

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

611

20p

Black Sunday for ASLEF

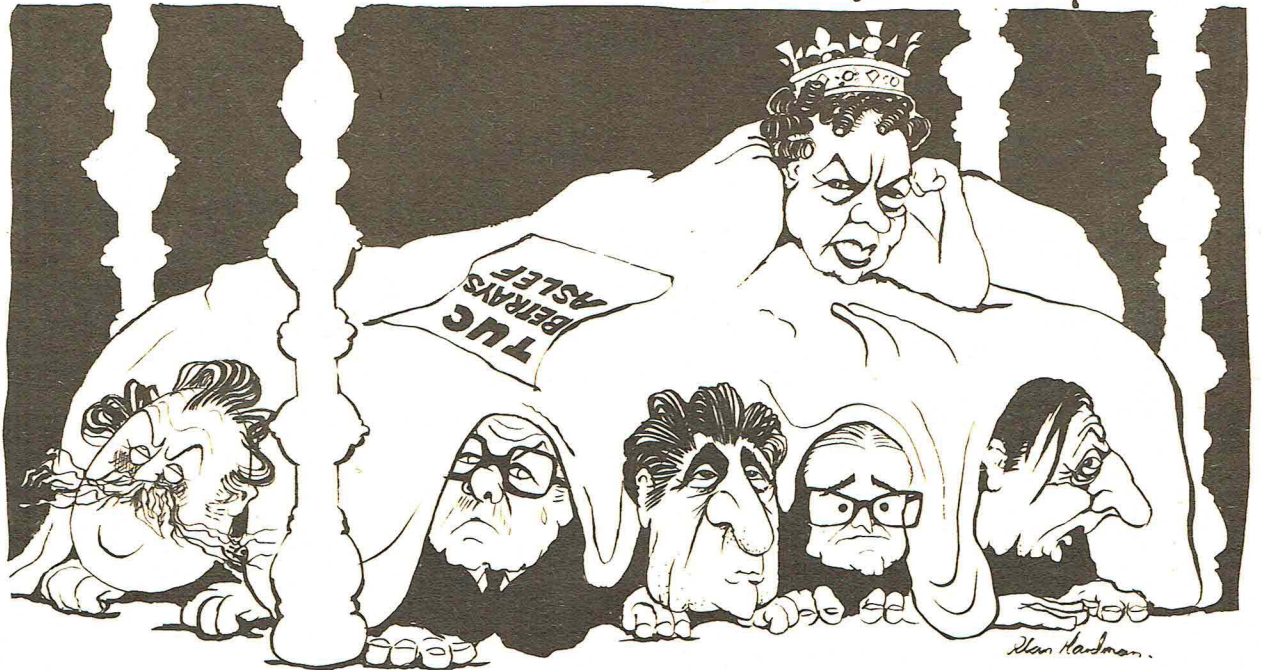
See pages 2, 14 & 16

Support the health workers  
See pages 15 & 16

unemployment  
rockets to  
all time high

# PUT TORIES ON THE DOLE!

YES YES ONE APPRECIATES THE DEPTH OF RANK AND FILE HOSTILITY  
BUT WHEN THE BLOODY HELL IS ONE TO GET A NIGHTS SLEEP?



## Men found hiding in Queen's bedroom!

The capitalist affliction of unemployment grinds ever upwards. The number on the dole by official reckoning has now reached an all time high of 3,190,621.

Within a month, another staggering 129,000 workers have joined the dole queue. That's 129,000 individual cases of despair, frustration and anger.

And this is before the expected 76,000 school leavers this month join the vain search for work! In Birmingham, once the workshop of Britain, 4 out of every 5 school leavers will not get a job.

To the Tories, all these are just figures for them to play around with on their multifarious economic charts which, if they juggle around with them enough,

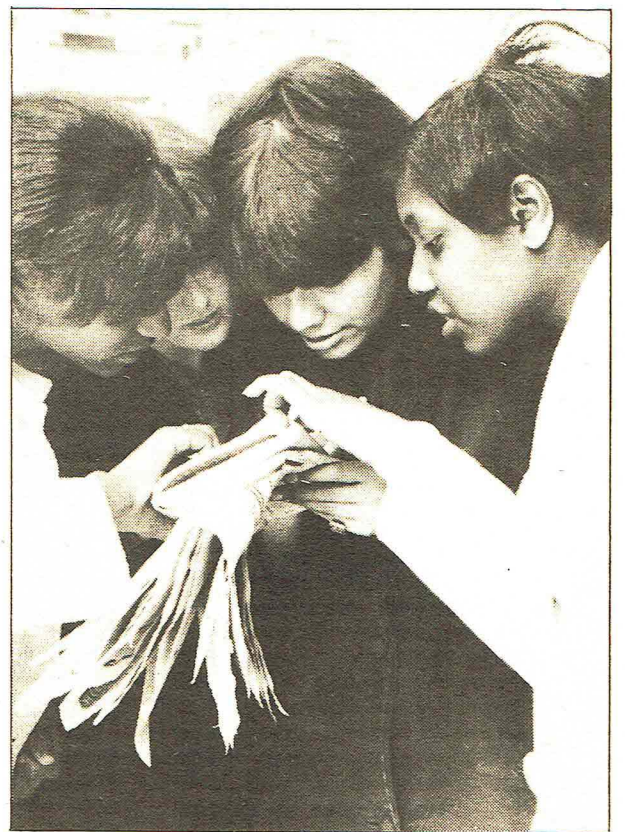
By Bob Wade

come out with absurd predictions such as 'prosperity is just around the corner.'

For the capitalists, it is a vast army of reserve labour for them to pick and choose from and to scare those with a job into accepting cuts in living standards.

Blackpool North Young Socialist Kevin Taylor told 'Militant' the reality of the situation today, when he described how MFI announced new job vacancies in his town; "When I arriv-

Continued on  
back page



Youth scour local newspapers for work in Manchester. This month 76,000 students leave school in the vain search for work. Photo: Romano Cagnoni (Report).

# Labour movement must condemn bombings

The new bombing campaign by the Provisional IRA in London must be condemned by the whole labour movement. The killing of the Household Cavalrymen and the maiming of civilian passers-by will have done absolutely nothing to

further the interests of workers either in Britain or Ireland.

Workers will feel an overwhelming sense of outrage and revulsion at the planting of the bombs, especially in public places—in a park bandstand, of all places, surrounded by pensioners and children. Nothing could have been better calculated to strengthen the arm of the Tory government and to damage the interests of the labour movement.

After the bombing campaigns in Britain in the early '70s, the Prevention of Terrorism Act was introduced and since then, although it has not prevented a new bombing campaign, it has been used to harass trade union activists in Britain and Ireland while going about their trade union business.

The latest bombs will only increase the opportunities for the Tories to bring in new legislation, ostensibly against the bombers, but available for use against

trade unionists at a later stage. Thus, the *Daily Telegraph* has already called for the strengthening of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and the possible introduction of detention without trial in Northern Ireland and even in Britain.

When the bombs went off, London hospital workers immediately abandoned their picket lines and returned to work to deal with the injured. Some NHS workers bitterly suggested that the bombs had been timed to coincide with

their industrial action, in order to have the maximum effect.

But one thing is for certain—while the nurses, orderlies and porters left their placards to care for the wounded, their own wholly justified claim was pushed well into the background by the press. The declining living standards of NHS workers and the record post-war unemployment should have been the occasion for an all-out assault on the Tories: but Thatcher and Fowler have been let

off the hook by the bombings.

If the enemies of the labour movement had calculated a means of boosting the Tories, damaging the interests of the health workers, alienating workers from any rational discussion on Ireland and increasing the chances of new restrictions on democratic freedoms, then they could not have done a better job than was done by the Provisional IRA last Tuesday.

# Militant

## TUC: BLACK SUNDAY

"There has got to be something wrong with the movement when you look at the support we have received from trade unionists and workers and the general public, which has been tremendous, and yet the TUC has sold us out."—the comments of a Cricklewood loco driver after the ASLEF strike was called off.

Throughout the strike, the membership of ASLEF displayed enormous solidarity, sacrifice and resolve, in the face of the most vicious campaign of threats, intimidation, harassment and press lies.

Fleet Street and the media tried to undermine the solidarity of the drivers by repeating the BRB propaganda about the scale of the services being run during the strike. When one driver in the Midlands made eighteen short return journeys, for example, the BRB reported that they had thirty-six trains running.

Yet the claims of massive strike-breaking were a fiction. Fewer than half of the NUR drivers went in to work and only a handful of ASLEF members broke ranks.

The real state of affairs was clearly revealed only after the strike when *The Times* editorial commented, "In spite of all the much-publicised strike-defying trains of the last two weeks, the union has proved that it still has the power to bring rail services in Britain to a halt."

The threat to sack all the drivers and close down the rail net-work had only strengthened the determination of the railwaymen. The Bury branch of ASLEF which had previously voted not to strike, reversed its decision and came out. The Stratford branch voted to continue the fight by 180 votes to 2. In Manchester a meeting of 400 members voted overwhelmingly as late as Sunday to go on with the strike. Other branches began to improve their plans for picketing.

Furthermore, grass roots support from other trade unions was pouring in to the ASLEF membership. Local trade union branches, trades councils, Labour Parties, LPYS branches, shop stewards committees, regional and district trade union bodies had all expressed their support by messages and donations the length and breadth of the country.

Speakers from the health service unions had visited ASLEF meetings and ASLEF members committed themselves to support the NHS workers' marches on Monday 19th—and indeed many refused to go back immediately, in order to fulfil that commitment.

The powerful National Union of Mineworkers had also pledged their members' support for ASLEF and, much to the annoyance of the right wing in Labour's Shadow Cabinet, Michael Foot came out in ASLEF's favour, reflecting the overwhelming mood of the Labour Party rank and file.

Trade unionists backed ASLEF because they could see that behind BRB's deci-

sion to spend over £100m to save £3m on flexi-rosters, there was a more serious purpose: to smash ASLEF and pave the way for huge cuts in jobs and the wholesale demolition of the working conditions of all railway workers. And behind Peter Parker stands the Tory government, just as determined to smash the democratic trade union rights and undermine the wages and conditions of all workers.

Workers could see that the ASLEF dispute with the BRB assumed the character of a general struggle: the train drivers were fighting on their own behalf but also on behalf of all trade unionists.

It should have been the elementary duty of the TUC leadership to have come down firmly in support of the jobs and conditions of the ASLEF membership. But ASLEF members and trade unionists will be justifiably angry and embittered at the treachery of the TUC.

Throughout the negotiations with ASLEF and ACAS, Len Murray tried to give the impression that he was acting as an arbitrator, an even-handed broker. To be 'neutral' is in itself bad enough, when it is the duty of the TUC to support other workers in struggle, but to ASLEF members the TUC and especially the NUR leadership were not even that: they were a transmission belt for all the pressures and threats of the BRB and the Tory government.

It has been reported that the Finance and General Purposes Committee had, disgracefully, even raised the threat of the expulsion of ASLEF. Without doubt, this was the worst instance of a betrayal of a trade union dispute by the TUC since the war, and by this act, they have dealt a blow against all trade unionists.

They have effectively disarmed the movement when it was ready to strike a solid blow against the Tories' anti-working class strategy. Trade Unionists everywhere have suffered a defeat, not because of the strength of the BRB or the Tories but because of the weakness of the TUC.

Were it left to the present leadership of the trade union movement, Tebbit would have no trouble in shackling the unions and the Tories would have a field-day cutting wages. There are important lessons to be learned, however, even in a defeat. To begin with, the ASLEF membership have not been smashed.

The leadership were slow to begin the organisation of pickets and the work of

building solidarity links with other sections of the movement, but the members learned enormously during the course of the strike itself. They have been 'blooded' by the strike and the experience will not be lost, particularly on the young membership.

But the whole affair will raise other issues in the minds of trade union activists. The key question that faces workers in their bitter struggle with the Tories is that of leadership and the actions of the TUC will have increased the resolve of many trade union members to fight harder for leaders who will spearhead the interests of the rank and file, rather than those of the Tories and the bosses.

Not only were the TUC right wing openly against ASLEF, but even the left TUC leaders were irresolute in their backing. If the lefts in the TUC inner cabinet had made a determined stand the actions of the right would not have been possible.

Trade Unionists and ASLEF members in particular will also be more aware of the link between the assault on their own conditions and the witch-hunt now being conducted against 'Militant' in the Labour Party.

Those TUC leaders who have been the most consistent advocates of a purge of 'Militant' from the Labour Party are the same people who have reneged on the interests of ASLEF members in this strike. 'Militant' supporters are 'guilty' of fighting for exactly what ASLEF members and workers need—for a bold and determined leadership in the Labour Party and trade unions.

ASLEF was prevented from giving the BRB and the Tories a bloody nose: the right wing trade union leaders are not prepared to take the government on. In the same way, Labour's right wing are happier to attack socialists in the Party than to have a go at the Tories.

There will be other battles in the future. The Tories, if they imagine that they can now ride roughshod over all the rights and conditions of trade unionists, are making

a mistake. If they feel too flushed with success, if they think they can shackle the trade unions with new laws; if they think they can do down the mine-workers—they will yet receive the good hiding that workers are hoping they get.

The Tories are building up a mountain of anger and bitterness. The longer it takes to build up, the greater will be the explosion of opposition when it finally does come.

Even despite the weakness of the TUC leaders, the rank and file of the labour

movement will not go on indefinitely accepting the vicious attacks of the Tories.

But in fighting off the Tory attacks, workers must redouble their efforts to build a leadership worthy of their own struggle and sacrifice.



HE'S TOO STRONG RAY WE'RE THROWING THE TOWEL IN

## LABOUR MOVEMENT CONFERENCE

The build up for the September 11 Conference against the witch-hunt is well under way. It co-incides with the publication of resolutions to Labour Party Conference which show a marked shift to the left and clear opposition to the re-introduction of bans, proscriptions and expulsions.

Tony Benn has added his name to the growing list of sponsors throughout Labour's ranks. Delegations are coming in from unions, CLPs, Labour Party branches, and Young Socialists branches. The NUM South Wales area, has elected two delegates to represent them at the Conference.

In Michael Foot's Constituency, Ebbw Vale, it was only on the casting vote of the Chairman that a resolution opposing the register and expulsions was 'left on the table' rather than thrown out. Nevertheless, Tredegar West branch, agreed to send two delegates

to the September 11 Conference.

Again, despite Swansea Labour Party's equivocal position on the witch-hunt, and its decision to withdraw credentials from Alec Thraves, its individual branches are taking up delegations. Alan William's (right wing MP for Swansea West) Mumbles Labour Party branch has agreed to send two delegates despite his witch-hunting views.

Unfortunately, some Constituency Labour Parties have received a letter from Hackney North CLP inviting them to attend a rival meeting on September 4th aimed at launching a 'Labour Parties Against the Witch-hunt' campaign. This meeting, which was publicised after the launching of the September 11 Conference, will only confuse many CLPs as to which meeting they should send delegates to.

It is clear that some people are trying to push the September 4th meeting in order to weaken the September 11th Con-

ference. The September 4th meeting is only open to CLPs.

But our object in this period must be to mobilise every section of the Labour Movement—Trade Unions, shop stewards committees as well as Labour Parties, etc.—and that is the aim of the September 11th Conference. Anything less will not have the effect, and will in reality be a diversion.

The September 11th Conference will be the biggest mobilisation ever of rank and file opinion before Labour Party Conference. It will be the focal point of opposition to the register and attempted purge by the right wing.

Fight back! Get your organisation to send delegates straight away!

**NOTE THE NEW VENUE:**  
**Wembley Conference Centre**  
**10.30am start**

Please send credentials for ..... delegates (maximum 5 per organisation) on behalf of ..... (name of organisation)

I enclose a cheque/PO for ..... (£1 for each credential)

My organisation agrees to become a sponsor of the conference ..... (tick if applicable)

We would like a speaker ..... (tick if applicable)

Name .....

Address .....

Return to Labour Movement Conference, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

# SWANSEA LABOUR ASSOCIATION BACKS NEC

By Militant Supporters

In the last meeting of the Swansea Labour Association (2 CLPs in one) 'Militant' supporters thought the transformation of society was taking place, when the secretary of the association read out at the end of business session an article from last week's 'Militant' concerning the Association.

After reading the article a number of delegates agreed that it was accurate (as are all articles in 'Militant') and then a few right-wingers argued sarcastically that we should invite the Tory press into our meetings. Progress was so moved.

In the business section the EC put forward that the association should congratulate the NEC of the Labour Party and their findings on 'Militant' and their support for the register. One 'Militant' supporter, opposing, made it clear that if this register was successful it could lead to expulsions and went on to point out that the 'Militant' tendency was not responsible for the defeat of the '79 Labour Government.

At this point a prominent right winger interrupted and stated that it was not the 'Militant's' fault but the Trade Unions! Nevertheless, the Association endorsed the views of the executive.

Another item that came up was the ASLEF dispute. The ASLEF delegate on the association explained the need to fight the political battle, and that a defeat for ASLEF is a defeat for the whole Trade Union movement.

He also thanked the LPYS and other groupings for their support. Sadly a delegate from the NUR argued against the dispute and in favour of flexible rostering.

Yet another NUR delegate argued for all out support for ASLEF. The association voted in favour of support and had a collection which raised over £50.

For the future, the members of the Labour Association will not get a true reflection of the ideas of 'Militant' from one article being read out by the secretary. If this article is read out at the next association, it is important that all members buy a copy so there can be a full discussion in the political session on the contents and policies of 'Militant.'



Ray Buckton told a Tribune meeting against the purges that after the TUC refusal to back ASLEF the movement needed socialist policies 'now as never before.' Also on the platform were (l to r) Derek Fullick (ASLEF President), Chris Mullin (Editor Tribune) and Pat Wall (President Bradford Trades Council). Out of picture but also on platform were Arthur Scargill, Jo Richardson MP, Tony Benn MP. Photo: J Woulfe.

## ... BUT WILLIAMS' BRANCH WELCOMES MILITANT SPEAKER

On Tuesday 13th I was invited by a Swansea Labour Party ward to outline the programme of the *Militant* and what it stands for.

Knowing that this was the ward of our local MP Alan Williams, I half expected to receive a hostile response. But in fact, the very opposite was the case.

After I finished speaking there were many questions and contributions mostly about the programme of the *Militant*. One member explained that he had been brought up in the labour movement and had supported many of our ideas, stating that Clause 4 part 4 was not the sole property of the *Militant*, to which I readily agreed.

Many more interesting points arose and at the end of the meeting the ward nominated a delegate, the secretary, to attend the Labour Movement Conference on September 11th. This meeting brought home the fact that where *Militant* ideas are put forward and are allowed discussion, they can win people, or if not *Militant* supporters can at least gain the respect as fellow socialists.

At the end of the meeting I was thanked and sold £4 worth of literature; in particular the *CIA* and the *Labour Movement* pamphlets.

By Roy Davis  
(EETPU, personal capacity)

## Blyth ban on YS activity

At a recent meeting of Blyth CLP executive a decision was taken to vet all material and literature sold by Blyth and Cramlington LPYS branches on their stall in the Blyth market place, and that only 'official' Labour Party literature be sold.

LPYS members and *Militant* supporters have given hours of their time during the past 14 months to man the stall in all kinds of weather. The YS branches pay £150 a year for the stall, without any help from the CLP, and it has brought a lot of publicity for the Labour Party and the LPYS.

Significantly, of those who voted on the executive in favour of the ban, none

By Joe Cox  
(Cramlington LPYS)



have ever given any time on the stall. It also seems to have escaped the attention of the executive that all the literature sold on official

stalls at conferences is not always official party literature but varies from *Labour Herald* and *Tribune* to the poems of Mary Wilson.

Quite clearly, this decision is no more than an attempt to stop the LPYS selling the paper *Militant* and otherwise curtail the YS activities.

But already one large party branch, Cramlington East has voted unanimously in favour of a motion criticising the executive decision, and demanding a return to the status quo. The branch also overwhelmingly carried a resolution denouncing the enquiry into *Militant* and calling on the party never to have anything to do with bans and proscriptions.

# LABOUR PARTIES OPPOSE 'CONCOCTED' REPORT

By Militant Reporters

Bradford West CLP last week resolved never to expel "any member or prohibit any member's views and literature (with the exception of racist, sexist or fascist) because that member's socialist opinion does not fit in with the NEC's spurious register of approved groups."

The mover of the motion, which was passed with only two votes against, indicated the undemocratic way in which the report on *Militant* had been compiled. "Despite the fact that Bradford had been one of the areas highlighted in the report," he said, "no-one in Bradford had been consulted."

"The report has been solely concocted by full time regional officials of the party, and members should start asking what files were held by officials on the members who paid their wages."

The Bradford West CLP also agreed that to send five delegates to the September

11th conference against the witch-hunt.

Despite a rejection of "any form of witch-hunt, proscriptions or bans in the Labour Party", by the West Midlands Regional Conference of the Labour Party, the Regional EC at its meeting of July 10th has launched its own attack on *Militant*. Their decision not to act on another (remitted) motion against the witch-hunt provided the pretext for the attack.

But the attack was not led by the Right but by those officially on the Party's left. Geoff Edge, former Tribune MP for Aldridge Brownhills, even commented that "as a left winger" he could not tolerate *Militant's* activities, and he raised once again the hoary old issue of the finances of the paper.

With other "lefts" joining in the attack, it was hardly necessary for the right wing on the committee to speak at all, although one did propose that the EC's hostility to *Militant* be publicised in a press release. Ordinary party members in the West Midlands will be angered at the way in which the EC, out of their earshot, are deliberately defying

the feelings of the annual conference.

At the last GMC of South Herts CLP (the CLP of POEU General Secretary Brian Stanley) the LPYS failed by one vote to extend standing orders to discuss a motion opposing the witch-hunt, although the CLP has passed a similar motion in the past. Instead a special GMC will be called to discuss the proposed register of groups.

Meanwhile, the *Militant* supporters in the area are planning a *Militant* Readers' meeting to which they are inviting members of a neighbouring CLP which has threatened to disaffiliate if *Militant* is expelled. As one South Herts supporters said, "we will try to show that to have good left wing members resign from the party is just exactly what the right wing would want."

It was also reported that Chester-le-street CLP last weekend threw out by 37 votes to 23 a motion that, in effect, supported the decisions of the NEC in relation to the *Militant* Tendency report and the register. Without a single vote against, Ealing Southall CLP passed a motion last week opposing all bans and proscriptions within the Labour Party, mandating the party conference delegate to do the same. The resolution also stated that the CLP would refuse to co-operate or help with the proposed NEC register. At the GC of Ebbw Vale Labour Party on 16 July, the LPYS put forward a resolution demanding no register and no expulsions. The local MP, Labour leader Michael Foot personally spoke against the resolution.

When it became apparent that the LPYS were winning the political arguments, Michael Foot proposed the resolution should "lie on the table". The vote was 23-23 and it was only by the casting vote of the chairman that Michael Foot's proposal was carried.

# The Right Wing and their 'friends'

The letter to CLPs and affiliated organisations setting up the Register of authorised groups makes it clear that there is a handy loophole for right-wing pressure groups.

The register does not apply, it says, "to organisations which include both members of the Labour Party and persons who are not members of the Party."

Thus, with one stroke of his pen, Jim Mortimer, Labour's new General Secretary, is exempting the local secretive cabals of Freemasons to which, unfortunately, many local Labour councillors belong, along with Tories and Liberals. But more importantly, it exempts right wing organisations, including Labour MPs, which at a national and international level campaign against the policies of the Labour Party.

The Bilderberg Group, for example, set up by, among others, Denis Healey, has held many secretive conferences in the past, attended by representatives of capitalism, nationally and internationally. Even while a Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer, Denis Healey found time in 1977 to attend one of its secret conferences in Torquay, chaired by ex-leader of the Tory Party Lord Home.

Others who have attended meetings of the group include Keith Joseph, Lord Carrington, Margaret Thatcher, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, Walter Scheel (West German President), Henry Kissinger and Sr. Agnelli of Fiat. As 'Financial Times' columnist Gordon Tether wrote in 1975, "if the Bilderberg Group is not a conspiracy of some sort, it is conducted in such a way as to give a remarkably good imitation of one."

Then there is the Labour and Trade Union Press Service sponsored by the Labour Committee for TransAtlantic Understanding. This body is sponsored by Labour right-wingers like Roy Mason, Roy Hattersley and trade union right wingers, Frank Chapple, Terry Duffy and Sid Weighell.

Its sponsors also included right wing Labour MPs who have defected to the SDP, like William Rodgers and David Owen. The Labour and Trade Union Press service has distributed articles for free use by newspaper and trade union journals.

Contributors have included Harold Wilson, writing on the need for a 'fight-back' against Labour's left-wing NEC and Denis Healey, on the 'essential link' between pay and productivity.

The LTUPS was financed by NATO to the tune of over £32,000 over five

years from 1976, but the Labour right wingers involved in this organisation had made no great efforts to publicise their sources of funding until it came out in February 1980.

Another organisation set up to 'promote education' about NATO is the British Atlantic Committee, set up in the 1950s. It is registered as a charity, although its aims seem to be clearly political.

The aims of the committee are more or less to monitor the support for unilateralist ideas (for CND for example) and to counter these with its own pro-NATO leaflets and propaganda. The Committee

## Tory money for nuclear arms group

has a budget this year of over £50,000 although it has not filed its accounts with the charity commissioners since 1972.

More to the point, it was given over £33,000 last year by the Tory Foreign Office, to conduct its activities. This Committee, includes a galaxy of diplomats, politicians and military men in its ranks, including Lord Carrington, Ted Heath, Margaret Thatcher, William Rodgers, General Sir John Hackett, etc. and... Denis Healey.

Last week 'Labour Weekly' reported on the imminent formation of a new pro-Common Market Group, dedicated to a change of Labour party policy on the issue. But some right wingers are already off the mark—the new Action Committee for a European Union is pro-



Roy Mason MP, sponsor of the Labour Committee for Trans-Atlantic Understanding which is funded by NATO.

moting "the co-ordination or the unification of the policies of member states in the field of security."

Its supporters, according to 'Labour Weekly', include Labour Euro-MPs Derek Enright and Ken Collins, union leaders Frank Chapple and Geoffrey Drain, as well as SDP MP Ian Wrigglesworth and Tory MPs.

Labour party members will see nothing wrong in disagreeing with Labour Party conference policy and, indeed, in fighting to change that policy. But it is nothing short of disgraceful

that Labour right wingers should form committees and various campaign bodies with some of the bitterest enemies of the Labour Party, in order to fight against Party policy. At least *Militant* supporters can never be accused of hobnobbing in joint campaigns with Tories, SDP traitors or



businessmen. Labour Party members will want to know why it is that good loyal party members are being faced with 'registration,' with expulsion implied for failure to do so, when right wing groups and campaigns, supported by Labour's enemies are allowed to operate with impunity?

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## 'What we stand for'

### "We're proud to stand with you"

In the wake of Pat Wall's victory over the right wing and the capitalist press, over 90 people attended a meeting in Bradford to hear Lynn Walsh speak on Marxism and the Labour Party.

Speakers from the floor showed the opposition there will be from Labour's ranks to any attempt at a witch-hunt. Ragvir Virdee of Bradford Indian Workers Association told how 'Militant' supporters had won him away from Maoism and he joined the Labour Party. They then persuaded him to go out and work for right wing MPs like Ben Ford and councillors who have since defected to the SDP—'mental torture' said Ragvir to laughter! But now we had a candidate said Ragvir, we can be proud of.

Vice-chairman of Bradford North Labour Party John Barker read out the election address of a previous candidate for Bradford North. It spoke of 'public ownership,' the 'right to work,' and opposed 'private ownership' in favour of 'co-operative production' in industry.

That candidate was Kier Hardie in 1896! "Would the NEC have endorsed him?" asked John. John later gave £5 for the fighting fund (£130 was collected in all) saying if it's worth paying £6 to join the party, it's worth paying a fiver to stay in it!

businessmen.

Labour Party members will want to know why it is that good loyal party members are being faced with 'registration,' with expulsion implied for failure to do so, when right wing groups and campaigns, supported by Labour's enemies are allowed to operate with impunity?

And two older party members showed the ideas of Marxism are nothing new and strange. Tommy Hare, 71, said he left the Labour Party in the '30s because of the right wing, but they weren't going to get rid of him a second time. And George Stevenson said he was proud to stand with us.

In summing up, Lynn Walsh said if the fighting support shown at Bradford was mirrored around the country the witch hunt couldn't succeed. It would certainly seem readers' meetings are attracting more support wherever they are held.

In Cricklewood, West London, an excellent meeting was addressed by ASLEF branch secretary Bob Cook. Bob expressed thanks to the LPYS for their support for ASLEF and £60 was raised for the fighting fund.

In Cambridge about 40 people attended, raising £79 for the fighting fund, addressed by Steve Glennon. This was an excellent meeting, for as one 'Militant' supporter pointed out, last year such a meeting would only have drawn around half a dozen people.

### South Shields and Carlisle

South Shields opened its doors for the very first time to welcome 'Militant'—well at least a small room in a small pub did, to be exact!

Despite abysmal weather, 25 people turned out to hear Margaret Reavey of Gateshead East CLP outline the policies of 'Militant.' The discussion was packed full

of questions and contributions.

It was clear the people present weren't worried about the Labour Party moving left—many of them hadn't joined the Labour Party simply because they didn't feel the party represented them! As one man said, while expressing his disgust at the latest royal incumbrance, while his pregnant wife was still having to carry buckets of coal up stairs in their inadequate rented flat; "Two years on a waiting list for a council house and this is a Labour controlled area! What good can joining the Labour Party do me?"

They all got the message that they had to get active and involved if things were to change. Several people then came forward stating their intention to join the Labour Party. A magnificent £57 was raised for the fighting fund.

Another area new to the ideas of 'Militant' (although not its first meeting) was Carlisle. Labour Party members in the area have had quite a few arguments with a local party official on the question of the validity of Marxism within the labour movement. The speaker, Ray Physick, hammered home the point that Marxism has been within the labour movement from its very inception, tracing the thread from the days of Chartism through the ILP and the formation of the Labour Party, to the present day.

By Mary McIntire (Jarrow CLP) & Iain Campbell (Carlisle CLP)

## Readers' Meetings round-up

### 230 at Manchester rally!

The best 'What We Stand For' meeting yet—230 people attended the meeting in Manchester on Sunday night (18 July) raising £326 for the fighting fund. There was a great reception for the main speaker, political editor Ted Grant, who said the ideas of Marxism cannot be witch-hunted out of the Labour Party.

Also speaking was chairman of ASLEF No 1 branch Peter Gunn, who expressed the train drivers' anger at the TUC, and said they were only returning to work under protest.

There was a lively discussion, in which a girl soldier who had just returned from an 18-month tour of Northern Ireland explained how soldiers need trade union rights.





Over 2,000 young people attended LPYS conference at Easter. Join Labour's youth again in Gloucestershire. Photo: Militant

# LPYS SUMMER CAMP

## - one week to go

# BOOK NOW!

### Can you afford to spend £533 to stay in a one bedroom apartment in the Bahamas for a fortnight?

How about £773 for a holiday in Florida or a fortnight in Hawaii for only an extra quid?

If, like most working class youth, you can't, then why not come to LPYS Summer Camp from 31st July—7th August and have an excellent holiday for only £20! The camp is to be held in the Forest of Dean

in Gloucestershire and promises to be bigger and better than ever.

We can't guarantee that you catch a glimpse of the rich and famous or that you'll enjoy temperatures like in the Bahamas or Hawaii, but we can guarantee a fine mixture of politics and leisure facilities.

Peter Taaffe will be debating with a representative of "Solidarity" on "Marxism and the Labour Party". There will be sessions on the life of Marx, Lenin and Trotsky as well

as sessions on labour history, black youth and the struggle for socialism, international topics such as Poland and Central America plus many others. There'll also be canoeing, football, films, music and discos.

Bring the family along as well! A professional creche will be provided for the kids with lots of activities to keep them happy. It only costs £10 for children under 12 and children under 4 can come free.

All you need to bring is a tent, sleeping bag, stove,

cooking utensils and enough food for a week (although there is a store on the campsite). Bring enough clothes for a week and wellies and a kagool.

Forget the prospect of seeing Princess Margaret in Mustique. Come to LPYS summer camp and see a week of socialism in action. Don't delay, book now. For further details, contact Andy Bevan, 150 Walworth Road, London SE 17.

By Leo McDaid  
(Brent East LPYS)

## MILITANT PUBLIC MEETINGS

### What we stand for—fight the witch-hunt!

(where no venue details, see local 'Militant' sellers for information)

**WATFORD:** Thur 29 July 8pm, Watford Central Library, Speaker Bob Labi (London LP exec.)

**SOUTHWARK:** Mon 26th July 7.30pm Penrose Hall, Penrose St., SE 17. (Off Walworth Road). Speakers: Keith Dickinson (Editorial Board), Theresa Wrack (LPYS National Committee).

**NORWICH:** Thur 29th July 7.30 Norwich Labour Club. Speaker: Keith Dickinson (Editorial Board).

**HAYES & HARLINGTON:** Tuesday 27 July, 8.00 pm. Speaker: Sue Kohn (LPYS Regional Committee). The Labour Hall, Pump Lane, Hayes.

**HARLOW:** Thursday 22 July, 8.00 pm, Advice Centre, Harlow Town Centre. Speaker: Bob Edwards.

**LAMBETH:** Wednesday 28 July, 7.45 pm. Speakers: Rob Sewell and Kevin Roddy (President, Civil and Public Services Association), Brixton Town Hall, London SW2.

**STEVENAGE:** Thurs 29 July, 8.00 pm, Committee Room 1, Stevenage Leisure Centre. Speaker: Steve Glennon.

**PETERBOROUGH:** Thursday 29 July, 7.45 pm, Neighbourhood House Cromwell Road, Peterborough. Speaker: Sean McCartney.

**CAMDEN:** Thurs 22 July. Speaker: Bob Labi (London LP exec.)

**CWMBRAN:** Fri 23 July, 7.15pm The Old Assembly Hall, Victoria St.

**THANET:** Selby Guest House, 7 Union Crescent, Margate, Thursday 22 July 7.30pm.

**PORTSMOUTH:** 29 July, 7.30 pm, Labour Party Rooms, 84 Kingston Crescent. Speaker to be arranged.

**BURNLEY:** Thursday 12 August, 7.30 pm. Speaker: Pat Wall. Venue: The AUEW Rooms, 16 Hargreave St., Burnley

## Tories on trial

The Northern Region LPYS festival of Socialist Youth proved to be a huge success with nearly 300 attending during the course of the night, to take part in a rally followed by the "Trial of Thatcher", a disco and live bands.

Val Stead, who has been active in the health service dispute stressed the need for union solidarity for the health workers to win their battle. Geoff Egglestone, TGWU regional recruitment officer spoke in favour of the aims of the YOPs Trainees Union Rights Campaign and condemned the way many youth were used as cheap labour on YOPs schemes.

His views were shared by Bill Banks of the TGWU National Executive Committee who was in the audience. Dave Harris of the LPYS National Committee followed. He showed the need for the Labour Party to actively campaign for socialist policies and urged young people to join the LPYS.

Dennis Skinner then spoke and got much support when he told us how the next Labour government will have to transform YOPs into proper jobs with trade union rates of pay and supervision.

The biggest cheer of the night though came when he said he will fight to get Pat Wall endorsed by the NEC as the Bradford North prospective parliamentary candidate for the next election.

After the political speeches we saw the play "The Trial of Thatcher" which was excellently performed by the East Kilbride LPYS. Next was the whoopy do with a live band, a disco and dancing till 1am. It was a great night of entertainment with everybody thoroughly enjoying themselves. Serious politics and fun—that is what the LPYS is all about.

By Jane Harker  
(Wallsend LPYS)

# OCTOBER 16

## A date for your diary

By Willie Griffin

Apart from a few of the "gilded youth" at private schools like Eton, not one section of young people has gained anything from the Tories.

Young workers have seen wages and conditions eroded, health workers are in confrontation with the government. The miners and civil servants are next in the pipeline.

Youth in these industries, many becoming active for the first time are in the front line of battle.

School leavers—the majority will be unemployed and they won't be able to claim supplementary benefit until 6 September.

YOP trainees—630,000 will go on YOP this year. YOP trainees are still being used as cheap labour and still face atrocious conditions. According to Peter Morrison, Employment Under Secretary, between June 1981 and March 1982, five YOP trainees died in accidents on their schemes.

In total 2,652 accidents were reported. The LPYS have been accused of exaggerating the lack of health and safety provision on YOP schemes. But amongst the reported accidents, 32 YOP trainees lost part or all of a finger, hand, toe or foot, 34 suffered eye injuries and 453 sustained fractures.

In the last 21 months ten YOP trainees have lost their lives in accidents at work. Every two months on average, a YOP trainee dies.

The Tories' attitude was best summed up in the case of Sandra Buckhart, who was a YOP trainee at Camperdown Zoo in Dundee. Tragically she was killed in a road accident, but when her mother applied for a £30 death grant she was told Sandra didn't qualify because she wasn't involved in a normal job.

Mrs Buckhart wrote to Mrs Thatcher, "We feel there is something very wrong with a system which can allow people to be 'written off' this way."

But the Tories are prepared to "write off" a whole generation of working class youth. The Youth Against the Tories demonstration on 16 October is an opportunity to fight back.

The YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign along

with the Labour Party Young Socialists originally called the national demonstration to protest against Tory proposals to pay 'youth trainees' £15 a week and withdraw the rights of unemployed 16-year-olds to claim supplementary benefit.

But such was the success of the mass YOPs lobby of Parliament that already the Tories have thought twice and decided to withdraw their reactionary proposals.

The mass YOPs lobby of Parliament demonstrated the willingness of youth to fight back. It showed the power of working class youth when they are united and organised in the ranks of the labour movement. Without a shadow of a doubt it was the fear of hundreds of thousands of angry low paid youth turning towards the organised labour movement that forced the Tories to retreat on their youth training proposals.

But one victory doesn't win a war. Youth today still have no future under the Tories. As a vital part of the fight back, the Labour Party Young Socialists are demanding a new deal for youth.

★ A guaranteed job, or the right to training on full pay, for every school leaver.

★ A guaranteed grant of at least £20 a week for all 16-18 year olds in full-time education.

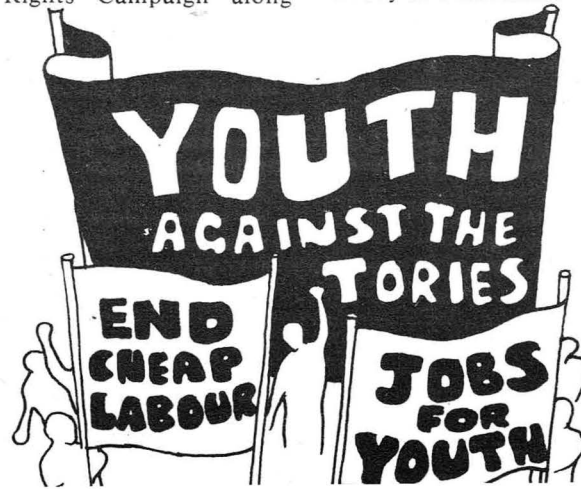
★ Union rates and conditions for all YOPs and all trainees on government schemes.

★ A minimum wage of £90 at 18.

The YTURC have already produced 20,000 leaflets advertising the demo. The LPYS are producing 330,000 leaflets along with trade union letters, posters, stickers and other material LPYS branches should order supplies now.

Every LPYS branch should start preparing already for 16 October. Branches should set up local action committees to build for the demo. Aim to win the widest support from organised workers and from the mass of youth.

Let's make 16 October the biggest, most successful demonstration ever organised by the LPYS outstripping even the magnificent mass YOPs Lobby of Parliament.





### Class in health service

The health workers dispute has attracted support from workers who realise the debt they owe to underpaid hospital staff. A survey conducted from 1978 to 1980 showed that unemployment, a daily threat to all workers, increased the risk of heart failure. The British Regional Heart Survey questioned 7,735 men aged 40-59 throughout Britain. Men who were unemployed for reasons other than health were considerably more likely to suffer from heart disease (16%) than those in work (10%).

On the other hand, some consultants in the hospitals don't support the strike. Writing in 'Hospital Doctor', one doctor lays into the strike, complaining that surgeon who turned up at his hospital in a red Ferrari got some antagonism from pickets. The next day he was due to go to Ascot and felt it would be more discreet to take the day off than turn up at the hospital in morning dress and grey topper!

### Workers' plan rejected

Militant has always pointed out that shopfloor workers, with their day to day experience of the products they make, are often far more in touch with real needs than their profit hungry bosses. Workers at International Harvesters in Bradford have consistently advocated to the parent company changes in their small horse-power tractor which would make it useful for modern conditions particularly in the poorer countries of the world, whose agricultural performance could be markedly improved. The directors of the parent company in Chicago took no notice, saying there was no market for small tractors.

Now a small tractor in the 40-45 horse power range has been launched, selling at about £7,300. The Bradford shop stewards' model could have been made, with a profit, for £6,000. The Bradford factory's future is now very uncertain.

A planned economy with workers control and management of production could guarantee jobs and a new future for the millions of the third world. The "business acumen" of the multinational bosses has only brought botching, mass unemployment and more expensive agriculture in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

### Tory right oppose EEC

When the anti-Common Market campaign was in full swing in the early '70s, 'Militant' criticised those on the left who shared anti-EEC platforms with some of the worst reactionary elements of the Tory right wing. The reactionaries' nationalist, jingoistic opposition to the EEC had nothing in common with the labour movement.

Should history repeat itself, it would be interesting to see what position those comrades on the left would take now. Two leading members of the Monday Club, the reactionary right-wing Tory grouping, have just published a pamphlet explaining why Tories should be opposed to the EEC.

You see, the Common Market is "well suited to the achievement of socialist aims". You may well ask, if the EEC is just some international socialist conspiracy then why is the majority of the Labour Party all for withdrawal from Europe? Ask you may, for you won't find the answer in the Tory pamphlet. It simply dismisses this stark factor by explaining it as just plain "curious"!

### FIFTY YEARS AGO

The French government began building the Maginot Line, their massive defence fortifications, along the border with Germany, to defend them from invasion—yet the main firms building the Maginot lines were German. War and preparations for war can of course be extremely profitable for capitalists. In the Second World War, the American multi-national ITT helped both sides. It had a 28% share in the Focke-Wulf Company whose bombers wreaked havoc upon the Atlantic convoys. And one of its American companies manufactured direction finders for the ships in the convoys, to help them escape destruction.

# Apartheid Football

With an average £30,000 each it is unlikely that many of the international soccer mercenaries who were on tour in South Africa would have had the inclination to go visiting schools.

But if they had, they might have got a glimpse of why it is so ludicrous to talk of apartheid having ended in sport. You cannot have normal sport in an abnormal society.

In Cape Town, where the soccer tour began, two schools would have begun to show the difference. At Rondebosch High School, there are 650 white boys, with 32 teachers.

The school has: 50 acres of sports facilities, 7 full sized rugby pitches and 2 smaller ones, 8 cricket pitches, a grass athletics track, a swimming pool (big enough for water polo), Sports Hall, Squash Courts, Tennis Courts, a shooting range and a groundstaff of ten to keep it all up to scratch.

Facilities are not quite as good a few miles away at Fazeka School, Guguletu. There, the 1,000 African pupils, aged between 6 and 16, are packed 67 to a classroom. Their sports facilities consist of an irregularly shaped piece of grass at the back of the school, on which there is one rugby goalpost. To play a game they have take their posts down the road to a piece of waste ground.

Such inequality pervades all of society. Apartheid is a system, specifically aimed at dividing and ruling in the interests of profit.

However much the touring footballers talk of there being no apartheid in football, all they show is their willingness to turn a blind (and profitable) eye to apartheid. To truly remove apartheid from just the playing and administration of sport, over thirty basic apartheid laws would have to be removed.

Because of international boycotts, the government in 1976 announced sport in future could be 'multi-national'. This was just a rhetorical charade to mask discrimination. You could now play across the racial divide if you could get the agreement of white local Councils.

Jimmy Hill, before he made his first ever visit to South Africa last week, was reported as saying that football in S. Africa had been de-segregated for six years. This is far from the case.

Three years ago, a member of the ruling Nationalist Party, AJ Vlok MP reassured his fellow MPs: "far less than 1% of the total sports activities in South Africa are integrated" and the Minister of Sports stated on 21 May, 1979 that mixed sport "must be dealt with in such a way that they do not in fact become the rule."

Nothing fundamental has

By Jim  
Christie

changed. Recently one Cape Town team had to fold because, unable to travel together by train it was finding the cost of air fares prohibitive. A white footballer returning from coaching a black team was arrested for not having a permit to be in a black area.

Although some of the footballers have claimed that they are going to S Africa because of their 'deep commitment' to non-racism, the financial incentives may just possibly have had something to do with it too. Before pressure forced his last minute withdrawal, footballer Justin Fashanu stated he had been offered "more money than many people earn in a lifetime."

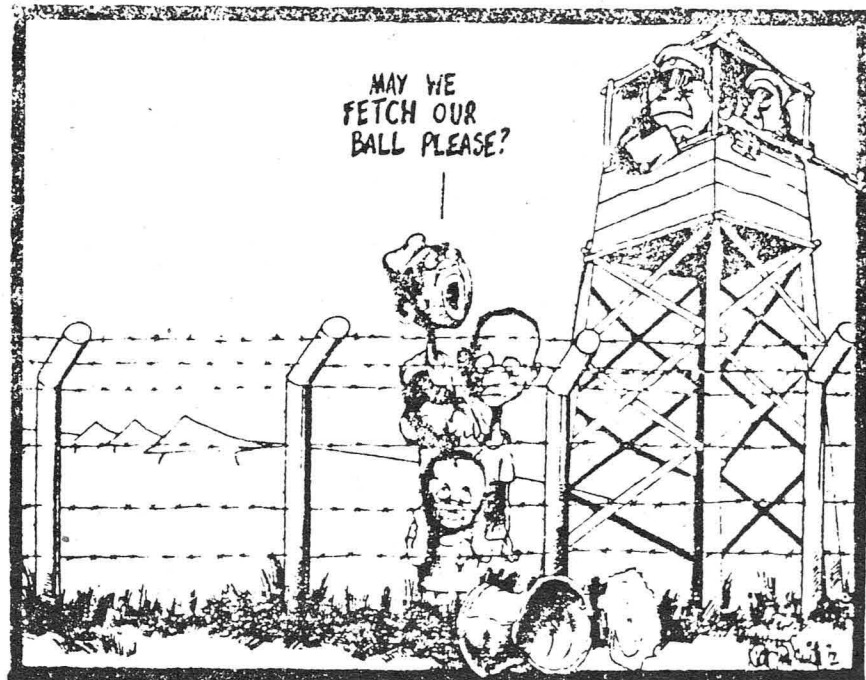
## Flops



Jomo Sono (above) is one of South Africa's best black footballers. He has played abroad for New York Cosmos and Atlanta Chiefs, and in South Africa. A big star abroad, when he returns to South Africa to play for Orlando Pirates, he is affected by

all the racist laws of apartheid.

"When I walk down the steps from the plane at Johannesburg Airport I could feel the pressure closing in on my head. It was something I could feel." (Observer, 21 October, 1979)



Cartoon published by black students in S Africa

Ardiles stated he could not understand the fuss, for he had often played abroad for charity. But how many charities paid him the £100,000 he was offered to play in South Africa. Worry over losing out financially in the rest of his career has forced him and virtually the only other world-class players, Kempes and Dirceu, to withdraw.

The tour itself has turned into a farce. Black activists have made three leading black teams withdraw from fixtures with the visitors. At the second match, where a replacement team had to be flown in half an hour before kick-off, only 2,000 spectators turned up to watch in a stadium which holds 10,000.

But this will not stop South African Breweries, the backers of the tour who

have provided £500,000 to underwrite it, from trying to get as much advertising as possible. SAB were not so forthcoming to their own black employees, who recently came out on strike for a decent wage.

Sport and alcohol are very much the modern equivalents of Roman bread and circuses. Firms such as SAB, Adidas, Holiday Inns, Pepsi Cola, Iwisa, have poured money into sponsorship of black professional sport.

Some blacks have done well out of this, if they accept the system. The South African National Football Association and the National Professional Soccer League, have helped ensure that soccer is run in the interests of business.

Their monopoly of grounds in the African

townships means that it is difficult for other teams to find pitches. One Soweto based team, Botofago (from the rival non-racial Federation Professional Soccer League) found that they had to play at Lenasia, 11 miles from their home ground.

Football is a mass spectator sport for black South Africans, unlike rugby or cricket—and there is big money to be made from it. This has led to a number of murders of leading managers, directors, and coaches, who have refused to obey the orders of the criminal gangs which plague Soweto.

The soccer world is a microcosm of apartheid. Built upon inequality, run in the interests of business, restricted by racist laws and infected by criminal thugs.

# Drivers now face extra strain

The vicious press and media campaign backing BRB's imposition of flexible rostering on the loco-men has emphasised the effects of the strike on commuters.

No-where have they attempted to explain the effects of flexi-rosters on the drivers.

But evidence of health and social problems are well

detrimental health effects: "Train drivers must pass strict medical examinations as Traction Trainees at the age of 20 then more periodic examinations. These medicals make certain that train drivers are a fitter group than the

changes such as working on HSTs (High Speed Trains) which can operate at speeds around 125mph, have introduced new stress factors.

The report outlines how loco-men already work an extremely flexible system, 96% working shifts—a higher proportion than any other group of workers. As well as varied shift start times these can be altered at short notice by instructions from management which can even be delivered to drivers' homes.

Shift work alone results in the increased incidence of a long list of health problems ranging from loss of sleep to a higher death rate. Alongside come serious social effects resulting in accidents at work and disrupted family life at home including a higher divorce rate.

10-16 hours rest between shifts, drivers' errors in the cab increased.

One of the most frequent health effects is stomach trouble. The report refers to the Dutch loco-men where "drivers working the most flexible system suffered a 50% higher incidence of stomach complaints as did drivers on the least flexible system. Stomach complaints may develop into more serious stress related problems like stomach ulcers. They can also be a warning sign for other stress diseases such as heart diseases."

The most recent study from Gothenburg, Sweden (1980) made a number of recommendations based on the results. These included reducing the length of very early and very late shifts by shortening the working week, reducing the number of alternating schedules and reducing the irregularity of shift patterns.

The pamphlet concludes by comparing BR's approach with Gothenburg where it points out "work schedules will be designed to minimise stress in line with the above recommendations' whilst in Britain BR is modernising to the detriment of railworkers and some might say in order to crush them."

The information contained in the pamphlet completely undermines BR's widely publicised case that the loco-men were resisting progress. Progress BR style clearly means destroying the health of railmen. After British Leyland and the horrific production line conditions imposed this again raises the question of a nationalised industry being used to pave the way for attacks on the health of the working class in general—at a time when the Tories are attempting to dismantle the NHS.

It is ironic that the *Guardian* editorial 3 July suggests that BR's savings from flexible rostering would be enough to build new hospitals. As the pamphlet replies "precisely then these hospitals can steadily fill up with railmen and their families from ill-health caused by flexible rostering."

## Accidents and health risks rise

More flexibility will undoubtedly make things much worse. BR base their attitude for flexible rostering on France, West Germany, Holland and Sweden where this practise is already carried out on the railways. But in all four countries concerned, detailed studies of workers health show detrimental effects.

The report concludes: "Not one of the studies discussed finds anything to recommend flexible shift systems. On the contrary they are all agreed that the irregular shift systems worked contribute to ill-health."

One aspect ignored completely by BR and the media is the accident risk. The report outlines "for maximum safety the rest period (between shifts) should be much longer than 12 hours but under flexi-rostering the rest period more often comes down to barely minutes longer than 12 hours."

In fact a 1974 West German report recommended rest periods between shifts of well over 16 hours after it was shown that with only

documented in a report from the Environment Research Group at Bradford University summarising recent scientific studies.

In a four-page pamphlet currently being circulated to ASLEF men in Leeds, the report outlines how the stress imposed by train driving alone produces

average working population—and yet one in every ten footplate staff are unfit for normal duties. Train drivers in Britain and abroad are very likely to be retired through ill-health well before they reach the age of 60."

In the Soviet Union drivers have a 10% chance of being retired from work through hypertension alone. Since the end of steam, technological



Bill Wynn (Leeds South LP) reviews 'Flexible Rostering, the Human Cost'. Copies available from the Work Hazards Group of the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science, 9 Poland Street, London W.1.

## Parents occupy to save school

Croxteth tenants are fighting to retain one of the few anywhere near decent facilities on their estate. Parents of children at Croxteth Comprehensive School have occupied it to stop Sir Keith Joseph from implementing his decision to close the school down.

Joseph's diktat goes right against the wishes of the local community and even the decision of the local Council, who have voted (after pressure), to retain the school. Last year Heseltine came up to Merseyside and promised a new beginning. Such promises ring hollow in Croxteth.

A vast Council estate on the outskirts of Liverpool, it has a staggering 94.8% of

youngsters unemployed, the highest in Western Europe. As one 14 year old said: "If you came to live around here you would want to leave after two weeks and you wouldn't want to come back, not even to look."

Croxteth tenants have been fighting a long time to save their school. The original decision to close the school was taken in 1980 by the council education committee, by the casting vote of the Chairman, Mike Storey.

How could they defend this decision? The school offers the only playing fields (30 acres) for miles around, the only gyms in the areas and the only base for night classes and youth clubs. Its 465 pupils would be forced to travel nearly 2 miles (not enough for a free bus pass), to an agreed school which has no playing fields, is completely closed in by houses, and its two very old buildings are separated by dangerous

dual-carriageways.

The original plan closure was first agreed to by Tory minister Mark Carlisle. This led to a massive outcry of protest, with the Croxteth Community Action Committee (CCAC) playing a prominent role.

### Only protests have kept it open

The East Lancashire main road was blockaded three nights running. Roads were blocked in the city town centre and councillors were lobbied outside the town hall. These examples of "extra-parliamentary activity" showed councillors that the people of Croxteth would not accept the closure. This led to the council effectively reversing its earlier decision by a 31 majority with only Liberal

Councillors continuing to support closure.

But the latest bomb shell came when Sir Keith Joseph, the new education secretary, refused to accept this local decision and insisted that the school should close anyway. So CCAC organised a series of public meetings on the estate. About 500 parents were present when it was decided to occupy the school to prevent its closure.

The school is now occupied by the people of the estate on a well organised rota system with pickets, banners, on all the entrances, although the phones and electricity have been cut off. The LPYS is fully involved in this fight, to ensure that we not only save Croxteth School, but also link it up to a political struggle for decent education, jobs and better houses.

By Ray Murray  
(W Derby LPYS)

## WHO'S RUINING THE RAILWAYS?

### JOBS LOST:

★ Since 1950 there has been a 66% reduction in the number of railworkers (a 73% reduction in drivers and second men, ie footplate men)—over 450,000 in all since nationalisation in 1948.

### PRODUCTIVITY:

★ Since 1950 there has been a 250% increase in traffic carried per footplateman.  
★ The number of rail workers per track mile is now lower than in any other major European country.

### INVESTMENT:

★ This year down to an estimated £265 million, compared to £379 million in 1979 (and even the 1979 figure was not considered enough to maintain services).

★ Other countries give massive subsidies to run a proper railway system; The Paris metro gets as much state subsidy as the entire British rail network.

★ Just to stop the railways deteriorating more BR needs an extra £150 million a year.

★ Yet flexible rostering, which the BR board and government have chosen to concentrate upon, would only save 0.02% from this year's operating costs.



The real America— 10 million unemployed, 25 million under the poverty line and 34 million just above it...

In August 194 Lewis, US mi leader, told a ch vention:

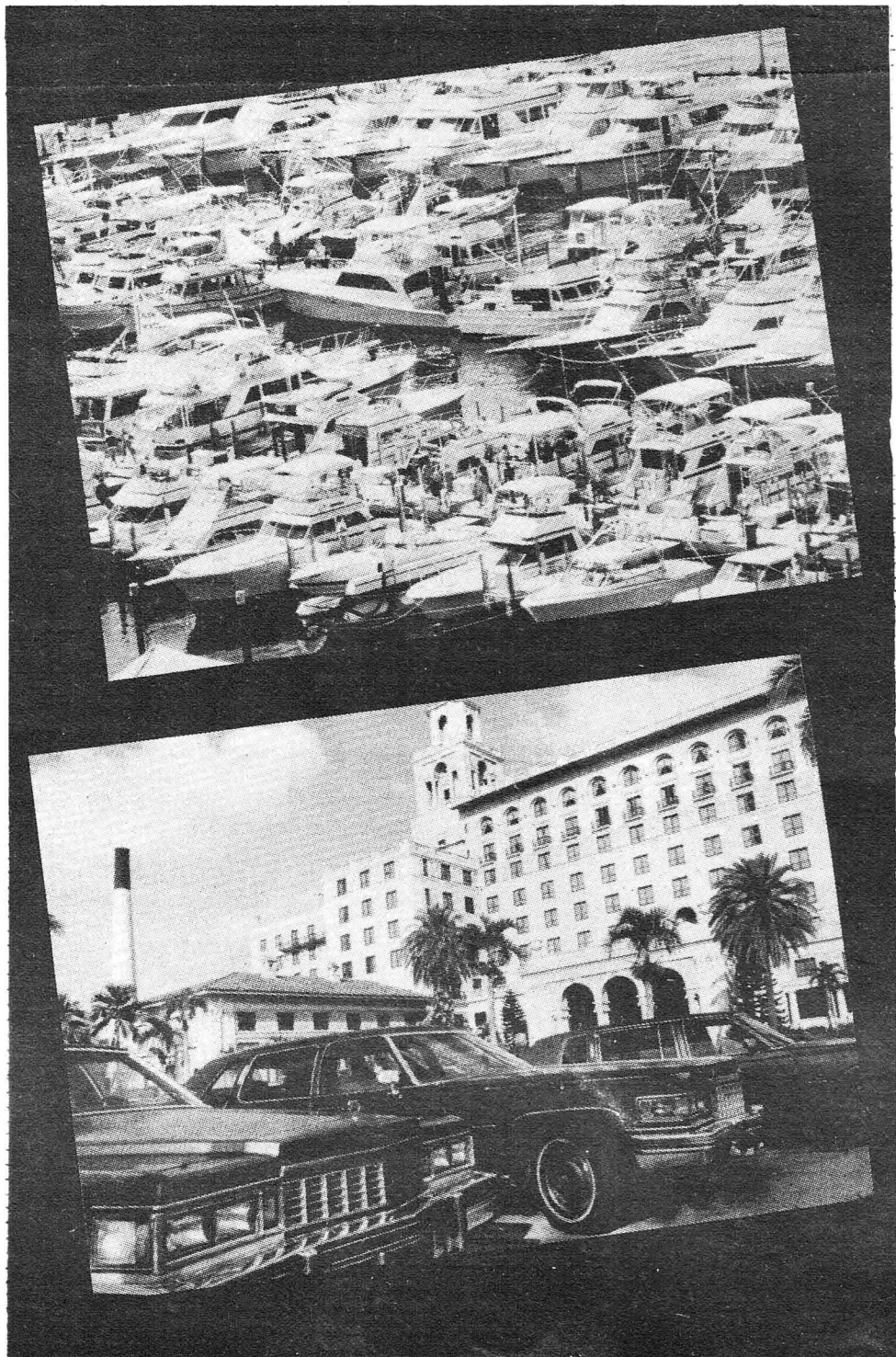
“Some day in this country the people are going to lose confidence in the existing political parties to a degree that they will form their own party.”

Following this an estimated 25 to 30 million people tuned in to hear Lewis on a radio broadcast. Hanging on his every word, they were expecting that he was to announce the formation of a Labour Party. Imagine the disappointment when they heard him urge workers to vote Republican.

In the preceding seven years American labour had emerged from the Trade Union dark ages. At the beginning of the thirties less than 10% of the workforce were in Trade Unions—few-

# USA — workers build a Labour Pa

...while the top one million people own 20% of the country's assets



## INTERVIEW WITH UNION ACTIVIST:

“In the 1960s it was the civil right, in the 1970s it was Vietnam, 1980s it will be Labour.”

On a recent visit to the USA, Robert O'Neill talked to PETE KELLY, a nationally-known United Auto Workers Union activist, and recorded his opinions on what lies ahead for American labour.

Pete Kelly is Chairman of the Bargaining Committee of the Design Staff of General Motors in Detroit, Joint Chairman of the Locals Opposed to Concessions, and Treasurer of the Independent Skilled Trades Council. He is a member of UAW Local 160 in Detroit.

With one in six jobs in the USA related to the auto industry, the developments in this industry and in the UAW are of importance to the labour movement in the

whole of the US and internationally.

“Because of conditions affecting working people and the consequent effects on the trade unions—especially in the UAW where 300,000 of our members are laid off without much prospect of being rehired—I don't think it's business as usual. It is my opinion, and there are already signs that this is taking place, that there will be an intensification and escalation of labour struggles in the US and Canada in the 1980s.

“For the past thirty years, with the rise in the economy, the leadership of the UAW were able to acquire gains in wages and benefits from the enormous profits made by the corporations. Now this era is at an end. Now we are in an era of give-backs in which the trade union bureaucracy are moving quickly to accommodate the corpora-

tions.

“The majority of workers now see increasingly clearly that this is not the way to save jobs. They view it as a conspiracy of management, government and the union bureaucracy to smash their standards of living.

“The bureaucracy are losing credibility when they state: “We are now entering a non-adversarial role with management.” This is insane. In some of the plants we have had 2,000 disciplinary lay-offs or sackings. This is a common experience of locals. Does this sound like a “non-adversarial relationship?”

“The opposition in the union is grouped around the Locals Opposed to Concessions (LOC) and the Independent Skilled Trades Councils. Twenty years of fighting consistently on principled positions in the Union now sees the LOC and the ISTC emerging with



# John L Newworkers' eering con-

By Dave  
Cotterill

er than 3 million workers—and most of these were organised into craft unions.

The depression starting in 1929 had acted as a mighty hammer-blow against organised labour. 15 million unemployed meant that there was no chance of the unions defending their members.

The upturn in the economy in 1933, however, provoked a tidal wave of strikes and union organisation. Within four years 10 million were organised into mighty industrial unions.

What the British workers had struggled to achieve over more than seven decades was accomplished by the American workers in five years.

Through these movements the politically advanced sections of the working class began to move toward the creation of a Labour Party. Without doubt the support was there. Even in 1942 an opinion poll in *Fortune* magazine reported that 25% of the population were in favour of socialism, and

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greater support.

"The developments now taking place in the Union are shown by what has happened at Chrysler. At the recent elections for leading positions in the plants and locals, 50% of those standing were voted out of office and replaced because of their support for the concessions.

"In Canada the UAW has taken a clear stand on concessions. At a recent Canadian UAW Council, the delegates were asked to stand if they opposed to concessions being agreed to. Every delegate stood as the platform declared that if there was anyone left sitting, 'we would drive the b.... from the Union.'

"What is happening in the auto industry and the UAW will happen in other sectors of the economy and the rest of the labour movement. In the 1960s it was the civil rights struggles, in the 1970s it was Vietnam, in the 1980s it will be Labour."

35% had an open mind.

The barrier was the lack of leadership on the part of the foremost union leaders in that period.

The end of the Second World War saw America in a position of economic, social and political superiority on a world scale with, as Trotsky had predicted, colossal military power on land, sea and in the air. The boom in the world economy, together with the development of the Cold War and the onslaught on trade union activists in the US, cut across the pre-war movements.

In the period 1950 to 1975 the expansion of American capitalism meant that important concessions could be guaranteed for large sections of workers (though by no means all); jobs, decent standards of living, improving education and health.

On such a basis the political consciousness of workers was blunted. Illusions in the Democratic Party were renewed. The influence of labour waned. There seemed no need for militant trade unions. The union leaders became firmly wedded to management and increasingly adopted their outlook—workers and management were 'partners.'

This development is reflected in the position today, where only 20% of workers are organised into unions—20 million workers in total. But the political influence and strength of the union movement is shown by the fact that an estimated one half of the workforce benefit from union-negotiated deals.

The new world crisis of capitalism, however, will change all this. As in the 1930s, the American workers will be forced to struggle.

The colossus of American capitalism has already begun to reveal its feet of clay. In 1947 America

## Economists expect a 6% fall in investment this year

created half of the world's manufactured products, 57% of steel and 80% of all new cars. By the beginning of the 1970s this was down to 22% of steel and 30% of cars.

Its share of world production had fallen to 36% (the level of 1913) and its share of world trade had fallen from 25% to 10%. In twenty years, half the gold in Fort Knox has trickled away.

America's overwhelming economic supremacy on a world scale has disappeared. The problems of inflation, low productivity, recession and lack of investment are now the main issues in American society.

The decline in profits, which fell by 3% in 1980 and 5% in 1981, has led to the bosses' demand for cuts in wages and social services. Mounting deficits in the budget have undermined confidence in the dollar and fuelled inflation.

The basic sectors of the economy have been in continuous recession for the last three years. In agriculture, the farmers are facing the worst crisis since the depression years. Last year was the first time since 1933 that farm prices have not risen.

To reverse this trend and create a climate for business to invest, Reagan has proposed a programme which places the crisis firmly and squarely on the backs of the

workers and small businessmen.

In industry, the government and the bosses have used a combination of unemployment and wage freezes to cut wages. As in Britain, the threat of mass

## Manufacturing industry, now running at two-thirds capacity, sacked 200,000 workers in June

unemployment has been used to force workers to accept wage freezes. In return for 'guarantees' of job security, the more powerful monopolies have forced through wage deals which mean a big cut in living standards.

Small businessmen, who probably saw Reagan as the saviour to get the government off their backs, have been 'rewarded' for their illusions.

In February 1982 there were more business failures than at any time since the Depression. At present 450 to 500 companies a week are going out of business. A dozen small banks have already had to be rescued from bankruptcy.

Unemployment now stands at 9.9 million. By the summer it is expected to hit 10%, that is over 10 million unemployed. And these are the official figures. Not counted are the 1.2 million who have given up hope and are not registering, nor the 5.4 million who are now regarded as part-timers because their hours have been cut.

For the black workers, unemployment is now 17.4% but for young blacks it is an incredible 46%. In Atlanta 500 people a day turn up for the free hot meals—not the 'derelicts,' but the ex-workers.

For workers in America the effects of unemployment are even more horrendous than in Britain. Unemployment benefits only extend up to a maximum of 26 weeks—something which Reagan has proposed to cut back even further.

## The 1982 budget deficit, aimed for \$40 billion, is likely to reach \$100 billion

Only 37% of those unemployed receive unemployment compensation. Consequently the majority are now literally faced with starvation or going on to welfare.

Such prospects will have devastating results on the consciousness of millions of workers. The American workers have been fed a diet of 'unlimited opportunity'—the freedom to earn big wages and make profits.

Now the reality is turning out to be very different. For the first time in nearly fifty years Reagan is demonstrating unmistakably the class nature of the system.

Already for millions the dream of riches has a vicious ring. In the richest country of the world live some of the poorest people. There are nearly 22 million people who receive food stamp money and aid from Medicaid. In 1978 it was estimated that 24.5 million live below the poverty line,

and 34 million just above it.

Reagan's programme of cutbacks in state expenditure will hit practically every sector—the sick, through cuts in Medicaid; the schools and colleges, where cuts in student loans may force half the nation's 1.2 million graduates to give up their studies; the pensioners, both military and civilian.

Reagan's policies, together with the recession and the threat of unemployment, have had the initial effect of dampening down the trade union struggle. Real wages have fallen since 1979, the number of strikes have dropped. More contracts are being signed in which concessions are being made in return for a guaranteed job.

Nevertheless this is not to say that the workers are not willing to struggle. Despite a small falling away in the level of the strike activity, the strikes which are being conducted are now for a longer duration than three or five years ago, thus indicating that there is less room for manoeuvre. This is how the true nature of the capitalist society will be exposed to the workers.

No one can doubt that there is massive opposition to Reagan's policies. He was only elected with the support of 25% of the voters. In this land of 'democracy,' the turn out at the polls is one of the lowest in the world.

## The steel industry employs 100,000 fewer workers than a year ago

But at this stage, the cynicism, disillusionment and opposition can find no real outlet. No wonder, when the Democratic 'alternative' to Reagan is: 'Our alternative is that the President should advocate an alternative!'

The labour movement is the only force which can offer a way forward. Despite the backwardness of the trade union leaders who are allied the management of capitalism, combined with their corruption and graft, the unions will be transformed into fighting representative bodies. It will be from these bodies that the basis will be laid for the creation of an American Labour Party.

That support could be won for a Labour Party even at this early stage of the crisis was shown in a *Business Week/Harris Opinion Poll* printed in *Business Week* on 31 May. Opposition to 'business' (ie. the capitalists) was extremely high.

On keeping plants open, 72% saw the role of business as negative; on providing steady employment during a recession; 71% voted negative; and on ploughing back profits to make the economy grow 67% voted negative.

Even more significantly, when asked how they would vote in an election between one candidate who favoured business and one who was critical of business, 52% said they would vote for the candidate who would be critical of business, as opposed to 40% for the pro-business candidate.

Political independents declared for the anti-

business candidate 58% to 35%, and people who considered themselves middle of the road politically were 59% for the anti-business candidate and 34% for.

Even among the pro-business section and those with incomes of \$15,000 to \$25,000 per year—64% were for the anti-business candidate!

## Companies should now look for 19% profit rates before investing —leading forecaster

Not only does the mood exist for the successful building of a Labour Party, but this poll shows that the mood exists to give it an overall majority in an election. What stands in the way of such a development is the refusal of the trade union leaders to take action.

The Machinists' Union, the Clothing and Textile Workers' Union and the Electrical Workers' Union have all passed resolutions at their conferences for a break with the Democrats and for labour to set up its own independent party. In spite of this, as Reagan's policies have begun to bite, the reaction of the union leaders has been to move even closer to the Democrats in preparation for the Congressional and Senate elections in November and the Presidential election in 1984.

Based around the state and labour councils, drawing in the community and minority groups, and fighting against all the oppressive policies of big business with a programme for a Socialist United States in a socialist federation of the USA, Canada and Mexico, a Labour Party would quickly become the major party in the US.

In spite of the role of the leadership, support for a campaign to build a Labour Party will grow among trade union activists.

The experiences of the four years of Carter's presidency have underlined the real nature of the Democratic Party. At a time when the Democrats controlled most state legislatures, the Congress and White House, not one piece of pro-labour legislation was passed.

## "All these forces combine to make a strong recovery from recession unlikely" —Economist, 17 July

With 72% of political contributions to the Democrats coming from the corporations and 8% from labour, the reason for this lack of enthusiasm toward labour is clear. The Democrats are similar to the Republicans; they are both parties of big business.

Reagan's policies are creating the basis for a tidal wave of opposition. The prospect of budget deficits of over \$100 million, combined with stagnation in the economy and rising unemployment, has already caused a few jittery nerves among the bosses. Splits are already apparent in the

Republican Party. When Reagan gave his State of the Union address in February, the economic passages were greeted with stony silence by the Republican representatives.

The American ruling class is unsure of which course to take. For the moment they have backed Reagan's deflationary measures. The industrial-military complex in particular is having a field-day. Reagan is proposing in the next five years to spend \$1.6 trillion on arms. To appreciate such a figure it is perhaps easier to think of dollar bills stacked 107,000 miles high!

Against the background of cuts in public spending, unemployment and the holding down of wages, this colossal waste of society's resources will lay the basis for a resurgence of the peace movement, as was shown by the million-strong anti-war, anti-Reagan demonstration in New York on 12 June.

Similarly, Reagan's policies of tax hand-outs to the rich will arouse strong opposition from the working class. In a country where one million people own 20% of the country's total assets (\$721 billion), the lavish assistance to industry will not go unnoticed.

With an upturn in the economy most likely in the latter part of this year, or in 1983, the workers will attempt to recover what has been lost. A tidal wave of strikes is then likely.

In the elections in November the Republicans are likely to be defeated—both the Senate and the Congress will probably fall to the Democrats. In such a situation Reagan would be isolated in the President's office.

Already discussions are taking place about the need for him to stand down at the end of his term. The volatility of American politics is now reflected in the emergence of one-term Presidents.

In such a situation, if no lead was given by the trade union leaders to form a Labour Party, a further term of the Democrats would be possible, with the Kennedy wing to the fore. At present Edward Kennedy is proposing a \$4 billion reflationary package to alleviate unemployment.

Initially this could cut across the development towards a Labour Party. Old illusions would be temporarily renewed. However, such a government would be unable to find a solution to the crisis of American capitalism. The Democrats would also find themselves in power with the economy in a worse crisis than at any time since the 1930s. They would be forced to expose their anti-labour nature.

The struggle to defend living standards will find its expression in the transformation of the trade unions, and this in turn will renew the struggle to create an independent party of Labour.

The same process that took place in Britain at the turn of the century will be repeated in America—the difference will be in the much quicker tempo of events. Within seven to ten years the American workers will create an independent party of Labour, which under the pressure of events will adopt a socialist programme to take up the struggle against the American bosses and their system.

# Indian Railway Workers face Government attack

The government of India under Indira Gandhi, in its bid to protect capitalists' interests, is coming down heavily on public sector workers because they are the most strongly organised and unionised.

Following the anti-labour policy of the government, the railway authority has started taking drastic measures to 'rationalise' the workforce and also to crush the trade union movement on the railways.

But the railway workers have recovered from the demoralising effects resulting from the defeat of the 1974 railway strike. The onslaught by the railway authority has rekindled their fighting spirit. The Executive Committee of the railwaymen's union have called upon the railwaymen to fight relentlessly for their outstanding demands and to resist the attacks of the authority.

Included among the outstanding demands is the demand for eight hours to be introduced as the working hours for all categories of workers.

The railways, one of the three biggest public sector employers (the other two are docks and mines), has a strength of about 2,000,000 workers, permanent and casual combined.

The whole sector today suffers from serious crisis. The present capitalist regime of India, failing to solve the mounting crisis, decided to reduce the number of railway workers to 1,000,000 through service cuts, illegal suspension and sacking.

Fresh recruitment has been stopped, although 38,000 vacancies are created every year by way of retirement, deaths etc. In the

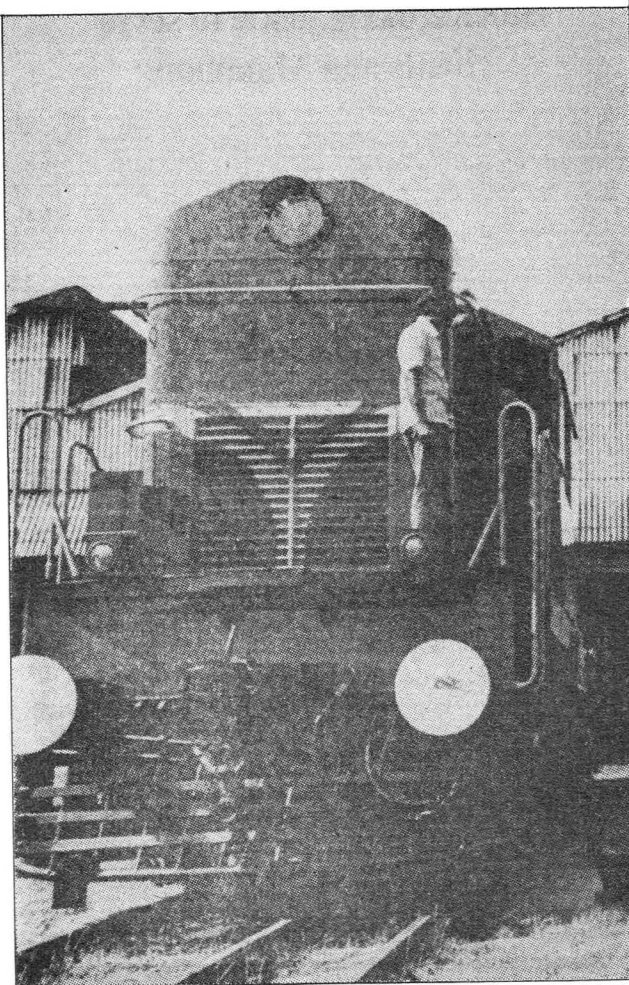
## From an Indian correspondent

Sealdah (Calcutta) Division of Eastern Railways alone, 4,300 posts of different categories have remained vacant, creating an additional work overload upon the existing 10,300 workers. Moreover, the authority is insisting on automation, which will not only curtail fresh recruitment prospects but also result in further reduction of the existing permanent workers.

A large part of railway workers still languish as casual labour (without job security) and the railway authority, instead of taking steps to make the casual workers permanent, has sacked 3,000 casual workers in the Sealdah Division alone.

Under the plea of inefficiency and mounting loss, the authority is taking measures to convert the railways into a happy hunting ground for private contractors. Small wayside stations are being leased out to private contractors for selling tickets on an experimental basis.

Besides this, work in almost all the departments like Loco-workshop, electrical etc are being thrown open to profit-hungry private contractors. As a matter of fact, the loss suffered by the railways is due to factors like lack of proper planning, bureaucratisation of the administration, want of adequate investment and infrastructural facilities, shortage of



Mrs Gandhi (right) hopes to 'rationalise' the railways—but the organised workers stand in the way.



office in the Narkaldanga area of Calcutta. The union, founded in 1978, has 163 members. It is affiliated to the anti-Congress (I) Eastern Railwaymen's Union.

The Congress (I) men threatened the union workers, using abusive language like "no red flag hoisting in the Narkaldanga area, otherwise we shall cut you into pieces and throw into the ditch", etc.

A similar attack by Congress (I) thugs a few months ago was countered by a mobilisation of 500 workers. The management is mysteriously keeping silent over these activities.

## Workers prepared to struggle

But Indian railway workers, seasoned by the experiences of the great 1974 railway strike, are not prepared to suffer humiliation and attacks on their lives and jobs.

The ERMU have already organised a demonstration to the divisional managers in all the divisions, demanding protection from assaults and harassment. It has also put forward a detailed programme of action including demonstrations, mass meetings etc.

However, it would be

mistaken to limit the struggle to narrow trade union issues. It is necessary to face up to the political issues concerned, and direct the workers' struggle against the Congress government and the capitalist class whose handmaiden Mrs Gandhi is. Unfortunately, the present leadership of the Railwaymen's Union takes up a reformist position.

But the growing crisis has radicalised the workers more and more, and put the leadership under pressure.

The railway workers do not lack the stamina and determination to fight but they require an able Marxist leadership based on a socialist programme. This may not be long in coming.

The foremost task is to link the workers' immediate demands to the political action that is necessary to carry them out.

Immediate steps should be taken to bring all the public sector workers under one single union. The fight for union democracy must be carried forward, with the right to recall elected leaders in order to keep a check on them.

Open discussion of all important issues must be insisted on, with the right to publish and circulate bulletins within the union. Trade union militias should be formed, involving all the workers, to resist the murderous assaults directed against them by the bosses' thugs.

These and other measures will help to infuse the workers with a new sense of direction aimed towards the socialist transformation of society—the only way to overcome the misery and repression suffered by the working people in capitalist India.

manpower and so on.

But the authority, instead of taking firm steps to root out mismanagement and corruption, is blaming the workers for the sad state of affairs and using it as an alibi to sack and harass workers, and also to justify the frequent increase in railways fares and freight charges.

The workers under the banner of railwaymen's union, demanding protective measures against cor-

ruption and malpractices and struggling for their just demands, are facing serious threats from pro-Government elements and their accomplices. Lacking a mass base, and courage, the latter are indulging in hooliganism and are using the muscle power of thugs to combat the struggle of the workers.

On 31 May some Congress (I) workers along with local hooligans raided the Bridge Inspectors' Union



## British trade unionists support South African strikers

"Reinstate the sacked workers!" "Recognise the union!"

These were some of the slogans on the banners of over 300 people who joined the Anti-Apartheid demonstration in York on Saturday 3 July.

Local union members, shop stewards and national officials of the Rowntrees Unions joined Anti-

Apartheid groups, CLPs and LPYS members in support of sacked members of the South African Allied Workers Union at Wilson-Rowntree in East London, SA.

Bro. Bob Harrison, National Secretary of the TGWU, pledged the full support of his union:

"It is the same fight that has been waged and won by the workers of the United Kingdom over 200 years, to gain the benefits of free and

independent trade unions."

Bro. Trevor Haigh, representing the 5,000 GMWU workers at the York Rowntree-Mackintosh factory, said he was determined to carry on the campaign locally and nationally but urged the Anti-Apartheid Movement to think again before urging a national consumer boycott of Rowntree products. He said that putting further jobs at risk would be a contradiction of what was try-

ing to be achieved.

Effective backing for the SA workers will be raised by mobilising British workers' industrial muscle in support of common demands. A determined campaign in this direction is the only way of forcing the Rowntrees employers to retreat.

This is also the way to beat off any retaliation by the company against workers taking solidarity action.

The campaign in Britain in support of the free trade union SAAWU must be strengthened. Support of trade unions like the T&GWU, G&MWU and USDAW is an important step forward. LPYS branches in the cities with Rowntrees factories should raise the campaign with local trade unions and Labour Parties.

The most vital part of the campaign is to build solid lines of communication at shop floor level between British and South African unions. Unions must be urged to organise exchange visits to South Africa so that means of support and solidarity can be worked out, trade unionist to trade unionist.

By Fred Cole  
York LPYS

## FRANCE

"How to rule a country when one represents social groups which are not the ruling class?"

This question by L Jospin, Secretary of the French Socialist Party, sums up the impasse of the Socialist-Communist coalition government.

Its policy of trying to implement reforms on the basis of the crisis-ridden capitalist economy, through deflation, is breaking down. There is no way the capitalists' demand for more profits can be reconciled with the needs of working people in the present period.

Inevitably, the Socialist government's reforms have begun to turn into counter-reforms. Union leaders, while continuing to back the government, are reportedly "nervous about being outflanked by the anger of their rank and file"—who voted for socialist policies when they put Mitterand into office in May 1981.

At Vireaux in the Ardennes, steel workers threaten-

ed with redundancy exploded, locking up three of the company's executives and fighting a pitched battle with police. With management refusing to negotiate, 1,040 workers burnt down the empty chateau which had housed the company's offices.

Also sections of the middle class have been provoked into violent protest by the government's 'wage and price freeze' which has been used to make them carry the cost of more expensive imports and the devaluation of the franc. Farmers have blocked autoroutes with tractors; wine-growers have barricaded railway lines with burning rubber tyres; small business owners have thrown smoke bombs into trains and into the Stock Exchange.

While these actions offer no way forward, they emphasise the fact that French working people are refusing to have to pay for the bosses' crisis. Their problems can only be solved when the workers' elected leaders carry out the policies on which they were elected and break the power of the capitalist ruling class.

# ECONOMIC RECOVERY: 'NOW YOU SEE IT, NOW YOU DON'T'

**Priests, and others who owe their place in society to alleged miraculous powers, usually play safe.**

They either pray for something which will happen anyway, like the sun rising, or which cannot easily be checked on, like God's grace. In this respect, Howe, Brittan, and the other Tory economists have given hostages to fortune with their repeated predictions that a "recovery" in the economy is just ahead.

Recoveries do not just happen anyway, despite Tory belief in the miraculous recuperative powers of the free market. And it is extremely difficult to persuade people that the economy is moving on ahead as the dole queues grow. But has the economic trauma to which industry has been subjected prepared the economy for better things ahead?

## Massive decline in profits

Between 1979 and 1981 total output of goods and services fell by 5½%, slightly more than in the Great Depression of the early '30s. Whilst the service sectors were relatively unaffected, manufacturing industry was ferociously squeezed.

The government's high interest rate policy attracted a flood of 'hot money' which helped to push the value of the pound up against other currencies. Between 1979 and early 1981, UK manufacturers suffered an unprecedented decline in competitiveness.

Their exports fell in volume by about 8%. Then in 1981 increases in taxation and cuts in public spending had their maximum effect, taking a further 3% cut out of the economy.

The overall effect was a terrific squeeze on profits. The Bank of England reports that in the first half of 1981 the rate of profit of industrial and commercial companies had fallen to 2¼% from 5¼% in 1979. This was much the lowest level ever recorded.

The combination of profit and credit squeeze led manufacturers to cut their labour force and slash production. Instead of producing as much as they were selling, they massively ran down their stocks of goods.

During 1980 and early 1981, industrial production fell by 15%. Industrial employment continued falling throughout 1981 although production stabilised. By the first quarter of 1982 employment in industry was nearly 18% below the level of 1979 when the Tory government was elected.

By Andrew Glyn

The torrent of redundancies has undoubtedly forced workers into accepting some deterioration in wages and conditions. Until the end of 1980 earnings rose faster than price increases, so that workers were about 5% better off than when the government was elected.

But during 1981 and the first months of 1982 all this was lost as wages rose by about 5% less than tax and price increases; many workers in the manufacturing sector suffered bigger cuts than this and of course these made the unemployed bear the worst brunt.

Just as important from the employers' point of view productivity in manufacturing industry rose by about 8½% in 1981. This was quite unprecedented in a recession year.

Firms were concentrating production onto their most efficient plants and piling the pressure on workers in those plants to increase output by faster and more flexible working methods. The most spectacular example was in the steel industry where productivity rose 34% in 1981; in motors the rise was 14% (see article on BL in Militant April 23rd), in electrical engineering 12% and in chemicals 10%. Whilst most of the increase in productivity in 1981 reflected this process of rationalisation and labour intensification, some part was due to the introduction of labour-saving investment. Admittedly, between 1979 and the beginning of 1981 manufacturing investment fell by 22%, but this fall was less than might have been expected given the slide in production, high interest rates and very low profitability.

## No return to '60s growth

Surveys report that virtually all new investment is directed towards cutting costs rather than expanding capacity. In the service sectors, like retailing and finance, investment has actually increased steadily since 1979, again pointing efforts to cut costs (and employment) with new technology.

It should not be concluded from this that the competitiveness of UK industry has been transformed. In most industries the productivity rise in 1981 only made up for the decline in 1980.

In motors, for example, productivity was a little lower at the end of 1981 than when the Tory government was elected, and for manufacturing industry as a whole, the productivity increase was only 2% a year.



Whilst some count their winnings at Derby Day (left), others are having to strike for a living wage; (right) health workers lobby London's County Hall, 23 June. Photos: Militant

This is about the same as that achieved in France and Germany, but only about half as fast as in Italy and Japan.

The rapid increase of productivity of the past year would have to continue for a number of years to make a major impact on the huge backlog of low productivity accumulated over the past twenty years. But already the Bank of England believes productivity growth has slowed down to 4% a year.

An enormous investment drive would be required to sustain a major increase in productivity. But for the crucial manufacturing sector only a slight rise in investment is expected this year and next, which will not even bring it back to the level of 1979, let alone 1970.

The Economist (1 May, 1982) pointed out "The

Thatcher strategy depends upon boosting profits—not just marginally and temporarily, as happened in the Heath boom in 1972-3, but massively and permanently." Profits did increase by nearly one half in the second half of 1981; but only to 3¼% of capital employed.

There is no possibility that pressure on workers will allow the employers to get back to the profit rates of 10% or so which were made in the sixties. Without such a radical improvement in competitiveness there is no prospect of basing an expansion on an export boom.

In the last two years the UK share of export markets has declined from 10.4% to 8.3%, and even if world trade picks up next year it is most unlikely to grow even half as much as in the six-

ties. So investment and exports will hardly rise.

The government is committed to keep its expenditure down. Workers managed to keep their spending level last year and this by cutting down their savings, but there is no possibility of a 'consumer-led' boom with employment declining and living standards slipping.

No wonder the Financial Times reports (5 July, 1982) that on average the economic forecasters expect 1% growth this year. Their forecast of 2% for next year looks distinctly optimistic, hoping like Mr Micawber, that something (the economy in this case) will turn up to improve the situation.

Even this growth would see unemployment continuing to rise during 1983. The pessimistic, and therefore

usually accurate, Cambridge Economic Policy Group predicts a further rise in unemployment of half a million by the end of 1983.

The latest CBI survey shows firms even gloomier about production than in recent months. Sam Brittan commented (Financial Times 5 July) "a fresh wave of destocking and manpower reductions may be occurring—not on the scale of 1980-81, but enough to turn modest recovery into a renewed unemployment crisis." Not many people even noticed Sam Brittan's last "modest recovery"; you have to be a real believer to expect another, less elusive, one.

## Strike threat gets pickets out of jail

**The release of three members of the Irish National Painters and Decorators Union imprisoned for ignoring an injunction against picketing represents a tremendous victory for the trade union movement.**

Norman Duff, a member of the National Executive, Gerrard Granger and Alan Harold had been locked up in Dublin's Mountjoy Prison from 12 to 14 July.

On the 15th they were released after the Construction Industry Trade Unions had called out their 50,000 members in Dublin and called a demonstration which had the backing of the Dublin Council of Trade Unions.

This demonstration would have amounted to a half-day general strike in Dublin. In the face of this mobilisation, the employers involved, Kelland Holmes Ltd., backed down and asked for the injunction to be lifted. This was not just a defeat for Kelland Holmes, a small building firm, but a

major defeat for the bosses of the Construction Industry Federation, who had set themselves the task of smashing the Painters and Decorators Union.

The Painters and Decorators have been fighting the "lump" or "piece work" and have successfully done so on all local authority sites. It was this question which was at issue during the dispute.

Once again the correct tactics to fight anti-trade union laws have been demonstrated, as in the 1970s where workers in the Poolbeg Power Station and

Leylands Power in Dublin showed that the bosses will back down if faced by workers who are prepared to go to jail and pin their faith on mobilising solidarity in order to defeat the employers rather than tamely accepting their dictates. That lesson should not be lost by British workers, who face sacking threats from employers and or government.

By Dermot Connelly  
(Crumlin Labour Party)



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## We need 'Militant'

Dear Militant

Enclosed is a cheque for £15 from my brother Dave, a panel beater in a garage and myself, a ceiling fixer in the building trade. We both see the necessity of a working class socialist paper dedicated to fighting the system which makes the majority class sweat to produce wealth for the minority class to benefit from.

This week I had to work very hard for seventy hours just to bring home a living wage. My brother needs to

work 50 hours a week regularly just to live. We are both proud to support the only paper that fights for a completely socialist system and not just a middle class dream of a 'middle of the road', give and take so-called socialism.

My family, all manual workers, don't want socialism as a dream, we need it as a reality. The programme of Militant is our only hope of every living a life where we can enjoy the fruits of our hard work and sweat.

Yours fraternally  
Rob and Dave Rooke  
Hayes, London

## Socialism is here to stay

Dear Comrades

Over the last few months, the right wing and the media have laid siege on the mass membership of the Labour Party, in particular the youth and 'Militant' supporters.

Our crimes? Trying to build the Labour Party into a party for the working class and to represent working class interests.

And how are we achieving this? By offering

socialist ideas. The ideas of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. We are not extremists, we are realists and can see that capitalism offers no way forward other than smashing the working class. The right wing, unable to match socialist arguments, resort to the depths of a witch-hunt. But the right wing cannot keep holding back the move to the left by the party rank and file. We should let the right wing know. Socialism is here to stay.

Yours fraternally  
R Feely  
Dagenham LPYS

Housewife Mrs Ivy Newton, sent the following letter to Michael Foot;

Mr Foot

I feel that I must write to you to complain about your treatment of 'Militant', and the left of the Party in general. These are the people whose votes you need at the next general election, and they may not all come your way.

Why did you not expel the gang of four? Three of whom got into the Commons on a Manifesto, on which they rattled, as soon as it suited their convenience to do so. Fraudulently accepting their fat salaries for doing something they had not been elected to do.

Are the Rail-men getting paid or NUPE members, who have been forced to go on strike for decent conditions and pay, and above all, explain to me, what rostering, un-social hours or extra productivity Peter Parker has done to merit a 25% increase in salary? Under the last Labour government the rich got richer, while the poorer paid, thanks to Healey and Callaghan, who were totally responsible for losing the 1979 election, not the left.



Labour's right wing—more concerned with Clause 2 and witch-hunts than Clause 4 and socialism. Photo: Militant

If you are so concerned about Clause 2, pay more attention to Clause 4, the very heart of the constitution.

I am not a young person, but a housewife 67 years old, and I remember you as a young man, fighting for the under-dog with all the spirit in the world. Where has it gone?

You are being pushed by the right wing, along a line

which will bring disaster to the Labour Party, we will be back to square one, once again looking for other 'Tolpuddle Martyrs.'

Instead of witch-hunting with some of the top men in the unions (to name one, 'Duffy') you should be extending your energy for the betterment of the men and women, who make the wealth of this country, instead of, in my

opinion being the best PR man Thatcher has ever had.

I do hope you will read this, before confining it to the waste-paper basket, because I will give you a bit of a bonus, by telling you, thousands of Labour voters think as I do. Long live real democracy!

Ivy. I. Newton (Mrs)  
Uxbridge, Middx

## Workers in uniform

Dear Comrades

While giving out leaflets in a town near Oxford, I was approached by a policeman. He said he was not interested in our leaflet, (one had been pushed through the station door). He said our demand for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies was ridiculous and impossible, because there were too many capitalists.

I said it was necessary

because these firms were throwing people on the dole to protect their profits, and we should have control of them. Then he went through our demands.

He agreed, 'every school and college leaver should have a job to go to,' but did not agree that 'all 18 year olds should receive the full adult rate of pay.' He said socialism would not work, but I replied that capitalism certainly did not work, with 3 million people on the dole.

I said it was alright for him, because the police so far had been sheltered from the crisis and redundancies, but their turn might come.

To this, a policewoman, who had joined us said, with the rate of crime rising their jobs were secure.

I had to admit they were in a 'growth industry.' After a further discussion they left. Considering he thought our ideas were 'ridiculous' and he was 'not interested,' he spent a long time talking about them.

This is further evidence that police are like other workers in as much as they are not against socialism, but do need a lot of convincing. Those in the labour movement who think the police and other forces are all fascists and totally opposed to the labour movement are incorrect.

The LPYS position that the rank and file of the forces are 'workers in uniform,' I believe, is correct. We should not be intimidated into compromising our position, ie. 'I'm sorry I was attempting to spread socialism in a built up area. I won't let it happen again, officer.' We should be prepared to take time to discuss and explain our ideas to all workers, in or out of uniform.

Yours fraternally  
Barry Shillingford  
Oxford LPYS  
and AUEW-TASS

## He spoke the truth

Dear Militant

My husband worked for British Rail as a rayer from 1974-1979 and continually warned his NUR colleagues about how the rail network was being run down.

Nobody believed him and his own branch officials, in particular, branded him as a left-winger and a 'trouble maker'. They blocked every move he made within the union.

He was eventually dismissed after a conflict with one of his seniors because he refused to work in dangerous conditions.

The union refused to support him when he appealed to an industrial tribunal against unfair dismissal and it took him two years to eventually pay the solicitor's bills. He then got a job in the health service.

Over the last year I have heard that his former colleagues have been wishing he was back with them to represent them and that they had listened to what he had said.

Regrettably this is impossible as my husband died tragically last year at the age of 39 leaving many railway workers sadder and less secure men.

Yours fraternally  
M Idle  
NE Leeds CLP

## Well, if the 'Sun' says it's true...

Dear Comrades

I was spending my tea break this morning trying to keep myself informed of events in the world outside. As Arthur Scargill has received a lot of news coverage since his election and we have been well warned that he is a threat to democracy and all things British, I read the reports of the NUM conference taking place at Inverness to see what Bolshie plots were being hatched there.

Yesterday new Coal Board boss Norman Siddall was addressing conference and I wanted to know how miners reacted to his denial of the Scargill 'hit list' of pits due for closure before exhaustion.

So I picked up my 'Daily Record' and sure enough it carried the story: 'His (Siddall's) 20 minute speech was received in polite silence by the 200 delegates'. So it seems he failed to convince

the miners that Scargill was at it. Later I swapped my 'Record' for a workmate's 'Sun'.

Their version of NUM conference read 'And he (Siddall) won applause for his plain speaking from more than 200 delegates at the NUM conference in Inverness.' But I thought...

Now we all know that the British press is renowned for its truthfulness and lack of anti-union bias. Perhaps the two reporters were at different NUM conferences. I mean it couldn't be the small number of owners of the British press whose interests are contrary to those of the ordinary working people which could lead to distortion and even fabrication in the news against the labour movement, could it?

After all we all know that if the press was nationalised under workers' control, then it would be biased. I mean the press have told us so, haven't they, and we know they tell the truth.

Yours fraternally  
Danny Williamson  
Erskine

## Fighting against the Tebbit Bill in Arbroath

Dear Comrade

Despite a heavy downpour on the day, about 30 workers and unemployed turned up to a recent public meeting in Arbroath, to discuss the criminal acts proposed by Tebbit's Bill. The speakers; Ron Brown, MP for Edinburgh Leith and Eddie Donachy, Scottish Committee LPYS were enthusiastically received, with discussion leading to a realisation of the need for a definite fight back amongst workers to rid us of this disastrous anti-working class Tory government.

One worker probably hit the nail on the head, when he said, "The miners have to be called upon again to bring the Tories down." It seems his wish could very well come true now that the NUM have pledged support to health service workers.

Although different ideas were put forward as to how we could defeat the Tories, everyone agreed that what was needed now was a Labour government committed to genuine socialist policies.

The meeting, although made up of a good number of unemployed, showed their support for genuine socialism, ie. nationalisation of the 200 top monopolies etc, by giving £7.35 to the collection.

We also sold 16 copies of 'Militant.' We feel this is the beginning of a real fight back amongst workers in Arbroath. Opposition to the witch-hunt against 'Militant' was shown by the excellent response to Eddie Donachy's attack on the right wing and their organised campaign of attack against 'Militant,' whose supporters in Arbroath were instrumental in the success of this public meeting.

Yours fraternally  
Gary Buick  
Arbroath

## Now we want our share!

Dear Comrade

Last week I spotted a report in *The Times* newspaper which I thought would be of great interest to the blokes on my job.

It pointed out that the half-yearly profits for the Imperial group of companies, which our firm belongs to, have increased from £1.6 million last year to £16 million this year.

I pinned this item up on

## Profits first safety last

Dear Comrades

Last Saturday a 9 year old boy I knew was killed at a holiday camp when his go-kart crashed and he was impaled on the steering wheel.

The same afternoon a 13 year old boy was injured in an identical incident at the same track. When the owners were asked if they had an age limit they said no but they have a height limit of 4ft 9ins.

The village where this boy

lived is completely devastated by his death. It was reported in all the national newspapers but they completely glossed over the negligence of the owners (surprise, surprise). This really brought home to me how recreation, whether it is in playgrounds, holiday camps, youth clubs, sports clubs or wherever, will never be safe or satisfactory until it is planned by the working class for the working class.

Yours fraternally  
Bob Dolan  
Shop Steward

lived is completely devastated by his death. It was reported in all the national newspapers but they completely glossed over the negligence of the owners (surprise, surprise). This really brought home to me how recreation, whether it is in playgrounds, holiday camps, youth clubs, sports clubs or wherever, will never be safe or satisfactory until it is planned by the working class for the working class.

Yours fraternally  
John Paines

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 July
Eastern	2172		2115
East Midlands	1744		1765
Hants & Dorset	1157		1250
Humberside	715		1075
London East	2994		1960
London West	1185		1060
London South	1891		1415
Manchester & Lancs	1899		2020
Merseyside	1617		2290
Northern	1845		2760
Scotland East	796		1345
Scotland West	1734		2375
Southern	2067		1760
South West	1050		885
Wales East	1001		945
Wales West	1447		1355
West Midlands	2203		2120
Yorkshire	1856		2505
Others	5960		4000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>35,333</b>		<b>35000</b>

# ads

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

## MILITANT MEETINGS AND SOCIALS

ASHINGTON Militant Meetings. Sunday 25 July: 'The Falklands crisis—what next?' Venue: The Ladies Room, Ashington Leisure Centre. 10.30am. All welcome.

ISLE OF WIGHT Militant supporters weekend school Saturday/Sunday 24/25 July. London Hotel, Upper Hight St, Ryde. Speaker: Ted Grant. Saturday 2pm: 'Socialist view of war'. Sunday 2pm: 'Lessons of France and Greece for the British labour movement'. Social Saturday evening.

## Classified

South Africa—13,000 black goldminers struggle for a living wage! South African Labour Education Project presents: "We Live Like Dogs"—the struggle of black migrant miners on the South African mines. Available for hire from SALEP, 28 Martello St, London E8 3PN. (Tel: 01-241 0434). £12 to LPYS branches/Labour Party Women's Sections. £16 to other labour movement organisations.

WRITER, political, working on final investigation magnum opus seeks active assistant, preferably resident. Bases country-by-sea Isle of Man and UK. Preferably no ties as travel Europe, USA. Antipodes also involved. Only qualifications, energy and common sense. Please write briefly, with telephone number if possible to Box no 1, 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Accommodation wanted. Unfurnished flat in London, willing to share required from September 1982. Contact Mark Perkins Oxford: 44644

Disabled comrade seeks nurse or similar for holiday. Late July-Aug. Contact Iain 0228-21068.

IRISH Labour Youth 1st Annual Socialist Summer Camp, Forest Park, Portumna, Co Galway. Sat 31st July to Fri 6th August. Rallies, seminars, films, music, dancing, quizzes, sport and swimming. Leading speakers from labour and trade union movement.

OXFORD Militant supporters tote results: Week 606—No 70, M McDonnell, Oxford. Week 607—No 3, T Lineman, Oxford.

## 7th South Wales Summer Camp

August Bank Holiday, Friday 27 August—Monday 30 August. For the seventh time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton on the Gower Coast (10 minutes' walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches).

It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the ideas of Marxism, but also a superb holiday for the family.

This year will be the best ever with increased facilities but still at a very low cost of £10.00. Meals and snacks will be provided at the camp but campers will have to bring their own tents etc.

Send money to South Wales Summer Camp, 181 Hanover Street, Swansea. Cheques payable to 'Swansea Summer Camp'.

## GREET LABOUR'S CONFERENCE

Get your Labour Party or YS branch, trade union or shop stewards committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of Militant. This year more than ever Militant needs your support.

Rates for greetings:  
Semi-display: 3 column centimetres . . . . . £3  
6 column centimetres . . . . . £6  
Display: one-sixteenth page . . . . . £10  
one-eighth page . . . . . £20  
quarter page . . . . . £40

Closing date for copy is 14th September, but send your greetings as early as possible to the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

## Defeat the witch-hunt



Fight back with the official defence badge, 20p each or £13 per 100 or part thereof. £1.50 p&p from Val Pearce, 16 Wagbullock Rise, Bracknell, Berks.

## FIGHTING FUND DONATIONS

Cut out and send to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Enclosed is my donation of £ . . . . . to back 'Militant's' campaign against the witch-hunt

Name . . . . .

Address . . . . .

# Keep up the momentum

*Militant* faces a long hot summer in the run up to the Labour Party Conference. And after the TUC General Council's decision on the ASLEF dispute, never has it been more apparent that you cannot divorce industrial and political aspirations.

Although our readers have done a marvellous job for us so far this year, we ask you not to stop now—this is one summer when the labour movement has no time to rest! We have a target of another £35,000 by October 10th, and we've already made a start this week of £970 in addition to promises paid up for our July target.

Last minute cash for the July 10th target included collections of £150 in Bradford, £56 in Ebbw Vale, and £124 in Newcastle at meetings on the theme *What Militant Stands For*. A number of members of Sheffield Park constituency collected £42, and LPYS branches in Stoke, Linwood, Macclesfield, Stockton, Stevenage (£45), and East London sent over £100 between them.

Add to this collection from Preston and Sunderland *Militant* meetings, and £10 "from airport workers" Manchester, the proceeds of discussion groups as far apart as South Shields and Melton Mowbray, and the picture is one of growing support.

A very large number of individual donations assisted our effort; only a few can be mentioned as "representatives", so thanks amongst others to D Rooke (Hayes) £15, M Mat-

thews NUPE steward, Manchester £13.82, Mrs I Newton (Uxbridge) £5, A F Owens (New Brighton) £1, and A Tweddle (Newcastle POEU) who has contributed a regular £1 to our funds for some time, and a Wallsend supporter £1. Our raffle added £1,385 (net) to our funds, the final step to our £35,333 total.

This week thanks to LPYS members in Bradford, Brighouse, Huddersfield and Halifax who raised £32 for us at their summer camp. "We are determined to resist any witch-hunt against *Militant* and the LPYS and we hope this money will assist in the fight for the right to free speech in the party" their letter reads.

£70 was collected at a meeting in Cricklewood, and £44 has come from a meeting in Lewisham (more to come, the comrades say). Railway workers were among those who heard Pat Wall in Pudsey, and who contributed to the collec-



By Steve Cawley



'Militant' consistently backs workers in dispute and that's why they back us with cash. But those who want to conduct a purge in the Labour Party, are the same people who stabbed ASLEF in the back

tion of £35, whilst £28 has come from Blackburn's discussion group, and £6 collected after a meeting of Blackley CLP.

£15 has come from bar proceeds of a Newcastle social (see what would be the benefits of nationalisation of the breweries!), £5.60 from Wallsend LPYS's Durham Gala Trip, and £2.50 from Bermondsey LPYS.

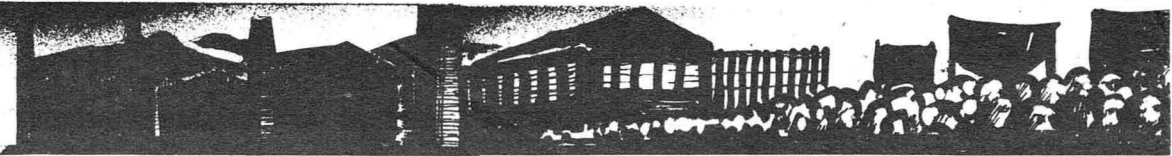
Two American subscribers gave us the change from £100 for their *Militants*, while the Grant family in West Wales have decided to forward us the £19.50 payment they previously made to a third world charity—as they say "it was the imperialism of the West that created the situation in Burundi and only international socialism can solve it..."

Thanks to P Walter and H Attwood (Coventry) for £15, and to C&C Thorpe (W Bromwich) for their £10 and appreciation for our front-page cartoon (2 July)

on Thatcher conjuring up the Falklands spirit to attack workers. Fivers this week included those from a Gibraltar subscriber, T Henderson (Dis. Sec. Sheet Metal Workers, Birmingham), and from P Arkle (Tyneside), with sums of from £1 to £5 from P Maniscalco (Leicester) and P Fish (Immingham), both unemployed; V Lane (Hants), D Godfrey (Twickenham), A Page (vice-president, Westbury CLP) and S Smith (Dundee).

Normally the new quarter's fighting fund starts fairly slowly. But because of the witch-hunt, already we're off to a faster start than this time last year. The right wing show no sign of letting up in their drive to kick socialists out of the party—so we trust that our readers will not let up in their commitment to back *Militant* the paper that fights for radical socialist policies.

# Industrial Reports



## ASLEF members still bitter at flexi-rosters

The terms of the agreement between the TUC and BRB were as follows:

The BRB would immediately withdraw its intention to give notice of dismissal and to close the rail system on 21 July. Pending conclusion of an agreement nationally with ASLEF, for flexi-rostering, the rosters already imposed at 71 depots, without prior agreement would remain there, be regarded as provisional and be worked under protest, whilst no further rosters would be introduced before 2 August.

The ASLEF "acting on advice tendered by the TUC" would immediately terminate the strike and instruct members to return to work. The union would then recall their AAD (conference) within seven to ten days and recommend that conference authorise negotiations to reach agreement on flexi-rostering for footplate staff, to be completed in six days!

That deal was reached without any prior consultation with the ASLEF Executive or leadership. After having been reached between the TUC and British Rail at ACAS, it was then presented to ASLEF as a "take it or leave it" fait accompli.

Furthermore, whilst some left members of the TUC Finance Committee are said to have opposed this scandalous deal, there was no formal vote, it was arrived at as a general "consensus".

ASLEF's membership are as bitterly opposed to BR's proposals as ever. Locomen have not fought two bitter battles this year in defence of jobs, conditions and hard fought gains just to see them snatched away by a conspiracy between the government, management and TUC leadership.

ASLEF have been instructed to recall the AAD but only the membership can decide the outcome of this meeting.

In all probability, the conference will reluctantly accept the imposition of the new rosters, although the EC will be mandated to seek

the best possible deal with BRB.

The ASLEF rank and file have made their position abundantly clear: they have been beaten on this occasion, and they are being forced to accept job cuts and a worsening of their conditions. But they are more united as a union than they have ever been and they will resolve at the earliest possible date to restore the eight-hour day.

As one Hertford ASLEF member commented to 'Militant', "We are all closer now, but any co-operation with management is finished. There are no industrial relations on the railways now." Another railwayman commented to the 'Financial Times' that he would willingly pay a £5 weekly subscription to keep ASLEF going.

The conference must be used to take stock, to learn the lessons of the past month and to prepare for the future. If the membership have to go back with worse conditions, then they must go back united and determined to go back on to the offensive at a future date.

The miners pledged their support, whatever the TUC agreed. We must build that link and get concrete action from them. The ranks of the NUR are disgusted by the antics and public utterances of their General Secretary. An appeal to them would undoubtedly have gained an echo, as many NUR locomen showed on ASLEF picket lines.

The full enormity of the TUC's betrayal has shocked and angered the entire labour movement.

As the driver at Hertford East said, "What makes us so bitter is that we were winning. The TUC managed to do what the BRB and the government couldn't do."

The Tories may be crowing now, as the leadership of the TUC snatched defeat from the jaws of victory. But we will snatch the victory back again in the future.

By an ASLEF member

### Cricklewood

On Sunday lunchtime, one driver, D Wilkins of Cricklewood ASLEF branch grabbed my notepaper when I visited his depot and wrote his own views.

"I believe the TUC have no backbone, they have sold us up the river and all the trade union movement with us."

The branch secretary Bob Cook said, "In America it was the government who beat the Air Traffic controllers. Here it was the TUC who did the government's work for them."

However they were quick to point out the positive aspects. Bob Cook explain-

ed "We've had full support from the grass roots of the movement, such as TGWU, NUPE and GMWU members in the local authorities in the area."

They gave support to black refuse normally sent by rail from going by road. "We thank the trade unionists who have bent over backwards to help us. If there's a strike at the refuse, no train will run," chipped in another locoman.

"We had support from nurses, the LPYS, unemployed, the pensioners. The grass roots of the NUR are disgusted with Sidney Weighell. We had carriage cleaners, guards, fitters telling us of their support."

Watching the television at lunchtime, the feelings came to the fore again. Bob



The ASLEF dispute was betrayed by the leaders of other unions, not their rank and file. Local authority manual workers in NW London refused to move refuse normally moved by train. Photo: Militant.

### Waterloo

COLIN GRAY, ASLEF representative at Waterloo spoke to Mick Carroll (Vauxhall LPYS) and Clare Doyle (Norwood Labour Party) on Sunday evening:-

"I'm shell-shocked. I think we're all shell-shocked. The phone's not stopped ringing this afternoon."

"From the grass-roots level there's got to be a rethink. The people who have come forward in the current campaign must stand up and be counted. If these activists deem it necessary to create a new TUC made up solely of those on the left,

then so be it!

"Those who have, in the past, aligned themselves with so-called 'moderate' thinking are not representative of the rank and file. The bitterness and disgust felt by the rank and file will take its toll on the TUC leadership. I have to tell you there's another revolution within the unions on its way, if that's what it requires!"

"I fell embarrassed for the people in NUPE and the NUM, who've pledged action on our behalf, and for the activists in the NUR (whose Conference is not representative). The Sid Weighells and Frank Chapples of this world have stab-

Cook said "As soon as Parker and Rose go the better, there's no industrial relations with them. We'll fight now for the rest of our lives."

"We won't be in Monday," they said, "we are going to march with the nurses tomorrow."

Report by Martin Elvin

### Bradford

In Bradford the strike had been 100% successful. All 86 members refused to go into work, despite blackmail from management who threatened senior workers with all loss of pension rights etc.

Bob Wilson, branch secretary of ASLEF in Bradford reported that his

members were utterly disappointed at the lack of support from the TUC and contrasted this with the enormous support from the grass roots of the movement.

Members had been invited around to speak at union branches, factory branches of the Labour Party and the Trades Council, who had organised a concert for the ASLEF strikers.

The ASLEF leadership had been left completely isolated. It was a great pity that the TUC leadership didn't reflect the attitude of the rank and file members of our movement.

He said in finishing that he wished to thank the Trades Council for their work and especially the work of Militant supporters in helping the dispute.

bed us in the back and they haven't spilled a drop of blood!

"The return to work will be orderly. The Annual Assembly of Delegates will no doubt go along with the Executive's decision. But our negotiating Committee will still be known as the 'Pack of Dogs'—when one lets go the next one gets stuck in! Our main

spokesman, Derek Fullick, is also known as 'The Silver Fox'—he doesn't miss a thing!

"A phoenix will emerge from the ashes of this seeming defeat. Things may be chaotic tomorrow (Monday) but we hope to have a vote to support pickets at St Thomas' Hospital. We don't want them to lose their battle."

## Fight Tebbit Bill

The Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Hall usually resonates to the sound of classical music. On 12 July a different sound echoed in it, a call to class war against the Tories.

Seven hundred trade unionists came to register opposition to Norman Tebbit's so-called 'Employment' Bill. The rally was the biggest since the 1970s despite the innumerable closures. It showed the combativity of our class is still intact.

Liverpool played a major part in changing Labour's 1968 anti-trade union measures and in thwarting Ted Heath's industrial relations court. Once again Liverpool will be at the forefront when battle re-commences.

Les Huckfield, parliamentary spokesman for ASLEF, complimented Merseyside ASLEF men on their solid support for the strike. A banner draped in the foreground summed it up: "An injury to one is an injury to all."

He pointed to a Labour Party banner in the balcony and commented that next we'd have to register the word socialism. The witch-hunt was on everyone's mind

when Tony Mulhearn and Terry Fields rose to speak.

The response from the audience to their contributions showed the support for Marxism in the Liverpool labour movement. Terry Fields was cheered as he called on the next Labour government to act in the interests of their class as forcefully as the Tories have acted in the bosses' interests.

The final speaker, Moss Evans, General Secretary of the TGWU, referred to his union's role in defeating Heath's anti-trade union laws. London dockers, TGWU members, had sparked off the mass movement which led to the defeat of the Bill. Moss Evans finished off with a rousing call to defy Tebbit's legislation, saying that if necessary he was prepared to go to jail rather than see the union smashed.

Even in the plush surroundings of the 'Phil', it was evident that the rank and file are determined to fight the Tories. We must ensure our trade union generals are as sure in their resolve.

By Richard Knights

**St Thomas**

"What we do is more than 'ancillary'. We tend to drugs, syringes, needles, dressings, everything—from major heart operations right down to a plaster for a cut finger—and for what, £64 a week" said Anna Thompson.

Anna is a NUPE shop steward at St Thomas Hospital in South London. St Thomas' workers have been singled out for attack by the national press, perhaps because the hospital is opposite Parliament and near to Fleet Street.

The *Sunday Express* and *Daily Express* have both carried smear articles claiming patients have suffered in the dispute, totally ignoring the scrupulous way the health service unions have conducted their pay campaign.

Few workers will believe these vicious Tory rags care a fig about the National Health Service. Their stories are just part of their disgusting propaganda war on the trade unions.

Anna spent 8 years working in the Central Sterile Supplies Department (CSSD) before moving to the Medical Disinfecting Unit. The CSSD at St Thomas has been on strike since 23rd June, and Anna described to me the conditions of work for the 21 women and 4 men who work there.

"In the CSSD, we scrub, clean and prepare everything to go to the theatres and wards here, and also supply local clinics in the West Lambeth Area.

"The conditions here are not good; although this is a big department, there's still very little room because there's so much equipment, with trolleys and containers all around. In summer it's too hot—there are no windows, only the air conditioning, which doesn't always work.

"The work is hard—beyond reason—and after 40 hours of this back-breaking job, we only take home £64. We are exposed to all sorts of diseases here: they send down all the equipment to be sterilised. It's infected with hepatitis, TB and things I don't even know the names for.

"All the protection we get is a pair of rubber gloves and an apron—no masks! During the strike there are Nursing Officers working in the CSSD, and they don't want to do the work; they complain of headache, backache, they say it's hard, awful work, and they don't know how we stick it.

"I wish they'd tell the reporters that. I believe that people should get properly paid for such hard work. The government shouldn't try to separate us from the nurses. We're all NHS workers. One couldn't work without the other. It's ancillary workers that keep the hospitals running, not the professors.

"Before we went on strike, the nurses and doctors called us in the CSSD

# SOLIDARITY WITH THE HEALTH WORKERS



County Hall, London on 19 July. ASLEF members, despite their anger at their own defeat, showed their solidarity with the NHS workers. Photo: Militant.

rubbish, but they see now that if the CSSD don't work, they can't do a damn thing. We've been out for four weeks now, and they're screaming because they can't do anything.

"But it's an exaggeration to say we are causing the patients to suffer, there's enough supplies for accident and emergencies.

"It's about time that they recognised that we play a major role in the hospital, and all we want is a fair wage for the work that we do."

**By Lesley Phillips**

(Vauxhall LPYS)

**Leeds**

Over 200 hospital workers picketed Leeds General Infirmary (LGI) on 16 July as a "reception committee" for Kenneth Clarke (Minister for Health) who was meeting management and union representatives.

A 10 day strike at LGI, sparked off by management's breaking of agreements, had obviously led the government to consider Leeds to have national importance in the current dispute.

To provide Mr Clarke and his party with a special lunch, kitchen staff were

transferred from normal duties. The cooks etc. originally asked to provide this lunch struck in protest and eventually management had to reduce the patient's menu from three choices to one in order to provide Coq au Vin to about a dozen senior managers and government representatives.

So much for their commitment to patients' care! The minister admitted to union officials that the NHS project had been pegged at a low level and said that "as no more money was available staff had to choose between wages or services." He also said that "there was low pay outside the health service as well." He was certainly right about that.

Nothing Kenneth Clarke could say will diminish the determination of workers at Leeds General Infirmary to fight for better pay and to protect services. The nurses and others who visited ASLEF picket lines in their strike understand the battle against low pay and poor conditions is a battle for everyone.

**Plymouth**

Over the past year or so, a number of new stewards have been elected within Plymouth hospitals, and at a meeting in May about forty stewards representing

COHSE, GMWU, NUPE and ASTMS discussed the action and elected a joint committee to co-ordinate local activity.

Since then we have seen support for the days of action from porters, domestics, drivers, technicians, some nurses, and others, many taking industrial action for the first time.

In between there have been various work to rules and selective stoppages in key departments, such as laundry drivers. This has been assisted by a strike fund established by the joint committee to enable staff not in a position to strike to assist those who are.

The fund has also received support from many local unions outside the health service. For example, Plymouth UCW sent £30 together with a telegram recalling their own dispute with a Tory government in 1971. Unions have also helped on the picket lines—despite the 1980 Employment Act.

The joint committee have been visiting local workplaces and unions to encourage support for the 19 July rally. Within the hospitals our committee has produced newsletters to keep members informed of action in other Plymouth

hospitals, and support from local trade union and labour movement. Meetings have also been arranged prior to the days of action to build support. Despite the length of the dispute, most members seem as determined as ever. As one hospital worker remarked to me, "I've worked in the health service for thirty years and never felt as badly off as I am now."

The TUC must fully support our dispute, and ensure that the government is unsuccessful in its attempt to break the trade union movement.

**By Mike Sheaff**  
(Chairman, Joint Co-ordinating Cttee, Plymouth)

**Luton**

Support for health workers has come from all quarters of the labour movement in Luton.

Vauxhall stewards have organised a two-hour rota for the picket line. Over £400 was raised for the strike fund there and over £40 at a LPYS meeting.

ASLEF have shown active support. At the LPYS meeting the train driver speaker gave his half of the collection to the health workers.

Unity of the health

workers themselves has been tremendous. In a few days many lessons of organising have been learned. The strike fund was only set up when an OAP passing the picket line asked if there was one. "I remember when the babies used to die. It's unheard of now. So start your fund with a pound note."

A co-ordinating committee was soon set up and all the unions volunteered action. On one day just two people were withdrawn from the tills in the canteen. Management said, "put in what you think it's worth," and so people did! A few coppers were thrown in and everyone had the most expensive meal.

A lot of women have husbands on the dole. They're the main breadwinners. That's why a strike fund is so important to maintain solidarity. There aren't any cracks yet though. Over one hundred have been on the picket line at any one time.

When the police informed the picket that this was more than six and so illegal they got the reply, "It's me you're talking to and it's me that you'll take into custody." No arrests were made.

**David Warwick**  
spoke to  
**Eileen Moren**  
(COHSE)

**Doncaster**

The NHS workers have been slated and condemned by the media and the government for being 'unreasonable' and putting patients at risk. Let us look at some facts that are not distorted to provoke public reaction.

I am a full time worker in a mentally handicapped hospital involved in patient care. During a working month I work 20 shifts including Saturday and Sunday. On two Fridays and two Sundays of the month it is necessary, as part of the working month, not overtime, to work a 14½ hour shift.

My reward for this is take home pay of £208 per month—£52 per week.

I work alongside people who run the risk of physical assault every day, who cannot afford to eat in the hospital canteen, who cannot afford to have a family and have to suffer the indignity of applying to Social Security to bring their income up to the poverty line.

As for putting patients at risk, on every day of action the union have ensured that adequate cover is provided in every department concerned in the welfare of patients and pickets are instructed not to stop any vehicle carrying medical, oxygen, food or any other essential supplies.

Compare this with the government's policies in the NHS which have closed down countless hospitals, cardiac and kidney units resulting in thousands of deaths because people have been denied life-saving equipment.

We do not want to strike but we have reached a point where desperation is taking the place of dedication.

**Arthur Boughy**  
St Catherine's Hospital

# UNITY FOR THE 12%

Health workers are still fighting hard to force the government to give us a realistic increase on our pathetically low wages—and that means the full 12%.

Throughout the country, the three days of action (19-21 July) are proving the determination of NHS workers to win this battle.

In the North East, 2,000 joined a rally in Newcastle and a further 1,500 demonstrated in Durham. Mineworkers were very prominent in their support for health workers. With the ever-present danger of their work they appreciate the vital task done for scant reward by NHS staff.

Other delegations include printworkers, NALGO members and CPSA members, while in Cardiff, merchant seamen laid off after service in the Falklands joined the picket lines.

In Leeds too, there has been a good response from other workers. The local Tory rag, the 'Yorkshire Evening Post,' after their vehement attacks on striking ASLEF members, turned their attention on us 'Workers snub health strike' trumpeted their headlines on Monday night.

The editors completely ignored the fact that Leeds Council cleansing department was almost at a standstill, that a third of the workers at Sulzers engineering works were out, and

By Colin Piper  
(COHSE 257 branch,  
Leeds)

As a contrast to the health workers fighting for a few extra quid a week to pay the bills, look at the way the top people survive. Three members of the Sainsbury family, directors of the famous grocery chain, felt in need of a bit of pocket money.

So they sold some of their shares in the family firm—for £2½ million. They'll hardly notice it; between them, they will still have over £500 million worth of shares left.

that many pits throughout Yorkshire were closed.

Not only was the trade union movement generally represented on the march by the regional TUC, Leeds Trades Council, East Leeds and South East Labour Party banners but many individual sections of workers had banners on the demonstration as well.

It was a magnificent show of solidarity. Many unions present, like those of the

miners, engineers, printers, teachers and civil servants were not directly involved in the dispute. CPSA members at some government offices even defied the threat of the sack to take sympathy action (see page 14).

Jack Taylor, President Yorkshire NUM, spoke of the need to go forward on the basis of unity and solidarity.

The unprecedented unity of health workers over the last few months has given a real opportunity to win this struggle. But against this Tory government, no group of workers can win on their own, particularly health workers, whose capacity to withdraw their labour is limited.

The help given in demonstrations and on picket lines, though, shows the colossal public support for our claim, a support that even the malicious propaganda of the press cannot dent.

The TUC must build on this support and act this time as a real defender of workers' interests. The tactic of one-day and three-day strikes has now lasted for about three months. There is a danger that sheer fatigue may start to dampen spirits and drive hospital workers back to work.

'Militant' has consistently called for the TUC to organise a one day general strike in support of our claim, a demand which would get tremendous support in the labour movement. If all ten million TUC affiliates were involved in a 24-hour strike, with mass meetings, rallies etc, to clearly show the reasons for the Tories' denial of our



Photo: Militant.

A tale of two trade unionists. Above, GLC refuse disposal workers refuse to cross an ASLEF picket during the dispute, in North West London. They refused to move rubbish at the site, work normally carried out by rail men. Below, Sid Weighell, general secretary of the NUR, is escorted by police past angry ASLEF pickets, to attend the TUC Finance and General Purposes Committee, which reneged on the train drivers. Full report of TUC decision on page 2.

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



## Unemployment

Continued from front page

ed at 10am at the hotel where the interviews were being conducted, I found over 200 people there. I was lucky in only having to wait three hours for an interview. A lad I know was still waiting at 2pm! When the interviewers went for lunch and he was told he would have to wait another hour, he just left."

Who can blame that youth for walking away from that cattle market! And who would blame him after experiences like that if he joined those desperate youth who don't bother to sign on, who alongside housewives, those ineligible for benefits and YOPsters, put the real unemployment figures at more like 4½ million?

The capitalists have no solution to unemployment. On a 'Panorama' programme on July 19, top economists all agreed that there are now over a million workers who are permanently unemployed, and this figure would rise. The capitalists' 'norm' for acceptable unemployment is 3%—three quarters of a million workers on the dole. They admitted it would be impossible even to return to that 'normal' figure!

All they could forecast were riots, public disorder, rising crime and, as the trade wars between declining capitalist countries were heightened, even war itself! As Belgian economist Charles Merit blurted out, "When trade cannot cross frontiers, the military will." This economist's prognosis does not of course take into consideration the nature of

multinational capitalism today, but shows the dire crisis within capitalism today and is an admittance that capitalism is the cause of war.

The Tories understand all this as fact. Yet they try to hide the bankruptcy of their policies. On the same programme unemployment minister Tebbit defended their position. The unemployed will be pleased to know he regretted the massive rise in unemployment; he would rather have done it "slowly and gently over the years"!

He called for more productivity—how are the unemployed to achieve that?—and less 'restrictive' practices in industry. Yet the programme pointed out that Treasury predictions show that if there was just a 1% growth in the economy through acceptance of new

technology by trade unions, there would be another half a million unemployed!

Tebbit wriggled about in his chair and whined that there were "no magic solutions."

But there is a solution, and there's nothing magic about it. The socialist transformation of society would mean the planning of industry and the economy, directing new technology into the boring, laborious jobs, freeing workers to concentrate on socially necessary work, with guaranteed jobs for all, a shorter working week and decent pay.

Socialism means jobs, decent living conditions and peace. Capitalism means misery, desperation, unemployment, riots, disorder and war.

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