.

It would have been better to have sorted out everything in one strike.

There is going to be a lot of sporadic trouble throughout the plants over what may appear to be 'trivial' issues. We would soon be in a similar position as the recent 'tea break' strike at Longbridge following the British Leyland dispute.

As it stands at the moment there is a lot of unrest. When you think that the overall vote for acceptance was approximately 60-40—and that with the union recommendation—there was a lot of support for the strike. Workers

By Bob Neal
(Shop Steward,
Sheet Metal
Workers, Fords
Dagenham)

personal capacity

won't be satisfied with what they will end up with.

Already there has been trouble in the body plant. Much was made of it in the Tory press, giving the impression that there was a mass fight. In fact it was only a few who took matters into their own hands, by starting to throw bolts at the platform during a meeting when there was a split vote. In no way can we condone what these men did, however despairing they may have felt. Action like this puts a black mark on the majority of the workers which the Tory press can exploit. It also gives ammunition to those who demand secret ballots, with all the dangers that would hold for the trade union movement.

At the moment there are a lot of comments going around like 'we've been sold down the river' or 'what did we get—bloody nothing!'

It's significant when you look at Halewood, who have just voted to end their action, that apparently around 12,000 voted to go

on strike in one meeting, then at the last meeting 5,000 voted to go back.

But it is also significant that those plants who voted to reject the recommendations were those in depressed areas; South Wales, Liverpool and Belfast. The rest of us must look to their example and fight to keep the hard-earned gains that previous struggles have given us.

Halewood

A worker in the Paintshop at Halewood told 'Militant' of the workers' attitude at the mass meeting to a return to work, after the majority vote by the rest of the Ford plants to return. "There weren't as many at the meeting as last week when we voted to reject. There wasn't the same feeling in the meeting at all. We just fell into line with the rest of the Ford workers; the stewards recommended that we return to work."

"That didn't mean that we accept the offer. Halewood rejected the offer, but we were the only plant out, and we thought we might as well get back in. There was resentment against the national officers, and mumbblings every time Ron Todd's name was mentioned."

"It's not an improved of-

fer, at all, nothing of the sort. We accepted 7.4%, but I reckon we could lose £20. The strings attached have serious complications. All local agreements that lead to inefficiency will be scrapped with the bosses, of course, deciding what is inefficient. 20,000 redundancies over 4 years, the introduction of new technology and of job mobility; they are all serious questions.

Swansea

In the 'Sunday Times', January 3, Ron Todd, the union negotiator said that the Fords strike over pay and conditions planned for January 5 would be long and bitter. In reality the dispute was very short, but very, very bitter.

The weakness and vacillations of trade union leaders came to the forefront. Ron Todd made statements to the press and TV on January 4 saying he would recommend acceptance of the 7.4% pay offer, which annoyed thousands of Fords workers who were prepared overwhelmingly to make a stand for better wages and working conditions.

At the Swansea plant the

men were very angry and felt betrayed. A vote of no confidence for Mr Todd was clearly carried. We realised if this offer was accepted it would mean another 95 jobs would be lost immediately. 580 jobs in the last 18 months have already gone, never to be replaced. The plant meeting was bitter and full of anger on the way negotiations had been handled.

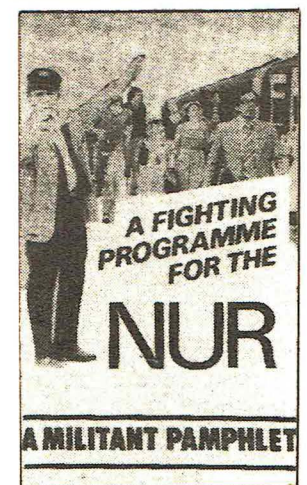
To see the anger on the faces of the rank and file workers, whose jobs are now threatened, including my own, was a shameful affair.

As 'Militant' stressed last week, if the union leadership had made a decisive stand, they would have had 100% support of the membership to win the whole claim.

Now we Ford workers are left to ponder our fate. One thing is certain though—their will be repercussions over this pay deal.

By David
(Llewelyn-Davies
Fords T&G,
Swansea)

personal capacity



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

Miners ballot -

FIGHT FOR THE FULL CLAIM

The offer of the National Coal Board must be clearly rejected by the NUM members in their ballot this week!

The original claim by our union included six points, but in fact four of the points have not even been the subject of any offer. On the wages, the offer means that face workers will get only £5.50 extra after tax and the surface workers will get only £4.20 more.

Yet the present rate of inflation means that these rises will be immediately swallowed up. Rents are due to rise by £2.50 a week. Rates will put another £1 a week on the weekly bills.

Electricity, gas and transport are all going up. The point is that we cannot afford to accept this offer. Yet the NCB can clearly afford to pay more.

By Stan Pearce Durham NUM area council

Last year we lost 12,000 jobs from the industry, saving the Coal Board £60m. Revenue increased by about £500m altogether, but the miners and the public do not get the benefit. The fact

is that the money-lenders are the ones who are being supported by the NCB and the miners. Last year the Board paid out £185m in interest charges and this year these will be over £250m—in other words over £1,000 for every miner!

We should not be worried about the level of coal stocks. The CEBG hold about 18m tons but they burn about 2m tons a week and effective picketing can stop shipments. The strike last February showed that we can win this dispute.

What is more of a worry to us is the fact that some right-wing leaders are already backsliding and refusing to campaign. In Northumberland, the area leaders are not giving any recommendation to the members and are leaving it to themselves. The leaders of the Power Group have come out in favour of the NCB offer and are actually

recommending a vote against the NEC. Yet these people were all represented at the special NUM conference and they sat through that and voted along with the rest to reject the offer.

It's an indication the way things have changed in Durham that this area which was formerly known as a 'moderate' area, is fully behind the NEC. For the first time there has been a special edition of the 'Durham Miner' produced, with a front page article by the area leaders recommending rejection of the offer and strike action. There is no doubt about the feelings of Durham miners: they are dead against the miserable NCB offer—and that must also be the situation nationally. The national and area leadership of the union must prepare the members for a determined struggle with the NCB and the Tories to get our full claim.

IDEAL BAKERS

For the last week workers at the Ideal Bakeries, Shaw, have been on strike in support of their branch secretary.

The dispute flared up in the pre-Christmas rush, when management increased the workload. The workers, members of the Bakers Union, refused this attack on their conditions of work wanting the job to be stopped. The branch secretaries went round the members ensuring support. In return for representing the interests of his members Keith Albison was dismissed on 29 December.

After several abortive meetings with management the majority of the branch were for industrial action. Unfortunately two shop stewards crossed the picket line along with a small proportion of the membership.

Even so, on 7 January the workers went on strike for Keith's reinstatement and the strike was made official immediately by the national leadership. A 24-hour picket was organised in sub-zero temperatures, with many local people pro-

viding the pickets with wood.

The management were taken by surprise by the strike—it is the first such action the workers have taken. Already, the management have backed down to an extent by asking to pay Keith's wages until an ACAS industrial tribunal hears the case, and have given an undertaking to abide by the ACAS decision.

The union is confident of winning the case—a similar case recently resulted in reinstatement. However, if Keith is not reinstated, all the carefully fostered illusions in independent bodies such as ACAS will be shattered.

Several Labour Party wards including the local Shaw Labour Party have supported the trike and sent donations to the strike fund. The local Labour Party Women's Section has been lobbying for support for the strikers amongst shoppers at supermarkets.

By Margaret Creear
(Shaw LP)



Photo: Denis Doran

While workers are struggling to make ends meet, the well-to-do were rushing into Harrods sale to buy expensive crockery, furs and other luxuries—even at 'knock-down' prices, well beyond the reach of most workers. In two days Harrods took in over £6.25 million

Subscribe Now!

BRITAIN & IRELAND	13 issues... £4.00
26 issues... £8.00	52 issues...£16.00
EUROPE (by air)	REST OF WORLD (by air)
26 issues... £9.00	26 issues...£14.00
52 issues...£18.00	52 issues...£28.00

Name

Address

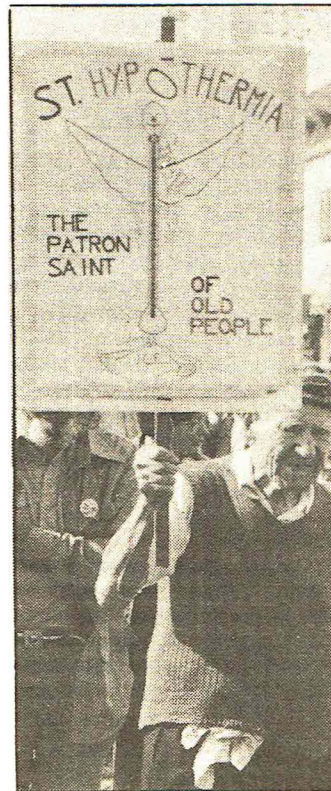
Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to the Circulation Department, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Bulk orders available, sale or return.

CUTS MEAN WINTER CHAOS

continued from front page
 wage will be felt long after the current freeze is over. Those on low wages and inadequate welfare benefits will suffer most from the food price rises that will certainly follow this winter.

There will also be an increase in the number of road accidents as councils will not have the funds to pay for repairs to frost-cracked roads. Even before the recent freeze, Suffolk Council estimated its repair bill as £1m and West Midlands £3m.

Yet the Tories have the nerve to accuse local authorities of under-



spending! 'Councils should really have anticipated pro-

blems when they budgeted' says Kenneth Clark MP, junior Tory Transport Minister. But any council which had done so would get short shrift from Heseltine.

Now the Tories say councils should introduce a supplementary rate to pay for 'weather expenditure.' Yet at the same time they are pushing through Parliament a Bill to make supplementary rates illegal!

Their incompetent, short-sighted attitude to transport will result in more dangerous, pot-holed roads. 'The birds have come home to roost. My roads are in a bloody awful state' complained Essex County Council surveyor, George Carpenter. And the Association of Metropolitan Authorities has called for proper re-surfacing: 'If we don't, our roads are going to be holes kept together by bits of tar.'

The effects of not investing in proper transport facilities can also be seen on

the railways. British Rail has only 15,000 heaters to cope with the problems of frozen points. They each cost £1,000 to install, £7 a week to maintain and 80p an hour to use.

They do not have more, explained BR spokesman, Peter Northfield because: 'Points heaters have to compete for priority with signalling equipment. We are desperately short of funds for investment and have very little to spend on weather precautions.'

Clearly if we are to have decent transport and a proper welfare system we need to get rid of this government. The snow and the current freeze are exceptional and beyond our control. But flooding need not occur if preventative expenditure was undertaken. And the enormous problems created by the freeze could be prevented if there was a massive increase of useful public expenditure. Get the Tories out before next winter!