

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

Broadgreen

## A Socialist Victory

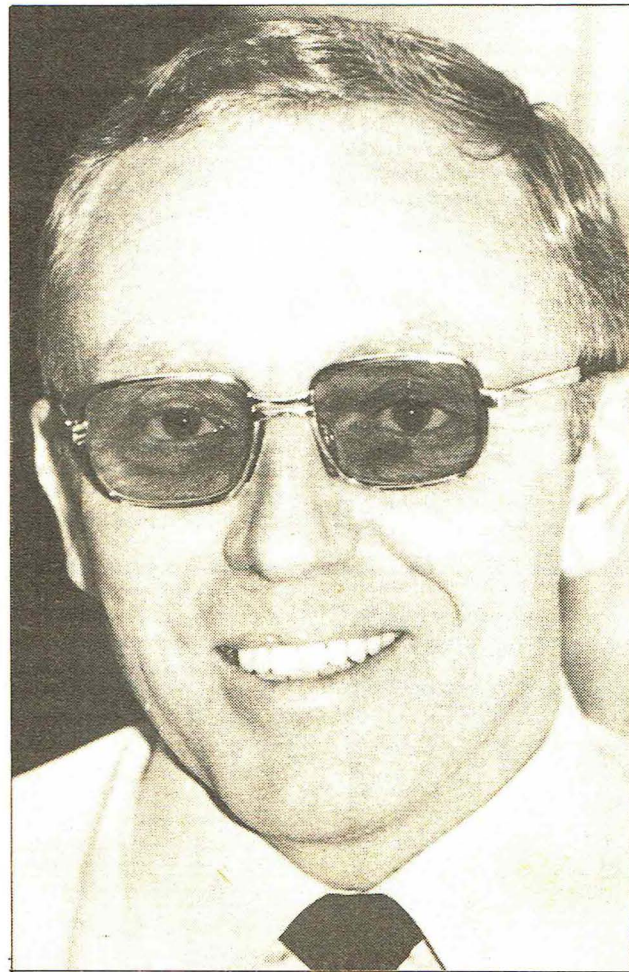


Photo: Militant

Terry Fields, Labour MP for Broadgreen on a 4% swing to Labour

The workers of Merseyside provided one of the few cheers of election night when Liverpool Broadgreen was won by Labour candidate Terry Fields, a worker and a Marxist.

Terry fought the campaign around the slogan "a workers' MP on a worker's wage" and won the seat by 3,800 votes, in a seat which would have gone to the Tories in 1979. Terry also defeated a sitting SDP MP. A *Militant* reporter spoke to him after the election.

**M: What was your reaction to the victory?**

Terry Fields: "A sense of fulfillment. It wasn't a personal question, more an achievement for the class. I looked around at the young people especially who'd been working flat out over the period, some previously never involved and really the reward was theirs. "It became obvious in the campaign that the three parties of capitalism had no solution and posed no threat to us, except in personal acrimony and attacks on socialism and me personally.

"In particular the response from ordinary people boosted me, those who said that they'd been ashamed to have never bothered for a lifetime to be involved in politics, but now their eyes were open and their pledge was given. There was a natural class reaction from people. Working class politics is based on experience, and the working class know what needs to be done, they've had despair in the past and really that's

because they've not had leadership."

**M: What conditions did you find in Broadgreen?**

Terry Fields: "Some deplorable housing. For example in Kensington a woman lived in one room with a big double bed and cooker, four children, the youngest four months, with her husband and mother all living in one bed virtually homeless. In fact the kids had to climb out of the window when the landlord came, and they were shunted round by the bureaucracy under the Liberal council.

"We also saw an enormous number of houses boarded up because the council in the past refused money to refurbish them.

"An experience which also touched me came from a teacher who said, "Just promise me one thing, you won't change." Many have said it before but there's no way I'll change, I've got no pretensions to enhance my own lifestyle on the backs of working people, when you see the conditions and the support that they've given me.

"There are going to be big battles in the future. We're like the weather forecaster, we can read the signs. The working class have been

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

# Now For The Real Tory Manifesto

Another Thatcher government has been elected. Another stretch of rule by the rich, for the rich—and at our expense.

As soon as the election was over, the Stock Exchange reached new dizzy heights though without improving one jot the chances of a real economic recovery.

## FIGHTBACK MUST BEGIN

As soon as the election was over, the Building Societies pushed their mortgage rates up to 11%, another attack on living standards for 5½ million families.

And as soon as the election was out of the way the same old story of factory closures, mass redundancies and blighted inner cities started all over again.

In Manchester and Bradford, the Renold group announced redundancies. While in Liverpool, already desperately hit by four years of Thatcherism, a Crawfords Biscuit factory, part of the United Biscuit Group, announced closure, putting another 2,000 workers on the Merseyside dole queues.

The chairman of United Biscuits is Sir Hector Laing. He is one of the class who finance the Tory party (UB gave £32,000 to the Tories last year) and benefit from its governments. His firm is a British based multinational which has swallowed up well known names in the biscuit industry like Macfarlane Lang, McVities and Crawfords and made Laing very rich in the process.

He is also director of Allied Lyons which owns Lyons Ice Cream. The local Lyons Maid factory also closed recently. Merseyside workers have had their fill of Sir Hector in this past year.

In the summer of 1981 while UB were sacking workers in West London he took delivery of a £450,000 aircraft for his firm. He can afford to. Last May when his workers were, according to the Tories, "pricing themselves out of a job" on an average £77 a week, Sir Hector was carting home



**Fighting Fund: three weeks to go**

IT'S A GREAT time if you're rich! You've had the day out at the Derby, you've got

Ascot, Lords and Wimbledon.

If you're at the other end of the scale, you've got nothing spare, no prospect of a day, let alone a week away, mounting bills to face and the prospect of everything getting worse with Thatcher firmly back in the saddle.

But...there is something to celebrate! There are Marxists in Parliament! They can't work miracles but they can reach millions of workers with an explanation of what's happening and a clear

programme of socialist policies for the Labour movement to take up and fight back with.

*Militant* will be stepping up the fight, too but we're a long way short of target for our funds. (See page 4) We need your help!

Why not celebrate Marxists reaching Parliament with a 'fiver' or a 'tenner' reaching our offices? If you haven't got one, collect from other workers you know. There's a great deal of work to do—we must have the premises, the equipment and the staff to help us do it!

CONTINUED ON BACK PAGE

# Debate must be on programme and policy

**IN THE coming months the contest in the Labour Party will concern more than just the leadership and deputy leadership—it will be over ideas and policies.**

The leadership candidates from the right wing of the party have already made it clear that they intend to try to turn the party away from the policies on which it fought the election and, together with their supporters in the trade union movement, they are now rushing to distance themselves from the manifesto, admitting they never really supported it.

The situation is similar to that after the election defeat in 1959, when the right wing of the Labour Party drew the conclusion that the Party must "free itself" from

the socialist traditions to which it was bound. A movement developed then to remove the socialist clause 4 from the constitution, to cut the links with the trade unions and to reduce the influence of the Constituency Parties.

The right wing wanted to "modernise" the Labour Party, as they saw it, and in their efforts to change it into a left-of-centre liberal party, they even had the backing of the leadership around Hugh Gaitskell.

To justify the changes, the Right argued that capitalism had changed, and along with it the electorate: the old "class politics", they insisted, were dead.

"It seems misleading to talk about 'capitalism in Britain'" wrote the chief theoretician of the right, Anthony Crosland, around this time, "We stand on the brink of mass abundance...one cannot imagine

today a deliberate offensive alliance between government and employers...with all the brutal paraphernalia of wage-cuts, national lock-outs and anti-union legislation."

In their analysis of this election defeat, there is more than a hint from the present-day right wing that they will peddle the same arguments today to push the party to the right.

Peter Shore has talked in the last few days about facing up to the "post-capitalist" society. The only "post-capitalist" society known to party members is a socialist one, but we suspect that Shore's formulation means something different; it is a justification for support for capitalism on the grounds, as Crosland argued, that it has somehow "changed".

The right wing will now probably try to drop commitments to nationalisation,

to unilateralism and to cutting unemployment. The incomes policy that was always explicitly in Labour's manifesto will probably now be wheeled out into the light of day.

On constitutional questions the Right will seek to restrict the powers of constituency Labour Parties, to vet prospective parliamentary candidates far more thoroughly and to start a witch-hunt all over again. Enough statements about expelling 'militants' have already been made for this threat to be taken seriously.

The conclusions that the right wing have drawn from the defeat could have been anticipated. But they are fundamentally false.

The balance of blue collar and white collar jobs may have changed over the years in favour of the latter and more workers may be home owners, but these things do not change the basics of a

class society. The smug optimism of Anthony Crosland, has been rudely shattered in the last ten years, not by Marxist theory, but precisely in the language of mass unemployment, poverty, anti-union laws and class politics.

But what would be even more tragic would be for some of the left inside the party to draw the same conclusions as the right. Even Neil Kinnock, the clear favourite to become the new leader, was quoted in one paper as being in favour of a purge and he was one of those on the NEC who in February voted for the expulsion of five members with over 120 years membership between them.

Neil Kinnock should be reminded, as one who likes to cast himself in the "Bevanite" mould, that it has never been in the traditions of the left of the party to fight for office on the

platform of wanting to expel marxists.

The debate about programme and policy is absolutely essential if the party is to recover and prepare itself for the next election. We are confident that the rank and file of the party and the trade unions, as happened after 1959, will reject firmly any attempts to turn the party away from its socialist roots, which are more necessary today than ever before.

But if free and democratic debate gives way to bureaucratic restrictions and a new witch-hunt, no matter who becomes leader, it will play into the hands of the Tories as it did earlier this year, and the party will be more divided than ever. The rank and file of the party must make it clear to the witch-hunters that there needs to be a debate, but no more expulsions. They have done enough damage already.

**Right's election style: 'Low key to non-existent'**

**THE BANKRUPT legacy of Labour's right wing domination of the Labour Party in Wales has been highlighted by the abysmal election results.**

In 1966 Labour held 32 out of 36 Welsh constituencies. But the disillusionment and mistrust of the right wing leadership over the last decades has allowed this majority to be whittled away. Now Labour only control 20 seats with the Tories close behind with 14 and others 4.

With its massive Labour majorities, Wales became a prime target for careerists who wanted a safe seat on a Labour ticket, and it's not surprising that many workers have turned their backs on these "Mayday socialists" who seemed more concerned with self interest and self preservation than the struggle for socialism.

Alan Williams from Swansea West increased his majority by almost two thousand votes but this was due entirely to the intervention of the Boundary Commission who lopped off a heavy Tory area, and not to his stand against *Militant*, as he claimed after the vote. If Swansea West had been fought on the 1979 boundaries, this witch-hunter would unquestionably have lost his seat to the Tories.

Apart from one or two exceptional instances, the LPYS was barred from the platform of election meetings, prevented from holding youth rallies and restricted to handing out leaflets. With that kind of attitude from party officials, no wonder many youngsters "couldn't be bothered" to vote. The campaign in Wales as in most of the rest of the country ranged from low key to



## 'NO CAMPAIGN' CALLAGHAN

**IN CARDIFF South and Penarth the failure of James Callaghan and his right-wing supporters to enthuse party workers was very noticeable in the election campaign. Very few workers bothered to campaign and those that did showed little enthusiasm for the fight.**

Callaghan's "stab in the back" speech on unilateralism undoubtedly sowed confusion in the minds of the voters. Party workers were asked on the door-step, on a number of occasions, why voters should support a party that was split on defence. And every time

non-existent..

We must ensure the working class of Wales is represented in Parliament by MPs whose only ambition is the socialist transformation of society, then we can rid Wales and the rest of the UK of the Tories and the rotten profit system they represent.

Callaghan's speech was given as evidence of the split.

One party worker was told by a life-long Labour voter that he had asked Callaghan how a Labour government would take Britain out of the EEC. Callaghan replied that no Labour government would ever carry through such a policy. Not surprisingly the voter then asked angrily that if that were the case how should he believe anything in Labour's manifesto.

For many years party workers have seen Callaghan attacking members of the Labour Party and particu-

ly *Militant* supporters with far more hatred than Callaghan ever directs at the Tories.

After the defence speech some party members publicly refused to campaign for Callaghan or to appear on his election platform. But despite his treacherous role in the election *Militant* supporters in Cardiff South and Penarth CLP continued to campaign for the Labour Party in the constituency as we would for any candidate who was democratically selected by their local party.

### MILITANT POST-ELECTION RALLY

**'Thatcher returns—the fightback must start now' Monday 27 June, 8 pm at Friends Meeting House, Euston Road, London NW1 (opp. Euston Station)**

**Speakers:**

**Peter Taaffe (Editor, *Militant*), Terry Fields MP, Dave Nellist MP, Eddie McParland (London Labour Party Executive), Rod Fitch (Brighton Kemptown Labour Party),**

## SOCIALIST VICTORY (cont. from front page)

repressed for so long on low standards of living, unemployment, and inflation. An immediate issue will be anti-trade union legislation. It's not for nothing they've left Tebbit there, he is needed as a hatchet man."

**M: What's your message to trade unionists?**

TF: "As a trade unionist of 24 years the leadership must wake up and get round the country, educate the membership or perhaps be educated by the membership on what it's like to struggle against unemployment and anti-trade union legislation, and against the use of the vast army of unemployed by the ruling class in trying to keep down wages. The battle has to be joined now, we can't wait five years, the Government must be taken on immediately and preparations made."

**M: Why do you think Labour lost in the rest of the country?**

TF: "What was lacking

was clear leadership, a willingness to go out to explain what is happening. Some said that if you pose socialism too sharply the working class will run away. We found the opposite in Broadgreen.

"The manifesto, the way it was presented, did not come across clearly to the working class. We gave a full commitment to the manifesto but it was also necessary to tell people the truth when the question was raised by workers themselves.

"The manifesto itself will not bring socialism and without socialism the manifesto could not be implemented. The working class could see this themselves and they were only too eager to support me and Broadgreen Labour Party with that explanation.

"I'm proud to wear the badge of a militant, a militant is only a moderate who's got off his knees. We all must get off our knees."

## LIVERPOOL MILITANT READERS' MEETING

"MP LASHES leadership" was the headline in the *Liverpool Echo* the day after Broadgreen's newly elected MP, Terry Fields spoke at the *Militant* Readers' Meeting in Liverpool on Sunday 12 June.

With only two days notice 300 people came to hear Terry demand the reinstatement in the Labour Party of the five expelled members of the *Militant* Editorial Board.

Terry sharing the platform with Peter Taaffe said "socialism will rule, but we have to struggle against the excesses of the capitalist

system on the one hand and the inability of the Labour leadership on the other."

The £510 collected was part of well over £2000 raised at 20 meetings during the election, attended by around 1,500 people. It is expected that these figures will more than double with the attendances at the forthcoming rallies (see left and p. 4), to answer the question "where now for Labour?"

The reception for Terry Fields in Broadgreen shows the way—socialist politics for Labour!

# Labour renegade welcomes Tory victory

WITHOUT A DOUBT one of the saddest results to come from the election was the defeat of Pat Wall in Bradford North, where the 4,000 votes for former MP and Labour renegade Ben Ford were decisive in allowing the Tory in.

No Labour candidate, even Peter Tatchell in the Bermondsey by-election this year, could have been more vilified, and had more lies told about him than Pat Wall.

The intervention of Ben Ford as a so called "Independent Labour candidate" angered Labour supporters. It has become apparent since the election that a number of workers had voted for him thinking he was still the Labour candidate and certainly even those who voted for Ford as a "moderate" must have been angry when Ford welcomed the Tory victory in the constituency.

But although the hundreds of workers were disappointed at the result, as Margaret Reavey reports, the campaign built a sure basis for a Marxist Labour MP in years to come:

In almost ten years of Labour Party membership I've never experienced anything like the campaign and comradeship I found in Bradford North in the last few weeks.

Canvassing began every day at ten; most areas weren't canvassed just once or twice but on many cases three and in some cases five times and we didn't conduct an opinion poll but a real personal campaign. Spending twenty or thirty minutes on the doorstep was nothing unusual, arguing the socialist case.

All day, every day, cars with loud hailers were in the streets, not just driving around shouting "vote Labour", but stopping in the middle of the street speaking to the people.

As well as the election address every postal voter and every new voter received a personal letter from Pat Wall. We had youth leaflets



Victorious Tory candidate Geoffrey Lawler chats with Ben Ford (right) at the election count

and everyone received two more constituency wide leaflets. On top of that there were thousands of other leaflets advertising the public meetings that were held in every part of Bradford North, practically every night in the course of the campaign. The Asian community received all of these plus leaflets in Urdu and Punjabi; literally thousands of posters went up around Bradford, not just in houses and flats but in shops and offices.

Every day complete strangers walked in the committee rooms offering help, men and women, young and old, black, Asian and white. Letters, cards, money and telephone calls of support poured in from individuals, groups, organisations, even one from a factory owner in Bradford!

Young unemployed workers hitched to Bradford penniless, slept on floors, went without food, to fight for Pat, in the knowledge that he would be their champion whether they lived in Bradford North or not. Every day we reached people, through canvassing, leaflets, street meetings, public meetings, factory gate meetings, which were held almost every day and through being seen and being heard.

We worked hard but there wasn't a moment of depression. 400 of us waited for the result in Queen's Hall in the early hours of Friday morning, all of us knowing that whatever the result we'd done all we could.

Of course our disappoint-

ment was enormous. As Pat walked into the hall he remarked that he had never seen so many red eyes in his life. But no one left the hall when the result was known. Completely unplanned I attended, the best meeting of the campaign.

The truth was we'd lost the vote but won the campaign. Thousands of people in Bradford voted for the best known Marxist in Britain. There was no doubts in their minds who or what

they voted for, despite the campaign of lies, distortions and treachery by our opponents, the media and the Tory party, we won the argument in the minds of thousands of workers in Bradford North.

We left Queen's Hall, initial and natural disappointment gone. Bradford North will become a bastion for socialism, we'll make sure it does and I hope the Tory MP enjoys his Parliamentary career, it will be brief. ♪



Pat Wall, Labour's candidate in Bradford North

## Workers' MP on a worker's wage

ELATION swept Liverpool after Labour's stunning victory in Broadgreen, and in Liverpool generally, which shone out against a gloomy background of defeats for Labour nationally.

Labour's majority in Broadgreen was won in three main ways. The politics of Labour's campaign, enthusiasm for a working class fighter who could be trusted, and particularly the tireless mass activity conducted over four weeks.

Labour set the tone from the outset with its slogan 'A workers' MP on a worker's wage', which gained the attention of big sections of voters.

Four weekends were devoted to mass canvassing, with 200 to 250 helpers turning out each time. LPYS



Terry Fields MP

members and older unemployed comrades showed tremendous devotion and enthusiasm. The whole constituency was canvassed

three times over in a determined effort to win over doubtful and opposition voters.

Factory gate meetings were held at every major, and most minor, work places throughout the constituency, with trade unionists responding positively.

Many workers were not only persuaded to vote Labour, but also to take an active part in the campaign.

Well attended street corner meetings of up to 80 people were held on most evenings. Labour's public meetings were also tremendously successful. Even Labour's enemies had to admit that they'd never seen any campaign like it.

But above all it was the politics of the campaign which won the election. Ex-

planations were given to doubtful workers on how Labour's economic programme could be financed, and the class position on war and peace convinced people on the nuclear arms issue.

In turn, this work on the streets, in the workplaces and colleges won droves of people to the Party, with 99 people joining up in Tuebrook ward alone.

Over 500 people turned up to help on the day, and four 'knock-ups' of those who had promised to vote Labour were carried out. Such was the enthusiasm of some Labour voters for Terry Fields that one girl hitched from Newcastle to Liverpool just to vote.

# Rise with your class



Dave Nellist MP

DAVE NELLIST the new Labour MP for Coventry South East spoke to *Militant* after his election victory.

Our campaign started over 18 months ago, following my selection, with mass canvasses to win over workers to join the Party and take an active part in the running of the constituency.

The city has not seen an election like this for many years. Even Labour Party stalwarts who differ politically have congratulated our campaign on the "tidal wave", of canvassers sweeping the constituency.

We estimate that well over 100 people have joined the Party during the election. Not only did we retain the seat for Labour but we strengthened the Party, particularly amongst the youth and working class women.

One phrase to stick in my mind from this campaign was from a woman in

Willenhall, whose husband works for British Rail, whose ambition this year is to have a new set of sheets and a topcoat that no one else has worn. That demonstrates the battles that will be necessary on behalf of low paid and unemployed workers in this area.

That a family with a husband in regular work can be reduced after four years of Thatcher to that level of poverty is a crushing indictment of capitalism and the Tories' defence of profits.

In and out of Parliament I intend to work as hard as fighting for the interests of the low paid, the under privileged, and the working class as Thatcher has for the rich. John Maclean the Scottish socialist once said, "rise with your class not out of your class."

As a workers' MP on a worker's wage I will stand shoulder to shoulder with all the struggles of working people politically and industrially to fight to defeat any attacks by this Tory Government on our class. ♪

## Brighton Kemptown ... vote held up

THE RESULT in Brighton Kemptown was about the best result for Labour in the South of England, with a higher share of the vote than in almost any other constituency, in the region where the Tories won their biggest landslide and where the Liberal/SDP Alliance had a big surge.

The SDP were pushed into third place, which only happened in a handful of the other, usually far more marginal, seats.

only the beginning.

"12,887 have voted for socialism today, have voted for a change in this rotten society. We will build on that to defeat this government of the rich." Nobody in Kemptown Labour Party is demoralised. Our speaker vans toured on Saturday thanking the Labour voters and appealing to people to join the Labour Party to defeat the Tories at the next election.

If Labour nationally had combined the enthusiasm for socialism and the organisational ability shown in Kemptown it would have romped home in the election. Six public meetings, rallies for pensioners and youth, and a mass rally in the Dome were attended by over 1700 people. Numerous street and estate meetings were organised and special leaflets produced aimed at council tenants, youth, home owners along with other general material.

A leaflet was delivered to every house in the constituency at 5 am on election day and another one at eleven to counter a last minute Tory smear. Well over 600 were mobilised to help on election day and 200 people have applied to join the Labour Party—a hundred to the LPYS—and well over 2,000 *Militants* were sold.



Rod Fitch, Labour's candidate in Kemptown

Rod Fitch, the Labour candidate, received a tumultuous standing ovation from hundreds of supporters in the famous Brighton Dome at the count. When Andrew Bowden the successful Tory candidate and sitting MP said this was the end of the Labour left and of *Militant*, Rod Fitch corrected the Tory. To cheers he told the audience, "This is

# TARGET—£50,000 BY JULY 9.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 9 July
Eastern	761		2700
East Midlands	743		2600
Humberside	437		1300
London East	849		3300
London West	508		1650
London South	1555		2500
Manchester & Lancs	1131		3000
Merseyside	812		3400
Northern	711		3550
Scotland East	629		2100
Scotland West	821		3000
Southern	1348		3150
South West	545		2000
Wales East	524		1500
Wales West	332		2100
West Midlands	596		3100
Yorkshire	876		3400
Others	2823		5000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>16000</b>		<b>50000</b>

## One third of way to target

To have raised £16,000 for our Fighting Fund amongst all the election work that most of our readers have been involved in, is a marvellous achievement!

Leading the field are: almost £300 from POEU supporters, £155 from GMBATU delegates and visitors, and a further £300 in IOUs redeemed from the CPSA conference. Shop stewards and other TU officials up and down the country forwarded another £110 in smaller amounts from expenses received.

Brighton supporters of Rod Fitch put together £300 on election night, with nearly £70 coming from Coventry and a further £20 from Liverpool, whilst from elsewhere over £700 (after expenses) came in from meetings in such places as Basildon, Watford, Hull S London, Manchester, Newcastle Swansea, Sunderland, Bristol, Barking and Birmingham.

Over £20 was raised at a Sheffield LPYS social, with other contributions coming from LPYS members in Bridlington, Newham, Wigan and Stockton. We can't list all individual donations, but thanks to A Cameron (Levan LP) for £80; to the following for £10 or over: A Jay (Pollok), C Cawley (Bridgend), M Whitham (Carlton, Notts), Withington tax rebate, Kilmarnock readers, Manchester People's Marcher, L Arnell (Marden LP), and a Thanet supporter.

Fivers came from: P Crack (Bristol E CLP), R Howl (Bath), R Allan (ex-Oxford), S Smith (Dundee), J Cray (GMBATU, Leith), W Woodhead (retired, S London), I Saunders (W London) and from H Edge and G Rafferty (Derby).

Between £1 and £5 came from: T Walker (Gedling), J Hoof (Bristol), M Walsh (Stevenage), F Hallahan (Hounslow S LP), G Williams (Stockton GMBATU and LPYS), R

Stein (retired, Cardiff), Mrs Doniney (Isle of Wight), S Hatch and S Yen (Tobacco Workers, Merseyside), M Hay (Motherwell), D Wright and friend (Twickenham), Bloch brothers (Borehamwood), J Maxwell-Taylor (Coventry), G Webster (TGWU steward, Leicester), J Thompson (Alloa) and J Penn (Cowie), R Carlton (Penzance), M Allan (Holt, Norfolk), J Dean (Wigan), C Edwards (Barnet), V Brakewell (Walsall, AUEW), M Durrent

**Total since last week: £3066**

(Crawley), B Rodgers (Maltby), D Holmes and B Blanche (both Wallasey), and Dunfermline SOGAT readers.

Raising money for our Fighting Fund can be fun too. We've had 'hot dog' cash, 'canvass feeding' cash, teas, posters, sticker money, 'hankie' cash, 'head shave' sponsorship, biscuits, election forecasts, sandwiches, pontoon tickets, benefit night at Thames Poly (£30), Gillingham social, and a "wedding present" collection!

But hundreds of pounds came in since our last issue from our largest source of individual donations—collecting tins! Have YOU got a *Militant* tin on your mantelpiece?

Elsewhere in this issue we've analysed the election results, and the reasons for them. One thing however is clear: the role of the press and TV. Will you assist the paper putting the alternative by donating to our Fighting Fund?

By Steve Cawley

"Ain't no time for the summertime blues" must be our message to the labour movement after the election.

To defend our rights and living standards the programme and policies of *Militant* are vital if we are to mobilise the movement against the rampant Tories. All our sellers were prominent in the election campaign, arguing for socialist policies and using our paper to show that Labour must break with capitalism.

As well as tens of thousands of extra copies sold on the doorstep we've had a flood of new subscribers determined to get stuck in after the election. Sales at union conferences have rocketed. Nearly 200 copies were sold at POEU conference, 200 at UCW conference and good sales were held at SOGAT'82 conference and BFA&WU.

We are appealing to all activists not to sit back and worry but to take our ideas into the movement and fight to transform the Labour Party and trades unions into weapons that can not only beat the Tories, but lead the way to a socialist future. To get your copies of *Militant*, contact: 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, or phone 01-986 3828.

By Dave Farrar

## Now sell socialist ideas



Follow up now all the paper sales made during the election.

(Above) canvassing in Brighton

# ads

CLASSIFIED: 10p per word, minimum 10 words. SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres. All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

### POST-ELECTION MILITANT MEETINGS

(further details from local sellers)

<b>THURSDAY 16 JUNE</b> LEICESTER (Speaker C. Doyle).	<b>MONDAY 20 JUNE</b> SWINDON (7.30 pm Speaker: Robin Clapp at AUEW Hall, Fleming Street).
<b>FRIDAY 17 JUNE</b> CHESTERFIELD (at 7.30 pm Room 3/4, Market Hall).	<b>TUESDAY 21 JUNE</b> CHESTER-LE-STREET.
<b>SUNDAY 19 JUNE</b> WASHINGTON TYNESIDE (The Bridge pub, Newcastle at 7.30 pm).	<b>THURSDAY 23 JUNE</b> KINGSWOOD.

### CLASSIFIED

**MILITANT**  
Marxist Weekend Schools  
LONDON: 2/3 July, Queen Mary College Student Union.  
NORTHERN: 9/10 July, Teeside Poly, Middlesbrough. Fuller details in future issues

WHAT WE STAND FOR: THE PROGRAMME OF *MILITANT* 20p each. 30p for one, including post. 10 or more post free. Available from World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

BLACK YOUTH RALLY to be held London 2-3 July now postponed. Further details of future venue and date will appear in later issues.

INAUGURAL Meeting. Labour CND, West Taunton CLP Meeting Rooms, 24 East Reach, Taunton. Sunday 26 June 2.30 pm. "Protect Composite 81". LP members only.

### MILITANT SUMMER RAFFLE

1st prize: Video equipment worth over £400.  
2nd prize: Colour TV worth over £200.  
Eight other prizes, electrical goods, books.  
Draw 9 July. Tickets 10p from local *Militant* sellers.

### SOUTH WALES MILITANT SUMMER CAMP

August Bank Holiday  
Friday 26 August-Monday 29 August  
For the eighth time we are organising our highly successful camp in the beautiful surroundings of Horton on the Gower Coast (10 minutes' walk from Port Eynon and Horton beaches).  
It will provide not only an excellent introduction to the ideas of Marxism, but also a superb holiday for the family. Price £10. Write to 181 Hanover Street, Swansea SA1 6BP.

# THATCHER'S PRESS GANG

**THE TORIES' auxiliary election machine in Fleet Street went into top gear during the election and played its part in Thatcher's victory.**

The press unleashed a torrent of abuse at Labour's policies and made outrageous personal attacks on Labour's leadership, especially Michael Foot—such as *The Sun* (June 2) whose centre page article screamed out, "Do you seriously want this old man to run Britain?"

Fleet Street was its usual cowardly, biased self. A stunning example of the anti-Labour attitudes of the press came on June 6 with the reports on the Young Tories 'star' rally at Wembley and the Peoples March for Jobs rally in Hyde Park. With over 60,000 at Hyde Park and only a puny 2,500 at Wembley, press coverage of the two events shows where Fleet Street's heart lies (see chart).

But it wasn't only coverage, it was what those papers said. On the Tory youth rally:

*Sun*—"Wembley went wild for Maggie Thatcher last night when she emerged as the superstar of a rally sparkling with showbiz razzmatazz."

*Mail*—"It was the day the Thatchers went pop...(Thatcher) got a 10 minute standing ovation from 2,500 rapturous Young Conservatives."

*Express*—"With trumpets

blaring, balloons soaring and stars of sport and showbusiness ranged around her, Mrs Thatcher was given an ecstatic early taste of election victory..."

Just compare this adulation with how they 'reported' the People's March:

*Sun*—"An embarrassed Michael Foot presided over the pathetic, rain soaked end to the Peoples March for Jobs yesterday."

*Mail*—"The Peoples March for Jobs ended yesterday amid claims of violence..."

*Express*—"The rain poured down yesterday on the March for Jobs rally in London. Most people will say: 'Serve them right'. For this was no honest outburst of anger from the unemployed. It was a political ploy—arranged by the Extreme Left."

Fortunately, the press barons did not get it all their own way. The latter *Express* 'opinion' was silenced by industrial action by angry print workers, as was a Tory election advert in the *Observer* which attacked the trade unions.

The headbanging tabloids—the *Sun*, *Mail* and *Express*—were out for a Tory landslide. Not once were they critical of the Tories' policies or did they report how the economy was in tatters or that four million were on the dole—it was good news only.

The *Telegraph* also

wanted a Tory victory of course, although the more serious capitalist press such as the *Times* and the *Observer* had thought out the consequences of a Tory landslide, fearing future actions by a provoked labour movement. They still wanted a Tory victory, but just a small one.

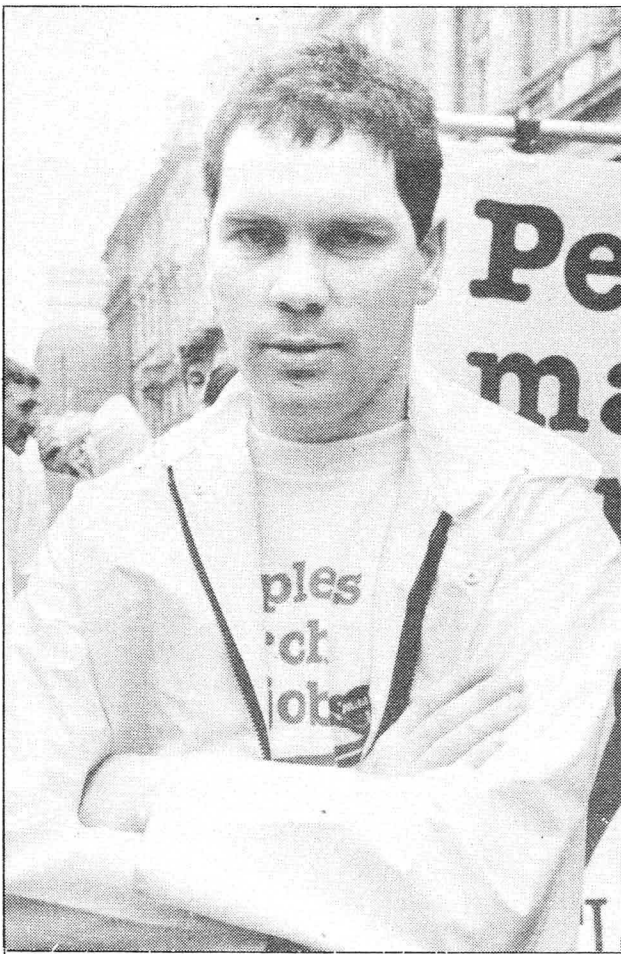
The *Guardian* called for tactical voting. The *Mirror* was the only Fleet Street paper to urge its readers to vote Labour—yet it qualified its support, attacking Labour's policies.

One consolation to come out of the election campaign was the *Daily Star* dropping its 'Labour' mask. The sister paper of the reactionary *Daily Express* and owned by the Trafalgar House multinational, previously it had masqueraded as supporting

Labour. This was a cynical attempt to win the northern working class to its readership. But come the election it stabbed Labour in the back. It will be interesting to see if Labour MP Joe Ashton continues his regular column with this Tory paper.

The election was yet one more example of the biased nature of Fleet Street. Its editors are elected by no one—they are appointed by the millionaire press barons. Yet they sit like a dead weight on the country's main outlet of news, shaping opinions rather than reporting them. At the very least the demand for the labour movement to direct some of its resources into building an independent labour movement daily paper must now come to the fore.

By Bob Wade



Ali Hughes

## 'No politics' Peoples' March

The People's March for Jobs came to a successful conclusion last week, with a mass rally in Hyde Park on June 5. Despite pouring rain well over 60,000 turned out to greet the marchers.

However, while everyone was united in the fight against unemployment, there have been some criticisms of the stewarding of the People's March itself and its "non-political" direction.

*Militant* spoke to Ali Hughes who was expelled from the march.

**How did you come to get invited on the march?**

Through the local Trades Council. Four applications were put in from the Dalkeith Unemployed Workers' Centres and mine was accepted.

**What were you doing before you were unemployed?**

I was a miner working in Monkton colliery for two years. I was working underground taking supplies off the coal face.

**How long have you been unemployed?**

Three and a half years.

**What's the unemployment situation like in your area?**

In the Tranent area there are virtually only two places you can work, that's the power station and the pit, and at the pit they've not taken anybody on for the last three years, and they're not taking on at the power station either. Virtually everybody who left school in the last three years has ended up unemployed. I think it's about 27% unemployment.

**When did you start on the march?**

23 April.

**How did you come to get thrown off?**

When I went on the march the Trades Council and myself thought it was a march against the Tories to get a Labour government re-elected and to fight against unemployment, but as we were going down the marshalls and people who were running it, mainly Communist Party members and sympathisers, decided that it was to be a non-political march.



The final rally of the People's March at Hyde Park gave a glimpse of the potential support which, unfortunately, was not fully tapped.

What they actually said was that they were out for any government, Labour or Tory, who would put unemployment first. That was the main aim, to get unemployment put first by any government. Not specifically a Labour government, so they banned and expelled anybody who chanted anti-Tory slogans. At Manchester there were about sixty people out of about 150 chanting, "Maggie, Maggie, out." Out of the Scottish contingent nobody was

chanting. The Scottish contingent was well tied up. I was the only one chanting. And the Scottish contingent put me off the march.

They were awfully strict and bureaucratic. You weren't allowed any discussion. When they had march meetings—there were four in the whole six weeks—people were arguing and everything but at the end of the meeting the marshalls would say, "Well we have decided..." They made every single decision. What they said went

**What was the organisation of the march like?**

In most cases we were provided with very good facilities by local Labour Parties and trade unions. Sometimes, though, it was dreadful. In one place we were in a hall with sixty people, five of them had flu and had to be segregated. There was only one toilet and one handbasin in the building. The marchers sometimes didn't get any food all day, that's from 9 o'clock to 4 o'clock, all we got was a bag

of crisps at lunchtime. A lot of times we weren't given any refreshments all day, nothing to drink.

**What was the attitude of the marchers to the stewards?**

There was a lot of resentment amongst a lot of the marchers. When people joined the march after Scotland, especially when the North West joined, there were a lot of criticisms and arguments. With every new contingent there was an outburst of arguments.

**How successful do you think the march was?**

I think it could have been a lot better—especially the East of Scotland, where it wasn't publicised properly at all.

It could have been better organised on the route. The demonstration at the end was quite good, as much as I would expect. The turn-out along the route could have been better. It could have been used as part of an anti-Tory attack.

How the press covered two news events

Paper	Young Tories rally Coverage in column inches	Peoples March rally Coverage in column inches
Sun	116	10
Express	75½	28½
Telegraph	55½	9½
Mail	48½	16
Times	44½	30
Guardian	25½	35
Mirror	8	24½

# The day we canvassed Rottingdean

**On Sunday the 22 May we got ready to go down to Brighton, not to see the Seagulls after their FA Cup Finals, but to canvass on behalf of Rod Fitch, Labour's candidate for Brighton Kemptown.**

The nine of us had a good chat in the mini-bus although half the time was spent on frantic searches for public conveniences—no doubt due to our social the night before. We advise comrades if they use these particular motorways to be cautious because the conveniences are rather inconveniently spaced out!

We reached the Labour Party HQ in good time although the number of people present to get the details for the canvass made us feel that we were queuing up for a Bob Marley concert at the Hammersmith. It was a real morale booster to see so many people from all over anxious to get on with the work.

We were designated the Rottingdean ward, which was prominently Tory. Still

the place had to be canvassed and someone had to do it—so off we went. When we got there our hearts just sank—there were big houses cum bungalows with garages and two family cars and long front lawns. Half of us were more put off by the efforts needed to get to the front door rather than by any confrontation with voters.

## Surprising result

In true comradely manner we canvassed the same roads together so it was much easier and more comforting. We got many people saying that they voted for the Conservatives and would do so again; it seemed it was second nature to them. It was a slow and predictable process where there were more Tory and SDP definite and in instances we had the door slammed in our faces as we were "disturbing them on a Sunday—their day off"!

Shaken but not stirred, we carried on. Then a couple of us knocked at this rather pleasant house, and a lady

answered the door and almost collapsed when we said that we were canvassing for Labour. She was the first voter all morning who had thought seriously about the elections.

Her first reaction was to commend us on canvassing for the Labour Party in that particular area and then felt half sorry for us for taking up working-class issues with "those particular voters"! She was thinking of voting SDP as the "Tories had to go" and felt that the Labour Party was too left-wing. Anyway she invited us for a cup of coffee—it was real filtered coffee too—so both of us were real chuffed.

It transpired that she had worked for the United Nations in Geneva and she gave us a few examples of mismanagement by the USSR bureaucrats and the inefficiency of the capitalist countries. She supported the Russian revolution of 1917 but not its degeneration.

So we had a chat on the reasons for this and also stated that five more years of Thatcherism will make Britain an authoritarian state, too, complete with Victorian values, 'unlimited' police powers, unemployment in-

surance, strike-breaking—in short, a cutback in civil liberties and tactics of "big brother 1984". Then quite bluntly we pointed out that her vote for the SDP would be wasted and it was only Labour that was the credible alternative to Thatcher; SDP policies were those of the 1974-79 right-wing Labour government.

In the end she agreed that the answer was Labour and not only did she become a definite for Labour but also bought two copies of the *Militant* (one for her brother in the Communist Party), and gave us £1 and asked us to keep the rest for a good cause (i.e. *Militant* fighting fund). This example shows that we can influence people if we are prepared to take up issues on the doorstep and discuss them fully. We always thought these situations only happened to others but now we've been pleasantly enlightened.

Meanwhile the rest of our group were searching for us quite frantically, suspecting perhaps we had been kidnapped or something. When we came out from a very refreshing and valuable canvass they were quite surprised by the whole affair and

that our fighting fund was 60p richer.

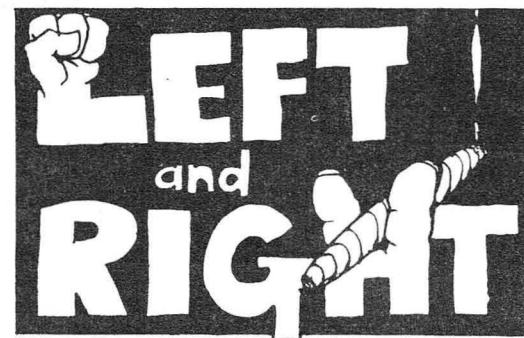
After a puo lunch we carried on, only this time the houses were bigger, the cars were bigger and for that matter so were the dogs. One of us had the audacity to canvass a house with a Rolls Royce and Ford Granada parked in the driveway. They had to find the front door amid the fully glassed fronts, and dodge elaborate anti-burglar mechanisms, including two rather unfriendly Alsatians, only to find that the lady of the house needed a stiff 1945 Napoleon Vintage to get over the nature of our visit!

The moral of the story is that canvassing can be fun especially in a group (and it is advisable to have a sober social the night before, otherwise it's running time!) and that it is not unexpected to find support from seemingly unlikely sources. The idea is to go with an open mind and campaign hard on issues; the results can be surprising!

**By Annette, Pat, Brian, Roger, Beverly, Sara, Kamal, Tom and Karen**  
(Medway Militant supporters)



Who cares that millions are looking for one decent house to live in? This display at Brighton Marina was selling second homes in Spain. Photo: D Doran



**"Let them eat grass"**

On the BBC's *Election Call* programme, Shirley Williams was explaining the merits of the SDP's prices and incomes policy. One questioner pointed out while some professional people are able to get around such a policy by taking on extra accounts, a hospital porter cannot work overtime unless specifically offered more work by the NHS. "He could always go and do a bit of gardening", was Mrs Williams' earnest reply.

So there you have it: the Social Democrats solution to low wages and discontent in the National Health Service.

## Who backed the Tories

The Tories denounced Labour's funding by the trade unions during the election campaign and are now busy trying to introduce new measures to financially cripple the Labour Party. With typical 'honesty', however they are refusing to disclose the source of the estimated £20 million spent on their own general election campaign. Incredibly enough, all enquiries to Tory Central Office are being referred to Labour Research, the trade union financed body.

Labour Research can account for only about one-third of Tory election expenditure. Its study of company accounts of more than 2,000 large firms disclosed donations totalling only £1,500,000 to the Conservative Party. Yet in only one day the Conservative Party spent an estimated £400,000 to £500,000 on newspaper advertisements. On May 22, the figure was £222,640 for adverts in five national Sunday newspapers. Labour Research are unable to discover how the shortfall, likely to run into several millions, is accounted for.

Under the 1967 Companies Act firms are not obliged to disclose donations to front

organisations such as "regional industrial councils". This is a loophole through which large sums of money are undoubtedly being channelled secretly into Tory coffers.

## Election Celebration

It wasn't all gloom on election night. For the rich and wealthy, the real party began the moment the polls closed. London's luxury hotels laid on special do's to celebrate the victory of their party.

At the Sheraton Park Tower champagne and baked potatoes stuffed with Royal Beluga caviar and sour cream were on offer for £13.50 a spud. Over at the Grosvenor House, Lady Eden and Lord Charles Spencer Churchill were having a ball, and you could have gone along too if you coughed up £60 a time.

Not to be outdone on "parasites' victory day" the Ritz had laid on a special celebration. There was a five course dinner, dancing till 3 am, cabaret with Lance Percival, and a fireworks display on the roof. All good preparation for the belt tightening and sacrifices ahead.

**Civil servants forecast more riots**

**"...IT SEEMS only a question of waiting for the explosion of another time bomb such as those we have seen in Brixton, Moss Side and Toxteth". This is the warning of a number of former civil servants in their book *Government and Urban Policy*.**

Recently released government tables of "deprivation" show some of the horrific conditions in the English inner city areas. Unemployment, overcrowding, long housing waiting lists, the decline of manufacturing industry, all combine to turn the inner city areas into a hell-hole of misery and despair for the people living in them.

Hackney, in East London finished top of the deprivation league. With 1 in 4 unemployed and 1 in five families on the council waiting list, it managed to come in "the top ten" in five out of the eight categories of deprivation. The worst ten areas were all in London, exploding the myth of the "soft south" that has somehow benefitted from this Tory government.

What has particularly alarmed government pundits is the fact that many of the former depressed areas are now little worse than the national average. It isn't that conditions here have improved, they haven't. But conditions elsewhere have declined to an even greater extent. For example, Leicester, once reputed to be the richest city in Europe, finishes second only to Manchester in the deprivation tables outside London.

Tory palliatives have proved inadequate for dealing with the problems. They have been more concerned with appearing to be doing something. For example, Micheal Heseltine's trip to Liverpool following the Toxteth riots.

Far from pumping more resources into the inner cities they have continued to cut back. In 1981-82 Islington lost 51% of its rate support grant. Tower Hamlets, 35.7% and Lambeth 27.6%. All of these London boroughs are areas of acute deprivation. When the government's measures are set against this back-drop it can be seen how inadequate they really are.

The problems of Hackney, Brixton, Toxteth and Moss Side are too severe to be solved by Tory tinkering, enterprise zones or development corporations, with their vain attempts to make it profitable for private enterprise to invest. It is private enterprise that sucked these areas dry in the first place. And it will be their press that decries the inevitable riots that result.

**By Simon Cole**  
(Hackney South LPYS)

# THE LESSONS OF LABOUR'S DEFEAT

By John  
Pickard



THE QUESTION now uppermost in the minds of Labour Party members and supporters is "why?"

How has it come about that the Tories have achieved a landslide majority in Parliament, despite policies that have already savaged living standards and threaten to do so even more in the next few years?

The popular vote for the Tories fell by nearly 2 per cent, or 700,000 votes, compared to 1979 and as against 13 million votes for them, there were cast more than 18 million against. Despite the biggest post-war working majority, the Tories have the support of the lowest proportion of the electorate—31%—for any government since the war, with the exception of the two 1974 elections.

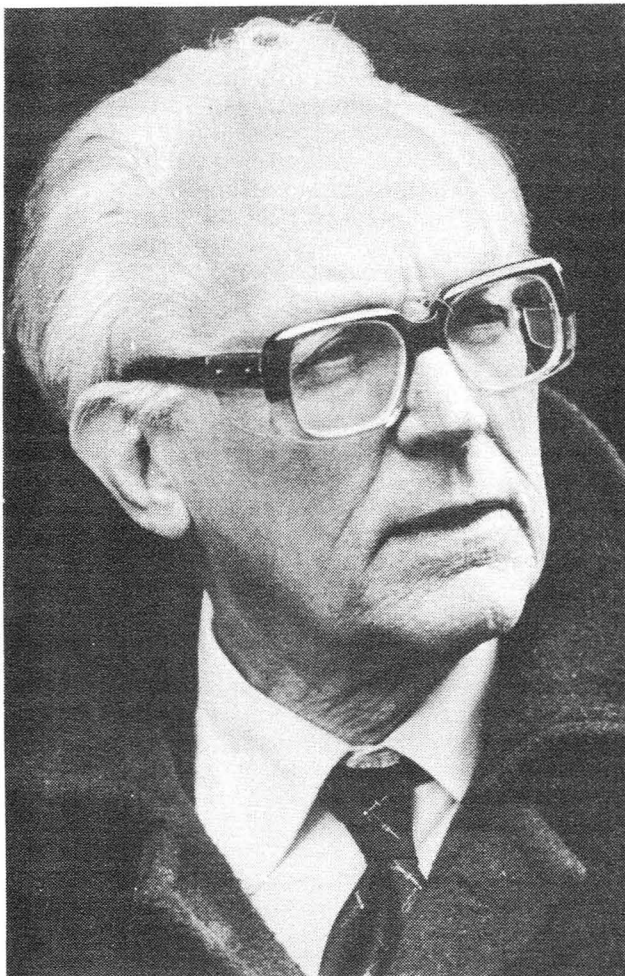
But facts must be faced square on. Things must be called by their proper names. The drop in Tory support cannot be used to rationalise away a *serious defeat* for the labour movement. After the Tories destroyed a fifth of manufacturing industry and broke records in the number of bankruptcies and in unemployment levels, the issue should not have been in doubt—the only debate should have been about the size of the *Labour* victory.

## Falklands Factor

The key element in the Tories' favour was without doubt the 'Falklands Factor', in as much as the war allowed the Tories, and especially Margaret Thatcher herself, to bask in the aura of a "great national leadership".

Compare the picture today to that two years ago: in June 1981, nearly two dozen English towns and cities were affected by riots as unemployment climbed remorselessly higher and industries closed down one after another. Even sections of the capitalist class and the Tory Party were alarmed at the economic collapse and the threat of massive social upheaval.

The president of the CBI called for a "bare-knuckle" fight with the government and one Tory minister suggested that the October Tory Party conference would be the last That-



Michael Foot

Photo: Militant

cher would attend as leader.

The war in the Falklands changed everything. Because of it, Thatcher was able to contrast the vacillations and irresolution of Labour's leadership to the apparent determination, resolution and single-mindedness of her own government, a contrast that the Tories have carefully cultivated and highlighted right up to the election.

The Thatcher slogan of "There Is No Alternative", directed at her own Cabinet "wets" as much as anyone else, was replaced by "The Resolute Approach". Whereas in 1981 Thatcher was even outvoted in her own Cabinet over the question of more public expenditure cuts, by the time of the election she was bossing other ministers, as the press commented, "like a headmistress".

Workers were faced with a Tory Party, which, whatever damage it had done to living standards, at least gave the *impression* of purposeful leadership. In the wake of the military success in the South Atlantic, Thatcher successfully managed to stir forlorn hopes, if not of former imperial grandeur, then at least of former economic strength. This was the case as far as a section of workers was concerned, among them even some who voted Labour in 1979.

## Labour gave no credible alternative

Without the 'Falklands Factor', without, in other words, Thatcher being given the chance to don the mantle of a latter-day Boedicea, it is extremely doubtful that she could have won the election.

Throughout the campaign the Labour leadership offered no credible alternative to the Tories. Those workers who did vote Labour—three million less than in 1979—did so with no great enthusiasm, since most of the leadership clearly disagreed with their own manifesto and were stuck, moreover, in the rut of the failed and discredited policies of past right-wing Labour governments, policies of massive government borrowing, currency devaluation and incomes policy.

Thatcher, for all her reactionary ideas, posed as the most 'radical' political leader—in this election there was not even a hint from her own party of the "U-turn" demands of two years ago—while the Labour leaders, in more ways than one, wore the old shabby clothes of 1974-79.

It was because of the failure of the Labour leaders to pose as a viable

alternative that millions of Labour workers and those Tories who were disenchanted switched their votes to the SDP/Liberal Alliance, and others simply did not vote.

The Tories' whole campaign carefully avoided any attention to the detail of economic policies, especially of future unemployment trends, and in this they were ably supported by almost the whole Fleet Street propaganda machine. Whereas there was a campaign of lies, slanders and smears directed against the labour movement, all the more serious questions, particularly on the future of the economy, were pushed from the front pages.

Leaked reports from the NEDC and from the House of Commons All-Party Committee, both emphasising a growing crisis in the economy and the Tories' own responsibility, were pooh-poohed by Fleet Street in a way that would have been inconceivable had these reports been leaked during the lifetime of a Labour government.

Similar reports showed the Tories' secret intentions for the increase of private health and the run-down of the NHS. These were similarly played down in the newspapers.

So unbalanced was the press campaign that workers in Fleet Street itself reacted against some of the worst features. A meeting of between 70 and 80 journalists from the *Daily Mail* Chapel of the NUJ passed a resolution highly critical of the one-sided coverage in their newspaper. Similarly, nearly a quarter of a million copies of *The Observer* were lost when the NGA demanded in vain that a reply should be printed to an advertisement placed by the Conservative Party.

The *Daily Express*, on the Monday after the People's March arrived in London, published a disgraceful editorial which, noting that the rain poured down on the welcoming rally, commented, "Serves them right". So incensed were their NGA members that they also demanded a right to reply, and when it was refused the *Daily Express* was forced to publish a blank space (except for early editions) where the editorial would have appeared.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# THE LESSONS OF LABOUR'S DEFEAT

FROM PAGE 7

From the very beginning opinion polls were also used as part of the campaign against the Labour Party. There has been an unprecedented degree of volatility among voters, especially within the middle class, but not excluding even working-class voters, yet the press have consciously used polls not so much to show this volatility or to describe in a balanced way the views and opinions of voters, but precisely to steer attention away from the real issues and support away from the Labour Party.

Headline after headline featured opinion polls and apparent surges away from the Labour Party rather than the issues themselves. It was not an accident that almost without exception the final polls over-estimated Tory support (as they did throughout) and underestimated Labour support. The polls were used consciously to try to intimidate Labour voters into thinking Labour had no chance.

In the last week of the campaign, the press, radio and TV all hammered away at the theme that the Labour Party was in third place, even though it was highly unlikely that it was at any time behind the Alliance. For example, on the final Sunday, when only one poll out of five showed Labour "trailing behind the Alliance", that was nevertheless mentioned all day on the TV and on the radio. New polls were then taken on the Sunday and published a day later, further exaggerating the apparent Alliance lead—once again, of course, with banner headlines.

## Tactical voting

At no time did the Alliance have a lead over Labour, but to some extent the pollsters created a bandwagon that became a self-fulfilling prophecy, so that by 9 June many workers even in the North switched to the Alliance under the impression that by doing so they were more likely to kick the Tories out.

This impression was reinforced by the treacherous advice from sections of the right wing of the Labour Party to abandon Labour candidates in certain seats and switch to the Alliance. Thus, in his union journal, Roy Grantham, General Secretary of APEX, urged tactical support for some Liberals, as did the journal *New Statesman*.

The unexpected size of the national swing to the Alliance was in large measure due to the press campaign and last minute tactical voting by Labour supporters, for which purpose the SDP had been sponsored and encouraged by the press and big business in the first place.

As *Militant* explained at the time the SDP was created, the economic crisis and the volatility of the electorate threatened a big swing away from the Tories. The Social Democratic Party was set up precisely in order to destroy the leftward moving Labour Party to prevent it coming to power, or, at the very least, to act as a "safety net" to trap disenchanted voters in the illusion of a new "radical" Party.

The press almost unanimously acclaimed the new SDP, praised its "moderation" to the very skies, while of course denouncing, with the support of the right wing in the Labour Party, the "sinister" and "extreme" developments in the Labour Party.

In one sense the promotion of the SDP by the big business-backed press has served its purpose—it has taken anti-Tory votes away from the Labour Party. But it has nevertheless failed utterly to destroy and replace the Labour Party, which, although it has seen its popular vote slump to the lowest since 1918, will recover to become eventually even stronger than before.

## Labour's campaign failed

In the background of all these influences—the Falklands factor, the press campaign, the Alliance—lies the failure of the Labour Party campaign.

Labour lost the election as a result of the fact that its programme, campaign and leadership failed to achieve credibility in the eyes of many ordinary workers.

The most important question was not the issue of defence, but even in that respect most of the Labour leadership disagreed with the manifesto. Although the majority of left MPs and the rank and file of the Labour Party understood Labour's Manifesto to include a clear commitment on unilateral nuclear disarmament, this was blurred over and even explicitly contradicted by Denis Healey and others.

The final stab in the back for unilateralism was delivered by Jim Callaghan in his well-prepared and advertised public speech in which he stated quite clearly that in his view the Labour Party's Manifesto was wrong on this question.

At no time was a genuine socialist point of view put forward to counteract the multilateralist position on defence, or to allay the fear of many ordinary workers that Labour was ready to abandon defence altogether.

The most important questions facing workers, however, were those on the economy, jobs and living standards, but the 17 years of post-war Labour governments hung over this part of the campaign like a pall of black smoke. Faced with an enormous economic crisis, Labour's economic strategy unfortunately offered only a rehash of old and discredited policies.

The reforms outlined in Labour's manifesto, *The New Hope for Britain*, were never in question. Who would argue with promises to "rebuild British industry", "create a fairer Britain", raise child benefits by £2 per week, uprate pensions, increase expenditure on the Health Service by 3%, improve the personal services, spend more on education, freeze rents for a year, and so on?

The problem was that workers on the doorstep were sceptical as to whether these policies could be carried out by Labour. "How will it be paid for?", people were asking.

Labour's continued emphasis on borrowing, devaluation and spending our way out of the crisis raised the spectre of a massive expansion in public expenditure but without the economic base to sustain it.

## 1974-79 cuts remembered by workers

Workers remember the devaluation of the pound by the Labour government in 1967 and the direct effect that had on living standards. They also remember the run on the pound in 1976 and the way in which the Labour government borrowed billions of pounds from the International Monetary Fund, on condition that there were cuts in public expenditure and a stricter incomes policy to hold back living standards.

Labour's strategy of massive deflation, linked to an implicit incomes policy, simply shifted the question of cuts in living standards from one *method* to another, and many workers took the view that even despite the unpopularity of Thatcher, and all the sacrifices, it would be better at least to have a consistent economic strategy and stay with the Tories.

David Basnett, general secretary of the GMBATU and chairman of Trade Unions for a Labour Victory (TULV) has called for a "jump of a generation", for an entirely new, younger leadership for the Party. What is this, if not a tacit admission of the fact that the "old" leaders are too much associated with the discredited policies of previous Labour governments?

The Tories' campaign against "extremism" in the Labour Party has already found an echo in the Labour Party in the aftermath of the election, although it was never the major factor the Tories intended it to be. In those seats where candidates stood on the



same kind of radical socialist policies as are outlined in *Militant*, the campaigns were models of organisation, enthusiasm and socialist crusading.

Completely against the national trend there was a swing to the Labour Party in Liverpool of 2%, due in no small measure to the influence of *Militant* supporters in that city, where Terry Fields was elected as MP in Liverpool Broadgreen. In Bradford North the party fought a campaign which was stronger and more vigorous than any for generations, and only lost the seat as a result of the vote splitting of 'deselected' MP Ben Ford.

In many constituencies where the right-wing of the Labour Party dominate there were no comparable campaigns—no meetings, sometimes not even leaflets or canvasses. If the



In 1981 towns and cities in England were rocked by riots. Social unrest may develop again in the late 1980s as a result of Tory policies





Coming soon  
**LANDSLIDE...**  
 of discontent

Labour Party had fought nationally with the same degree of organisation, with the same policy, determination and resolve as was demonstrated in places like Bradford North, Liverpool Broadgreen, Coventry South East and Brighton Kempdown, then it would have been swept into government.

### Foot "bitter" over SDP

Michael Foot, it has been reported, is "bitterly critical" of the treacherous role played by the renegades who split from the Labour Party to form the SDP. The bitterness is a bit late in coming. It seems that for far too long Labour's leadership, including Michael Foot, have been far too ready to appease anyone on the far right threatening to leave the party—like Ben Ford, Bob Mellish and so on—and far too ready to attack the left.

Labour's rank and file will not overlook the fact that only weeks before the General Election was called the attention of the right-wing NEC, supported by Michael Foot, was wholly centred on a campaign to expel five Labour Party members with more than 120 years of membership between them.

The right wing have spent the best part of the last four years barnstorming the country making speeches against left-wingers and the *Militant* in particular. Whenever right-wing MPs split to join the SDP, it was a case of "please don't go", but when it came to *Militant* supporters, loyal, hardworking members of the Labour Party, no effort was spared to heap abuse and calumny upon them.

It is significant that the Labour Party—least of all the right wing—conducted no serious campaign in this election against the SDP. The reason lies in the fact that the policies of the right wing are virtually indistinguishable from those of the SDP.

Indeed, the campaign of the labour and trade union right-wing against the left has been grist to the mill for the Tories' press who have gleefully siezed on Callaghan's speech, on Frank Chapple's support for an SDP candidate, and on other incidents to highlight the divisions within the Labour Party.

It is a pity that Michael Foot's "bitterness" did not extend, during the campaign, to a denunciation of those like Callaghan and Frank Chapple who did so much damage to the Labour Party. Like Chapple, Lords Lever and Shackleton announced their support for an SDP candidate—Roy Jenkins—but then calmly announced that they were staying in the Labour Party! Where were the ringing denunciations of these people from Labour's leadership?

### Tories' £20m campaign

The Tories' enormous £20 million campaign, backed by the overwhelming majority of Fleet Street, had an effect upon the election, but in the final analysis it was not the decisive effect. That was the lack of a credible programme by the leadership of the Labour Party.

Had the Labour leadership in the last four years pursued policies in the interests of ordinary workers—with the same determination as Thatcher and the Tories showed pursuing policies in the interest of big business—then even the most vicious and slanderous campaign of the press would have fallen on deaf ears, especially if this Labour campaign had been backed by a mass membership, able to discuss and convince workers on the doorstep.

Those right-wingers who, at Labour Party conference, suggested that an election could be won on the basis of "the TULV and television", dispensing altogether with the "foot soldiers" of the Constituency Labour Parties, have

been proved to be tragically wrong.

What then is the future that faces society and the labour movement? Their Parliamentary majority may increase the confidence of Thatcher and big business in the short term, but the strength of the Tory government is largely ephemeral.

The real class balance of forces is not judged by Parliamentary arithmetic, but by deeper, underlying economic and social developments. Every new set of economic statistics seems to add more to the already enormous pile of evidence demonstrating the decline of British industry, and these facts and figures will mean more in the long run than the new government majority.

In the week before the election, tucked away on the inside pages of the newspapers, were comments on a report by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, entitled *The De-Industrialisation of Britain*. Manufacturing in the United Kingdom, the report explains, has fallen to become a lower proportion of Gross Domestic Product than in any of the other main industrial countries, the United States, France, Japan and West Germany.

From 1960 to 1970 the growth rate in manufacturing averaged 3.3% per annum in the United Kingdom but in the decade after, the average increase was of the order of 0.1%—and in both cases these figures were below those of Britain's international competitors. The report points out that over the last decade Britain has moved from a situation where manufacturing exports were around 1½ times the value of manufactured imports, to one where Britain had a deficit in manufacturing trade in 1982.

As has been pointed out in other issues of *Militant*, in the last four years investment in plant and factories in the manufacturing industry has declined by 36%, while the amount invested overseas has been £29 billion. Yet on the day before the election new figures released from the Central Statistical Office indicated that this trend is actually increasing.

Capital outflows in the first quarter of this year were reported to have doubled to £2,400 million from £1,300

million. "Overseas investment in stocks and shares totalled £1,600 million", commented *The Times* economic correspondent, "continuing the rise of financial assets abroad sparked off by the abolition of exchange controls four years ago."

### Growing economic crisis

It will be less possible, as the 1980s wear on, to paper over the crisis of the British economy by means of oil revenues. The decline in the economy will inevitably force the Tories to put even greater pressure on living standards and to introduce deeper cuts in public expenditure.

In the anger and bitterness that workers already have for the government the Tories are building up a huge reservoir of social unrest. The inner city areas, burdened with unemployment, deprivation, slum housing, crime, vandalism, despair and frustration, will have all their social and economic problems worsened in the course of the next four or five years. Millions more will be drawn into the Tories' frustrating poverty trap, and many will hit out at the system.

But social unrest will not be confined to the inner cities. Many in industry and offices will be forced to take action to defend their jobs and living standards more militantly and forcefully than in the last four years.

Paradoxically, a weak recovery, albeit a temporary one, will encourage many workers to switch their attentions to the industrial plane after being frustrated in the political plane. There will probably be big struggles in the coming period over jobs, for example in the coal industry, in British Telecom, on the railways, in British shipbuilding and struggles will inevitably break out also over wages.

Increasing upheaval in industry will inevitably lead to major confrontations between the government and the trade unions, leading, even despite the leadership of the TUC, to the possibility of a general strike. One thing is absolutely

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

# THE LESSONS OF LABOUR'S DEFEAT



FROM PAGE 9

certain: the next four or five years will not be years of relative industrial tranquility as they have been in the last four years. Before the Tories are defeated—in the next general election—they will go through many “winters” and also “summers” of discontent.

## Future Tory splits

The election of such a big majority will usher in a period of big splits in the Tory Party itself, as the Thatcher government comes up against social and industrial unrest and economic crisis on a far larger scale than in 1979-83. Even a section of the capitalist class are apparently alarmed at the possibility of a massive Tory majority that would consolidate the intransigent monetarist right wing and warned against Thatcher surrounding herself with her own acolytes in the new Cabinet.

As was the case in the summer of 1981, criticisms of Thatcher's policies will surface again inside the Tory Party, and on a far wider scale. The so-called “wets”, always more sensitive to social instability and industrial collapse, will be forced to come out against Thatcher in the crisis months that lie ahead.

The Tory Party will begin to show the first signs of a deep split. The right wing, the Monday Club, the Young Tories—all the doorstep racials and National Front fellow travellers, will move in the direction of out-and-out totalitarianism. They will want to measure the success of their economic and social policies only by the extent to which workers are beaten and intimidated into accepting a return to 1930s conditions.

“Short of Britain achieving an exports supremacy comparable to Japan's in Asia,” Peregrine Worsthorne blithely commented in the *Sunday Telegraph* before the election, “millions of unskilled workers will never again have anything worthwhile to do, if worthwhile continues to be measured in terms of money or wages.”

“The only hope for the unskilled,” he continued, “lies in their not being bloody-minded; in their making the best morally of a bad economic job. And it is here that Conservatism, properly understood, has a crucial role to play; in helping to recreate a society fit for ‘helots’ to live in, by which I mean a culture where serving is not seen as subservience but as an activity and carries with it a dignity, honour and job satisfaction transcending material reward.”

Thus Peregrine Worsthorne reflects all the conceit, arrogance and contempt for “common mortals” shown by this ultra-monarchist, reactionary wing of the Tory Party. “After all,” he says, “economically speaking the role of the masses will be parasitic. Robots are more efficient than human beings.”

On the other hand, the so-called “left” of the Tory Party will recoil in horror at the prospect of social unrest and will grope instead towards an accord with the SDP/Liberal Alliance, perhaps even with Labour's right wing—with those people, in other words, with whom they have an affinity—in pursuit of more “pragmatic” policies.

At a later stage, the Tory Party could split in the same way or even on a greater scale than has the Labour Party.

The SDP/Liberal Alliance has probably seen its high point, as far as general elections are concerned. In the longer term the class polarisation of British society, given the perspective of enormous industrial and social unrest, will inevitably lead to a squeeze on the Alliance, far more than has been the case in this particular election.

## Labour will move left

The labour movement itself will be radically affected by the election, but there will be no major swing to the right inside the Party. On the contrary, it is likely that the rank and file will move further to the left, demanding the same energy and determination in pursuit of socialist policies as Thatcher has shown for her own reactionary policies.

The election of a left-wing majority on the National Executive Committee of the Post Office Engineering Union, John Golding's union, is a pointer to the likely developments inside the trade unions and the Labour Party in the future.

The changes inside the Labour Party will be accelerated above all by the social and industrial events outside it. An ounce of experience is worth a ton of theory. The chronic decline of British capitalism, as well as the general policies of Thatcherism, will have a profoundly politicising effect upon large layers of workers.

In the 1970s many trade unionists, like teachers, nurses, civil servants, firemen, bakers and so on, were involved in strike struggles for the first time in their history. The same process of learning and re-learning will be repeated in the 1980s on a higher scale.

The rapid swings to the right and left in the CPSA will be copied in other white-collar unions, also at present “non-political”, like the teachers' unions, the SCPS, NALGO and so on. Stronger shop floor trade union organisations will be built, despite the anti-trade union laws of the Tories and, sometimes, despite the trade union leaders.

Many lessons as to the purpose and methods of organisation inside the trade unions, learnt by the founders of the movement many decades ago, will have to be learnt all over again in the hard school of experience. The general developments inside the trade union movement will be towards the election of militant leaders, more willing to fight on behalf of their members.

Office and shop-floor representatives will be replaced, especially by younger militants. District and regional committees of trade unions will likewise change in composition. Those trade union leaders who stand in the way will at first be by-passed and then pressure will increase on them for the election of new leaders.

As the Tories try to peddle their own version of trade union democracy in order to establish leaders responsive to big business “public opinion”, they will inadvertently raise the issue of union democracy and the ranks of the trade unions will raise their own demands for the elections of all trade union officials and for officials to be on the same wages as the members they represent. In other words, they will demand leaders who are completely responsive to their needs and struggles.

## Right wing will be isolated

Profound changes are on the order of the day as far as the trade unions are concerned and these will have an inevitable effect on the Labour Party. Many thousands of workers will not rest content with trade union activity but will draw the logical conclusion that it is necessary for them to get involved also in the Labour Party.

An influx of new working class members will only further increase the



POEU members demonstrating over the Tories plans to privatise British Telecoms. These workers may be in the forefront of the fight against Tory policies as Thatcher re-introduces the bill to sell off BT. Inset: John Golding, POEU sponsored MP, may be under pressure from the new left majority on the POEU executive, over his witch-hunting activities.

trend to the left in the Labour Party and further increase the isolation of the right wing.

The witch-hunters in the Party, who have only paused briefly while they go through the formalities of the general election, will want to get back to business as soon as possible. The general secretary of the UCW, Alan Tuffin, has already implied that it is necessary now to get rid of the “Militants” from the Labour Party.

There will be strident demands from the right wing, and whimpers from the faint-hearts on the “soft left”, for all the constitutional and policy changes of the last four years to be reversed. Attempts will be made to restrict the process of re-selection and to shift the party to the right. But the conclusion drawn by the right, and some soft lefts, that policies must be shifted rightwards to “match the electorate” are fundamentally false.

On the contrary, genuine socialist ideas, Marxist ideas, will be more relevant in the coming years than ever before. On the basis of their experiences under Thatcher, some workers will even go direct from Toryism to Marxism.

The witch-hunts against the left and *Militant* supporters, unpopular even before the election amongst Labour's rank and file, will fail utterly to stem the growth of Marxist ideas. The defeat and the abysmal performance of the right wing will only accelerate the moves to the left and increase the support for Marxist ideas.

More and more workers will come to the conclusion advocated by the *Militant* that only socialist policies offer a way out of the enormous crisis faced by society. Tinkering with the capitalist system no longer permits the introduction of permanent reforms or improvements in living standards for workers. On a capitalist basis there is no future for British society except greater uncertainty, greater instability, and greater insecurity.

This election has been an important turning point for society in general and for the labour movement in particular. There is greater volatility in the electorate than there has been for generations, as millions of workers look for a way out of the impasse facing society.

## Workers looking for a way out

Millions of voters, in supporting the Alliance, have marched into a dead end, but in entering the political *cul-de-sac* in the first place they were looking for a way out, for a change of policy and change of direction. Only socialist policies can offer such a change of direction and a way out.

The lesson for the rank and file of the Labour Party is not that socialist ideas should be shelved or watered down but that they should be fought for all the more vigorously, first of all inside the Party, and then among the electorate as a whole.

The Labour Party has suffered a serious defeat in this election but it is not one from which it cannot recover. The very creation and building up of the Labour Party involved periods of ebb as well as flow. Victories and advances were always interspersed with periods of defeats, despair and even reaction.

In 1924, the Tories came to office, after an election dominated by the notorious red scare around the “Zinoviev letter”, with a parliamentary majority of over 200. Yet within less than two years a general strike rocked the capitalist class and within five years Labour was returned as the biggest party.

The recovery and renewal of the Labour Party is assured. But that will be all the more certain if the ranks of the movement understand the reasons for the defeat this time, and re-arm themselves with socialist policies for a different campaign next time.

## GREECE



# Greek workers fight anti-strike laws

By our correspondent in Greece

**ANSWERING** the call of their trade union organisations, tens of thousands of Greek workers staged 24 or 48 hour strikes on the last two days of May and in the beginning of June.

The strikes were called to protest against a bill being discussed in parliament, containing a clause that effectively denies the right to strike for 250,000 workers in the public sector.

Over 30,000 bankworkers came out. 10,000 port workers from Piraeus were joined by others from transport and construction. Trolley bus drivers, shop assistants, bakers, doctors and a host of white collar workers joined in.

In Athens, demonstrations of 100,000 workers were held outside parliament and the Ministry of Labour. In Salonica 10,000 workers marched to the Ministry for Northern Greece, presenting a demand for the bill to be withdrawn.

Workers have been shocked and angered by this latest slap in the face by the 'socialist' PASOK government. Although the bill is aimed at workers in publicly-owned companies, the workers in the private sector realise that they will be next and are equally opposed to the government's proposals.

The GSEE (Greek TUC) voted to support the bill with only a few minor reservations that were accepted by the government. This decision prompted the resignation of the GSEE president. The members of both the 'communist' parties—the pro-Moscow KKE and the Euro-Communist Party of the Interior resigned from the GSEE.

Two PASOK members spoke out against the offending article 4 of the bill, one



calling for a united struggle against it and the other saying that if there was no fight today, then tomorrow they'd find themselves in a concentration camp!

Articles 1-3 of the bill deal with the principles and the composition of the management boards of enterprises either totally or 51% state owned.

Whereas these have real support in the country, article 4 has aroused enormous indignation.

Article 4 states that local trade union organisations can only call a strike if they receive a 51% majority from the members after a postal ballot. Union Federations would have to call a special conference to take a decision to strike but if 10% of the membership are opposed to strike action they can demand a special meeting. This special meeting must then call a conference and if this special conference decides in favour of a strike the federation must then ballot the membership!

The present union practice

is that a union calls for strike action if this proposal receives a simple majority at a meeting where at least 51% of its paid-up members are present. This practice was given legal blessing last year in a law that PASOK hailed

**“A split is developing within PASOK, with the ranks demanding real socialist change and the leadership marching the other way.”**

as an enormous step forward for the labour movement.

The fanfare that greeted the proposals to democratise public companies obscured for many people the issue of the right to strike. The problem of how and by whom state enterprises are run has long been a major issue in Greece.

Describing the proposals as a great advance in terms of democracy and socialism, the government claim that article 4 will give more power to the rank and file of the

movement. They use the deceitful arguments of the right-wing everywhere, that strikes are caused by “unrepresentative minorities”.

But it is clear that the government aims to give effective power of disruption

to a 10% minority and to embroil union organisations in lengthy, time-consuming procedures. If, after observing all the procedures, a union still manages to get the membership to support a strike, then precious time will have been given to the government to prepare for confrontation.

The electricians' union, controlled by PASOK, issued a leaflet which firmly answers the government claims. Whilst supporting articles 1-3 of the bill, the

union wants to know why the actual content and implementation of the proposals will be left to future presidential and ministerial decrees. What will be the content of these decrees? Why the secrecy?

Angered that the government didn't even bother to consult the GSEE let alone the rest of the movement, the union declares article 4 to be totally unacceptable. Not only does it attempt to abolish the right to strike, it would also cause splits and divisions within the trade union movement.

Pointing out that laws cannot abolish strike struggles, the leaflet explains that article 4 will only increase social tension. And why, the leaflet asks, will articles 1-3 only be implemented by decrees after 8 months whereas article 4 comes into effect immediately?

There are two reasons why the government has introduced article 4. Firstly, the economic situation is worsening.

The Greek CBI has stated that investment for 1983 will

Photo:

Above and below—in defiance of their union leaders and the 'socialist' PASOK government tens of thousands of rank and file Greek workers struck and demonstrated against proposed anti-strike legislation.

rified did the 'socialist' ministers become that they threatened to declare a state of emergency in the affected areas and place the strikers under military discipline!

Having found it impossible to use the members of unions controlled by PASOK as strike-breakers, the government has had no other course but to try and use the law. These measures have been forced upon them by the logic of their position of trying to maintain a diseased capitalist system.

Reforms were promised when PASOK was elected but only counter-reforms are being delivered. Struggles of the workers to force the government to implement its programme are met with threats and attempts at legal restrictions.

The attitude of the labour movement is “Yes to Socialisation—No to Article 4”. The programme of socialisation could be an enormous step-forward. But even then the proposals outlined in the bill give the working class only a minority consultative say.

What is required is genuine control and management of the companies by the labour movement. But even this would not be enough. As long as major industries remain in private hands the public corporations would be forced to serve the interests of a bankrupt, crisis-torn capitalism.

No section of the socialised enterprises could develop alone, neither the health service, nor education, nor public transport. The nationalisation of the monopoly companies is necessary as well. Only this will enable a development of the economy in the interests of society.

If the government continues its present course then enormous social explosions are being prepared. One unpopular decision will inevitably follow another.

Papandreu's government is rapidly burning up its last reserves of good-will in the working class. During the April strikes he used the issue of US military bases as a means of appealing for national unity.

He thundered against American blackmail and raised the hopes of millions that at last the bases were going to go. In doing so Papandreu has prepared bigger problems for himself.

The bases will stay and while Papandreu is desperately trying to negotiate some face-saving formula, agreement will have to be reached this summer. The continuing presence of the bases will be another nail in his political coffin.

The whole issue of socialisation has raised the struggle to a higher level. Workers are more and more discussing the issues of nationalisation and how nationalised concerns are run.

In the coming struggles trade union demands will become political demands, the Greek workers will seek to transform their organisations. What they need above all is a lead.

A split is developing within PASOK, with the ranks demanding real socialist change and the leadership marching the other way. Only the Marxist wing of PASOK are offering a way forward.

# No peace in the Lebanon

By  
George Collins

**A YEAR after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, there are new threats of a major war, as new tensions build up between Israel and Syria, and within Lebanon itself.**

The war effectively partitioned Lebanon, destroyed the PLO as an independent military force, exposed the utter impotence of the various Arab regimes and also increased the class divisions within Israel itself.

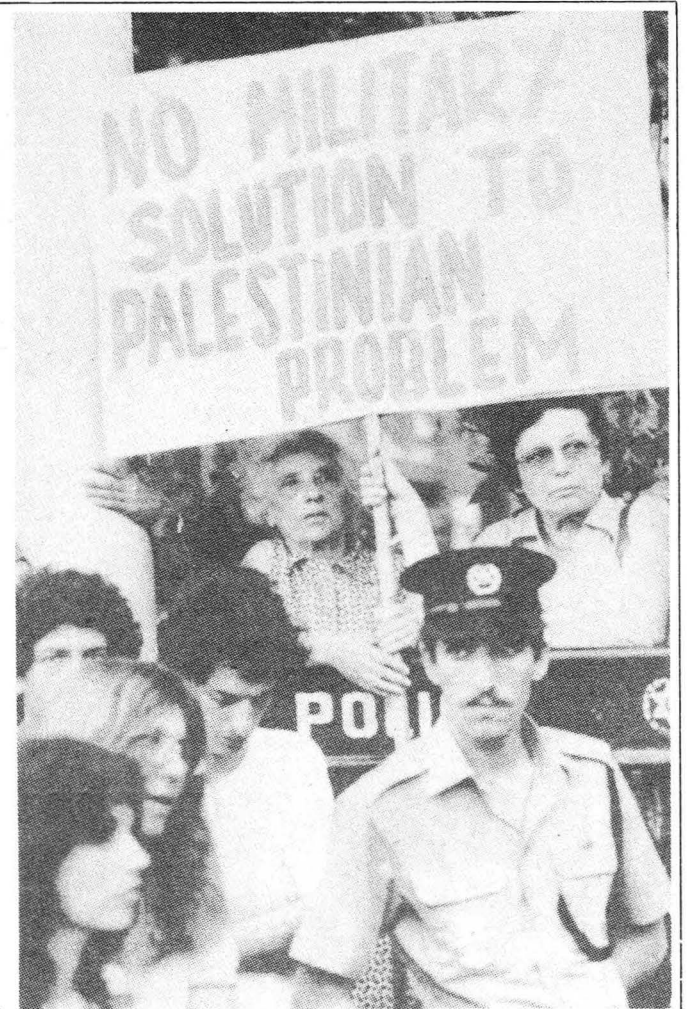
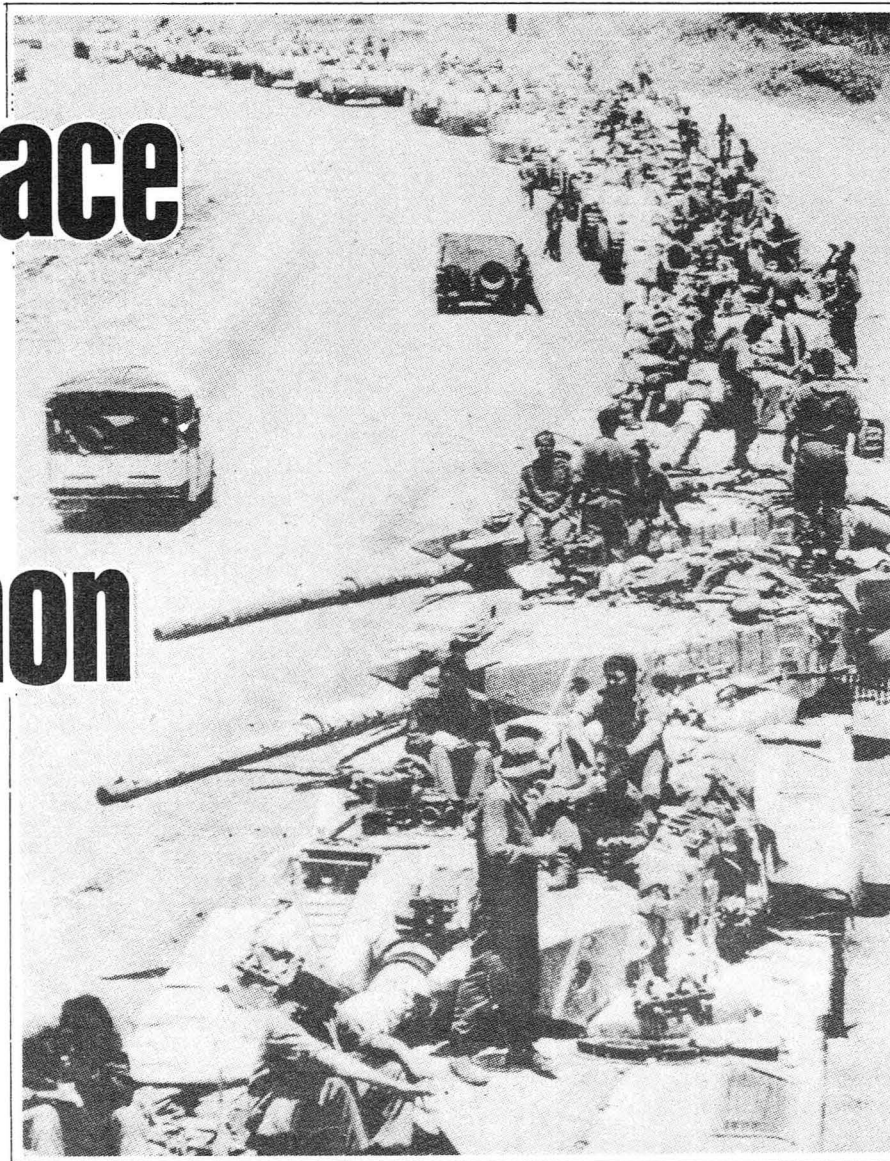
But despite its huge cost in lives and suffering, it has done nothing to remove the basic causes of political and military conflict - chronic economic underdevelopment, in the Arab countries especially, mass poverty, national and class oppression, especially of the Palestinians, and the bankruptcy of landlord and capitalist rule.

Israel invaded Lebanon on the pretext of ending Palestinian guerilla activity across the frontier, but once in Lebanon, it was clear that Begin intended to drive out all PLO forces and establish a stable Lebanese regime, tied to Israel, in order to weaken Palestinian resistance to the expropriation of the West Bank.

But the economic and political causes of social upheaval in Lebanon could not be blown out of existence by Israeli guns and rockets. The authority of the Gemayel regime, installed by Israel, is almost non-existent. Most of Lebanon remains occupied by Syria and Israel.

Even in the areas nominally under Lebanese control, armed struggle is once again flaring up between bitterly divided national groups representing different class and social interests, principally between the left wing Druze militias and right wing Maronite Christians.

Reagan's 'peace plan' for Lebanon is, ostensibly, to arrange the withdrawal of foreign troops and to prop up the Gemayel regime. But the 'withdrawal' agreement between Gemayel and Israel involves, in fact, the withdrawal of only the



Hundreds of thousands of Israelis have opposed their government's intervention in Beirut. This year, on the anniversary of the invasion, 60,000 turned out in a demonstration in Tel Aviv.

June 1982. An Israeli armoured column pauses in the march north to Beirut.

Syrians, with a continuing Israeli presence in the south of Lebanon. Seeing this as a threat to their own strategic interests, the Syrians have rejected this. The Syrian regime sees no reason why it should withdraw from Lebanon, leaving an Israeli presence there—even if it is in the form of Israeli-organised Christian militias—and leaving the Syrian Golan Heights still annexed to Israel.

## Russian military aid

The Syrians probably calculate that Israel is unlikely to launch a major new war at present. Soviet military aid to the Syrian regime has been considerably stepped up.

The Israeli invasion and the Western 'peace-keeping' forces in Lebanon have virtually turned Beirut into a NATO base. The Russian bureaucracy is concerned not so much with helping the Arab or Palestinian masses as with restoring the strategic balance between themselves and US imperialism in the region.

The Syrian regime itself can not seriously hope to challenge Israel's military predominance but it is probably emboldened by the unprecedented social tensions that have been building up in Israel that are limiting Begin's ability to wage war.

The war in Lebanon brought about an unprecedented degree of opposition in Israel, even among serving soldiers, splitting society right down the middle.

In addition, the gruesome massacre of Palestinian refugees in Beirut last year by Begin's Christian allies sent a wave of revulsion through the Jewish as well as the Arab sections in Israel,

and sparked off demonstrations by hundreds of thousands against the ruthless foreign policy of the Begin government.

With 500 Israeli soldiers already killed in Lebanon, it would be very difficult for Begin to risk massive new casualties in what would be, under present circumstances, a very unpopular war.



The plight of the population in Lebanon has worsened.

At the same time, the worsening crisis of Israeli capitalism has been pushing the working class into a new period of militant struggle. For the Israeli workers, Jews as well as Arabs, the bankruptcy of the economy inevitably means sharpening attacks on jobs, wages and living conditions.

It is this situation that has enabled the Syrian military to take up an apparently bold posture and even to fire on Israeli aircraft without provoking devastating reprisals. It cannot be excluded, however, that continuing skirmishes with the Syrians and Palestinians over a period of time could

lead to a change of mood in Israel, that would once again enable Begin to seek an escape from his problems in war.

If Reagan's hopes for capitalist stability in Lebanon are in ruins, however, his plan to 'solve' the Palestinian question has fared even worse. Reagan had hoped, on the basis of Israel's crushing victory, to pressurise the PLO leadership through the intermediary of right-wing Arab rulers into dropping the demand for Palestinian independence.

Instead, he put forward the 'compromise' of a Palestinian 'homeland' in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip - at present occupied by Israel - under effective Israeli control and 'in association' with the reactionary King Hussein of Jordan.

While the PLO leadership toyed with this idea and Arafat himself certainly favoured it, Begin rejected it outright. In the end, the PLO leaders were only prevented by pressure from their own ranks from giving Hussein a blank cheque to negotiate away their rights.

## PLO deeply divided

In reality, the PLO is deeply divided and the leadership is completely at a loss as to how to proceed in the face of Israeli intransigence. Their traditional patrons, reactionary Arab rulers, are in disarray, all afraid for their own regime's stability more than anything.

Pressure from the ranks has compelled PLO leader Arafat to withdraw from open involvement with King Hussein and pushed him closer towards the Syrian regime. Yet despite all the recent more radical rhetoric, Arafat can see no 'realistic'

alternative except to seek a compromise with US imperialism, in the hope that the US will persuade Israel to make concessions.

Dissatisfaction with the bankrupt PLO leadership among Palestinian guerillas has now broken out into open mutiny by senior officers in Arafat's own Al Fatah organisation (the largest under the PLO umbrella).

These tensions inside the PLO reflect the need felt by activists for an alternative to the policies of the leadership. The dissident leaders, however, only stand for a more militant, pro-Syrian variant of the same failed policies of diplomatic manoeuvres, guerilla strikes and terrorism that have strengthened Begin in Israel and have led the PLO into its present impasse.

All the policies put forward by the PLO leadership have been proved again and again to be false. On a capitalist basis, hemmed by the entrenched power of the Israeli and Arab ruling classes, there is absolutely no way forward for the Palestinian struggle, nor for the millions of workers and peasants trapped in hopeless poverty throughout the Middle East.

Bold socialist policies are needed to mobilise the working class at the head of all the oppressed for the overthrow of capitalist rule and the conquest of state power.

On this basis alone could exploitation be ended, the burdens of poverty lifted and the national aspirations of the Palestinians and other oppressed peoples accommodated in states of their own, linked together in a socialist federation of Middle Eastern States. It is not this revolutionary programme but the 'pragmatic' manoeuvres and guerrilla adventures of the PLO

leadership which are hopelessly utopian and doomed to defeat.

The potential for mass mobilisation has been demonstrated repeatedly among the working people of the different countries, in particular the Arab workers and youth on the West Bank. Early in March, massive protests were triggered off in several West Bank towns by attacks on Arabs by Jewish extremists.

Barricades were thrown up, schools went on strike, and, in scenes reminiscent of the Soweto uprising in South Africa, the youth attacked the Israeli military with stones.

## Socialist federation

The very fragmented and explosive nature of Arab resistance, however, reflects the absence of conscious socialist organisation. Clear socialist leadership, based on the organised workers, is vital to develop the magnificent potential for struggle into a concerted movement that will sweep away the forces of reaction in Israel as well as the Arab states.

Socialist governments in the Arab countries, appealing on a class basis to the Israeli workers, could cut across the fear of Arab reaction which is the breeding ground of Zionism, and pave the way for a mass-based socialist movement in Israel. Only the overthrow of capitalism in Israel can offer the Jewish working people a way out of the hopeless trap of crisis and war in which they are caught by Zionism at the moment.

With Israel and the Arab states in a socialist federation a new era of peace and social development would open up in the Middle East that would inspire the workers' movement in all countries.

## Rape Crisis Centres

Dear Friends

I am responding to the article in *Militant* of May 13 1983 about violence to women.

I am writing not only because I have an involvement, albeit marginal, in the Liverpool Rape Crisis Centre, but because I have spent my share of hours in a police station ten years ago after being attacked at knife-point in East London.

What would your response be at that moment, after twelve hours in the police station, no food, no sleep, etc?

I was not politically active at that time and would not have registered or under-

stood until much, much later that what was needed was better street lighting etc. etc.

What I needed was a hand to hold, advice on how to deal with the police, advice about checks for STDs, someone to allay my fears of pregnancy.

A Rape Crisis Centre would and does provide all these things, albeit on a part-time basis, or staffed with volunteers.

Women need help here and now, it is important, but not enough, to plan and make demands for the future.

Any woman who might become anti-men after rape would sadly do so because of the experience, not because of a Rape Crisis Centre.

Yours sincerely  
Katy

## A quick blast on the loudspeaker

Dear *Militant*

I am writing to say how shocked/disgusted I am at the horrendous Tory landslide. I cannot believe that after one term of disastrous Tory government, in the North East of all places the Tories should have gained a 2.4% swing.

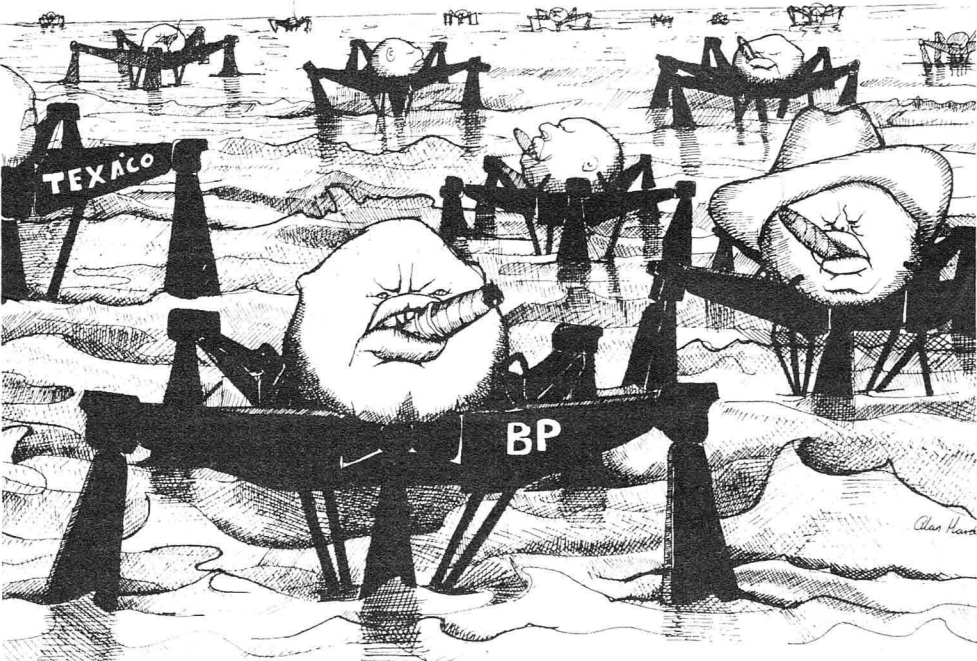
Maybe this might prompt some Labour Party members to get of their backsides and fight the Tories rather than *Militant* supporters in their own party.

I certainly wouldn't call one leaflet through the door and a quick blast on the loudspeaker the day

before the election a very passionate or vigorous campaign.

Moderation lies with the SDP who will be dead and buried as soon as a really strong socialist Labour Party comes into being.

Yours fraternally  
Karen Atkinson



## British economy —North Sea oiled

Dear Comrades

The decline of British capitalism continues and if anything that decline is accelerating.

British capitalism is on a drip feed of North Sea oil without which there would be a balance of payments crisis and a run on the

pound, followed by even more deflationary policies which would hit the living standards of the working class.

This in fact is on the cards. By 1986 North Sea oil production will have passed its peak and each year the revenues from it will fall by about £1,000 million per year. At best, the production level may stabilise for much of the 1990s at around half

to two-thirds the level which is now being achieved.

It does not take a genius to see that on the basis of capitalism, catastrophe is ahead. James Connolly sums up best how I feel. "The day has passed for patching up the capitalist system. It must go."

Yours fraternally  
Alan Turner  
Leeds West CLP

## What do we want...

Dear Comrades

I would just like to reply to a letter written in issue 650 by a Newcastle Poly student who seems to think it would be better for the movement if the Tories were returned to office, as greater struggles between the classes would ensue, possibly resulting in a general strike, which he states is "what we all really want".

*Militant* fights for the return of a Labour government, which will get rid of this hated Tory administration, and bring in measures to alleviate some of the devastation that Thatcher has caused.

Marxists support any reforms that benefit the

working class, but point out that those reforms will be attacked under a crisis-ridden capitalist system, and will eventually be clawed back by the bosses, unless a Labour government initiates a socialist plan of production.

A Labour government must take drastic measures to break the power of big business and 'capital' if it is in any way going to solve the problems facing working people.

Only when the mass of workers see that a purely reformist policy cannot offer any long-term solutions, will they look to more radical and revolutionary policies to take them out of the crisis and move forward towards a socialist society.

Yours fraternally  
R Murray  
W Derby (Liverpool)

## 38p a police pint!

Dear *Militant*

Just the other week after having completed the Oldham Police fun run I had the opportunity to see for myself the class division in the police force, with the officers and sergeants having their own mess away from the other ranks.

The conditions they enjoy include a large lounge with two snooker tables, plush seats, and a well stocked bar with beer at 38p a pint!

I don't decry anyone these conditions, but it does go to show how working people are being ripped off in clubs

and pubs.

Not until the profit system is ended can all workers enjoy the benefits of society.

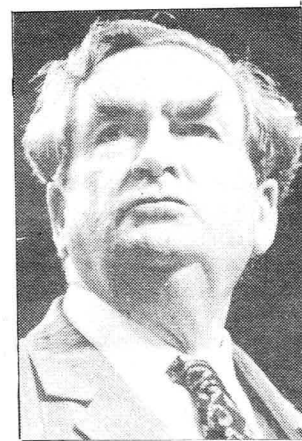
Keith Albison  
Bakers' Union member

ED: *Militant* apologises to Keith for giving him a quick sex-change in attributing his review of the Bakers' conference to Kath Albison. Sorry Keith, but don't stop writing.

## Is this what we want?

Dear *Militant*

In your article What We Stand For, item 11 reads:



## Toripol

Dear Comrades

We were in the shopping centre with *Militant* at Wallsend when Healey visited the shipyards.

A pollster was also there. She did not approach us but I subsequently got into a political discussion—and she turned out to be the chairman of the local Conservative Party!

Yours fraternally  
Daisy Rawling  
Newcastle

## One law for the right...

Dear Comrades

The manifesto of the Labour Party is categorical against any form of incomes policy—the *Militant* too is against such disastrous policies.

The manifesto of the Labour Party is clearly in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament and a nuclear-free Britain. Similarly the *Militant* advocates a unilateralist policy.

Ex-Prime Minister Callaghan, however, is in favour of an incomes policy and against unilateralism.

The five members of the *Militant* editorial board are not eligible for membership of the Labour Party even though they are outspoken and persistent supporters and defenders of Labour's policy.

So much for the "democratic" traditions of the "old-guard" right wing!

Yours fraternally  
John Armstrong  
Aldershot & Farnborough LPYS

## No joke

Dear Comrades

Who does Callaghan think he's kidding?

He must be worth more votes to the Tories than Saatchi and Saatchi with his Cardiff speech criticising Labour's defence policy (25 May).

It's about time so-called leaders of the Labour Party started to defend the policies of the Labour Party instead of thinking they are above the party.

When will Callaghan, Healey etc. go running to their pals in the SDP and Tory Party and leave the socialist party to real socialists?

Yours fraternally  
Thomas Kerr  
Govan LP  
and TGWU 7/200

## Richpol

Dear Comrades

Have you ever wondered where the election pollsters get their biased results?

Today I was stopped by a Mori pollster at a tiny shopping area on the edge of the most exclusive part of Poole.

In fact, Canford Cliffs is probably the richest square mile outside of London! Recently the local Conservatives won an award for recruiting two-thirds of the electorate into the Tory Party.

Just your typical average scroungers, with a million or two or three in the bank. Some sample!

Comradely  
Julie Harris  
Poole CLP

**THATCHER'S BRITAIN:  
A GUIDE TO THE RUINS**  
£1.50 + 20p postage

A packed factual guide to what the Tory government has done to working people. From World Socialist Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

"Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies... This should be done through an Enabling Bill, with compensation based only on proven need."

No compensation should be paid under any circumstances.

If these profiteers, who have for years luxuriated and junketed off the profits raised by the workers, find themselves in need, then they should apply for relief to the DHSS, like so many millions of their fellow citizens now have to do.

Perhaps then we would hear less about "scroungers" and "parasites" from the capitalist press.

Any compensation would

# Conference Reports



## No to slave labour Mass Demonstration and Rally

in support of Asian Textile Workers  
strike at Aire Valley Yarns Ltd.



**Saturday, 18th June, 1983**  
Coal Hill Lane, Farsley, Pudsey, W. Yorkshire.  
Assemble: 3.00pm.

AS THE Aire Valley Yarns dispute in West Yorkshire reaches its fourteenth week, the strikers have called a mass demonstration for this Saturday, June 18.

The workers came out on strike in March after the management sacked shop steward Liaquat Ali who, with the 22 other Asian workers, had been trying to organise a union.

A union was desperately needed—the workers are paid £1.02 an hour for a 60 to 72 hour week with overtime and weekend working including Sundays compulsory. Health and safety levels in this textile factory are appalling—it has been described as a Victorian sweat shop.

The hard nosed management are using scabs to try and break the strike.

Scab wagons have been

driven at pickets, a steward's car tyres were anonymously slashed, and strikers have received anonymous death threats over the phone.

Support is coming in from the labour movement — COHSE, NUPE, UCATT, AUEW, NALGO, NUT, ASTMS and NATFHE have all sent donations and support and at the annual conference of the textile trade group of the TGWU, a collection raised £127.

But these workers are fighting against all the odds. They need all the labour movement support they can get. Join the demonstration on Saturday (details above) and send donations and messages of support to: Aire Valley Yarns Workers' Support Committee, c/o 34 Dirkhill Street, Bradford 7.

## Bakers

### The bosses' price war must be fought

THE DISCOUNT war between the major bakeries was at the forefront of debates which took place at the conference of the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union on 5-8 June. General Secretary Joe Marino explained how in the past this has led to the closure of the major bakery Spillers, widespread redundancies, plant closures, and is now leading to the closure of Co-op bakeries.

Joe Marino said there were three options facing the union: to do nothing; make joint approaches with other food unions to the government and the employers; or industrial action. The first choice was out of the question, he said, the second was the path the executive would take, but the union must be under no illusions that talking alone would solve the issue. If jobs were to be saved, members must be ready to respond with industrial action.

The emphasis at the end of the conference was stated in

two resolutions which were carried overwhelmingly.

In view of the election result resolution 97 had greater importance. It urged TUC co-ordination against anti-trade union laws, non-payment of fines and in the event of any restraint on union funds or the arrest of trade unionist, for the TUC to call a 24-hour general strike as the first step in solidarity action.

This together with the second resolution, 102, which called for the next Labour government to implement Clause IV, should form the basis on which the trade union and labour movement begin the fight-back against the new Thatcher government.

The conference finished on an emotional note as the fraternal delegates from the Irish bakers' union led the singing of all five verses of the Red Flag.

By Gerry Lerner

## ASLEF—Rail Federation now on

ONLY through unity in the rail industry and throughout the labour movement will it be possible to repel the further onslaught from a Tory government in its second term. That was the theme that ran through this year's conference of the train drivers union, ASLEF.

The tone was set by Derrick Fullick, in his presidential address to conference. "During 1982 we stood alone" he said "but that is not to say that fellow trade unionists in the rail industry were unaware of the need for unity. One of the first acts of the newly elected General Secretary of the NUR was to pronounce in clear and unfettered terms the desire of his union to enter into a new relationship with ASLEF."

Bro. Fullick then announced that the inaugural meeting of the Federation of Railway Unions would take



Derrick Fullick

place as soon as the conference finished.

He added "I would say to our colleagues in TSSA—please reconsider your decision you have made not to join the Federation."

These views were fully supported by the new NUR General Secretary Jimmy Knapp when, in a historic event, he addressed the

ASLEF conference.

"You will never hear me stand and attack publically a sister trade union whether it be in the rail industry or elsewhere."

Commenting on the forthcoming election for Labour leader Bro Knapp said that a new leader must mean a new start and the old guard must step aside. He also hoped that the election would take place without a witch-hunt.

When Tony Benn addressed the conference he made the point that "eight and a half million people voted for a socialist programme, the most radical presented by the Labour Party. That is a bedrock of support to build on."

He added, "Don't be discouraged. We are enormously stonger than we were in 1931 or 1935. We must be a beacon of hope for the future."

## GMBATU

By a Militant Reporter

THE FIRST Congress of the newly amalgamated General, Municipal and Boilermakers' Union was cut short to allow delegates and officers to get back to their areas for the last few days of the election campaign.

Although all the branch resolutions had been taken off the agenda—in the interests of saving time (and

avoiding controversy!)—nevertheless, the Executive's own statements marked a considerable shift in policy.

Most notable was the commitment to fight for a statutory minimum wage, after voting against the idea on numerous occasions, including last year's Labour Party Conference and this year's Scottish TUC.

## COHSE

THE DEFEAT of Labour in the general election has cast a shadow over the 1983 COHSE conference. Delegates and visitors are aware of the formidable task they have before them to defend the NHS.

Nevertheless on the first day of conference delegates passed clear policies committing the union to "total opposition to the provisions of the Tebbit act and all other anti-union legislation passed by this government."

Mindful of the massive solidarity that came from workers during last year's pay dispute, conference reaffirmed the principle that "secondary action and effective picketing are an essential and legitimate force of trade union action".

Essential indeed for a group of workers where industrial action is such a sensitive and difficult issue, and where they must rely on fellow workers to assist them to win decent wages and conditions.

Finally the resolution mandated the union representative to TUC General Council to argue for the above policies, and demanded that the "TUC organise the widest possible industrial action in support of any trade union or trade unionist penalised under this legislation." This resolution was passed with a 2 to 1 majority on a card vote, despite opposition from the NEC.

Thatcher's first period of office proved that climb downs are seen as a weakness and only encourage the Tories to go for the kill. In view of the NEC opposition COHSE members must ensure that the mandate demanded by the resolution will be carried out fully by the union's representative on the TUC General Council.

Unfortunately with little debate conference went on to pass a motion later in the day which cuts across the anti-Tebbit resolution. The motion, supported by the NEC, will weaken the ability of branches to defend themselves. It amended the rules so that only the national leadership can "authorise members to take any forms of industrial action whatsoever or to threaten action."

This could delay fatally the response of members to Tory and management attacks.

Amalgamation with NUPE was rejected despite appeals from delegates that it was not about inter-union rivalries but about the very survival of the NHS through unity in action.

Group 81, the Broad Left in COHSE, have made a considerable impact already and will—despite some reverses—go from strength to strength in seeking to build a fighting and socialist union.

A document on shorter working hours was also adopted unanimously, though speakers tended to blame fellow workers for doing overtime and staying on after retirement age rather than linking the fight for a 35-hour week with the demands for higher wages and pensions.

David Basnett (General Secretary) was adamant that Labour's National Economic Assessment was "not about an Incomes Policy". "Incomes policies that see control of wages as the centre of economic policy have always failed..." Bro Basnett was one of the chief architects of Labour's '74-'79 Social Contract. He talked of "strong, effective, socialist planning", "democratic involvement", a "crash programme of public spending" etc. but failed to explain that none of these is now possible without public ownership of the commanding monopolies in the economy.

Overwhelming concern to see a Labour victory left the witch-hunt undiscussed. It also gave rise to a condemnation—from some unexpected quarters—of the role of the old guard right-wing Labour leaders. In reply to a delegate who derided James Callaghan and Denis Healey for "making our job more difficult", the General Secretary advised, "If people say things you don't like, ignore them with the contempt they deserve."

Next year will see a fuller than usual Congress agenda and more time to hammer out a programme to defeat the Tories.

But GMBATU members must act now to prepare support for resolutions and delegates that will shift the union irreversibly towards a fighting, socialist stance on every issue and towards a fully accountable leadership.

If you want to be actively involved in helping bring this about, contact GMBATU Militant supporters, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

## Railworkers Broad Left

"THE economics of the madhouse"—that's how successful Parliamentary candidate for Liverpool Broadgreen Terry Fields described the Serpell report and the run down of the rail industry.

Terry was speaking at the third conference of the Broad Left of Railway Workers on June 4, speaking alongside Arthur Scargill, President of the NUM.

In conclusion Terry Fields re-affirmed Labour's election pledge to extend the rail network and urged all rail workers to vote Labour on June 9 as means of preserving and expanding the industry.

Pointing to the discrepancy between the published dole figures and the actual number unemployed, Les Kiron for ASLEF explained that fear of the dole was the main reason for low pay settlements and working conditions.

Arthur Scargill expressed anger and disgust at the way trade union leaders often blamed their members for lack of support on many issues. The reason for this he explained was the abject failure of the TUC to get rank and file members involved in political struggle.

The present attacks on the rail, coal, and steel industries, the most powerful industrial trade unions, were a testing ground, and if the Tories were allowed to get away with it, the whole TU movement as we know it would be at risk.

On the Triple Alliance, Arthur emphasised the need for rank and file involvement and not just a talking shop for TU leaders. "The time has come to follow the Tory lead in unity," he said, and he informed the meeting that plans had already been formulated to form one union of Rail, Coal and Steel—700,000 members in all.

"What we need is an injection of red-blooded socialism into our movement," voiced Jack Lanwarne, NUR Divisional Officer in his criticism of the TUC. The dangling carrots of knighthoods and peerages created treachery and impotence within the trade union movement.

The offer in the new pay deal should be treated with derision, said Jack, and urged the negotiating committee to shrug off their "softly-softly" approach and to secure for their members a substantial pay rise without any deals on productivity.

The Broad Left has progressed considerably in the last three years. This can be proved by the fact that in the past year politicians and trade union leaders like Tony Benn and Arthur Scargill have shared our platform and pledged their support.

But all this will be no more than empty rhetoric unless we as activists get out into the depots and mess rooms, to advocate and explain the policies and programme of the Broad Left.

By Danny Bermingham  
(Liverpool No 5 NUR,  
personal capacity)

## EETPU Press Branch split— The dangers ahead

**OVER 400 electricians, members of the EETPU Press Branch, have filled in forms to resign from the union, including the branch leadership with one exception.**

They wish to join the print union SOGAT, such is their anger at the EETPU executive. At a time when there is a crying need for a fight-back against the Tories, the record of the EETPU leadership has certainly been abysmal.

The Fleet Street electricians rightly argue their wages and conditions have been won by their strength and solidarity, not by the 'assistance' from the leadership.

But their move to split from the union is fraught with dangers. Already the EETPU have made it clear that TUC principles will apply—SOGAT will be barred from taking EETPU members without the EETPU leadership's agreement. This appears to have been accepted by SOGAT's joint general secretaries and underwritten by Len Murray.

Previous breakaway moves ended in failure. The T&GWU in the 1950s, led by Arthur Deakin with a rigid right wing control, saw sections of frustrated dockers (with advice from so-called lefts) leave and join the

NASAD.

The following events were a disaster. Dockers were split in all the major ports. There were bitter battles, even brother against brother and relation against relation. The employers were the only ones to benefit. Non-union labour re-appeared in some ports for the first time in many years.

The T&GWU subsequently moved left, while the NASAD moved to the right. The remaining handful of NASAD members have now been absorbed into the T&GWU.

In another instructive episode, the G&MWU, a totally right wing-led union under Lord Cooper, went through a historic battle in Pilkingtons Glass Works in St Helens in 1970.

The open sabotage by Cooper and the right wing in this dispute, the first for 50 years, led many disillusioned shop stewards and militants to leave the G&MWU, and form the Glass Workers Union—again with advice from so-called lefts, who declared the G&MWU a "scab union" that had to be broken.

The majority stayed loyal to the G&MWU. The G&M leadership were forced to give concessions to the rank and file. The TUC enacted the Bridlington Agreement. As a result the Glass Workers Union found itself isolated. In months it

collapsed.

Had they stayed in the G&MWU and fought, the process of democratising the union would have proceeded at a faster pace than it did.

The battles in the EETPU over the introduction of the JIB scheme in the late 1960s also has many lessons. Many thousands of sparks, angry at this reactionary deal, met in London and Coventry to discuss a possible break-away.

Frank Chapple said of this, "The organisation we have got has taken fifty years to achieve. Anyone who imagines that a breakaway can be established in contracting out is living in a fools paradise" (*Times* 18 Oct 1967).

For once Chapple was right. So today, the Fleet Street electricians may find themselves in a similar blind alley. If they are unable to join SOGAT (which would cause problems with wage rates and differentials etc.) then with split chapels (branches), which are already apparent, there is a danger that the breaking of closed shop agreements could take place. This would benefit no one but the employers. Also the right-wing EETPU leadership will be looking for any advantage for itself that can end the Press Branch's continuous opposition to its rule.

The setting up of a break-

away organisation—which ironically could shelter under Tebbit's reactionary union legislation—would be equally as disastrous as history has shown.

The immediate demand must be one for unity—indeed at the last Press Branch meeting many expressed the need to build bridges to draw the membership together.

Those resigning feel it impossible to carry on in the EETPU, but as difficult as it may seem, there is no other way. The fight for a democratic EETPU can only succeed *inside* the union.

The Press Branch has a good record of standing up for other causes—ASLEF, the NHS dispute, etc.—and has the industrial muscle to defend itself, but a break-up of the branch would severely weaken the fight that has to continue within the EETPU for a really democratic union, on a programme of:

- ★ the election of all full-time officials with the right of recall
- ★ no full-timer to receive more than a skilled man (plus legitimate expenses)
- ★ conference decisions made binding on the executive

That struggle is not easy. But there is no short cut, it is the only way forward.

By Bob Faulkes  
(EETPU)

### General Election

## A steelworker's view

AS A steelworker in Teesside, I have witnessed over the past four years the reality of living a nightmare.

Jobs here have gone by the thousands, with them has gone the pride, the dignity and the hope of my brothers, sisters, friends, relations and neighbours. Many of these have waited in hope for the return of a Labour government, for a return to humanity and sanity that could only come from a socialist Britain. Now it seems for the moment at least, there will be no Labour government.

I rose at 4.30 am yesterday (June 9) to do a half shift at work (they wouldn't let me have a full day off). After finishing work, I helped out in my local constituency for a couple of hours, before setting off with another comrade to help out in Bradford North for the election of Pat Wall, a truly socialist candidate, someone I could work for without reservation, without apologising and without compromising.

We returned to Teesside when the polls closed, arriving at a comrade's house to watch the election results. We were not gloomy or despondent, we had half expected most of the results, though two quick flashes on the screen, Liverpool Broadgreen and Coventry South East, brought great cheers from those present.

The result for Bradford, I must admit, was a sickener, as was Tony Benn's defeat.

I arrived home at 3.40 am and rose for work at 5.45 am. Did I wake feeling fed up, despondent, bewildered? Did I hell. Have I had the fight knocked out of me? Have I hell!

As I write I feel bloody angry at all the different shades of and named Tories who have lied and conned some workers and many of the population; angry at the lies and smears cast by the millionaires' media on Labour candidates, especially those who preach socialism, who are dismissed as "nasty extremists".

Despite all the lies, distortions and half-truths (more like quarter-truths!) dispersed like effluence from a sewage farm, two workers' candidates were elected, and they will be the standard-bearers of Marxism in the coming period.

So, what of the future? As Marxists we do not have the attitude that the election was the be-all and end-all; that is not the only way we can defend our living standards and jobs and those of our class.

Thatcher and her rabid robots—some of the few machines still operating—believe they have a mandate for more of the same: more cuts, more job losses, more unhealthy sick people, less schools, less hospitals, less dole money—I could go on but I'm sure we all could.

In the coming years many battalions of workers will move against the Tories in defence of our very way of life.

Last week's POEU conference was a thumping victory for the left. Because they are preparing to struggle, the Post Office engineers wanted and got a better leadership who we hope can win the struggle against Privatisation.

But the POEU is only the tip of the ice-berg. Many sections of workers will move to struggle, grasping for a lead, looking left but not knowing why. This is where we should be comrades. It is not enough to let the fire of enthusiasm be formed by rhetoric only to be doused by lack of knowledge, organisation and discipline. We must intervene with Marxist precision and vision. We can lead these struggles to a successful culmination. We collectively have experience of workers' struggle, tempered with a Marxist analysis. We will win at the end of the day.

We have all worked hard in this election, but for socialists there is no time for despondency and gloom, so "up and at 'em" comrades.

By Martin Maley  
(Redcar LPYS)

## Liverpool YOP strike

Four YOPsters and their supervisor are on strike in Liverpool.

Their YOP scheme which has been in existence for four years has been closed by its sponsor at Liverpool University.

The YOPsters believe the reason for the sponsor's action is that they and their supervisor joined GMBATU.

The MSC had called a three month extension to the scheme, which was due to finish on June 10. But this was opposed by the sponsors and the personnel manager. No reason has been given for this decision. The arbitrary action on behalf of the personnel manager has jeopardised the employment pro-

spects of the trainees as the scheme has a 100% track record of securing full-time employment for its trainees.

To date the personnel manager has constantly refused to meet the trainees' union rep who has been requesting a meeting for six months. The supervisor has been sacked and the trainees ordered off the premises. A picket is in operation and the TGWU has informed the members of its local branch for unemployed to help man the picket lines. The GMBATU has called a meeting of all unions in the university.

Ray Murray spoke to the sacked supervisor, Rosemary Earnshaw.



Civil service workers demonstrate in Liverpool last week in support of a strike at two DHSS offices, Belle Vale and Toxteth. 52 posts are under threat from cutbacks at these offices in an area with increasing unemployment.

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

FOLLOWING THE victory of CPSA and SCPS members at a dispute at the DE and DHSS in Hackney, East London, *Militant* received this letter:

Dear Friends,  
Strikers at Hackney dole and social security

offices returned to work on 28 May having won a victory and gained considerable concessions from management.

We would like to thank your paper for the support and publicity it gave to our dispute. We recognise it could not

have been won without the support of other trade unionists.

We now face a battle over statting levels throughout DHSS and DE, but we face it with the knowledge that united action can win, however intransigent the

employer. This is the message that should be spread throughout the trade union movement.

Yours fraternally,  
pp Dick Lord  
Phil Newby  
On behalf of the Joint Strike Committee  
CPSA & SCPS

# POST OFFICE ENGINEERS VICTORY FOR BROAD LEFT

**In a momentous change at the conference of the Post Office Engineering Union, the Broad Left won a majority on the union executive for the first time since 1948.**

The left now have a majority of 14 to 8, where before the conference the right-wing majority had been 15 to 8.

The main reason for the change of direction had been POEU members' concern at the half-hearted role of the old leadership in fighting the proposed denationalisation of British Telecom. Their strategy of parliamentary campaign and token action was consistently attacked beforehand as inadequate. Eventually this was confirmed by events.

Secondly the painstaking role of the Broad Left itself in constructing an alternative leadership around worked-out policies has received its just reward.

On Monday morning before the election, the conference passed the following proposition: "In the event of a Tory government being elected in the June 1983 general election, if the government announces its intention to go ahead with the privatisation of BT the POEU should immediately embark on a campaign of industrial action to safeguard our industry and jobs, and working conditions."

Having established a policy the conference then went on to provide the leadership willing and able to carry out that mandate.

Earlier in the week events of equal proportions took place. The POEU took positive steps towards merging with the CPSA (P and T)

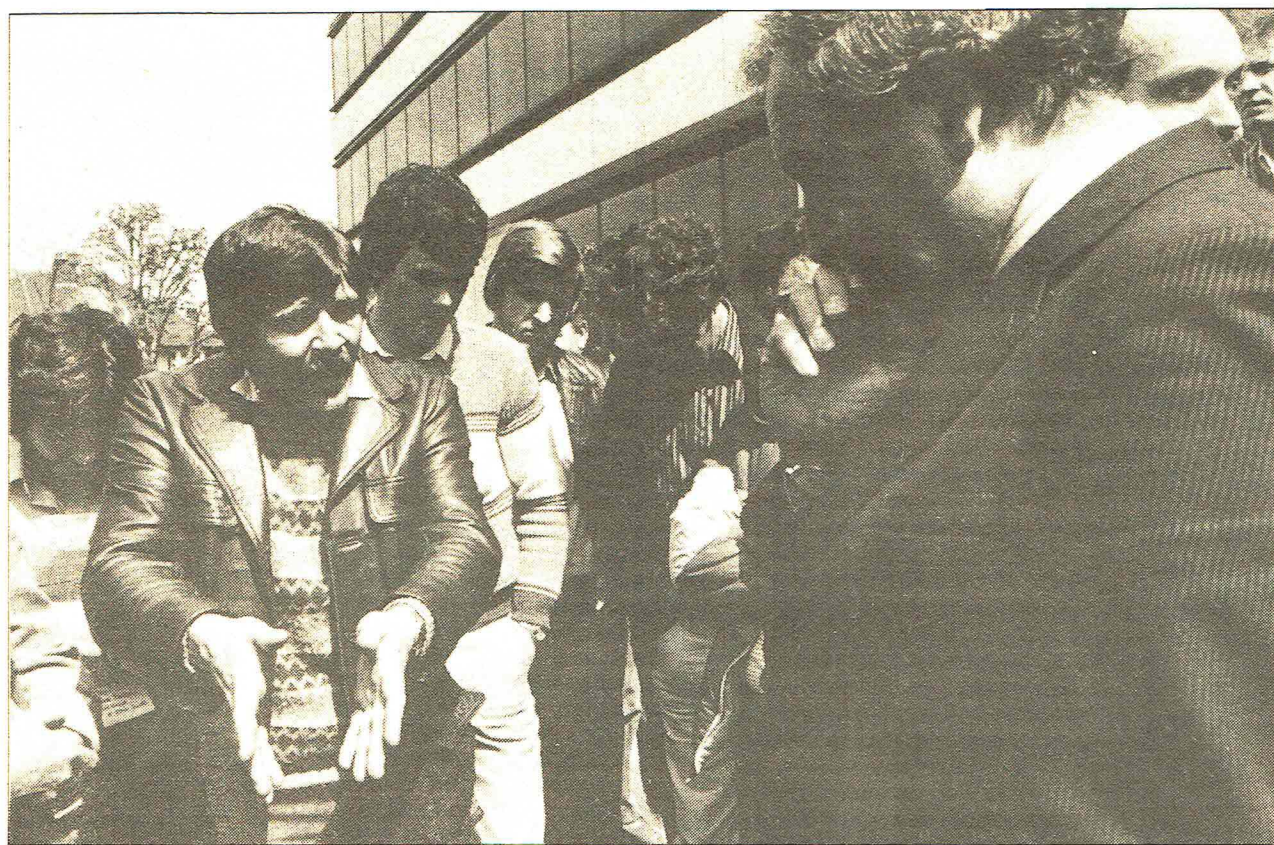
by endorsing a constitution of a new union. Conference has also called for the general secretary of that new union to be subject to five yearly elections, a significant democratic advance. All links with SPOE, now known as STE, which represents the managerial grades within British Telecom were rejected.

However, conference passed the following composite, moved by Roy Wrenborne, a Militant supporter, calling upon the executive to "enter into discussions with the UCW with a view to amalgamation with the POEU. And to present a detailed report within four months of annual conference." The amalgamation of POEU, UCW, CPSA (P and T) into one union would add enormously to the strength of the workers in the telecoms industry and the Post Office in their fights in the future.

We now have a left-wing executive which includes two Militant supporters. One of the significant offshoots of this victory on the NEC will be that for the first time the POEU will have a left-wing delegation to both TUC and the Labour party. Despite being hampered by many of our Broad Left candidates becoming ineligible due to their election to the NEC the preceding day, the left still swept the elected delegates gaining the four highest polled for the Labour Party, and five out of seven for the TUC.

Whereas previously the left's successes in these elections has been thwarted because half the delegations are appointed from the NEC, this year that will not be the case. The POEU will be taking one message to the wider movement, the fight-back starts here.

By Colin O'Callaghan



Activists in the POEU press their points home to Bryan Stanley, the union's general secretary. The new Broad Left leadership have the chance to lead a real fightback against Tory privatisation plans. Photo: Militant

## THE REAL TORY MANIFESTO

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

£1,019 a week.

Another person to be thankful for a Tory victory would be Laing's fellow director Sir Henry Plumb who is also a director of Lloyds Bank and Fisons and a Tory Euro MP for the Cotswolds. These creatures have been allowed to sack people and wreck industry throughout Thatcher's first term to boost their profits. But in the Tories' second term, the bosses want a lot more from the new cabinet packed with Thatcherite Tories.

Now the election is safely out of the way, more details of the Tories' hidden

manifesto are beginning to come out. The businessmen's bible, *The Economist* makes a few suggestions. They suggest cutting unemployment by making workers take huge pay cuts, for instance by following Switzerland in paying school leavers only 17% of the adult wage in the same job. It is only 60% at present.

They want "simple changes" in laws such as the Employment Protection Act, and on equal pay for women and minimum wage levels all of which would slash real wages. Presumably the next step would be to force the unemployed to "volunteer"

for these new poverty wage jobs before being allowed benefits.

As an "alternative" to cutting unemployment benefits "excessively", they want enormous cuts in public services, the sale of all council housing, and the privatisation of practically everything, ancillary work in hospitals, town hall services, transport, telecomms, etc, particularly, they suggest, if the public industries or services are heavily unionised and can fight for a decent wage.

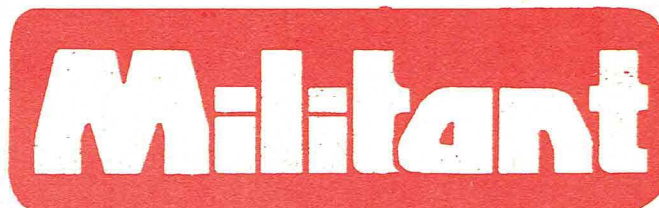
Of course, "reform" of the unions to try to make them powerless is another high priority for the Tories' backers.

The cock-a-hoop Tories are making their plans for our future and hope to slip

them past a labour movement chastened by an election defeat. But the Tories should beware. The mood of anger against the Tories has only been hidden by the stage managed election campaign and the inept performance of the Labour Party leadership.

The fight back must start now. The Trade Union Congress must start mobilising now to prevent the Tories implementing their vicious plans.

The working class can not wait until the Tories call the next election. The fight must start now and only end when we have a new Labour government as determined to struggle for our class as the Tories clearly continue to be for their own.



Become a  
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Address .....

Send to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace,  
London E8 3PN

## WHAT WE STAND FOR

- ★ The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss of pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
- ★ Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, public transport and other services.
- ★ A minimum wage of £100 a week, including for pensioners, the sick and disabled.
- ★ Opposition to anti-trade union and other legislation that restricts workers' democratic rights.
- ★ Opposition to all forms of discrimination against women, black and Asian workers and minority groups in society.
- ★ Massive cuts in arms spending, now running at £15bn a year.
- ★ Unilateral nuclear disarmament.
- ★ An end to the devastation of basic industries like coal, rail and steel.
- ★ Workers' control and management in the nationalised industries, run by boards to be made up of one third of each of representatives from: the unions in the industry; the TUC, representing all workers; the government.
- ★ Opposition to dictatorship of the national press by a handful of rich press barons. Printing facilities should be nationalised and access given to political parties except fascists on the basis of their electoral support.
- ★ Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80-85 per cent of the economy. This should be done through an Enabling Bill, with compensation based only on proven need.
- ★ A socialist plan of production, in which the enormous resources of the country are democratically planned for the benefit of the whole population.
- ★ Opposition to the capitalist Common Market. For a United Socialist States of Europe, as a step forward to a World Socialist Federation.

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