

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 628  
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20p

## Belfast 1932



Workers united — see page 7

# Unemployment



Part of October's Labour Party Young Socialists' demonstration against the unemployment caused by the Tories and their system. Join the fight for socialism.

Photo: Militant

# ONE MILLION TORY LIES

### Next week unemployment will probably show a fall.

But the Tories will have achieved it the only way they know how — by fiddling the figures.

Over a million jobless are not shown in their statistics.

At a stroke last week Tebbit declared that over 250,000 unemployed people would not be counted. The Tories are not going to include anyone who just goes along to Job Centres looking for work, only those who go to the employment office.

Next week Tebbit will probably announce that unemployment is "only" about 3 million. But the TUC calculates the true figure to be around 4,400,000.

This is how the Tories make people disappear.

**TEBBIT'S NEW RULES EXCLUDE:**

★ 161,000 who register for jobs but cannot claim benefit.

★ Self-employed who go out of business

★ Married women who, until 1977, paid a low rate insurance stamp.

By Jim Chrystie

**THEY ALREADY EXCLUDED:**

★ 30,000 men over 60 years old, who, since last October, no longer have to sign on.

★ An estimated 300,000 (mainly married women) who do not register because they get no benefit.

★ 360,000 school-leavers on the so-called 'employment schemes'

★ Anyone looking for 'part-time' work i.e. under 30 hours a week.

Even the government's own statistics show up some of the missing million plus. In their first three years in office, (up to June 1982) the overall number of jobs fell by 2,400,000.

But the number of people registered as unemployed only rose by 1,700,000. So the Tories have made 700,000 people vanish.

Not content with lying about the amount of misery they have caused, the Tories and the bosses lie about the reasons. They take refuge in the overall recession gripping the capitalist world and blame that for the growth in unemployment.

## Jobless figures fiddled to hide truth

But that does not explain why, since Thatcher came into office Britain has gone from being the ninth worst industrialised country in its percentage of people unemployed to being third worst. Only Belgium and Spain now suffer worse unemployment than Britain.

Tory excuses do not explain why during a recession, Britain will, this year, for the first occasion in peacetime for over a century, import more manufactured goods than it sells abroad. Oil is almost the only thing keeping the British economy afloat.

Over 50% of all lost jobs since Thatcher came to power have been in manufacturing. One out of every four workers have been sacked since 1979.

However much the bosses try to hide behind bogus figures or blame others, they cannot escape the charge that it is them and their system which has brought

about mass unemployment. Big business will never restore full employment to this country.

Last year major British companies got 45% profits from abroad. In Britain their pre-tax return on industrial capital was its lowest ever, just 3%.

But instead of ploughing even this back into investment to compete with foreign rivals, the bosses have squandered it on themselves. The Bank of England reported that half of the country's top 250 companies have been paying their directors greater dividends than were covered by profits.

Even the Business magazine the *Economist*, 20 November, 1982, was moved to comment in disgust: "That means that half of Britain's top companies have been eating their seedcorn in this recession by paying dividends out of capital".

With the Tories and such bosses in charge, the economy will continue in crisis, unemployment and bankruptcies will rise. Misery and lies, despair and deceit is all they have to offer.

Labour must campaign to kick them out as soon as possible, take over the dominant parts of industry and run them in the interests of working people. That is the way to end unemployment, hidden and not so hidden, once and for all.

## Witch-Hunt NEC Decide to launch expulsions

The right wing on the NEC of the Labour Party showed on Wednesday that they have scant regard for the views of the vast majority of Labour Party members and little more for the need to prepare an election campaign.

While the Tory Party bosses are gearing up their party for a general election, the right wing on the NEC

have embarked upon the disgraceful path of expelling Party members for their views and, without any reference to an annual conference, reintroducing the proscribed list that was dropped in 1973. The determination of the NEC to press ahead with measures to police the Party rank and file and curtail the democratic rights of members should be opposed throughout the length and breadth of the movement.

Continued on back page

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Become a *Militant* supporter

I want to help in the campaign to defend the paper and stop the witch-hunt. Please send details of how I can assist.

Name .....

Address .....

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# Militant

## Labour must oppose nuclear madness

In the same week as the CND national conference, it has been announced in the USA that the Pentagon will be going ahead with the construction of its new MX missile system.

At the same time, Jim Callaghan, former Labour leader is campaigning against the official Labour Policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

The siting of the hundred MX missiles will be based on what the Pentagon planners call the 'fratricide' system. They will be based in hardened silos within a few miles of each other so that, in the event of a nuclear attack, only a few will be destroyed in the first blast, after which the debris and radiation will prevent any further successful nuclear strike, leaving the remainder of the MXs to be fired. Each one of the MX missiles will carry ten separate warheads, all of them ten times more powerful than the atom-bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The whole system will cost American workers, through taxes, a total of \$30 billion, at a time when there is record post-war unemployment and when Reagan is cutting into all the Federal welfare and health schemes used by working people. But the decision to build MX will horrify workers around the world, as well as in the USA.

There are already a total of about 50,000 warheads stockpiled by the two great nuclear powers and these have an explosive capability one million times greater than the bombs used on Japan in 1945. There are already enough weapons at hand, in other words, to wipe out humanity several times over.

### Callaghan rejects Party Policy

This week also, Jim Callaghan contemptuously dismissed the Labour Party's policy on nuclear weapons as "an insular illusion". In a speech subsequently reproduced as a campaign pamphlet he attacked conference policy on the closure of nuclear bases and the scrapping of nuclear weapons.

The decision of Reagan and the campaign of Callaghan to reverse conference policy should not deter the Labour Party from its conference commitments: they should increase the resolve of the rank and file to ensure that official policy is carried into action.

At the Blackpool conference a resolution was passed, by more than a two-thirds majority, seeking to "ensure that the next manifesto contains an unequivocal, unambiguous commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament and for the Parliamentary Labour Party, including the

Wars do not arise by 'accident' or by the mere stockpiling of weapons, no matter how much workers are appalled by the huge waste of resources. They arise from fundamental national and social contradic-

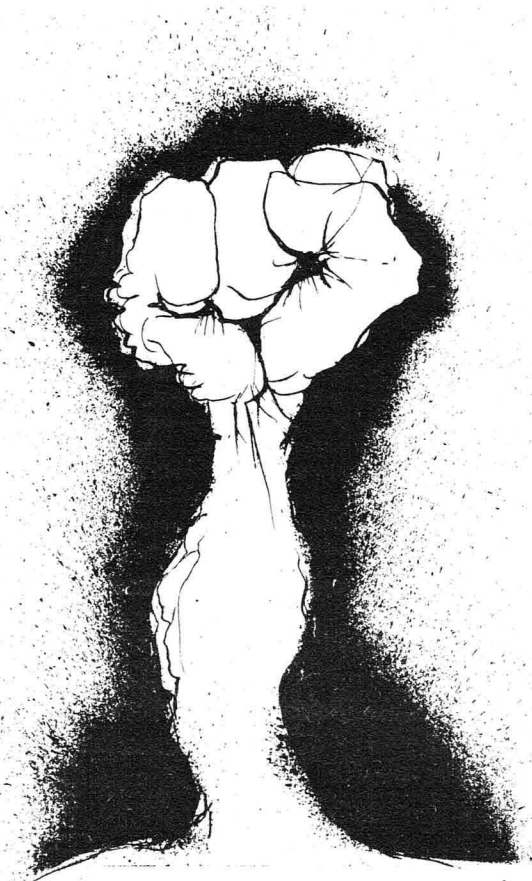
commented: "I don't see much of a chance of a nuclear war being limited or protracted. I see great difficulty in keeping any kind of nuclear exchange between the Soviet Union and the US from escalating."

It is not in the interests therefore, of either the American ruling class or the Russian bureaucracy to engage in a war at the present time that would spell their own physical annihilation.

But the massive stockpiles of weapons do carry a warning. In the next ten or twenty years, there will be many opportunities for the working class to change society, to eliminate capitalism in the West and overthrow the totalitarian regimes in the East. In the event that the working class failed to transform society in the USA, for example, and a military dictator drowned the labour movement in blood, then a nuclear war would be a far more serious threat.

Where the capitalist class itself would not want a nuclear war, a madman like an American Pinochet would have an entirely different outlook. But before that happens, the labour movement will have its own say.

The struggle against war and against nuclear weapons must therefore be a struggle for socialism, both East and West.



## Socialism or War?

Socialism vital in fight for peace

spokesmen on defence, to actively campaign on this policy in its first session in office."

The same resolution called for opposition to cruise missiles and the neutron bomb, for the closure of nuclear bases and for cuts in defence expenditure.

Labour's front-bench spokesmen on defence—unlike Jim Callaghan—should fight for the official policy decisions of conference. There is a suspicion among Party members, that the official spokesmen are, to say the least, unsympathetic to official policy.

### Unilateral Disarmament Not Enough

This newspaper, on the other hand, supports unreservedly, the commitment to unilateral nuclear disarmament expressed in the Labour Party conference resolution. But nuclear disarmament in Britain would not guarantee peace internationally or eliminate the Russian or American stockpiles. International socialism is the only guarantee of peace internationally. The issue of nuclear weapons cannot be separated from other social and political issues.

tions which reach such a scale that they cannot be resolved in any other way. The wars in the past between the great capitalist powers were over raw materials, markets and colonies.

The fundamental contradiction today is that between the imperialist powers (chiefly the USA) on the one hand and the Stalinist states (chiefly the USSR) on the other. In the one case, the market and capitalism holds sway; in the other, capitalism and landlordism are abolished and the economy, despite the totalitarian apparatus controlling it, is state-owned.

But whilst this fundamental gulf exists, there is no basis at the present time for nuclear war, because the great super-powers are well aware of the fact that there would be no winners. The capitalist class of the USA would not gain markets, raw materials or colonies; they would only get hot ashes out of a nuclear war.

Last August, the newspapers carried reports that the Pentagon strategists were apparently planning for a 'protracted' nuclear war capability. But even the top generals admitted that the plans were only drawn up to suit what the White House had specifically asked for, and the generals themselves did not accept their viability.

The retiring chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff

# SUPPORT SOLID FOR LABOUR AT QUEENS PARK BY-ELECTION

Over 400 people turned out to a meeting in the Gorbals, Glasgow to hear Tony Benn and Helen McElhone, Labour candidate for the Queens Park by-election on 2 December.

Benn received thunderous applause when he spoke of the fighting traditions of the workers of Clydeside, and stressed the need for workers to struggle to hold the gains won by the Labour movement during the last 35 years.

This by-election was caused by the death during the health workers day of action, September 22, of Frank McElhone who was marching through the constituency on a demonstration.

Unlike many of the recent by-elections, the Tory press haven't exactly descended on Queens Park, looking for another defeat for Labour. At the last general election Labour had a majority of over 9,000, receiving 64% of the vote.

During the last 3½ years unemployment has soared with adult male unemployment between 20-30%. While unemployment is always an important issue, housing is the dominant issue for workers in this area: 90% of the constituency is council housing.

Generally, the campaign has been low key, probably reflecting the views of the

Labour Party organisers that Labour will win easily. Certainly Labour support is rock solid in Queens Park. The opposition candidates are hardly inspiring. The Tories are standing a second-hand car salesman whose main campaign has been for firm government and the return of the 'businessman'. Not really applicable to Queens Park, when most of the businesses have had to close because of Thatcher's 'firm policies'!

The Scottish National Party are standing a well-known singer and broadcaster hoping to win support for a famous name rather than for their policies. While the SDP/Liberal Alliance are standing a candidate, who, after standing for the Liberals in Glasgow Central in 1979, turned up for the count dressed as Batman! Rumour has it that David Steel will turn up as the boy wonder if Batman manages to win the seat.

Nevertheless, in the remaining days of the campaign it is important that as many workers as possible are canvassed and that Labour put forward socialist policies to ensure a massive Labour victory on 2 December, and a crushing humiliation for the Tories and the Alliance candidate. Comrades wishing to help should go to the Labour Committee Rooms, 272 Allison Street.

By Frank White (Queens Park LPYS)

## LPYS OPPOSE CENSORSHIP

At its meeting on 20 November, the LPYS National Committee passed the following resolution:

"This NC opposes the personal decision of the new General Secretary, Jim Mortimer, to hold up the republication of the pamphlet, 'Northern Ireland—the Way Forward'. A decision not to re-publish this pamphlet could only be seen as an attempt to censor the opinions of Labour's youth.

"The main conclusion of the pamphlet is on the need to establish a Conference of Labour in Northern Ireland to build a mass labour party there. The LPYS not only support Party policy on this issue, but have been the most vigorous campaigners for this policy.

"While young socialists risk their lives to carry out a policy of class unity in Northern Ireland, it would be nothing short of appalling if 'Northern Ireland—the Way Forward' is not published. Therefore, we call on the



LPYS always campaign on need for class unity.

NEC to give the go-ahead for its republication as agreed in principle in April 1982, before we committed ourselves to £300+ expenditure in typesetting and layout costs."

We are sure similar resolutions of protests from LPYS branches and CLPs will reach the Party's Youth Committee before its next meeting on 10 December.

By Militant reporter.

# STOP THE PURGE!

This Saturday, 27 November, a series of conferences are being held throughout the country against the witch-hunt, called by the Labour Steering Committee Against Witch-hunts. Tickets available at the door.

## VENUE

### GLASGOW

Partick Borough Halls,  
Glasgow 10am

### CARDIFF

Top Rank, Cardiff Suite,  
Queen Street, Cardiff,  
12 noon

### NEWCASTLE

Tyneside Cinema,  
Pilgrim Street, Newcastle  
11 am

### BRADFORD

Caesar's (Tiffany's),  
Manningham Lane, Bradford,  
10.30 am

### LIVERPOOL

Central Hall,  
Renshaw Street,  
Liverpool (nr Lime Street Station),  
10 am

### BIRMINGHAM

Digbeth Civic Hall,  
Birmingham, 11 am

### LONDON

Friends Meeting House,  
Euston Road,  
London NW1, 10.30 am

### BRIGHTON

Brighton Conference Centre,  
Foyer Hall,  
Kings Road, Brighton 10.30am

Also on 11 December:

### BRISTOL

Hall of Memory,  
Central Hall  
Old Market Street, Bristol

## SPEAKERS (All in personal capacity)

Bob McTaggart MP, Terry Fields (Fire Brigades Union executive), Bob Gillespie (SOGAT '82 & Scottish TUC), Jimmy Livingstone (TGWU National Committee), Tommy Brennan (Convenor, Ravenscraig steelworks), Jimmy Devine (COHSE, Scottish Regional Officer), Francis Curran (LPYS National Committee), Bob Wylie (representing Militant for West of Scotland).

Ron Davies (PPC Caerphilly), Llwyn Smith (PPC Abertillery), Derek Hatton (PPC Liverpool, Wavertree), Tyrone O'Sullivan (NUM), Ken Smith (LPYS National Committee), Andrew Price (Cardiff SE Labour Party), Tony Saunois (Sec., LSCAW).

Ron Brown MP, Nigel Todd (PPC Newcastle N), Rob Clay (PPC Sunderland N), Laurence Coates (LPYS NEC rep), Jeff Price (USDAW Broad Left presidential candidate), Clare Doyle (Militant Editorial Board), John Aitken (EETPU, personal capacity).

Pat Wall (PPC Bradford N), Ted Grant (Militant Political Editor), Terry O'Neill (President, Bakers Union), John Goodby (LPYS National Committee).

Bob Parry MP, Tony Mulhearn (PPC Toxteth), Terry Harrison (PPC Edge Hill), Alan Quinn (TGWU national executive), John Hannath (USDAW Broad Left), Marie Harrison (COHSE shop steward), John Hunt (LPYS National Committee), Lynn Walsh (Militant Editorial Board), Eddie Loydon (President, Liverpool Trades Council), Vidya Anand (LSCAW).

Les Huckfield MP, Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant), Dave Nellist (PPC Coventry SE), Jack Turner (PPC Selly Oak), Jack Lanwarne (Divisional Officer, NUR), Les Kuriata (LPYS National Committee).

Joe Marino (General Secretary, Bakers Union), Peter Tatchell (Bermondsey Labour Party), Ernie Roberts MP, Valerie Wise (GLC Councillor), Jeremy Corbyn (PPC Islington N), Keith Dickinson (Militant Editorial Board), Bob Labi (London Labour Party Executive), Teresa Wrack (LPYS National Committee).

Rod Fitch (PPC Brighton Kemptown), Brian Ingham (Militant Spokesman), Tony McKenna (Bakers Union), Steve Morgan (LPYS National Committee), Cllr Nobby Clarke (Sec, Brighton Labour Party), Alison Hill (Gosport Labour Party), Richard Barnett (Sec., Reigate Labour Party), Eddie Pym (UCATT)

Kevin Roddy (President CPSA), Alan Totterdell (FBU executive), Ron Thomas (PPC Bristol NW), Cliff Hall (SOGAT '82 executive), Jimmy Cheek (TGWU sec., Bristol buses), Dave Nellist (PPC Coventry SE), Tony Saunois (Sec., LSCAW), Mike Shaeff (COHSE branch sec), Cllr Derek White (Cornwall County Council), Robin Clapp, (South West LSCAW).

## WITCH-HUNT: OPPOSITION CONTINUES

There is no let up in the mood against the witch-hunt amongst rank and file Labour Party and trade union members.

Sheffield District Labour Party passed, without dissent, a resolution opposing all expulsions, refusing to expel any members who are supporters of organisations that have refused to apply for the Register, or have been refused registration by the Labour Party NEC. Out of the seven CLPs affiliated to the district party, five had submitted resolutions to the November meeting condemning any witch-hunt.

One of the few CLPs in South Yorkshire to support the Register had a turn around recently. Rotherham CLP passed a resolution calling for the NEC to in-

vestigate alleged links between some Labour MPs and organisations backed by big business and the CIA, such as the Labour Committee for Trans Atlantic Understanding and the Bilderberg Group.

Still in South Yorkshire, Dearne Valley CLP passed a resolution defending the Labour Party Young Socialists, saying "it is nothing short of a scandal, at a time when unemployment is going through the roof...that the party's youth sub-committee are contemplating taking measures against the democratic rights of the LPYS..." Pledging opposition against any "bureaucratic manoeuvres" against the LPYS, the resolution was passed unanimously.

Similarly, Bolsover CLP unanimously passed a resolution defending the LPYS. The constituency's MP, Dennis Skinner, said he wanted to spend all his energies attacking the Tories and the Alliance, but was having continually to turn a shoulder to fight the attacks from the right wing majority on the NEC.

In Essex, Basildon CLP has condemned the threatened purge of Militant supporters, saying it is "the latest in a series of historical attempts to eradicate Marxist socialist principles from the constitution of the Labour Party..."

And in Bradford, the factory Labour Party branch at Renolds engineering plant have given their support for Pat Wall, twice selected

parliamentary candidate for Bradford North.

Trade unionists are also questioning the role their leaderships played at the 1982 Labour Party conference, who cast their block votes contrary to the unions' wishes. The Newcastle F180 USDAW branch have protested at their delegation in voting for the Register, against the decision of their annual delegate meeting this year.

And the 6/389 TGWU branch in Manchester have condemned their conference delegation for voting contrary to the wishes of the union's executive committee, and also pledged to support the November 27 anti-witch-hunt conference in Liverpool.

## STUDENTS MOBILISE

If Tycoch college in Swansea is anything to go by, then Further Education students are prepared to fight for the NUS claim for a £25 a week minimum grant. The students at the college struck for a day on November 18, bringing lectures to a virtual standstill, and marched from the college to County Hall where they handed councillors a petition demanding a grant for FE students.

Despite the pouring rain, about 70 (including small delegations from Swansea and Lampeter Universities) students took part. The mood of the demonstration was enthusiastic and anti-Tory. Terry Hopkinson, speaking for the Welsh Labour Students Regional Committee, got a good response when he spoke at the rally after the demonstra-

tion and stressed the need to build links with the labour movement to win the grants claim in full. Over 25 students from the college have already said they would like to set up a Labour Club.

The anger shown by FE students against the Tories must be acted upon by the FE National Committee, the leaders of the FE section in NUS. FE students have a chance to elect a fighting leadership of the FENC at the FE Sector Conference on 7-9 January 1983. All Militant supporters in FE colleges should stand as delegates to the conference. Each college is entitled to send 3 delegates. All delegates should be notified to NUS HQ, on the purple Sectoral Policy Conference Registration form by the 8 December.

# 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 READERS MEETINGS 'WHAT WE STAND FOR'

**BRIXTON** on Tuesday 30 November at 7.30pm. Room 119, Brixton Town Hall, SW2. (near Brixton tube).  
Speaker: Brian Ingham.

**POOLE** on Monday 29 November at 8.00pm, The Main Hall, Poole College of Further Education, North Road Site. Speaker: Laurence Coates (Labour Party Young Socialists rep. on Labour Party National Executive Committee, in personal capacity).

**Huddersfield Marxist Discussion Group:**  
Wednesday 24 November: 'Militant and the Alternative Economic Strategy'  
Wednesday 8 December: 'Lenin and Trotsky. What they really stood for'  
Wednesday 5 January: 'The State'  
Wednesday 19 January: 'Ireland'  
All meetings start at 7.30pm at Huddersfield Library, Children's section.

**WEST LEEDS Marxist Discussion Groups:**  
Tuesday 30 November, 8pm on 'War and Peace'  
Tuesday 14 December 8pm on 'Do wages cause inflation'  
For further details contact Jon Ingham on Leeds 741961.

**TEESSIDE** on Monday 6 December at 7.30 pm. Venue to be arranged. 'Fight Tories—Not Socialists'.

**BRACKNELL** on 29 November at 8.00pm on 'The National Health Service: A Socialist's View'. Speaker: Val Pearce at Griffin House (next to Cinema), Bracknell.

**NORTH EAST Marxist Discussion Groups:**  
**FOREST HALL:** Details Dave Metcalfe, 0632 665277  
**NEWCASTLE WEST:** Every Sunday. Contact Rob Lowther, 0632 775636.  
**NEWCASTLE NORTH:** Every Sunday. Contact Karen Walker, 0632 732959.  
**GOSFORTH:** Every Sunday. Contact Rob Dennison, 0632 844918.  
**SANDIFORD:** Every Sunday. Contact Gavin Dudley, 0632 652906.  
**GATESHEAD:** Every Sunday. Contact Tom McGuinness, 18 Lumley Gardens, Gateshead (Gateshead 783262).  
**WASHINGTON:** Details, Washington 478424.

**NEWTON AYCLIFFE** on Thursday 25 November, at 7.30 pm at the 'Iron Horse' pub, Newton Aycliffe.

**CAMBRIDGE Militant Discussion Meetings:**  
Thursday 25 November: 'Poland and Eastern Europe'.  
Thursday 9 December: 'Militant and the role of Marxism in the Labour Party'.  
Venue: The Bath House, Gwydir Street, Cambridge, 8.00 pm.

**CLASSIFIED**  
Saturday 4 December, 2pm. Littlehampton Labour Party Annual Bake-In, home-made cakes, pies, pickles, jams etc. Friends Meeting House, Littlehampton. Entrance 20p (includes tea and biscuits). In aid of CLP funds.  
**TONYREFAIL** "Fight the Tories not the Socialists". Speaker: Ken Smith (LPYS NC), on Thursday 9 December, at Tonyrefail community Hall, Prichard St., Tonyrefail.

**NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS ADVERTISE IN MILITANT**  
3 col cms (15 words).....£4  
6 col cms (25 words).....£6  
1/16 page.....£10  
1/8 page.....£20  
1/4 page.....£40  
All greetings must be received by 29 DECEMBER at: Circulation Department, Militant, 1, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN


### Militant Supporters Association

Registered Promoter: D Smith, 73 Armond Rd, Witham, Essex.

### WINTER HOLIDAY DRAW

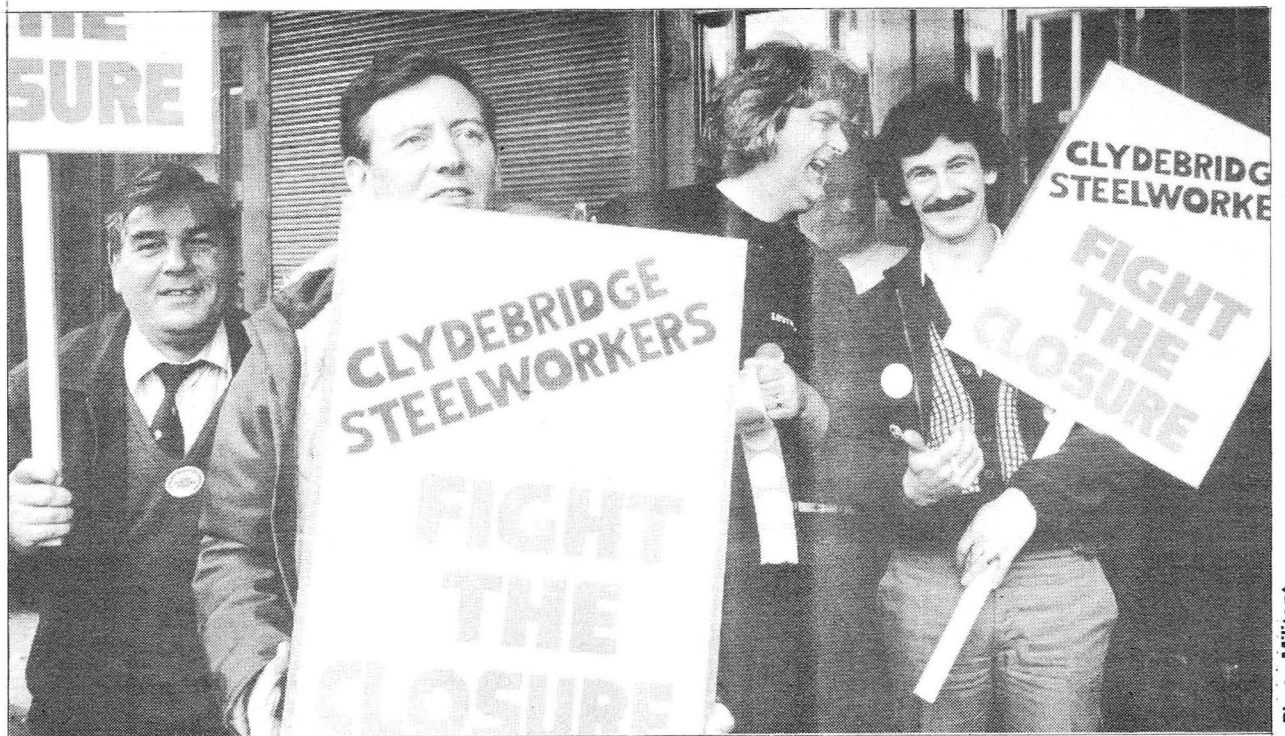
Tickets are now available for our annual draw, where you can win a £500 holiday, to be taken where and when you like, for the ridiculous price of 10p!

We're also giving away a VIDEO, and there are other prizes of electrical goods and books! Will you make a donation to your favourite good cause and have the holiday of a lifetime? Contact your Militant seller for details, or write to 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.



**WHAT WE STAND FOR**

Find out what the bosses and their media, and the right wing of the labour movement are so scared of. Only 30p, post-free, from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Workers' experience of capitalist recession has led to increasing numbers backing a socialist alternative. (Above) Scottish steel workers protest at closure.

Photo Militant

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target Jan 8th.
Eastern	733		2700
East Midlands	355		2850
Hants & Dorset	397		2000
Humberside	109		1650
London East	814		3300
London West	296		1650
London South	560		2700
Manchester & Lancs	846		3000
Merseyside	644		3100
Northern	519		3900
Scotland East	262		2000
Scotland West	420		3000
Southern	591		2500
South West	140		1500
Wales East	129		1500
Wales West	144		2000
West Midlands	434		2800
Yorkshire	562		3850
Others	265		4000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>8220</b>		<b>50000</b>

## Target £50,000 By January 8 BACK THE WORKERS' PAPER

There's been quite a lot of recent talk about the so-called 'black economy', whereby incomes are under-declared for tax purposes.

The overwhelming majority of ordinary people are on the PAYE system, which means employers tell the taxman what you get. But what about the employers themselves?

If you look at the low number of people in the top income brackets, as shown in the government's Inland Revenue reports, there seems to be a lot more expensive homes than people who could possibly afford them! On the other hand, when it comes to the workers there's always a shortage—a figure of a quarter of a million families are on council waiting lists in London alone!

As with all the main problems facing the working-class, this can only be solved finally by the labour movement having control of the economy, and constructing a national plan of production that puts the interest

### By Steve Cawley

of the majority of us first, and the interest of the parasites nowhere.

Militant has fought for this, since our first issue eighteen years ago. And that's why we have been attacked by the capitalists and their press and why thousands of ordinary people back us with cash.

Trade Unionists have supported us. Thanks this week to the NUM members who collected £61.48 for us, to the TUC delegate who sent us £55 expenses, NALGO members in London and Wakefield, readers at Pork Farms, workers at BREL (Eastleigh), and the Manchester FBU member for his expenses.

Members of the Failop/Fullwell Branch Labour Party sent £5 after hearing a speaker on our ideas, and collections were made after LP meetings in Bradford, Bristol, Manchester and Middlesbrough. Thanks to

these comrades, to LPYS members in Blackley, Openshaw, East Kilbride, West Bromwich, Southampton and Stevenage, and to student Labour club members at Imperial Collee London, and Salford.

Even though we find it very unusual if the mass media ever explains what Militant actually stands for, that doesn't stop us getting our ideas across! During this week, collections have come in from meetings in Blackley (£39), Peterborough (£29), Stevenage (£58), Croydon (£47), Greenwich, Eastbourne, Merton (£80), Perth, Wallasey, Blackburn, (£79 after hearing Pat Wall), Rochdale (£33), together with cash from discussion groups as far apart as Yate, Teesside, Portsmouth and S London.

Individual contributions to our funds included £25 from B Gilmore (Oldham), £20 from a Margate OAP, and £15 from P Crack (Bristol), R James (Birmingham AUEW), and J North (Oldham) and fivers from P Petrouss (TGWU), C Gwynne (unemployed), R Saunders (UCATT), J

Doveton (CPSA), C Goulden (Bradford) and from someone working for Channel 4.

Thanks very much to all the above, and to the following who contributed between £1 and £5:— C Hall (SOGAT 82), D Jennings (TGWU), Pbowyer (LPYS), Eastleigh readers J Simmons (Sheet Metal Workers) and J Maughan, S Perkins (NUJ), three members of Hayes LP, F Donalson (Arboath), R Mitchell (Leeds NE CLP), and J Mackintosh (Breckgeed LP) amongst others.

Militant needs every penny of its £50,000 target, and we need your help if we're to get there. Whether you can arrange social events for us at Christmas or the New Year, or whether you would prefer to make a straight donation to our funds, we rely on you. In particular Christmas is a good time to remember that the Roman Empire couldn't solve the housing crisis either!

What we need is a government with socialist policies! Help us get one!

**This Week:  
£2,043**

Last year Brighton Kemptown Labour Party selected local party member and active trade unionist, Rod Fitch, as its prospective parliamentary candidate, because of his clear socialist views.

As Rod supports the policies of *Militant*, the Tory press and Labour's right wing have since been trying to get this democratic decision reversed.

But, as these interviews with workers in Brighton show, any attempt would be strongly resisted by Labour Party members.



Sheila Hall, a single parent bringing up three children aged nine, eight and four on supplementary benefit.

"I get £30 on a Monday and £15.25 on Tuesday and that's for gas, electricity, everything. Over the road there's a shop that sells one fish finger, two ounces of peas, four tea bags, things like that. I have to use that because I can't afford more, or to buy in town where it's cheaper because of the fares.

"I want a Labour MP to fight for us, but one who understands what it's like for ordinary people, who'll fight for socialist policies.

"I've only recently become involved in politics—since about April or May. I joined the Labour Party because of my own experience, both on supplementary benefit and in the few lousy jobs I've had.

"But with Thatcher you've just got to come off the fence. There's no middle to this road. You're with your class or not and my class is working class.

"The way things are going my children just have not got

a future. What are they going to teach them at school apart from how to fill in forms for dole money?

"It's awful what they're trying to do with Rod Fitch. He was a known supporter of *Militant* and his policies were clearly stated and he was democratically elected. The NEC are insulting everybody who voted for him saying he may not be 'eligible'. Rod wasn't forced on to anybody, he was elected through the proper procedure.

"He's a working class bloke from Brighton, and that appeals to working class people. If the NEC get rid of him and bring in an outsider, the Tory MP, Andrew Bowden can spend election day in bed, he'll have no competition.

"We'll have someone come in at the start of the election, his heart would bleed for the people of Brighton then if he doesn't win, clear off, try somewhere else, possible a bit safer.

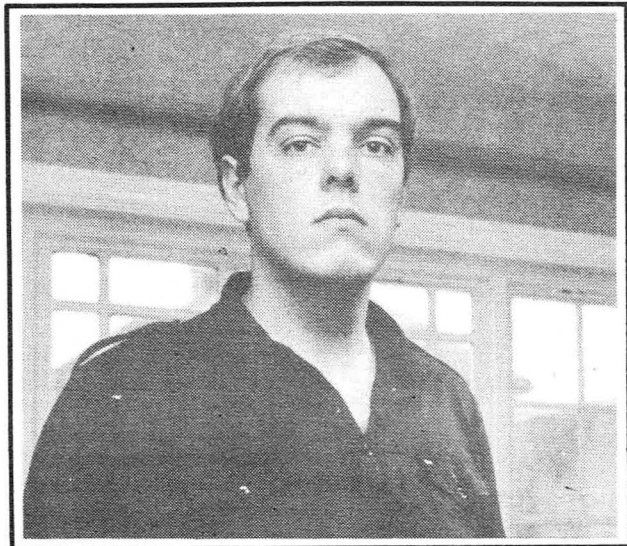
"We know Rod's a working class man who's going to stay with his class."



Photo above: the real Brighton

# BRIGHTON WORKERS WANT A SOCIALIST MP

Interviews by Roger Shrivess  
Photos by Denis Doran



Ian Tyrell a fireman and member of the Fire Brigades Union at Roedean fire station.

I thought, well, if I give my support every four years at the ballot box, I ought to give a bit more.

"I've been reading *Militant* since practically the first day of our strike in 1977 and it appealed to me as a socialist. I think it's disgusting that people like Merlyn Rees who we had to fight over pay then are trying to chuck out people like Rod Fitch who gave us a lot

"I joined the Labour Party this year because of unemployment and the pending Falklands dispute.

"Until recently the fireman's job was secure for life, unless you had your hand in the till, but no more.

Bill Wilson, a dustman with Brighton council.

"Unemployment has made me change my job several times, since I came from Cornwall nineteen years ago.

"I worked at Sunblest bakery when the 1978 strike started and refused a management order to drive my lorry through a picket line which had my brother on it!

"I lost that job and was off work for three or four weeks before Ray Apps and the union helped me get a job on the dust and almost immediately found myself in the middle of the low pay dispute.

"Rod Fitch and Ray Apps have always been tremendous even from the bakery dispute. We need unions and a Labour Party that will fight. You can communicate with Rod and Ray and Rod's

helped out with troubles with the council quite a few times.

"But some of them at the top of the unions don't associate with the grassroots. You never see them and with the salaries they're on, it's very hard for them to look at things from the same viewpoint.

"It's the same with people like Callaghan with his property here in Sussex. How can you think like a Labour person? Would you on that income? More like a Tory, I would think, than the Labour people like my father wanted.

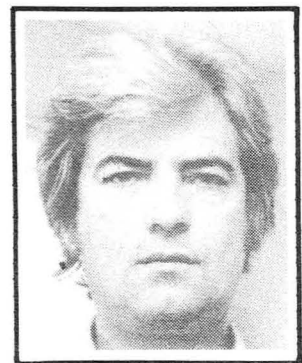
"If Rod and the Kemp-town party are allowed to campaign, he'll be in touch with three quarters of Brighton's population. They'll see he's no monster but an ordinary person worried about rent increases and so on—but with an answer."

of support.

"The Labour Party was supposed to be formed to fight for socialism but it's gone so far off the beaten track now, it's expelling the very people who are keeping the Labour Party alive.

"There has been a lot of disillusion in the fire service about the Labour Party after the 1977 strike. We caught a rat during the dispute, there are a lot of them round here as the fire station was built on a graveyard. It was hung up on a flagpole with Merlyn the Rat written on it, named after Merlyn Rees the minister responsible for the dispute.

"It's been people like Rod who have built the Labour party. I think when members of the FBU become aware that one of their respected NEC members, Terry Fields, is under attack there will be uproar."

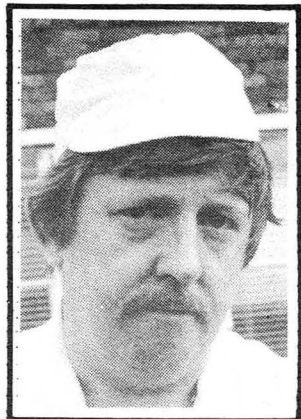


Bob Golby, bus worker, member of TGWU at Whitehawk/Conway Street garage.

"I think what differentiates *Militant* comrades from some of the other genuine types in the Labour Party is that *Militant* understands the practicalities as well as the theories.

"We had a strike last year on Southdown buses in the Brighton garage when management told us they were going to scrap our old working agreement and put us on rotating rest days.

"The strike could have been won if our union of-



Tony McKenna, Bakers Union, Sunblest Bakery, Brighton.

"I'm involved in the Labour Party. I've been a delegate to a previous Labour Party conference from my union and I'm on Brighton GMC.

"We think it's absolutely disgusting trying to get rid of Rod Fitch. On several occasions when we've been threatened with redundancies we've invited Rod along to speak.

"In the 1978 strike although he's a working man with his own job to go to, he used to come along to stand alongside us on the picket line on top of the Sussex downs at three in the morning, in the freezing cold with no covering, until seven or eight, then go and do his own day's work.

"*Militant* supporters gave a lot of help in action day after day. I think some of the right wingers who want Rod out would have died after one night up there!

"Rod's also done more to get improvements on the council estate where a lot of our members live, Woodingdean, than the Tory MP every does.

"At the Bakers Union conference there were only a handful of votes in favour of witch hunts. Our union opposed it and unlike some other unions we went to Labour's conference and voted as our own conference instructed us.

"Some other unions opposed and changed their vote. Nine tenths of the constituencies were against and they're the ones who actually do the work. It stinks of MacCarthyism to me.

"We've had union leaders like Alan Sapper and Alan Fisher come along to our union conference and are always very impressed. Movers always get a right to reply. Everyone's got to stay there to listen, including officials, and you get fined if you're late. You're there to represent your members."

Officials nationally and regionally had given anywhere near the support we got from the local labour movement.

"Locally we got good support, from the Trades Council and the Labour Party, mainly through the 'extreme left' in the form of the *Militant* tendency.

"One small incident was when we had a committee room up there and we never had a key, so I phoned up and asked one of the local dignitaries, who told me 'Oh no you can't have a key' so I said were we meant to wait outside until someone bothered to turn up?

"So I got in touch with Rod Fitch and within an hour I had a key to the premises. I mean something simple, but it's the practicalities.

"The fight's about putting your theories into practice; putting your policies into reality and not just sitting behind locked doors and debating them for the rest of your lives and feeling very holy about it."



### Face of Thatcher's Britain (1)

Less than one in three YOPsters find work according to the latest government report. Employment Gazette, vol 90, No 10, states that only 31% found work after YOP and even their most successful scheme, Work Experience on Employers Premises, only got jobs for 36% of trainees. Overall it found unsurprisingly that blacks, those with health problems and those who had been unemployed for six months before entering YOPs, were least likely to find work.

### Face of Thatcher's Britain (2)

Mr Charles Herk, board member of Cruden Investments Ltd is unlikely to be applying to one of the government's employment schemes. The Edinburgh Evening News, 9 November, has revealed that he is one of Scotland's highest paid bosses. Last year he was getting £4,995 every week, or £257,680 a year—a rise of £175,641 from last year.

### When it's safe to riot

After years of unemployment and despair boiled over in the riots 1981, over seven hundred, mainly young and unemployed people, were jailed and many others given heavy fines, to preserve "law and order"

This year another riot took place. A restaurant was ruined, crockery smashed, furniture spoilt, curtains ripped, and a trail of vomit was left. Last month some of the perpetrators were fined £25. Last week, other rioters were cleared of charges and bound over to keep the peace for two years.

They were members of the Assassins dining club at Oxford University whose main aim is to get drunk in restaurants.

One of those fined £25 was James Sainsbury, heir to the supermarket chain worth £124 million, slightly above current dole money. Sainsbury is a member of the right wing Monday Club and has been pictured giving Nazi salutes. The Assassins delight in playing games where anyone who went to a school with fees under £3,000 a year has to pay a forfeit. So British class justice says that if you must riot, go to public school and Oxford and you'll be all right.

### THIRTY YEARS AGO

In the early 1950's the African opposition to the seizure of their land in Kenya by white settlers exploded into violence. The British colonial state responded to this Mau Mau anti-colonial movement with intensified repression. On 20 October, 1952, some leading African nationalists, including future President Kenyatta, were imprisoned. Thousands were killed in the armed struggle.

But thirty years on, the Kenyan bourgeoisie has proved totally incapable of solving the problems of development. Land hunger haunts the African masses. And those who now praise Mau Mau are in danger of imprisonment. After all during Mau Mau, the British appointed current President, Arap Moi to be one of their puppets in the Legislative Assembly.

On 18 October, 1982, two days before the thirtieth anniversary of Kenyatta's imprisonment, Moi had a leading historian on Mau Mau, Maina-wa-Kinyatti, sent to jail for six years.

So scared are the dictatorship which now rules Kenya of popular opposition, that it is illegal for more than five people to meet without a police licence. The experience of Kenya over the last thirty years is clear. Political independence from colonialism is not enough—the chains with capitalism have to be broken.

# BRIXTON

## One year after Scarman

Scarman's report stated that social conditions and bitter resentment against the police were the two main causes of the upheaval of April 1981.

If anything, things have got worse in the last year.

By Kevin Fernandes  
(Vauxhall LPYS)

There were 13,000 people unemployed in Lambeth in April 1981. In October 1982 there were over 18,000. At least 50% of black youth under 24 are out of work.

Scarman admitted that Brixton is an area "marked by decay and that there are in particular very serious housing problems." But the Tory Council cut maintenance work, although there are about 10,000 outstanding repair jobs on council homes.

Over 12,000 dwellings in Lambeth are "unfit" to live in; at the same time the Tories have underspent on the housing budget. In Tory Britain, less council homes have been built in any year since 1925.

Again, Scarman showed that in Lambeth one sixth of families are one-parent families, twice the national average. The poverty conditions bring about "a higher rate of mental illness and of physical or mental handicap in the Borough than nationally." However, cuts in staffing levels mean that the Council cannot guarantee to carry out all the duties of the Social Services departments.

All they offer us is public relations exercises. The Council's painting of bridges, planting of flower beds in the high street, and the planned use of Blackpool illuminations over the Christmas period, will superficially and literally "brighten" up a few streets for a while. But that is all.

### Cosmetic exercise

What of Scarman's recommendations dealing with the police? His report confirmed the role played by the Special Patrol Group in bringing to boiling-point the long-standing resentment of blacks, youth and the community.

The resentment is bound to increase with the deployment of the new Immediate Response Units, who gave their para-military display on 1 November, with special equipment, and new, lighter, shields for 'snatch and grab' tactics. It is claimed that in some cases, the police did not wear numbers on their fireproof overalls, making identification, in the event of a complaint, impossible.

To top all this, in January, there will be a new police chief of 'L' district; it will be a Chief Superintendent Marnoch, former deputy-head of the SPG. And last week the Tory government announced new powers for the police, to stop and search on the streets.

Lack of real police accountability was pointed out by Scarman. But he merely recommended that consultation between the police and the community should be improved, and put in a statutory framework.

The Consultative Group in Lambeth, set up under the guidance of the police, with selected community "representatives", could not (and has not) solved the conflict between the police and, particularly, black youths.

### This Month's Riot

In a statement circulated amongst the local labour movement a year ago, the Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton pointed out that "unless the underlying social conditions are changed and the police are made democratically accountable, there will inevitably be renewed conflict in areas like Brixton."

The events of 1 November were a confirmation of this. In an area with a lack of social and leisure facilities, the Council knocked down or boarded up houses which were a meeting place and social centre for a section of the black population. At the same time, a virtual military operation was carried out to enforce this. The riot which followed later could only have been expected.

Only after a great deal of pressure did the police Commander even tell the Consultative Group how many police officers were deployed in the Railton Road area during the evictions. The incidents of that day showed that the Consultative Group cannot offer a way forward for workers and youth in Brixton.

Scarman recommended that "racially prejudiced or discriminatory" behaviour should be a specific offence in the Police Discipline



Picket outside Scarman Enquiry last year. Photo: Militant

Code, and that the normal penalty for the offence should be dismissal. The Tories have rejected this, and accepted the police claim that it is not necessary to have a specifically listed offence, as racist behaviour already falls within the general offence of "discreditable conduct."

Few blacks in Brixton, or in other inner-city areas, would believe that the police are dealing with racists in their ranks.

In fact, the treatment of blacks at the hands of the police, in the past and present, is part and parcel of their function. The police force, in the interests of capitalism, will try to harass and to intimidate any section of the working class which is a potential centre of opposition to the system, and which questions the exploitation of the capitalists.

Scarman, endorsed the moves by the Tories to equip police with new riot gear, shields, CS Gas, and plastic bullets. The authorities' only answer to social problems is more repression, using more sophisticated equipment.

A recent survey carried out by the Commission for Racial Equality showed that 6 out of 10 West Indian/African, and 4 out of 10 Asian, teenagers are now out of work. Despite the fact that black youth were getting school qualifications, this did not help them looking for a job. Of those who had 'O' level qualifications or better, 77% of whites were employed, 66% of Asians, but only 50% of West Indian/Africans.

With the existence of, almost permanent, mass unemployment amongst black youth, coupled with discrimination, it is a tribute to black youth that only a very small minority take to the road of petty crime. An "alternative" which can turn full circle, bringing further repression.

Whilst not condoning

crime, for socialists overcoming crime means fundamentally ending the social conditions which produce it. The capitalists, who are increasing poverty, are the biggest "criminals" of all. They, and the police, who are a law unto themselves, cannot solve the problem of crimes of violence, or unemployment, or any of the social ills of the system.

The Labour movement must champion the rights of black workers and mobilise to end the rotten social conditions, and the racist poison which it breeds.

Labour must demand the disbanding of the SPG and the Immediate Response Units, an end to police harassment, and full democratic control over the police—this to include control over the top officers, and over day-to-day policing policies, and bringing in a completely independent complaints procedure. While opposing the repressive role of the police force, the Labour movement should support the right of police men and women to join a democratic trade union organisation.

Labour are now back in control of Lambeth Council, due to a defection of one councillor from the SDP.

The Labour Council must now demand, and campaign for, more funding from the government, to bring about lasting changes in the conditions of workers and youth in the area, and link it to the fight to get rid of the Tories, and put in a Labour Government committed to a socialist programme. Such a programme will have to include a massive scheme of useful public works to provide jobs and basic services, and an end to repression by the police.

The Labour movement must win black and white youth away from blind anger, frustration or despair, to being the leaders of the fight to transform society.

**“What we have achieved gives the direct lie and contradiction to those who said the workers of Belfast could not be united and would not fight. They had seen Protestants and Catholics marching together, and, on Tuesday, fighting together.”**

So one of the leaders of the unemployed in the '30s, Tommy Geehan, summed up the historic events in Belfast in October 1932. Fifty years ago sectarian divisions of the Belfast workers were cast aside in the struggle against unemployment, an event that has significance with the return of mass unemployment and poverty to Northern Ireland today.

Not since the great Belfast Engineering strike of 1919, when over 40,000 workers took control of the city for a month, threw up their own trade union defence force, the 'Corps of Peace Pickets', and rendered the Unionist political machine, the police and the army (i.e. the state) utterly useless, had Belfast witnessed such a storm of class protest.

The forces which drove the Belfast workers into taking united class action in October 1932, and which resulted in the Unionist tops 'attempting' to put the city under martial law for 16 days, were once again, the terrible level of unemployment and grinding poverty suffered by the majority of workers.

In October 1932, the 'official' figure for those registered at Labour Exchanges was 76,000. However, the *Irish Press* reported that the real figure was in excess of 100,000. This was made up of 30,000 mostly young people, who didn't sign on because they had been deprived of benefit through the application of the Means Test.

Out of an insured population of 270,000 in Northern Ireland (the total population was just under one and a quarter million) unemployment stood at 37%—twice as high as in Britain!

In Belfast alone 48,000 were denied the right to work. 73% of shipbuilding workers were on the stones. In October, 1932 Harland and Wolff employed only 1,900 workers compared with 20,000 a few years earlier. Not one solitary ship came down the slipways in Belfast in 1932.

Grinding poverty didn't just reveal its ugly face as a result of the 1929-32 world slump. In his book on Outdoor Relief in Belfast 1929-39, Paddy Devlin remarks that in 1920 "bread-winners and other members of their families fortunate enough to be employed earned little more than a pittance in working conditions which were so wretched that they were described in factory inspectors' annual reports as being the worst in any factory district in the British Isles". Poverty and squalor know no religion!

In 1925, the three newly elected Labour MPs for Belfast—Jack Beattie, Billy McMullan and Sam Kyle, all trade union leaders—began to step up the agitation and struggle on behalf of the unemployed and the downtrodden. Through the operation of the vicious Means Test, which increased the number of unemployed not receiving

**By Bill Webster**  
Reprinted from  
**Militant Irish Monthly**

benefit at the Labour Exchange, there was an increase in the number of unemployed applying to the Board of Poor Law Guardians for outdoor relief work.

Relief Work Schemes carrying out road repairs etc., were started by the city authorities at which unemployed married men were engaged.

The social upheaval that was to grip Belfast by its throat in October had already spilled on to the streets of Birkenhead on September 13.

On September 30 the Northern Ireland Parliament held its first session at the newly constructed Stormont Castle. Jack Beattie, by now the only Labour MP in the Parliament, tabled a motion on the question of unemployment and the need for the government to provide proper relief schemes with decent allowances. When Beattie's motion was manoeuvred off the order paper by the Speaker, he lifted the mace and chucked it under the table which held the dispatch box. Beattie made a second attempt to hurl the mace, this time at the Speaker himself, but he was overwhelmed and escorted out of Stormont by the police.

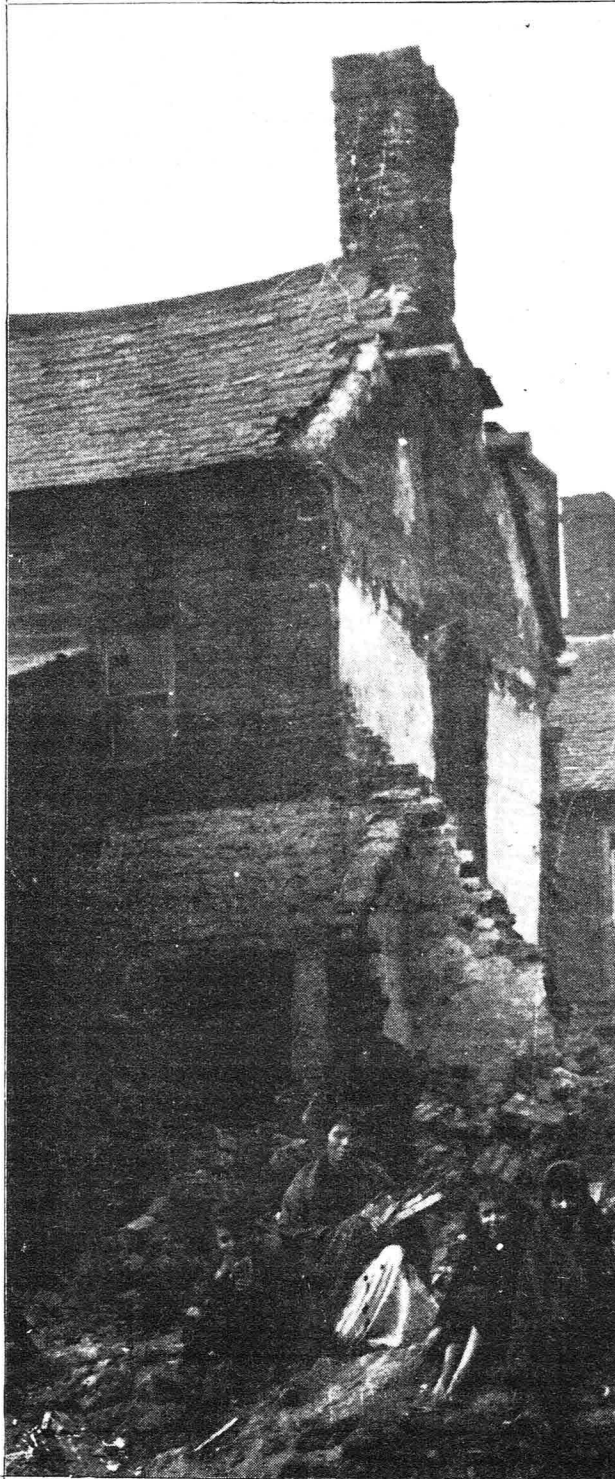
By his actions, Beattie had merely pointed to the storm cloud that was developing over Belfast. The Revolutionary Workers Groups (RWGs)—the forerunners to the Communist Party of Ireland, numbering some 50 members in Belfast—were perfectly aware of the mood of the organised and unemployed of Belfast. These socialist fighters had put down roots inside the trade union movement and were amongst the best of the class fighters in Belfast at that time.

On the initiative of the RWGs, the Belfast Trades Council supported their call for a strike amongst the Outdoor Relief workers as the only way to force their demands to the fore.

### Outdoor Relief workers prepare for action

On the evening of September 30, 2,000 Outdoor Relief workers supported the decision to strike unless their demands were granted. Their demands included the abolition of task work, substantial increases in the scale of relief to a man and his children, no 'payment of kind'—all relief to be paid in cash, street and road schemes to be done at the appropriate trade union rate of pay, and adequate outdoor allowances to all single men and women who were unemployed and not in receipt of unemployment benefit.

# BELFAST 1932



Then as now, poverty, slums and unemployment drove the Belfast workers into united class action. Above: slums in Belfast in the 1930s. Below: slums in the Falls Road area of Belfast today.



The strike was set for October 4. The various local District Relief Workers Committees organised house-to-house collections of money and food, to establish depots in order to supply the strikers and their families. Many small shopkeepers contributed to these collections.

On the evening of 3 October, 600 relief workers downed tools. That evening 60,000 workers, Protestant and Catholic, marched from the Labour Exchange to the Customs House steps in Belfast. 'Orange' and 'Green' bands led the march, and to avoid giving religious offence, played the neutral line, 'Yes, We Have No Bananas'!

From the 4—10 October numerous marches and demonstrations took place in Belfast. Riots broke out in the respective Protestant and Catholic areas. Just like in Birkenhead in September, the police were constantly 'at work' with their batons—only to be met with barrages of 'kidney stones' and bottles. Anything the workers could get their hands on was used in self defence.

On October 10 the Lord Mayor of Belfast, following a meeting with the Chairman of the Board of Governors, offered concessions to the strikers.

At the mass meeting that evening his offer was rejected. The workers insisted on the trade union rate for the job for all work done, and an increased rate on the Outdoor Relief Schemes. Under the leadership of the RWG, the workers now demanded a general strike of all workers in Belfast to support their struggle. The Outdoor Relief workers decided to escalate their campaign. They planned to hold a monster demonstration for October 11 which would include marches from every district to the centre of Belfast.

### Riots in the Shankill and the Falls

The Northern Ireland government immediately invoked the Special Powers Act and banned all meetings for the 11 and 12 October. A curfew was also imposed in all working class areas from 11 pm to 5 am. Tommy Geehan addressed a meeting of the strikers' wives and the women from the linen and flax mills on October 10. He stated that, "For many years the workers of Belfast have been divided by artificial barriers of religion and politics. But the past two months has witnessed a wonderful spectacle, because the workers were now united on a common platform, demanding the right to live..." (*Irish News*, 11 October 1932).

On October 11 the unemployed attempted to resist the ban on the demonstration, with organised mobs throughout the city. The riots spread like wildfire and they reached their highest points in the working class areas of East, West and North Belfast.

A journalist with the *Irish Independent* described a scene which he witnessed on that day:

"...On the Shankill Road crowds of growling men lounged around waiting... Suddenly a big red-faced woman with a black shawl thrown over her shoulders, wisps of hair hanging from her eyes, ap-

peared almost from nowhere... She ran to crowds of men and in quick, tense language told them that the unemployed and the police were in conflict on the Falls Road. 'Are you going to let them down?' she almost shrieked. 'No, by heavens we are not', they roared back, and in almost a twinkling a veritable orgy of destruction began".

As the police began to move into the Catholic and Protestant areas of the city in armoured cars and with other 're-inforcements', the workers threw up the barricades and trenches were dug to trap the vehicles.

On October 13, despite the 4,000 strong armed police force—backed up with re-inforcements from the rural areas—the barricades were still up and hijackings were taking place throughout the city. "The government tactics were becoming clear—they were now shooting with effect in the Catholic areas of the Falls Road while baton-charging in others". (Paddy Devlin)

The Unionist government once again, had resorted to the old tactic of divide and rule. However, on this occasion, despite the use of guns against the Catholics, the Protestants were rioting against the police in their own areas—the old Sinn Fein 'scare' (this time it was the 'fault of the Communists') just didn't work this time.

When the rioting eventually ceased two workers had been shot dead on the Falls Road and fifteen suffered gunshot wounds. 100,000 attended the funerals.

The Unionists knew that if they went any further, even their armed apparatus would not be enough to beat the Catholics and Protestants into submission. Consequently the Union Administration forced the Poor Law Guardians to make substantial concessions to the unemployed in the form of a substantial increase in the Outdoor Relief Allowances. For the first time, single men and women received a minimum allowance of 10 shillings per week.

The conditions of the 1930's have returned to Belfast and the whole of the North with a vengeance.

It is to the eternal credit of the working class in Northern Ireland, and their traditional organisations, the trade unions, that since 1975/6 united action has been developed around the basic class issues of opposition to sectarianism, unemployment, poverty, slum housing, etc.

As in 1932, common misery provides the bed-rock for common struggle. The massive strikes and demonstrations that gripped the North in April 1980 against Thatcher's policy of using unemployment to weaken the resolve of the trade union movement to fight, and the recent action of Health Service workers, demonstrate only too clearly the enormous potential, that exists to build a mighty socialist Labour Party in Northern Ireland.

To undertake such a task—the organised rank and file, with the Marxists, are the only people who can force the trade union 'leaders' into leading the movement in this direction—is the best possible tribute today's generation can make to the memory of all those who fought the bosses and the police in October 1932.

# RIGHT WING RETURN

After the withdrawal of the original document at the NEC organisation sub committee a fortnight ago, Jim Mortimer has presented an amended document to the full NEC proposing measures against Militant.

The new set of proposals put before the National Executive Committee last Wednesday are a crushing confirmation of the analysis of *Militant*. They confirm that the witch-hunt has been aimed specifically against *Militant*, that the Party constitution has been bent to suit an attempted purge and that *Militant* supporters have been singled out and treated unfairly.

By John Pickard

The proposals and the analysis contained in an amended document by General Secretary Jim Mortimer also confirm that the whole elaborate charade of the 'Register' has been merely a pretext for a witch-hunt, as *Militant* has always argued.

That pretext has now been abandoned and the NEC are now being asked instead to return to the proscribed list dropped by conference in 1973, but without any new conference decision. If necessary, the NEC is being asked to consider a special constitutional amendment to get round the Party rules, in order to go through with the attacks on *Militant*.

The document of Jim Mortimer also confirms, however, that the overwhelming majority of Party activists and constituency labour parties are against the exclusion of *Militant* from the Party and that a witch-hunt will create chaos in the Party in the run-up to a General Election.

The ridiculous attempt to discipline *Militant* for not sticking to the closing date for registration set before party conference has now been dropped:

"it can be argued", the document states, "that *Militant* should be given every reasonable opportunity to put their views to the National Executive Committee and to have them considered. Very quickly after the debate and decisions of the annual conference they submitted a full reply."

Many Party members will no doubt be asking why this was not conceded in the first place, in the original Mortimer proposals to the organisation sub-committee a fortnight earlier.

What is also clear from the NEC proposals is that the witch-hunters have been forced to go through certain procedures in order to get expulsions.

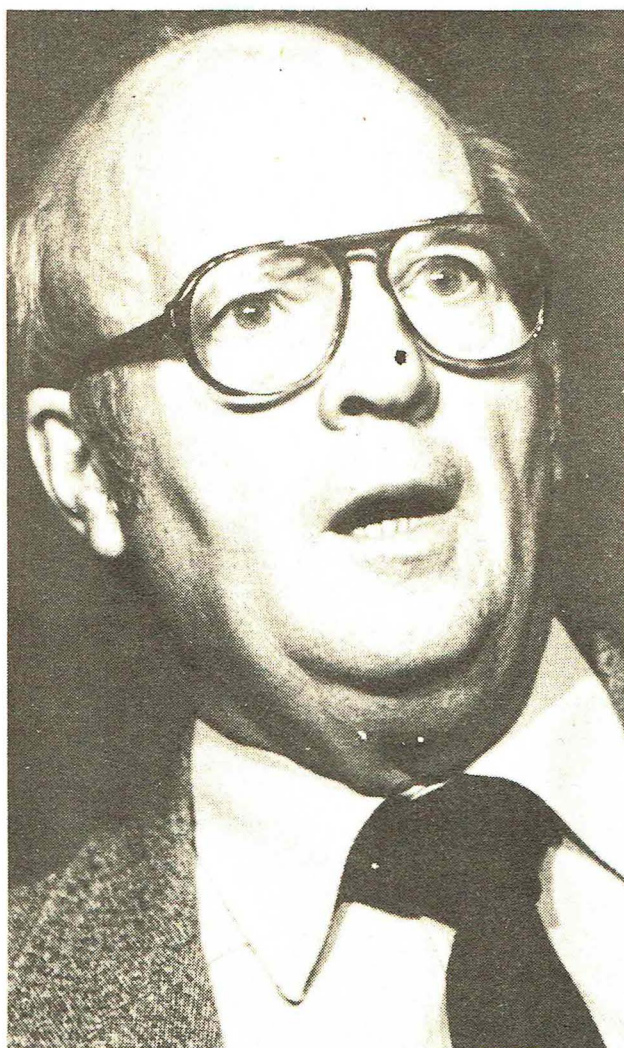
"The National Executive Committee should take

special care to observe strictly the requirements of the rules in relation to its own actions when consideration is being given to possible disciplinary action."

The NEC have dropped the plan for expulsions "forthwith" because of the legal implications but above all because of the furious response that such arbitrary justice would evoke among the ranks of the Party. But what a scandalous situation it is when the head office of the Labour Party were prepared right up to the eleventh hour to expel five members, with 121 years membership in all, without so much as a reason or a hearing—"forthwith", as the original proposals put it!

In being forced to go through formal procedures to get expulsions, Jim Mortimer openly acknowledges the opposition of Labour's rank and file to any witch-hunts. In an amazing statement, the document concedes:

"...There are some Labour supporters and probably the majority of Labour activists who welcome the policy and constitutional changes of recent years and who are suspicious of any moves against the 'far left' because they see it as the prelude to other changes. It is a factor in the situation that a large majority of constituency labour parties are not sympathetic to the exclusion of *Militant* even though, as the voting for the National Executive Committee indicates, only a small proportion of them vote for *Militant* candidates. Labour cannot afford to alienate large numbers of its activists or to come into collision with a significant number of constituency labour parties in the approach to the General Election."



Jim Mortimer is finding it difficult to appease right wing witch-hunters while being conscious of massive grass roots opposition to a purge. All Photos: Denis Doran.

The rank and file of the party have every right to be alarmed because it is clear that the new right wing majority on the NEC want to reverse most of the policy and constitutional changes gained over recent years. John Golding has recently made it clear that he wants to re-open the whole issue of re-selection and the election of the party leader by the electoral college. He has also raised the possibility of NEC action against the CLPD, LCC and other left groups.

## Right prepared to disband hundreds of CLPs

The document also warns that if wide expulsions take place,

"the controversy will extend up to and beyond the General Election."

There are some on the right wing of the party who want a widespread purge, no matter what the cost.

On the recent TV programme "Weekend World", Alan Williams MP made it clear that even the disbanding and closing down of "hundreds" of constituency parties was not too high a price to pay! The CLPs would vigorously oppose a sabotaging witch-hunting campaign, but it would be a mistake on Jim Mortimer's part to think that there

would be no controversy if 'only' the *Militant* Editorial board were expelled. Party members will take the view, correctly, that one expulsion for a member's ideas is one too many.

## Proscription to be re-introduced

The essence of the new NEC proposals is a re-introduction of proscriptions. Jim Mortimer tries to argue that the proscribed list was not really removed in 1973, that it in fact still exists.

Using the original clause in the constitution which set up the proscribed list, he is proposing that the NEC, without any recourse to the rank and file or to conference, reverse the 1973 conference decision and re-establish proscription. It is a disgrace that attempts are being made to undermine a clear Party conference decision in this manner.

The document proposes that a motion be put to either the December or January NEC declaring that the 'Militant Tendency' is "ineligible for affiliation to the Party" under clause II (4), in other words, proscribed. After hearing evidence and representations, *Militant* would then be declared "ineligible" after which the NEC would begin the proceedings for the expulsion of the editorial board.



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But by the declaration of "ineligibility", the NEC thereby gives itself, according to the witch-hunters, wide powers of expulsion of *Militant* supporters, the so-called 'members' of the 'Militant Tendency'.

"If the National Executive Committee adopt the suggested notice of motion all members of the Militant Tendency will become ineligible for individual membership of the Labour Party. Thus it will not be possible to distinguish, as suggested in the Hughes - Hayward Report, between 'organisers' and 'followers'...."

The document then goes on to establish a "working definition" of a 'member' of the 'Militant Tendency':

"one who is significantly involved in giving financial support, in its organisation or in its regular activities."

Very generously, Jim Mortimer excluded from this imaginary 'membership', those Labour Party members who "solely bought a copy" of the paper, "sold a copy", "read" it (very liberal indeed!) or even "wrote an occasional letter" or "contributed an article" to it. Those who "spoke in favour of certain policies known to be favoured by *Militant*" will not be deemed 'members', nor those (such tolerance is breathtaking!):

"who argued against the conference and National Executive Committee decisions on the Militant Tendency."

In other words, Labour Party members can still put forward a point of view that may be their own but not that of the NEC, but only thanks to the magnanimity of the General Secretary. There is no attempt by the NEC to arrive at a "working definition" of a member of the St. Ermin's group, not even the pretence, in other words, of an equitable approach to the constitution.

## A Charter for Spying, secret files and dossiers

But having declared *Militant* to be ineligible for affiliation and then having established a working definition of a "member" of the 'Militant Tendency', the document makes it clear that the NEC:

"should recognise that under the existing constitution all members of the Militant Tendency are liable to expulsion."

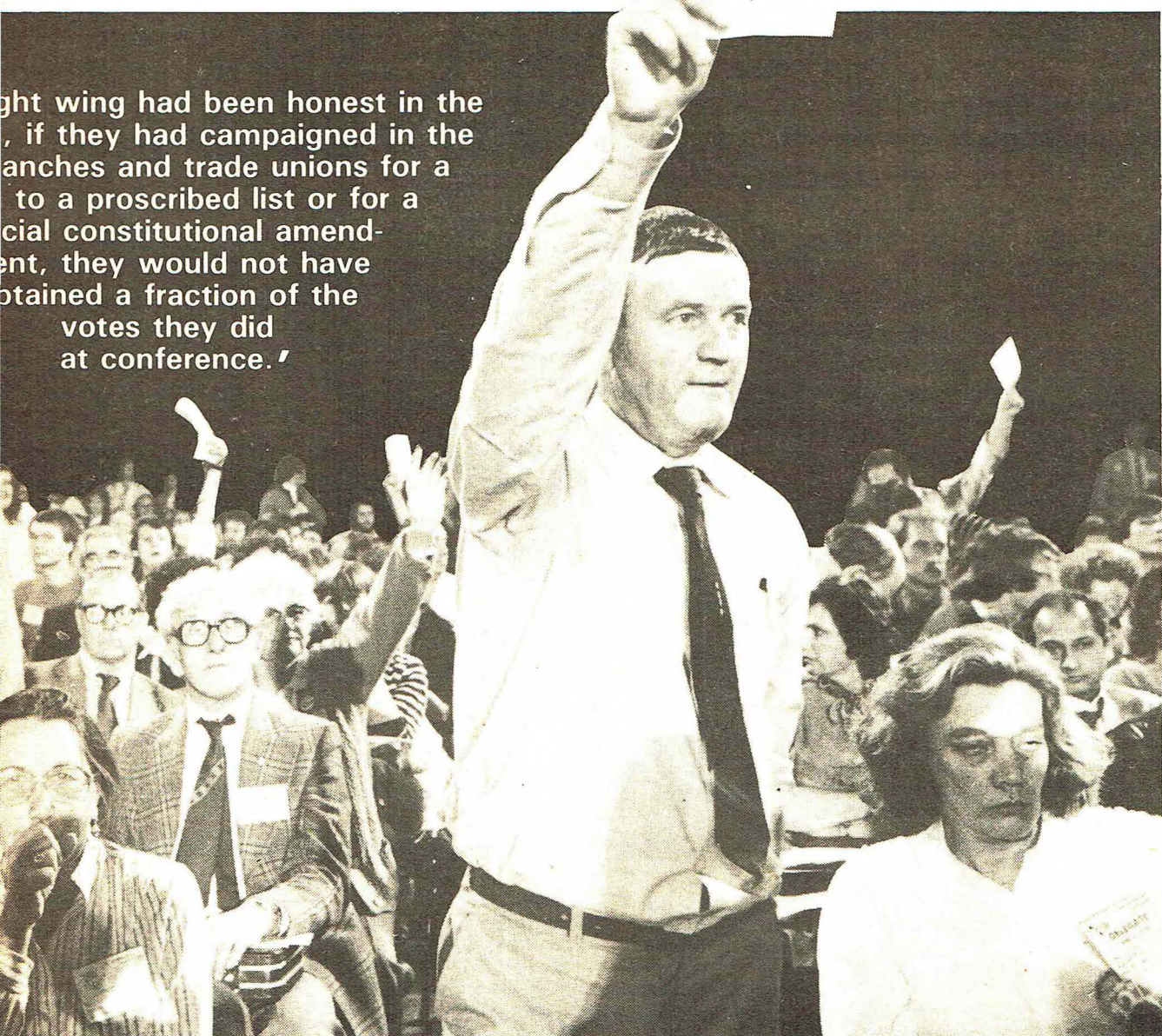
The document therefore opens up a Pandora's box of purges and witch-hunts. Labour Party members should not be under any illusions as to what this will mean for the internal life of

# Fight the Tories



# TO PROSCRIPTIONS

ght wing had been honest in the  
, if they had campaigned in the  
anches and trade unions for a  
to a proscribed list or for a  
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ent, they would not have  
obtained a fraction of the  
votes they did  
at conference.'



NEC Right Winger John Golding

the party.

The specific recommendations for *Militant* full-time employees and the more general recommendations for *Militant* supporters both make the point that "general charges" should not be considered for disciplinary action, but rather the NEC should take into account only those "specific" charges, related to the individual concerned.

What is this, if not an open invitation to right-wingers and regional organisers to open up dossiers on left-wingers? What is it but a return to the witch-hunt and spying of the 1950s, when Labour Party staff used to sneak into meetings to listen to Nye Bevan and Michael Foot and then send secret reports to Labour headquarters?

The rank and file of the Labour Party does not need its General Secretary to define the boundaries of tolerance: the methods of "bureaucratic centralism" will simply not be accepted in the party.

## New proposals also bend the rules

Quite apart from other considerations, the proposals of the second Mortimer document are on as shaky a constitutional basis as were those of the first, aborted,

document. The resolution of this dilemma, Jim Mortimer proposes, is for the NEC organisation sub-committee to determine;

**"whether any changes are required to the constitution or to the existing practice."**

We have come a long way. Now, at last, the witch-hunters are beginning to admit that they have no basis for their actions in the constitution (they have already admitted they have no basis in rank and file support) and so they are to contemplate a **special constitutional amendment to deal with the *Militant*.**

In all the main arguments about disciplinary action against *Militant*, the register has been dropped out of sight. As *Militant* has argued all along, the standpoint of the right wing has always been 'Expel the *Militant* and find the justification later.' The second document of Jim Mortimer shows irrefutably that *Militant* has been correct all along.

In the period before the Labour Party conference, the right wing made desperate attempts to cover up the real purpose of the register proposed by the Hughes-Hayward Report. The 'soft lefts' who supported the register tried even harder to show how 'innocuous' the register really was.

In his own conference

**"It is a factor in the situation that a large majority of the constituency labour parties are not sympathetic to the exclusion of *Militant*."**

—Mortimer document.

speech, Michael Foot spent a great deal of time defending the so-called "sheet-anchor" of the Party, i.e. the constitution. Then, after a short one-and-a-half hour debate, the trade union leaders used their block votes—often against their conference and executive mandates—to steamroll the measures through, despite the overwhelming opposition to the motion by the CLPs.

But the mask has now slipped. The register is nowhere in sight. Now, the NEC are being asked to return to bans and proscriptions and, if that proves a little difficult constitutionally (which it will) to introduce a special change in the rules to ban the *Militant*. What could confirm more crushingly the argument put forward by *Militant* all along, that the whole exercise was a smokescreen for a witch-hunt?

**There cannot be the slightest doubt that if the right wing had been honest in the beginning, if they had campaigned in the party branches and trade unions**

**for a return to proscribed lists or for a special constitutional amendment, they would not have obtained a fraction of the votes they did at Party conference.**

If Jim Mortimer is in some discomfort now, if he is finding it difficult to get the 'formula' right, it is because he is trying to appease the witch-hunters while at the same time being conscious of the enormous opposition to a witch-hunt in the rank and file, and of the damage that a witch-hunt would do to Labour's election chances.

The rank and file of the Party must be resolute and determined not to give an inch to the witch-hunters. The NEC are already taking steps to restrict the Labour Party Young Socialists, because the majority of them support the same political ideas as *Militant*.

Although the second document is more circumspect about the issue, a question mark still hangs over those duly-selected prospective parliamentary candidates who support *Militant*. The full-time emp-

loyees of *Militant* are still to be investigated and the editorial board are to be expelled—even if in a more 'civilised' manner than originally planned. But for the rank and file of the Party, one expulsion for ideas is one too many.

The opposition to the register and the witch-hunt must continue unabated in all the CLPs, Party branches and trade unions.

## 'Walworth Road' wasting time on witch-hunts

Party members must be wondering what Walworth Road is doing. In a period when the Labour Party should be gearing itself up for an election, the General Secretary seems to be spending all his time writing up huge reports just to facilitate the expulsion of good socialists from the Party.

At the end of this second document, Jim Mortimer makes an attack on the political ideas of *Militant*:

**"In defending and upholding the policy of the Party on jobs, the alternative economic strategy, the role of the unions, sympathy for broad popular movements concerned with nuclear weapons, women's rights, and ethnic minorities, and with support for detente, our spokesmen should not be**

**reluctant, when the occasion requires it, to emphasise that the policies of the *Militant* Tendency undermine Labour's case and help to spread sectarianism, disillusionment and alienation. This is not the route to a Labour victory at the next election."**

This is an incredible falsehood, a gross distortion of the true situation! It is a fact that the right wing of the Party are far more removed from official policy than is *Militant*. It was not *Militant* but Jim Callaghan who recently launched a campaign against Party policy on unilateral disarmament. It is not *Militant* but the right wing who are seeking to reverse Party conference policies on the EEC, public expenditure, incomes policy and so on.

It is precisely in order to facilitate a shift to the right in policy that the right wing are launching their campaigns of witch-hunts and expulsions in the first place. It will be the right wing who will ruin Labour's election chances if they are allowed to get away with it.

The Party rank and file must defend conference policies and fight on those policies to win the next election. And that means defeating the witch-hunt. The rank and file must insist that the NEC turn their guns on the Tories. Fight the Tories not the Socialists!

# not the Socialists

**The Earth for all the people.  
That is the demand.**  
**The machinery of production and  
distribution for all the people.  
That is the demand.**  
**The collective ownership and control  
of industry and its democratic manage-  
ment in the interest of all the people.  
That is the demand**  
**The elimination of rent, interest, pro-  
fit, and the production of wealth to  
satisfy the wants of all the people.  
That is the demand**  
**The end of class struggles and class  
rule, of master and slave, of ignorance  
and vice, of poverty and shame, of  
cruelty and crime—the birth of  
freedom, the dawn of brotherhood, the  
beginning of man.  
That is the demand  
This is socialism.**

With the above words Eugene Debs, Presidential Candidate of the Socialist Party of America, expressed the hope and vision of the United States labour movement in the early years of this century.

This was the era of the rise of the big corporations which led to the USA becoming the dominant capitalist nation. The power and wealth was concentrated in a few hands. A Government report showed that by 1914 the rich 2% owned 35% of the wealth.

Even President Wilson, soon after his election, wrote "the masters of the government of the United States are the combined capitalists and manufacturers of the United States." The corporations themselves were dominated by the big "Robber Barons" such as Carnegie, Vanderbilt, Rockefeller and-

**To fight the bosses was a brave act. It was a no holds barred struggle.**

Morgan. The last two, through their banks held 341 directorships in 112 corporations with a total capitalisation of \$22.245 million. But all this wealth was built on the poverty and exploitation of America's working class.

In contrast to the rich 2%, the poorest 65% owned only 5% of the wealth. The daily struggle to stay alive is only hinted at in government statistics. For example 2 million children were forced to work, often earning less than \$3 a week, to help the family survive. Concern for life and limb disappeared in the rush for profits. In one year, 1914, 35,000 workers were killed at work and another 700,000 were injured.

The workers fought for the right to organise in the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Many hard and bitter struggles were waged. To fight the bosses was a no-holds-barred struggle with all the power of the owners and the state against the workers. The Colorado miners faced it all in 1903-4 during their 15 month strike to win \$3 for an eight hour day.

The state and the mine

owners united with 30,000 vigilantes and several thousand troops to try to beat, starve, and murder the miners into submission. Miners were rounded up into concentration camps, called bullpens. When a lawyer tried to get some released he was told by General Bell, in charge of martial law, "Habeus corpus, hell! We'll give 'em post mortems!"

When, in spite of 42 murders, all failed, the state tried to frame the leaders, Big Bill Haywood, Charles Moyer, and George Pettibone for murder. The labour movement rose to their defence with mass demonstrations across the country. Eugene Debs wrote in *Appeal to Reason* "If they attempt to murder Moyer, Haywood, and their brothers, a million revolutionists at least will meet them with guns". The workers won and they were found not guilty.

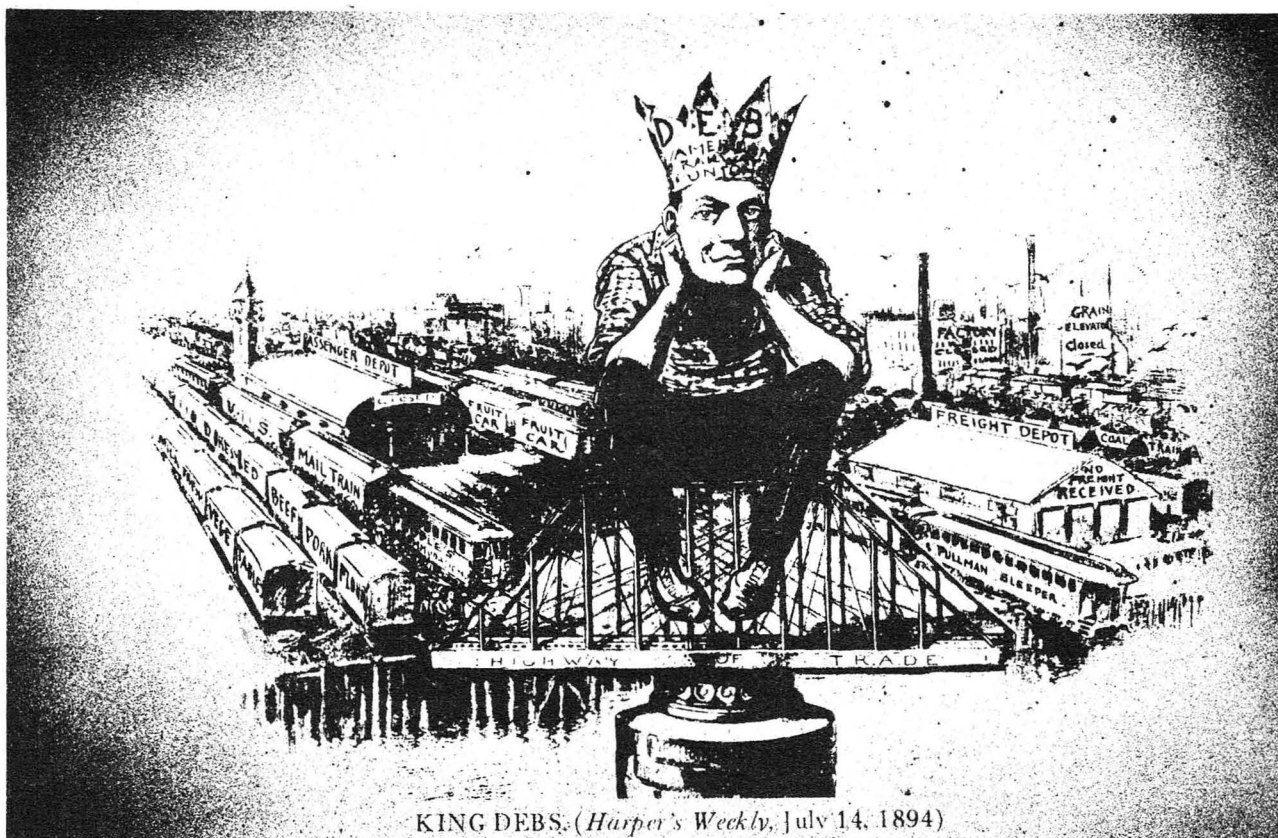
As well as through the unions the workers fought in elections. In several states successful campaigns were run for social and political reform. In many areas labor was active in strengthening local democracy to overcome widespread town hall corruption. In Toledo, Ohio, Mayor Jones took the clubs off the police and replaced them with canes and the police carried white gloves. This was a reform much appreciated by workers' skulls.

The Socialist Party of America, founded in 1901, was the strongest workers party. It had an energetic campaigning attitude. In the 1908 presidential election it hired a train, the 'Red Special' to tour the country. James Connolly was a national organiser from 1909 until his return to Ireland a year later.

**The party also had Eugene Debs, one of the most respected leaders of labour, as presidential candidate.**

By 1912 the Socialist Party had 118,000 members, over 1,000 elected to public office, scores of publications including the *Daily Forward* and *Appeal to Reason* with a circulation of half a million.

The party also had Eugene Debs, one of the most respected leaders of labour,



Debs helped organise 150,000 rail workers into one union, before it was smashed by the bosses' violence and the courts.

# When US socialists scared the bosses

as presidential candidate. For over thirty years he had been in the thick of the class struggle and his dedication is an example to this day. He had learned politics and class loyalty through bitter struggle.

At the age of 19 he joined the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen. Three years later the union was involved in the bitter national rail strike of 1877. The union was virtually smashed and Debs played a major part in rebuilding it. In 1880 he was elected national secretary.

Later, Debs was convinced of the need to unite all rail road workers in one union. In 1893 he left the Brotherhood and founded the American Railway Union. It grew rapidly to 150,000 members including all grades of workers. A year later the union was involved in the Pullman strike.

Official violence and the courts broke the struggle and the American Railway Union. In 1890 the Sherman Anti-Trust Act was passed. Debs and the other strike leaders were the first people successfully prosecuted under the act. On his way to prison Debs quit the Democratic Party and while

inside read Marx.

Debs learned from his mistakes of the past. In 1905 he was one of the founding members of the Industrial Workers of the World. In 1910 he publicly supported over 120,000 workers in Philadelphia out on a four week general strike. This determined attitude won the workers' support. In the 1900 election he won 97,000 votes and in 1904, 420,000.

**The election of 1912 offered great hope for labour. The problem was, which way forward.**

The election of 1912 offered great hope for labour. There was a radical mood sweeping America. The problem was, which political way forward. The majority of unions in the AFL, with nearly 2 million members, supported the Democratic Party. However, in New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia the local union had set up Labour Parties

and across the country there was wide interest in the British Labour Party.

As well as the Democrat, Wilson, former president Teddy Roosevelt stood. When president in 1895, he had said that Debs and other union leaders should be "placed before a stone wall and shot". But under the social pressure he put on the mask of a progressive.

The open candidate of the corporations, Taft, of the Republicans, gained 3.5 million votes. Roosevelt received 4.1 million and Wilson was elected with 6.3 million. Eugene Debs, for socialism, received the support of 901,873 people for a real future.

The votes show the possibility and the lost opportunity for labour. Taft got less than 24% of the vote. Both Roosevelt and Wilson claimed to be friends of Labour. If instead of supporting a "friend of Labour" the AFL had backed a man of Labour, Debs, as their candidate there was a real chance for Labour to at least become the second party if not to win.

The majority of American union leaders to this day have avoided the issue of a

political voice. Many times they have threatened the bosses' parties but never acted. The call for a new party is always put off until tomorrow.

**Build a party of labour**

Today the opportunity again exists to end the twin domination of Democrats and Republicans. Now with Reagan and the crisis in USA of mass unemployment, poverty, and degradation the unions must act. In America 10 million people take cocaine regularly, 30 million are below the poverty line, and real unemployment is around 16 million.

Already some unions have called for a party of labour. Such a party building on the traditions of struggle would win the support of workers, their families, and the other oppressed in society. A movement of this strength would realise the demands that Debs spoke for socialism.

**By Bill Hopwood.**



Trade union leader, Bill Haywood, (centre), freed from trumped-up charge by pressure of workers' protest.



Eugene Debs speaking. In the 1912 elections he got nearly 1 million votes, the highest-ever vote for an American socialist.

# Sri Lanka

## THE SHAM REFERENDUM

The presidential election victory of the United National Party (UNP) candidate JR Jayawardene in Sri Lanka has given him the green light to try to introduce a Bonapartist (military police) dictatorship.

Repression and violence against workers have been followed with plans for a referendum in which the President plans to extend the life of the present parliament for a further six years.

Below we print a letter from the General Secretary of the Marxist workers' party, the Nava Samasamaja Party (NSSP) calling for a campaign for real elections.

The governing UNP leaders have called the referendum as a plebiscite to cancel parliamentary elections and to impose J R Jayawardene as a bonapartist dictator.

They have successfully split the main opposition party, the SLFP, and are desperate to win a majority by all possible means to suppress the remaining vestiges of democratic rights in Sri Lanka.

They are introducing a step which amounts to surreptitiously removing the parliamentary elections under a constitutional facade.

All the kinds of rumours that circulate are an expression of the widespread disbelief of the entire electoral process under the present UNP regime. As we all know, suspicion started with what happened in Jaffna during the last District Development councils elections. Only last April, Mrs Bandaranayake (SLFP leader) gave many reasons why the election process itself is under suspicion.

After going through the presidential election and the aftermath events, the masses are now extremely suspicious. However, there is no substantial and significant evidence to suspect the election machinery used in the recent presidential election machinery.

It is very clear that the UNP regime did everything to disrupt the largest opposition party, using the state machinery.

Presently, the UNP is continuing with its disruptive tactics and has extended its

By Vickramabahu Karunaratne

(General Secretary, Nava Samasamaja Party)

work to the extent of using the emergency to close the major opposition press.

The only way to force an election is to organise an active campaign by the united opposition. It is very clear that JR is not interested in giving a parliamentary election unless he is forced to do so. His reasons for not having parliamentary elections are incredible and shocking. He has said,

"Are we to ensure peace and progress through a stable government or permit a set of political hooligans to enter parliament in large numbers and, while wrecking democratic parliamentary procedures, strengthen themselves to form their Naxalite government at the next (following) general election?" (*Daily News*, page 1, 3.11.82).

On this argument, it is his parliamentary group that should be dissolved immediately. Already quite a few of his MPs and ministers are associated not only with hooliganism but with various despicable crimes.

However, he does not mean criminals or hooligans. What he means are the various forms of radicals ranging from vociferous militants to genuine Marxists.

The sharpening of the political crisis means more and more left militant representatives getting selected to the parliament. This is an inevitable result of the political unrest in the country.

From the side of the bourgeoisie, the parliament is no longer a safety valve but has become a place for oblique representation of mass discontent. Hence it is to be abolished.

JR at the beginning con-



Tanks on the streets of Colombo during the 1980 General Strike.

Photo: MILITANT

tented himself thinking that PR system will eliminate the local tribunes getting elected. That means those who will feel and be guided by mass pressure are eliminated. Now, he is not too sure. Nouveaux Jacobins have invaded even the headquarters of the SLFP. So parliamentary elections cannot be held.

One condition of the general agreement of 1954 on Vietnam was to hold parliamentary elections in South Vietnam by the western powers. Instead the Americans installed an oppressive police-military dictatorship. The argument put forward by the then American President Eisenhower was that if elections were held, the Communist Party would sweep the polls.

Therefore in order to preserve the democracy they installed a military police dictatorship. JR's arguments are identical. However, he is shrewd in trying to show that he got a mandate from the people to do so. That is the meaning of the so-called referendum.

JR always boasted that he got an election in 1977 by arousing the masses against the postponement of elections through sathyagraha (mass struggle), 150 meetings on the same day.

Today it is necessary to launch a genuine mass movement by the combined opposition. This is the only way

to force an election. It has to be truly by a democratic mass agitational movement based on workers and peasants.

### Unite to force elections

Parliamentary elections arrived in Sri Lanka not through the activities of the national Democratic movement. On the contrary all National Congress leaders including JR Jayawardene, opposed the universal franchise in 1927/30. Also it did not arrive here through a referendum.

Parliamentary democracy in Sri Lanka was a result of agitation by organised labour both in Sri Lanka and in Britain. This agitation was supported by democratic youth who rejected the false leadership of National Congress leaders. JR and his class did not contribute an iota of effort towards obtaining parliamentary democracy.

JR is cautiously moving towards Bonapartism. His strength is really the weakness of the opposition. Today in the era of imperialism, the establishment of a conservative Bonapartist dictatorship, either, by abolishing the parliament, or by reducing it to a rubber stamp, is a dangerous gamble.

JR has carefully gone through the annals of

parliamentary intrigues and manoeuvres over the last fifty years. Naturally that has included studying all the weakness of his opponents. He has arranged to take every step towards Bonapartist dictatorship with constitutional legal covering.

We shall unite unconditionally with the other opposition forces to build an active democratic mass movement to force a parliamentary election, whatever the outcome of this mockery. We have to work together to build a solid working class unity based on work place leaders.

We have to work together to mobilise an active youth

movement centred around all campuses. We have to work together to unite active sections of the peasantry. Last but not least we have to work together to draw the Tamil youth away from futile terrorism and towards the path of mass resistance to the pseudo Bonapartist dictatorship.

This is the only realistic method to achieve even a democratic parliamentary election.

We shall continuously agitate for dissolution of the parliament and for the holding of the general election irrespective of the outcome of the referendum.

President J.R. Jayawardene.



## CHILE: Workers

### Protest



Photo S Cagnoni (IFL II)

In a desperate attempt to save their jobs, and as a measure of last resort, 50 workers from what was once the biggest publishing house in Latin America have gone on hunger strike.

On 8 June 250 printers from the Gabriela Minstral publishing house in Santiago, Chile, were dismissed; they were still owed their wages and family allowances since the previous February and had not received their overtime and holiday money from December 1981. For food the strikers and their

families have had to rely for over four months on the common 'soup kitchens' organised by their union and other workers in solidarity action.

For months the workers, with an average of 17 years in the firm, had written and petitioned the government, but to no avail. The publishing house had been state owned until 1976 when the Pinochet regime decided to return it to private hands.

The workers blame the "bad management" of the firm for their present crisis.

Machinery had disappeared and the question now being asked is "where did all that money go to".

Officially, unemployment stands at over 25% at present, though more realistic sources put the figure at between 30%-40%. With only one in six of the unemployed receiving unemployment benefit (which in value is equivalent to one pair of shoes) these workers are determined to fight until the end to defend their lively hoods.

The workers end their let-

ter explaining their present situation: "We believe that alongside our hunger strike, the rest of the working class, have a role that is perhaps more important than our own action, that is to support us in our struggle to show solidarity with us and our families, and to be aware of our battles".

Messages of support, especially by print unions and workers, to be sent to "CONGRA", San Isidro No 264.

# Letters

VIEW? COMMENT? EXPERIENCE?  
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Combat racism

Dear Comrades

It is now ten years since the first Ugandan Asians came to Peterborough, to escape the dictatorship of Idi Amin. Peterborough was the first local authority to take the homeless families and offer a new life for them.

*Panorama*, on the 25 October, showed how the Asians were settling down in Peterborough. It was easy to see that everything wasn't rosy, with death threats to a local community race relations representative, no-go areas for blacks and Asians and an increase in racist attacks in the city.

Since the programme was shown the local press and even the local Labour Party have been playing it down, saying that a few skinheads in a pub, boasting about 'Paki-bashing', doesn't represent the people of Peterborough. That is true, but to pretend racist attacks and no-go areas don't exist is sheer rubbish.

With over 10,000 people out of work and 2,000 school-leavers on the dole locally it is not surprising that some misguided youth have joined the British Movement, seeking a quick 'solution' to the problem of unemployment.

If the labour movement doesn't take up the fight

against racialism in Peterborough, by explaining to youth on the dole queues and the streets the real causes of mass unemployment and bad housing and exposing the lies of the British Movement, then the situation could get worse in a very short time.

Black and white workers must be brought into the labour movement together on the basis of a struggle to transform society—to provide jobs, homes, education and health for all. That is how to permanently remove the cancer of racialism.

Yours fraternally  
Kevin Zignani  
Peterborough LPYS  
(personal capacity)

Asian youth fight back against racial attacks and police harassment, in this case at Newham, East London, where eight youths were arrested after defending a school following attacks on Asian school students. Photo: J. Woulfe (Militant)



## Housing benefit for whom?

Dear comrades

From 22 November, claimants on supplementary benefit shall lose all control over their weekly budgeting for rent if they are living in council accommodation.

Next April, all claimants shall be treated in this way as rented accommodation in the private sector shall be moved out of the responsibility of the DHSS and into the hands of the council. In the future claimants will pay no rent as such.

Many may argue that this will prevent claimants falling into arrears. However, this ignores the real issues. Why do claimants fall into arrears? The answer is simple, no job and a minimal subsistence payment by the state to the upkeep of families once they become unemployed.

The element for rent is often the largest proportion of weekly benefit and as such is often used to pay off expenses that could have otherwise been met by a further claim for a single payment, which they are not aware of.

The increasing burden of the state's 3 million unemployed is a major factor in the introduction of the new Housing Benefit scheme. The government claims that £7 million will be saved with the new scheme.

What they are less candid about is the estimated loss of 2,000 DHSS jobs and 2 million claimants that will be worse off under the new scheme.

What further vicious measures will the government take next to cut the increasing bill to the state for unemployment? The present bill to the state runs at over £18 billion.

Yours fraternally  
Steve Bewick  
Notts

## Workers get wages, bosses get profits

Dear Comrades,

Workers up and down the country are being told that they have to settle for 5-6% increases this year because "the country can't afford more" and that an increase above the rate of inflation, dubiously calculated at 6.8% this month, is totally unreasonable.

However, at a conference of the Institute of Directors held in London the other week, it was revealed that directors' salaries rose by 9-10% this year, while Chief Executives pocketed a neat 13-15%.

"This is quite justified, though," states Sir Walter Goldsmith, the Institute's director general, because total business profits have increased by 25% this year. Quite clearly then as

workers are responsible for inflation, they should have 5% increases, and the bosses being responsible for profits, should receive 15% increases. Heads they win, tails we lose!

Keith McIntyre,  
Strathclyde NALGO.

## No options for school leavers

Dear Comrades,

I am in my fifth year at comprehensive school and as, you will agree, my chances of getting a job when I leave are not very strong, it was with a positively negative attitude that I attended my first careers interview a couple of weeks ago.

The careers officer seemed a bit surprised by my "lack of enthusiasm", but, as she explained, "The majority of school leavers get a job(?) and there are, of course, those YOP schemes."(!)

Then she went on to suggest that at the end of the interview, when I had described some of my hobbies, she could point out some jobs that would "probably suit" me. I explained that a lot of my free time was taken up with LPYS activities; 'Oh! I've gone over to the SDP myself.'

"Are you a *Militant* supporter?" came the prompt reply. When the question was answered in the affirmative, my careers officer said "Oh never mind, you'll

## Management's demarcation dispute

Dear Editor

I am sure that many comrades are familiar with the argument that demarcation disputes between workers have led to the downfall of British industry. Well, an incident at a local engineering factory may throw a different light on this issue.

The workforce had been put on a 3 day week. Even so, there was still not enough work to go round, so some workers had to sit about most of the day doing little or no work. They were not allowed to speak to their workmates as this, they were told, would cause a distraction and reduce production!

Sitting quietly on the benches all day proved too much for these workers so they asked their manager if they could paint the benches free of charge. (There would be a further saving to the bosses as they would not have to pay for contractors doing it.)

Not surprisingly, their manager thought this was an excellent idea and referred it

to Personnel for authorisation.

The Personnel manager also thought it was a great idea...unfortunately the manager responsible for the upkeep of the benches did not agree! So the workers were forced to continue sitting on the benches, quietly.

It only goes to show that demarcation disputes can arise as a 'defence mechanism' by managers as well as workers; which highlights the complete inability of private ownership to sustain, let alone develop, the present means of production.

Only under social ownership, with workers' control and management, will industry be able to fulfil its massive potential.

Yours fraternally  
John Merrell  
Leicester

## Selling our ideas

Dear Comrades

On Saturday morning, as usual, I trudged along half asleep to Sittingbourne's shopping forum in order to sell *Militant* (both the paper

and our ideas). Before I had time to wake up we made our first sale—to a pensioner.

To my surprise he then pronounced he was a Marxist and had been in the Labour Party for over 50 years. He explained he had not turned up to any Labour Party meetings because he thought the political content was lacking, so he was eager to support the ideas of *Militant*.

We convinced him that he should go to Labour Party meetings to put forward the ideas of Marxism and we noted his name and address. Who said Marxism would put off workers—it is the concrete ideas of *Militant* that will recruit new members, not defunct right wing policies.

This meeting put our sellers in fine voice to shout slogans and we quickly sold 9 more papers.

Yours fraternally  
Pat Ursell  
Sittingbourne  
Kent

# GET YOUR XMAS CARDS NOW

Following the tremendous success of last year's cards we are again offering a set of Xmas cards featuring original Alan Hardman cartoons.

The set comprises of six cards and envelopes and prices are as follows:  
1-5 sets £1.25 per set (including p&p)

For resale:  
10 sets £5 (plus £1.25 p&p)  
20 sets £10 (plus £1.60 p&p)  
30 sets £15 (plus £2 p&p)  
40 sets £20 (plus £2 p&p)

Cash must be sent with every order.



Send to Eddie McParland, Revolution Graphics, 81 Troughton Rd, Charlton, London SE7. All cheques/ Postal Orders to be made payable to Revolution Graphics

# YOU'RE MAD IF YOU BUY THESE CARDS

## Solidarity in action

Dear Comrades,

Solidarity—a nice word if it's not put into practice, but a nasty one if it is. 'Solidarity' as a union in Poland is a great thing. It means people standing up for themselves against corruption, fighting bureaucratic dictatorships, thinking for themselves.

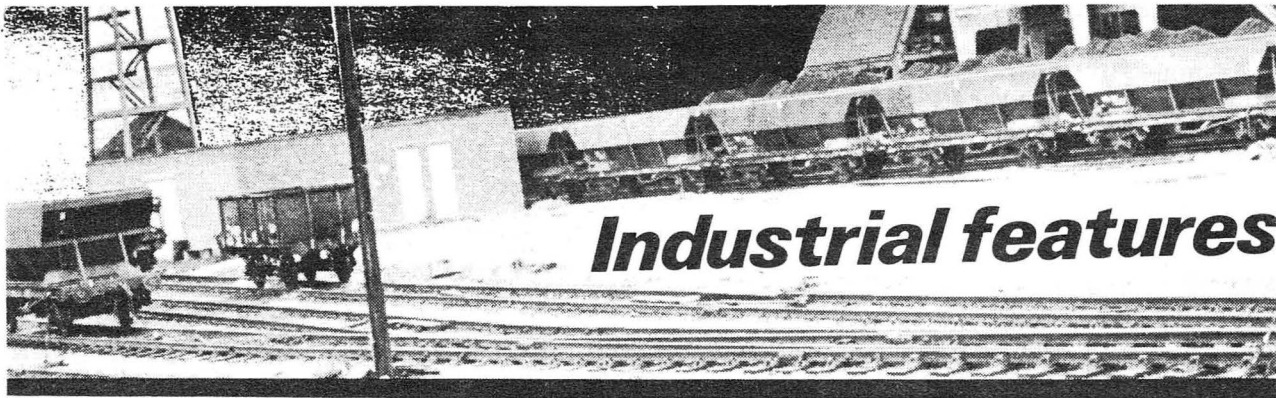
But in this country, it means 'bands of activists trying to cripple a nation', 'bring it down to the level of no return', etc.

No my friends solidarity means, and I quote, the state of being solidly united in support of common interests, rights and morality. In fact we are doing the same in this country as they are in Poland, but they haven't turned the guns on us yet!

Remember in Poland they are fighting for the right to keep a free trade union movement. And we must fight for the right to keep trade unions free.

Fraternally yours  
Henryk Z Ciesielski,  
Notts.

Yours fraternally,  
Tracey McCraughey,  
Swansea LPYS.



## Industrial features

# LEADING FROM THE FRONT

## 'Militant' interview Kevin Roddy president of CPSA

### In the next year the Civil and Public Services Association faces its greatest challenges in its history.

A major fight on staffing with DHSS management in Birmingham, (see page 14) a crucial test of strength in the 1983 pay round, campaigns to re-affiliate to the Labour Party, and to stem the cancerous growth of Tory "privatisation".

These tasks face the Broad-Left leadership, and the union's first left President, both elected in May 1982.

Kevin Roddy, a clerical officer from Washington Child Benefit Centre, beat the right-wing candidate in the annual election, while the union elected a Broad Left leadership including seven supporters of the newspaper *Militant*.

The new leadership has meant a considerable change in the way the union is run, and members prepared to fight alongside the rank and file.

There have been real successes in a very difficult period for all trade unionists, facing a government determined to lay the axe to the civil service. There have been hundreds of small disputes showing the bitter determination of the union membership to fight and noticeably Kevin Roddy has been on the picket lines of practically all these disputes.

At the Royal Ordnance Factory Birtley for example, in the Ministry of Defence, not normally noted for militancy, members struck against management's attempts to worsen hours and conditions, and won a resounding victory.

### Management onslaught

In Bargoed CPSA members in the DHSS struck for three weeks this summer when management tried to transfer a member from one office to another on the basis of an artificial surplus which gave the totally unfounded impression of workers with no work to do. The principle of no compulsory transfers has been maintained in the face of a management onslaught.

On 15 September, in DHSS offices in Birmingham a spontaneous strike erupted because of manage-

ment's refusal to provide adequate staff to cope with the demands of the job.

Over the whole country, the Tories' determination to cut the numbers of civil servants regardless of workload has led to the already creaky Supplementary Benefit system giving out cries of alarm, with strikes in Oxford, Bury, Birmingham, south London, Chelsea, and elsewhere.

I asked Kevin Roddy about the strikes at DHSS offices in Birmingham and Oxford.

"Our members in Birmingham, came out on strike spontaneously, and the Left leadership of CPSA in DHSS immediately aided the strike materially and with moral support.

### Intolerable conditions in DHSS

"These disputes clearly show the depth of feeling of our members about their intolerable conditions. When their action forced the government to come forward with an offer of 45 temporary staff at Birmingham and 7 at Oxford, we thought at first that this was something of a minor victory and it would be better to get this under our belt and prepare for a stronger fight later.

"But we don't have to suffer the pressure that these members do, and they heavily rejected the offer.

"From the beginning we were clear there was going to be no bureaucratic imposition from above on CPSA members and we made it clear to the local strike committee that if they disagreed with the SEC position they would be able to put their point of view to the strikers. The ultimate decision had to be theirs.

"When the settlement was rejected, the SEC met and decided that it was vital to work for a one day national strike to rally support and prepare for further action. It was also recommended that CPSA members should withdraw from the emergency centres paying out claimants' benefits"

PS. When the SEC recommendations were first put to the NEC they were unfortunately turned down, though by a very narrow majority. However when the recommendation was even more overwhelmingly rejected by the members a mo-



Above: Kevin Roddy. Photo: Militant  
Below: strikers in the Birmingham DHSS dispute. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)



What is work like in a factory, office, shop or shipyard? How have strikes been conducted, successfully or otherwise? How does a union activist conduct his or her work?

These and other issues we hope to feature here. But it is vital that our readers participate in producing these features. Why not write to *Militant* about your union organisation, your workplace or issues discussed among your workmates?

tion from *Militant* supporter Kevin McHugh the DHSS Section chairman for escalation was unanimously passed (see page 14)—*Militant*.

"CPSA is a young union with many battles ahead of it. In one year the left does not expect to remedy all of the accumulated problems of the years.

"But it has been the best travelled NEC on record. More branches have been visited by NEC members this year than ever before. Our union is moving to the left. In other Civil Service unions, notably the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, the same process is taking place as civil servants realise that their fights cannot be conducted on a purely industrial level."

**Militant: What do you think would make a serious pay claim for 1983?**

KR "I think the first priority should be the low paid; the bulk of our members earn between £50 and £70. Something must be done this year.

"I have seen the motions for the special pay conference. The National Executive Committee (NEC) has put down a motion calling for a £12 flat rate increase and an £85 per week basic wage. I think that this would make a serious claim.

"We want a united claim and since some of the other unions' aspirations would not be met with a flat rate, I would concede a percentage element in the claim which would obviously be greater than the rate of inflation".

**M: How do you intend to achieve that goal?**

"We intend to campaign amongst the members around the pay claim to be agreed at the Special Pay Conference. We need maximum unity of the Civil Service Unions. The present NEC will offer a strong positive lead over industrial action if it becomes necessary."

**"What is happening on Labour Party affiliation?**

"Conference this year agreed we should campaign for a 'yes' vote in a ballot to affiliate to the Labour party. Officers of the union have met the certification officer and there are elaborate mechanical arrangements to be made before we can go to the membership on a postal ballot.

"The union's 1983 Conference will have to agree these arrangements. Meanwhile we are raising the question in branches, and there have been letters and articles in the Union's journal. The campaign will intensify by summer ready for a ballot by Autumn".

**M: What is the future for the Broad Left in this union?**

"All the principled policies of the union are those of the Broad Left, which has groups in most areas of Britain meeting regularly to discuss important areas of concern for members. There is an enormous scope for increase in the size of the Broad Left.

"The Broad Left has gained respect from whole new areas recently. I've visited members in HMSO and

Ministry of Defence where I've been painted in the past as the devil incarnate, but our ideas win support, and the fact that we back our members.

"The right-wing of CPSA is as treacherous and rotten as anywhere, they have got nothing to learn from leaders of the EETPU or the AUEW. They have lost the debate in the CPSA a long while back and are left with no weapons but recourse to the courts and the propaganda of the Tory press.

"From time to time they will try to play the "Red Scare" card but that fails more and more regularly. The Union's policies are going to be the policies of the Broad Left because they are based on finding solutions to members problems. A Broad Left leadership will put those policies into effect".

**M: On your travels what do staff think of this government's treatment of them?**

"In Departments like Ministry of Defence where you would think, given the priorities of this government, our members might be having an easy time of it, they are desperately worried about job cuts and falling living standards. Ironically, this government elected on promises of higher defence spending, are threatening our members' jobs in the MOD.

"In the Post Office and British Telecom our members are alarmed at the Government's drive to cut staff and worsen conditions preparatory to privatisation.

"In areas like DHSS and D of E, despite the ever increasing level of misery and humiliation in society with more than 4 million on the dole, the Government are actually attempting to cut staff. In all of the smaller government Departments and other areas we cover members have similar worries. That is why the union is becoming radicalised, and we are determined to fight all these attacks."

**M: What steps has the NEC taken to seriously take up the problems of women members?**

"Over three quarters of CPSA members are women. We have established a women's committee to tackle the problems of sexual harassment, promotion opportunities and adequate child care facilities for working women. Women's issues aren't a 'minority' question. Women trade unionists aren't working for pin money. Obviously they will be the core of any national campaigns on jobs and wages".

**M: What is the possibility of CPSA/SCPS mergers?**

"I am in favour of one big union for the civil service but with separate branches so that the lowest paid workers do not feel intimidated by higher officers but certainly we should all be in one union. The leaderships of both unions will be putting the principle to their conferences next May. Neither union can succeed in a national campaign in isolation from the other. Merger isn't just a possibility, its a necessity"

# Industrial Reports

## RAVENSCRAIG

### Bloodletting must stop



Scottish Triple Alliance demonstration to defend jobs in London last month. Tommy Brennan is in the foreground on the right of the picture. Photo: D Doran

**The threat of closure of the giant Ravenscraig Steelworks in Motherwell, and the consequent knock-on effect on industry and employment have brought the crisis in the steel industry to the minds of all Scottish workers. Jackie Galbraith spoke to Tommy Brennan, ISTC Convenor in Ravenscraig.**

**What do you think of BSC threats to close Ravenscraig?**

Total madness! It's complete lunacy to close the plant. Ravenscraig is one of the most modern steelworks in Europe—in fact the BSC have just recently completed a £400 million investment programme between Ravenscraig and Hunterston. Earlier this year the plant was operating at record productivity levels, and yet they are talking about closing it down! And once the furnaces stop burning, that's it—finished!

**What about BSC proposals for partial closure?**

'Partial' closure to them means 2,000 jobs gone, and this would in turn mean reducing the two-blast furnace operation of the plant to one blast furnace. This would leave the plant totally uneconomic, a major step towards implementing complete closure—it is major surgery!

**What would the effects of closure be on the local community?**

If Ravenscraig closed, the whole of Scotland would suffer. Immediately, 8,100 jobs would go, and within a matter of months this figure would soar to over 15,000-10,000 in North Lanarkshire alone. The unemployment rate in many areas would rise to over 30%, creating 'ghost towns'. Jobs would tumble in and outside the steel industry—even previously safe and secure jobs would be at risk. Added to that everybody in Motherwell and Wishaw would immediately be affected by a massive rates in-

crease, as Ravenscraig pays £3½ million to Motherwell District Council in rates.

**What about the effects on industry?**

Closure would mean that there would be no steel industry left in Scotland to feed manufacturing industry. Immediately the risk of closure would affect Gartcosh and Hunterston.

**To put it bluntly, closure would be so devastating on the economy of the West of Scotland, that within a short time, it would be hard to see any future at all for the survival of an industrial base in Scotland.**

**How successful has your campaign been so far?**

Since the threat was first disclosed in September, my union, the Scottish TUC and the Triple Alliance have organised a series of meetings, conferences and demonstrations involving workers from all sections of industry. On 26 October over 1,000 Scottish workers took part in a lobby of Parliament organised by the Triple Alliance—Thatcher didn't even have the guts to see us! Just over a week ago, the STUC held a conference, which was attended by over 400 delegates and visitors. It was a very good conference—the mood was one of fightback.

**Scotland is waiting with baited breath**

**Have there been any obstacles to your campaign?**

In some parts of the industry the BSC's bribing tactic of high redundancy payments is working to an extent. The BSC are going over the heads of the union officials direct to the workers, and threatening that if they choose to fight closures then their redundancy entitlements would be reduced. And, although most of the Scottish press oppose closure, Scotland's biggest selling daily newspaper, the *Daily Record*, has come out in favour of the workers accepting redundancy. Apart from that we have the support of all sections of Scottish society. All of Scotland is waiting with bated breath for the outcome of our struggle.

**Do you think nationalisation is working under its present management?**

Nationalisation is a great thing, and has a lot to offer, but not as it stands just now. The nationalised industries should be run for the workers by the workers. Workers' participation in the steel industry has been a sham—until we control at least 51% of the management, workers' participation is a myth.

**Would you support the call for a 24-hour general strike?**

I would totally support any call from the TUC or Triple Alliance for a 24-hour General Strike, but let's not kid ourselves on. Unless such a strike was co-ordinated and organised properly, then it would only have the effect of demoralising the workforce. A well-organised 24-hour General Strike with full participation from the workers wouldn't take long in bringing the Tories down.

**If closure is announced will the workforce fight it?**

If the BSC try to close the 'Craig' they will have a hard time of it! I am 100% confident that the workers in the 'Craig' would be united in their determination to fight the closure to the bitter end,

with the active support of huge sections of the Scottish working class. History shows that people who have put up a fight have always come through—look at the Upper Clyde Shipbuilders in the early 1970s, the women in the Lee Jeans factory, and countless others—Ravenscraig will be no different; we will come through!

**Any final comments?**

All that I would do is appeal to all steel workers throughout the country to fight to defend their jobs and their industry. Don't sell your job! By doing that you would be depriving the next generation of young workers of their right to a job. The men in Ravenscraig know that—they are not fighting just for their own jobs, but for the future of young people in the area.

**The labour movement must fight for the future of youth**

As this interview was written yet another 400 redundancies have been announced by the BSC in Scotland. Workers at the Craigneuk steelworks in Motherwell were told their workforce was going to be cut in half. Union leaders have said they will not accept redundancies; Gerry Hayhoe, the union leader, said, "We will refuse to have discussions with management on redundancies."

At the same time as this was disclosed figures on youth unemployment in Strathclyde were also released. Sixty per cent of 16-year-olds and 17-year-olds in Strathclyde now have no permanent job, and a staggering 71% of youth in Motherwell, the steel town, are not employed in full-time work. The Glasgow *Evening Times* said, "The youngsters are suffering now. The whole nation will pay a heavy price for that in the 1990s"

## BBC DISPUTE

One story BBC TV has not reported, is the BBC electricians dispute over the working of electrical devices. At a meeting at Congress House (17 November) the TUC ruled that the dispute was between management and the EETPU members, and not between the EETPU and the Association of Broadcasting Staffs, as the management had tried to suggest.

70 EETPU members have been locked out and suspended without pay after refusing to work a blacked studio, and altogether another 250 EETPU members are on strike.

The dispute arose when management forced the EETPU members to give up their job security by allowing NATTKE and ABS members of television unions to do their jobs. This, combined with the new technology, means that previously skilled jobs can now be done by other workers.

Office workers and junior management are now acting

as scab labour in an attempt to force acceptance from the workers. BBC management are using Michael Edwards-style tactics to try and break the unions so as at a later date to be able to bring in redundancies.

The dispute has gone to ACAS and the TUC disputes committee. There has been an overtime ban introduced nationally, and the outside broadcasting contractors for the BBC are also supporting the dispute.

There was also an unusual show of support live on TV, when a member of the Polish 'Solidarity' movement stopped the interviewer half way through his first question by saying "I am only on this programme tonight because the pickets outside the studio have given a special dispensation for me to tell you about Poland and Solidarity, we support the workers on strike..."

**Reports by Pat Edlin and Brian Blake**

## Birmingham DHSS

The Civil and Public Services Association (CPSA) are to step up industrial action over the gross understaffing in Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) offices in Birmingham and Oxford.

All the Birmingham DHSS offices have been closed in the past week while claimants are paid at emergency payment offices.

The new plans are to:

(a) escalate strike action, with proposals to extend the strike to Coventry and the other Oxford offices;

(b) to withdraw members of CPSA and the Society of Civil and Public Servants (SCPS) from the emergency centres in Birmingham and Oxford. Both of these are to increase pressure on management and to prevent them from undermining the dispute.

In some offices, management and non-union members have crossed picket lines so in the offices where this has been a problem, a

mass picket will be organised. The levy and financial aid collected in the DHSS and the rest of the civil service is to be intensified as is the publicity to all union members.

A one-day strike throughout DHSS in both unions will be staged on Friday 3 December which must receive full support. There will also be a special meeting of all DHSS delegates at the CPSA special pay conference on 9 December to discuss the possibility of all out strikes extending to other parts of the department.

Staff in DHSS face a huge workload as the crisis puts more and more people on the dole queue. These proposals, put forward by *Militant* supporters in the DHSS Section Executive and National Executive of the CPSA must be used to force the Department to ease these intolerable conditions.

see also interview with Kevin Roddy, page 13

## GEC OSRAM

About 800 workers, mostly women have walked out in all out pay strike at GEC Osram in Shaw, Oldham. They have been negotiating since July and the offer of £3.75 on a £67.89 basic was upped to £4.50 by the huge multinational which has a

full order book.

The walk-out was workers' angry reaction to 48 workers being sent home after an overtime ban and work to rule. The strike is solid on the shopfloor with only staff workers going in.

## USDAW elections

USDAW members are under attack from all sides. Poverty wages, threat of redundancies and poor working conditions. The present leadership, however, have proved themselves totally incapable of solving even one of these problems. The opportunity of electing a fighting leadership is open to all USDAW members now.

Jeff Price is standing for the presidency of the union, pledged to ending the scandal of low pay for shop

workers. Go to your USDAW branch meeting and nominate Jeff Price for President and help to equip USDAW with a leadership determined to help the ordinary members. For nominating details contact Jeff Price on 0632 730861.

**By George Williamson**  
(Eastern Divisional Councillor)



# Industrial Reports

## Chester NHS workers harassed

## by police

The Hospitals in Chester have been in the forefront of the struggle during the NHS pay campaign but now the dispute is being overshadowed because some of the leading trade unionists in the area have been arrested and harassed by the police.

By Dave Clark

(Deeside TUC) spoke to a COHSE member in Chester.

The police were called in when a nursing officer found what the NHS workers believe to be a clerical discrepancy in the drugs book on one ward in the West Cheshire Hospital. This was reported to the management and two nurses on the ward were reprimanded and given a first warning.

However, the nursing officer then went to the police alleging that there was a conspiracy by the management and the union, COHSE, to cover up the theft. Four nurses who were on the ward were arrested and charged with the theft of eight dextrose amphetamine tablets. The nurses claim that forty tablets were provided, thirty-two returned to the pharmacy, and the eight alleged-

ly missing cannot be found because they were the ones which were swallowed by the patient.

Since then the police have alleged that the unions were conspiring to cover up the theft and have raided both the COHSE and NUPE offices, smashing the doors in to gain access, and taken away documents from the offices.

All the four nurses, who were arrested on the ward as they were going off duty, have complained that they

were ill treated in custody. One was held for 27½ hours and no provision was made for her child to be taken care of. When her husband visited the police station to see her, he was arrested as well. Another was stripped to her underwear and sat in a room with two male police officers.

The nurses were told that if they didn't sign statements they would be charged with obstructing the course of justice. The police raided their houses and took away items. When the union solicitor tried to gain access to them he was not allowed to see them. Whilst in custody they were repeatedly questioned and taunted and after they were released one of the girls needed medical treatment for shock.

The police have charged one of them, Janice Ramage, a COHSE activist, with the additional theft of 1½ lbs of butter (not 108 lbs as all the local press mis-

quoted it) and some bones from the kitchen. Later Janice was re-arrested for allegedly intimidating witnesses and told that if she went on the premises of the West Cheshire Hospital she would be arrested again. The police broke into Janices' car looking for evidence; the houses of the four nurses are being watched by the police and policemen have been haunting the corridors of the hospital, photographing union displays on the notice boards and "carrying on their investigations".

Despite these intensive investigations a fifth nurse who was on the ward when the tablets allegedly went missing, has not been interviewed by the police despite her willingness to talk to them.

In fact the police harassment has been so blatant that the National Council for Civil Liberties think there is a sufficient case to take action against the police and a

top policeman from London has been sent to investigate the way the local police conducted the enquiry.

The management have now taken the chance to implement a "non-negotiable" white paper and have informed the nursing students that they will be required to work a five day week instead of a three and a half day week. Obviously, the question is how will the shift system be able to work unless the rest of the nursing staff is on a five day week and so these proposals are seen as the first step in a wholesale revision of terms and conditions at the hospital. COHSE are now calling a ballot of the nursing students to see if they will accept a five day week.

The management are also proposing to split the hospital into higher grade and lower grade, so creating a two-tier standard of care within the hospital itself. Whatever happens in the national pay claim, it is obvious that there will still be the need for action on a local basis, like in Chester, against police harassment, victimisation, threats of redundancies and privatisation of canteen, laundry facilities etc.

The very existence of the unions inside the hospitals is also threatened by the present police intimidation in Chester and so the activists who have been arrested must be defended by the unions both locally and nationally.

## EASTWOOD STRIKE, BELFAST

The reasons for the Eastwood workers going on strike, may seem out of date to many people, because it is not for higher wages or shorter hours, but, for 'union recognition'.

For six weeks, the workers of Eastwoods have been on the picket line, despite appalling weather and severe lack of finance, but there is one thing that keeps their determination high, and that is the, "tremendous union solidarity shown by the workers of Northern Ireland in their support for the strike."

Fifty-two union branches including: B.O.C. who refused to supply Eastwoods with oxygen; Shell workers who refused to supply fuel; Young Socialists and NUPE, members who helped out with the pickets, and many others who actively and

Paul Quinn  
Twinbrook Young  
Socialists

financially helped out and supported the strike. This together with the successful turning away or blacking of Eastwoods input and export scrap, has left the ten scabs with nothing to do but brush up, and the clerical staff doodling on their forms.

In one incident scrap was smuggled out at night and sent to Mackies, an engineering firm. As soon as strikers from Eastwoods contacted workers in Mackies, the scrap was immediately

blacked and set to one side. The contractor involved in the action has since been blacked by the unions.

At the last meeting on Saturday 20 November, the management offer was to recognise both the TGWU and AUEW unions, together with union procedure on redundancies.

This is a major step forward and can be seen as a victory for the workers. But, there is still one demand that has not yet been met. And that is the reinstatement of the eleven workers who were sacked. Eastwoods, instead of giving back their jobs, offered £800 between them.

The workers will be meeting on Wednesday 25 November to discuss this offer, but are determined that they will win this strike.

## Arlington House

Transport and General Workers Union members, are continuing their bitter struggle at the Arlington House Men's Hostel in Camden Town, North London.

The owners, Rowton Hotels, have won a court case to get the forty-one strikers evicted from their rooms in the hostel.

The strikers, however, are still determined to win and have called for a mass picket outside Arlington House for Friday November 26, from early in the morning, in order to stop any moves to evict

them. Last week, two strikers were arrested for obstruction while picketing the Grand Hotel, Bloomsbury, also owned by Rowton Hotels.

Following Camden Council's decision to serve an enforcement notice on Rowton Hotels to upgrade the accommodation in Arlington House, Rowton Hotels have challenged the legality of this move by the council, further demonstrating their disregard for the tenants or the staff. Showing how homes for working class people are at the mercy of profits, Rowtons have apparently stated that they wish to

close Arlington House. (profits pre-tax 1981 £280,503) because the cost of improvements would "make it difficult for the parent company to maintain current dividend levels distributed to its shareholders".

Ian Pollock  
(Hampstead LPYS)

●  
Mass picket  
Arlington House,  
Friday  
26 November.  
Early Start!

## Defend the fire service

A Whitehall expenditure group (the officials who translate government expenditure plans into numbers of jobs to be lost and services to be reduced) met earlier this year.

They estimated that there would have to be a 20% reduction in the strength of the fire service over the next two years.

This reduction arises out of the obligation by local authority employers to pay firemen index-linked pay settlements. Thus the gap between local government expenditure forecasts and that of central government will widen each year by the extent to which the index-linked award exceeds the "general guidelines" set by the government. This creates an obvious problem for local authorities trying to work within government set cash limits.

This year the government are trying to overcome the problem by taking money back from firemen through

increased pension contributions.

The increased contributions will give no increase in benefits and is a clear attack on pay and conditions of firemen. It is no coincidence that the government suggested an increase of 4% in contributions at a time when the pay formula was expected to give a rise of 8%, the difference being 4% and nicely in line with government guidelines for the public sector.

In fact the pay formula has only given 7.5% mostly as certain sections, such as the health workers, have been bravely fighting for a decent wage and have yet to come to an agreement this year.

This will be reflected in next year's increase, but will mean going a full year with less than what should have been received.

Unlike other matters affecting the pay and conditions of the fire service, pension contributions are not a matter for negotiation on the National Joint Council (the governing body of the fire

service involving employers and unions), but can be imposed upon local authorities by the Home Office.

The response by the executive of the Fire Brigades Union has been to seek more time to consider the Home Office report. This may act as a stalling device, but at the same time gives credibility to the arguments of the Home Office. The FBU executive should reject them outright showing it up for what it is—an attack on the pay and conditions of firemen, and a renegeing on the 1978 pay formula.

Many union branches have already passed resolutions calling for immediate industrial action if the proposals are implemented. This example needs to be followed by the rest of the union and most of all by the executive if we are to successfully challenge this attack on our living standards.

By Dale  
Quinlivan  
(FBU, Wigan)

## FREEMAN'S PICKETS POISONED

After over fourteen weeks on strike, the Freemans picket have suffered threats, abuse, physical assault and criminal damage to their caravan (see Militant 19 November).

They have now been poisoned.

On 19 November, stewards Pearl Hughes and Audrey Warren entered the pickets' hut to make a cup of tea. Seconds later they staggered out choking and unable to breathe.

A chemical substance had been poured on the floor the previous night, almost certainly a chemical that can be used to fumigate and clean chicken houses. Pearl and Audrey were taken to hospital and are still suffer-

ing from headaches and chest and throat pains two days after the incident.

The fire brigade were called to clear away the chemical although at the time of writing it is still not safe to go near the hut. However, despite this latest outrage the strikers remain firm and confident, and support is continuing.

On 18 November a delegation of miners visited the picket line and promised to seek support for the strikers in the Welsh valleys. One good point of the affair was that contact has now been established with the FBU locally from whom solidarity and support can now be expected.

It is also hoped to organise mass pickets of Young Socialists from the West Country and surrounding areas too. Messages of support and finance should be sent to: Pearl Hughes, 19 Knights Way, Newent Glos.

By John Ewers  
Gloucester CLP,  
personal capacity.

BROAD LEFT FOR RAILWAY WORKERS  
National Rally "For a fighting NUR leadership". Saturday 11 December, 12 noon. Hampden Community Centre, Ossulton St, London NW 1 (by Euston Station).

# Militant

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## HEALTH DISPUTE... 'We can still win'

To add insult to injury the Tories are now threatening health workers with no pay rise at all.

By Alistair Tice  
 (NUPE Hull General Hospital, personal capacity)

Unless we accept their derisory and divisive pay offers by 31 March, the end of this financial year, then we are told we will not get any increase.

This blatant intimidation shows Thatcher's and Fowler's callous disregard for the plight of over a million low-paid workers. For seven months these workers have waged a

magnificent struggle for a decent wage—a struggle that has caught the imagination of the whole labour movement.

But the Tories' new threat may prove to be the last straw. Their so-called 'improved offer' is no improvement on the money available for this year, and only an ex-

tra half-a-per-cent for next year. And because the government will not centrally fund all the rise, then up to 50,000 NHS jobs may go over the next two years.

When added to the threats of privatisation the Tories are clearly set on wreaking havoc on our health service. Most key groups of health workers who have been taking selective action for the last weeks and months have now returned to work. There is a mood of bitter anger and frustration at the Tories' intransigence, but also an anticipation that there will be a clear stand by our union leaders against the offers.

NUPE's executive have already recommended an all-out strike with emergency cover only. But a recommendation alone is not enough.

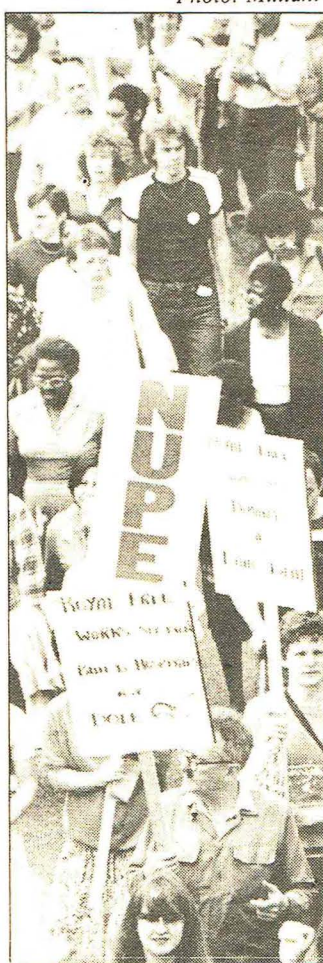


Photo: Militant

If our leaders are serious in their belief that, even at this late stage, we can still win a decent offer, then they must immediately campaign up and down the country to convince the membership of their new-found determination and resolve, and instil confidence that victory can be achieved.

### Accident and emergency cover only

A campaign must be taken up in every hospital, health authority and region to secure rejection of the offers and support for an all-out strike. It is a complete abdication of leadership for NALGO to make no recommendation whatsoever, and COHSE's executive are wrong to leave their recommendation until immediately before their special conference in December, even if they are likely "to follow NUPE's lead".

The leadership of all the

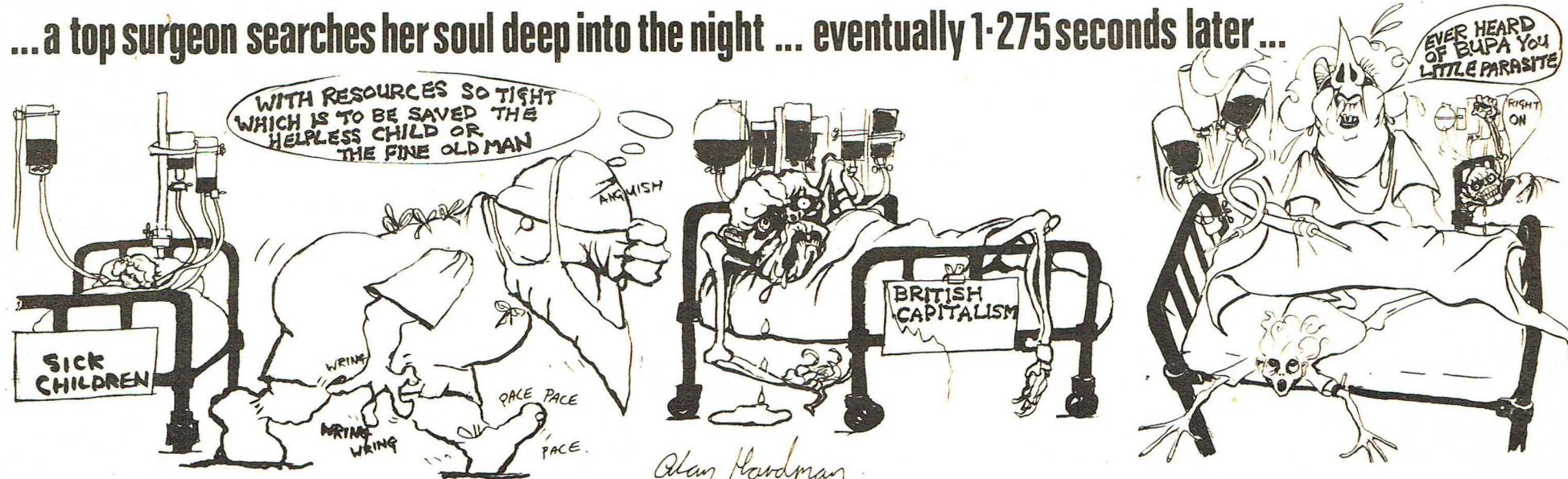
unions must immediately come out against these offers and begin preparing for an all-out strike with accident and emergency cover only. The TUC Health Service Committee must set a date early in January so that if the offers are rejected, and the Tories refuse to substantially increase the money, an all-out strike will be declared.

In the meantime the Health Union leaders must urgently meet Len Murray to demand that the TUC organises active support from the rest of the trade union movement, through a one-day 24-hour general strike with on-going sympathy strike action in key industries, particularly the private sector.

Preparations must also be made to link up with the local authority and water workers who may move in to dispute over pay early next year.

In this way, the health workers will feel confident that at last our leaders really mean business and that they have a worked out strategy for concerted action to defeat the Tories and win the full claim.

... a top surgeon searches her soul deep into the night ... eventually 1-275 seconds later ...



## EXPULSIONS

Continued from page one

The proposals that were before the NEC were those contained in a document drawn up by General Secretary, Jim Mortimer (see centre pages, 8 and 9) and were agreed to by 15 votes to 8, after some amendments. The NEC now has before it a notice of motion to be taken at the meeting in December or January declaring the 'Militant Tendency' "ineligible for affiliation to the Party", in other words proscribing it.

No proceedings are being initiated against right-wing groups and organisations in the Party. No plans are being drawn up to expel the editorial board of any right-wing newspaper or right-wing publicists. The five members of the editorial board, however, with 121 years of Party membership between them, will now face formal expulsion proceedings, against the wishes of even their own CLPs.

Those Prospective Parliamentary candidates who support the ideas of Militant will be investigated by Walworth Road. The original proposal, that they be asked to "give an undertaking forthwith that they

will not promote the Militant Tendency" was withdrawn, but in its place the right wing insisted that any past or present links with the Militant be investigated and the PPCs' replies considered. Tony Benn, it was reported, pointed out that Denis Healey had once been a member of the Communist Party but his past and present connections will not be investigated.

John Evans, opposing the amendment, was reported to have said that the measure smacked of "retroactive thought legislation", and the majority of Party members would agree. Yet he still voted for the substantive final motion, i.e. the acceptance of the document. The NEC are not making any attempts to investigate the links between right-wing MPs and businesses, so why should good socialist candidates be subject to inquisitions?

This McCarthyite motion was carried by only 12 votes to 11, opposed by Michael Foot, Neil Kinnock, Tony Benn, John Evans, Frank Allaun, Laurence Coates, Judith Hart, Jo Richardson, Tom Sawyer, Dennis Skinner and Audrey Wise. Unfortunately, Eric Heffer had left the meeting at this stage, for "urgent parliamentary

business" or something similar. With chairman McCluskie having stated, "This really is a witch-hunt", the amendment would probably have been lost if Eric Heffer had been present.

Other proposals dealing with the LPYS, as well as those dealing with the full-time employees of Militant, were shelved for the moment, but not dropped altogether.

The overall result means that for the first time since the 1950s and despite a clear conference decision in 1973 dropping the proscribed list, the NEC are introducing restrictions on the democratic rights, legitimate activities and the views of ordinary Labour Party members.

The introduction of proscription would leave the right-wing NEC open-ended powers to expel not five, but hundreds of Party members who they deem to be "members" of the Militant Tendency. Some on the right wing of the Party have already gone on record as being in favour of the expulsion of hundreds.

The purge will not stop with Militant. It will grow to involve other left groups in the Party. The NEC, incredibly, voted to not con-

sider Militant's application to register.

If the issue of the 'Register' had been raised in an honest way, if the Party membership had known unambiguously that it would lead to the reintroduction of proscriptions and expulsions, then it would not have had a majority at the conference.

The 'Register' has been used as a means of pulling the wool over the eyes of the rank and file. All along, the right wing have wanted a witch-hunt. But the rank and file of the Labour Party have not yet had the final say. The right wing must not be allowed to get away with it. There is still time to force the NEC to drop its witch-hunt and turn its attention to the Tories and the forthcoming election.

The 27 November conferences must be a starting point for a mass campaign that is taken to every corner of the labour movement. The ranks of the Party must be aroused to the danger faced by an internal civil war, by expulsions and witch-hunts; their voice must ring out loud and clear—No expulsions, no restriction of the LPYS, no hounding left-wing candidates, drop the witch-hunt and fight the Tories!

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