

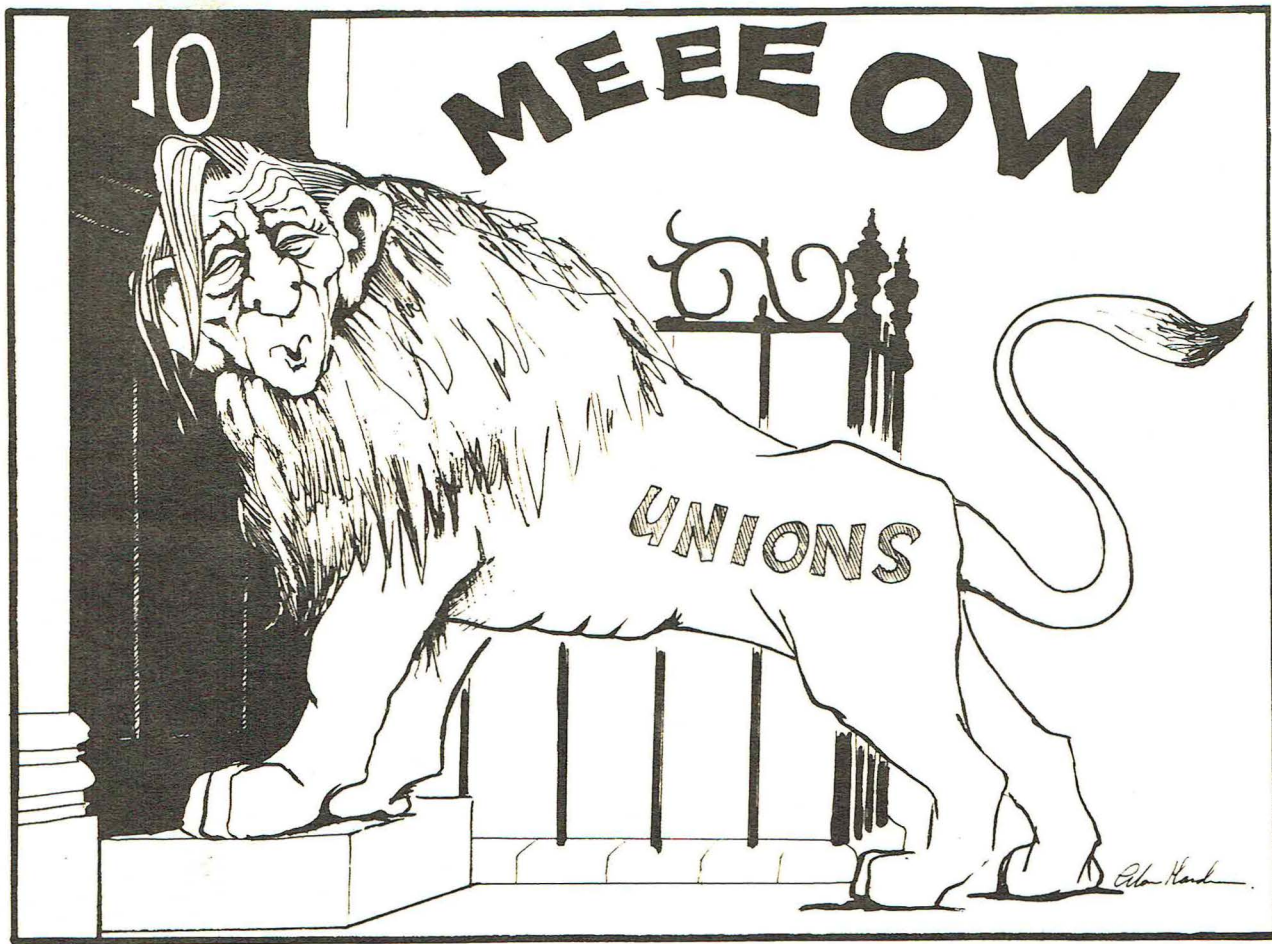
Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

Low Pay Nightmare



TUC must use workers strength to end low pay

“THIS CONFERENCE has passed a motion which commits the trade union movement to continue the battle on low pay...”, Tom Sawyer (NUPE) told *Militant* after the TUC Conference. Low pay is certainly an issue the TUC cannot avoid.

In Britain today, seven million workers earn below the TUC low pay threshold of £90 pw. This at a time when the government has removed a whole range of legal protections for low paid workers.

Poverty affects all sections of society. 11.5 million people live below the poverty line while three quarters of a

million live in intense poverty.

Mary Ferguson, a single parent from Sunderland, with three children, explained the effects of living on a poverty income: “the summer holidays are always a nightmare, you have no money to entertain the children so they are left to run about the streets. Also,

as there are no free school dinners we are actually worse off because we have to provide food. It makes life doubly difficult because your income remains the same pittance.

By Ray Physick

“For single parents who are working, the problems are actually compounded. The majority either have to pay for a child-minder, which is a drain upon their income, or they have to pack up work altogether”.

Low income is disastrous for families on social securi-

ty, but for workers with a wage coming in, life is not exactly a luxury.

In more than two-thirds of households with an income of £140.00 p.w. or over in 1981, the woman was in paid employment. In households with incomes below £140.00 p.w., the figure was one-third. 54% of women with dependents were in paid employment, not to enable their families to acquire the luxuries of life, but to keep their heads above water.

Maureen Appleby, a school dinner lady, told *Militant* that, “when you receive a low wage you can’t save for sudden emergencies such as buying an unbudgetted pair of shoes for one of the

Marxist Victory at Wembley

Nearly 3,000 answers to the Tories and Labour’s right wing witch-hunts.

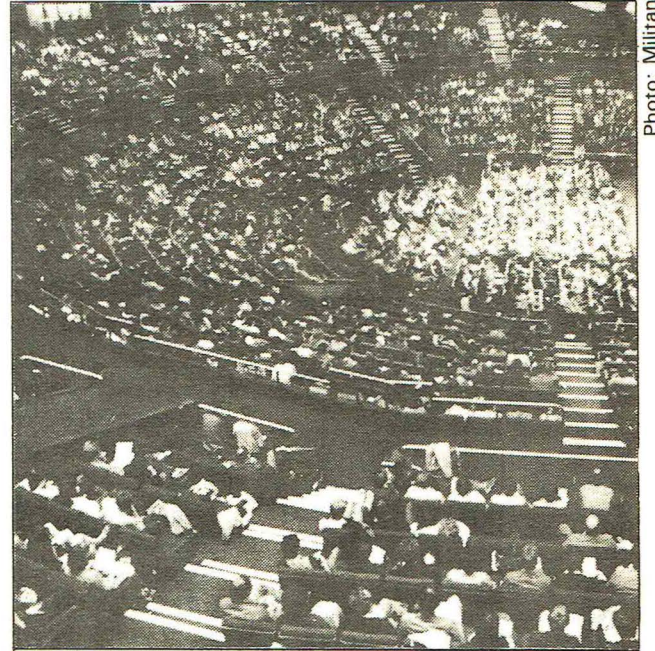


Photo: Militant

EVERYBODY agreed it was a tremendous success. The rally organised by *Militant* on 10 September attracted 2,900 people to completely fill the huge hall in the Wembley Conference Centre.

It completely put the lie to the jealous claim of the Labour right wing, in chorus with the Tory press that the ideas of Marxism have no attraction.

During the election campaign Thatcher and the Young Conservatives brought on the clowns,

people like Kenny “Bomb the Russians” Everett and gave Britain’s gilded youth a few hours of mindless giggling at the Wembley Centre. Thatcher threatened to wipe out Marxism and asked her hysterical admirers whether the Labour Party could fill that arena. Saturday gave her 2,900 answers: *Militant* could!

A varied programme of speakers from the platform and floor, of films, and of special exhibitions kept the audience’s interest to the end, and the meeting was totally

CONTINUED ON
PAGE THREE

children. There are times when you can’t afford to eat proper food, which leads to illness. Your standards sink even lower if the main breadwinner is off work sick.

“Fuel bills are a continual problem—you have to be extremely vigilant, not only with the heat but with weekly payments. If you miss a couple of payments for some reason then you’re in trouble by the end of the quarter.”

Chris Martin, a CPSA member, told *Militant* that a minimum wage of £90 p.w., is absolutely essential. We have a rates bill due in December”, he said. “Unless we cancel Christmas there’s no way it can be paid.”

The new TUC General Council claims to represent its membership. They should put their money where their mouths are and fight for their members’ interests.

The campaign of the TUC should be based on what Lil Stevens, a NUPE member of the TUC General Council, and herself a school dinner

lady, told *Militant* last week “...I don’t agree with the decision that was taken (TUC agreement to meet Tebbit). As a union belonging to the TUC we should go along with it, but I don’t want to see too much talking going on.”

“I would rather that we got our case together, went and presented it and came away. I don’t think that we can gain anything by arguing around a table. It means, at the end of the day that if we can’t get what we want, what is good and right for our members then industrial action might be the thing to fall back on”.

The General Council should take heed of this warning, otherwise they may be in for a shock. The TUC leadership might delay a fight-back on living standards but they cannot do that indefinitely. Sooner or later, sometimes even by unofficial actions, pressure from below will force individual unions to fight against low pay.

The *Militant* rally at Wembley Conference Centre triumphantly showed the growth of Marxist ideas in the labour movement.

Last year, the labour movement conference against the witch hunt held at Wembley Conference Centre was addressed by *Militant* supporters who were parliamentary candidates. This year two *Militant* supporters spoke as Labour MPs.

The reason for the growing influence of Marxism was shown by **Dave Nellist** MP for Coventry South East. He quoted from Labour's right-wing theoretician Antony Crosland in 1956, who claimed that capitalism had solved all its problems and escaped from the old crisis ridden days.

The other quote was from Frederick Engels back in the 1890's describing capitalist slumps and booms. Engels was infinitely more relevant to 1983!

The world was ruled by a few thousand rich people while the millions of workers were ruled. Dave revived an old demand from the seventeenth century Diggers to turn the world upside down so the workers were in control.

Derek Hatton, city councillor in Liverpool, where Labour won back control of the council from the Liberals after eight years spoke from the floor. Liverpool now has a left wing council which is carrying out its promises of creating new jobs and building new houses.

They are building support in the trade union movement for the inevitable fight when the Tories try to take action to stop Liverpool council.

Peter Taaffe editor of *Militant*, compared the elan and determination of the rank and file of the labour movement at the rally with the hopelessness and despair of the TUC leaders. On the same day as "The Godfather" was on television in the evenings, Godfather Chapple chaired the TUC conference on TV during the afternoon, and delighted the media with his right wing ideas.

Peter reminded the audience that last year the Labour Party right wing had started the process of expelling the five *Militant* editorial board members by saying "cut off the head of *Militant* and the rest will die". They had noticeably not made the same expulsion threat to people like Chapple for their anti Labour Party statements.

But with *Militant*, they had only succeeded in expelling us back into the movement. Peter called for all who agreed with our policies to join with *Militant* in transforming the labour movement to a powerful body which could itself change the whole of society.

By
Militant Reporters



Part of the huge audience at the Wembley rally.

Photo: Vivien Seal

Margaret Reavey (ex-LPYS National Committee) spoke on how vital it was to win working-class women who had suffered most under Britain's first woman Prime Minister. She emphasised the need for political and trade union meetings at convenient times and with arrangements so that women with children and families can participate.

Willie Griffin (LPYS National Chairman) spoke on the importance of the Chile demo on 11 September, and the lessons the Pinochet regime had for Britain. Chile used to be called the "Britain of Latin America". We must ensure that Britain did not become the "Chile of Europe".

Shortly before the coup, the British LPYS sent a letter of solidarity to the Chilean Young Socialists warning of the dangers of a military coup. Later the LPYS found it had been widely discussed amongst branches in Santiago. Repression had led to the murder of thousands, but now the working class of Chile are moving again. He called on people to join Sunday's demo.

The Sri Lankan regime is indicative of the desperate position fac-

ing people in the 'Third World'. A member of the NSSP Central Committee told how the regime had been involved in the most murderous pogroms, rape and violence. Yet it tries to accuse the workers' movement of causing the disturbance.

"It has accused our party of: 1)

Only Marxism has the confidence to answer workers' problems

Interwining the struggles of the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples to end the capitalist regime; 2) Murder against the Tamils. To the first charge we plead guilty, but the second is nonsense.

"Even more ludicrous is the accusation that our leader Vasu is hiding in the Tamil area. The government have put a price of 50,000 rupees on his head and that of other left leaders, for information leading to their arrest. We will be holding a joint meeting with the other left parties, on 22 October."

Terry Fields MP joked that he

had thought of turning up in disguise because of the dangers of being associated with *Militant*. He pointed out that Merseyside shows how socialist policies can win, but just having two MPs in the Commons won't solve the problems workers face. The fight for Marxist ideas must be stepped up.

Linda Douglas (Newham NW LPYS) spoke from the floor of the special problems blacks suffer during recession. 60% of West Indian youth are unemployed, 40% of Asian. Since the introduction of the Na-

tionality Act, there has been a 22% rise in the number of deportations. She called for support for the Newham 8 demo.

Linda also explained that the discrimination blacks suffer from is a class question, and can only be solved with class policies. In this respect she said "I have more in common with a white Marxist MP, than a black middle-class one".

Ted Grant was the final speaker. He commented on Moss Evans' explanation of the reasons for Labour's defeat on 9 June namely that "people did not believe that

Labour could deliver its promises." Ted agreed. 17 years of post war Labour government had left people cynical about Labour leaders.

When Thatcher says that "there is no alternative", in one sense she is right. Under capitalism Keynes had proved to be a false witch-doctor. They have turned to her witch-doctor, Friedman who also offered no long term solution.

Ted showed that the TUC and Labour Party don't know where to turn. Reformism can no longer deliver the goods now the boom of the 1950-75 period is over. Only Marxism has the confidence to answer the problems of working people.

As it happened, Ted was not the final speaker. For from the archives came a film of Trotsky speaking in German and English, about the Stalin show trials. The rally closed to the Red Flag and Internationale.

After the rally, hundreds stayed on to watch the excellent film *The Battle for Algiers*. It showed that imperialism will go to any lengths to safeguard its rule. Torture, murder and all manners of horror were visited upon Algerian people who were struggling to free their country from French rule.



Pat Maxwell and Barbara Shean, two of the large contingent from Merseyside.



Photo: Denis Doran

"A rally like this gives hope for the future" said Judy Griffiths. Nearly a century separates Anton Nilsson from Judy's daughter Holly, but the need for socialism is just as great.

MARXISM IN OUR TIME



Anton Nilsson—a standing ovation

Photo: Denis Doran

ANTON NILLSON inspired the audience with his account of the impact of the Russian revolution in the early years before Stalinism developed. Revolution broke the horrors of the first world war and Anton pointed out how today only socialism could finally defeat the threat of world nuclear holocaust.

The revolution abolished capitalism in Russia and proved that even in a country with 80-85% illiteracy, workers could organise and control society. Workers in the rest of the world must learn these lessons to stop the lives of living reflecting human beings being wasted by capitalism.

The experiences of the Russian revolution stopped him at the age of 96 from being pessimistic about the future of the human race. As a speaker from the floor, TGWU member J Burke pointed out, if Murray, Duffy and Chapple had half the courage of Anton Nilsson, Tebbit and the rest of the Tories would be hiding from the anger of the British working class.

In future weeks, *Militant* will serialise part of Anton's experiences.

"Renewed enthusiasm"

Phil Laurie, Darlington LPYS and UCATT member:

"The best part for me was Anton Nilsson. It's a pity he couldn't have spoken longer. If we can do half of what he's done in his life and have half his enthusiasm even now, we cannot fail!

"The rally has made me want to work for marxist ideas in the labour movement with renewed enthusiasm."

Christine Kenny, Stafford LPYS:

"I enjoyed Peter Taaffe's speech and his digs at Frank Chapple and the right wing media. The atmosphere was very good.

"I think it's been much better organised than last year. It's especially good for new people because the exhibitions and films explain quite a lot."

Tina Carroll, Newcastle Central LPYS:

"Peter Taaffe's powerful speech warmed me up and has given me the drive to go on. The ideas and the atmosphere at the rally made you want to do more political work than you are doing now."

John Griffin, Westminster branch POEU:

"I thought it was a very good gathering. It was heart-warming to see so many people come together when there are so many attacks going on against socialists of various kinds. I was particularly impressed with the speaker from Sweden, Anton."

Liz Buchanan, office worker, Leicester.

"The rally was very good. I really enjoyed it. I think that anyone who wasn't a supporter would be after this. It was very emotional."



A speaker from Hindle Gears in Bradford, on strike for nearly six months, appeals to the rally for increased union solidarity. See report on page 15.



An exhibition at the rally showed the increase in the size and regularity of *Militant* since 1964, which mirrored the rising influence of Marxism. This rally marked the start of a new campaign for a daily *Militant*.

Victory at Wembley

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

determined to build support for *Militant*.

Coaches came down at considerable cost from Scotland, and the North but workers still had the enthusiasm to show their support for *Militant* in the most practical way possible. A collection for the *Militant* Fighting Fund raised £5,800 and a magnificent £38,000 was promised in pledges for new premises for *Militant* which will be essential if we are to go as rapidly as possible to a daily paper.

From the guest speaker, 96-year old Anton Nilsson, former pilot with the Red Army from 1918 to 1920, who was active in defending the Russian revolution

before Stalin put his icy grip on the USSR, to the youngest of visitors, the overwhelming mood was of optimism, noticeably absent from the previous week's TUC conference.

No one was denying the working class had been set back by the Tory victory in the general election but the rally showed the growth of support for Marxist ideas. Capitalism and Stalinism are in crisis internationally, and as speakers at the rally pointed out, the struggle is increasing to change the labour movement into a force capable of the socialist transformation of society. The rally was a great step forward in this process.

Build for a daily Militant

Our enemies are rich but your cash can beat them

The new Building Fund being set up by *Militant* supporters has got off to a flying start.

In the last hour of the Wembley Rally, nearly £40,000 was promised. One young supporter from South London, Chris Worsley, promised £1,000!

John Howe pledged £500, two readers committed themselves to £250 each, seven to £200, ten to £150, eighty four to £100 and two hundred and fifty to £50!

Many others promised various excellent sums.

Supporters in the Leeds area got together to discuss what they could give between now and the end of 1983. A magnificent £4,235 was the result! Stevenage supporters pledged £1,050, Dagenham £845 and Brentwood £600. Supporters in other areas will no doubt strive to match these efforts.

Other readers have been searching through their belongings for jewellery, antiques, stamp collections, even clothes, that they can sell to help build for a Marxist Daily. This is the spirit of

determination and sacrifice on which the labour movement has depended over the centuries for every major step forward.

Those who fight the owners of property and industry with the ideas of Marxism have no rich friends, only rich enemies! We need what you will find difficult to part with! But, think hard!

The fund will be opened for collecting actual money in a couple of weeks time, but we want a massive figure in pledges before Labour's Conference (more forms available c/o *Militant* of-

ices). Help show the support that exists for a real socialist fightback against the Tories, the bosses and many of their friends, lurking in the labour movement.

Pledge the most you can now. You have until 1984 to save up and redeem it! Send any pledges from—yourself, your trade union, your Labour Party branch, your LPYS or shop stewards committee—to; Building Fund, c/o 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

By Clare Doyle

Militant

EDITORIAL

Social Democrats: junior party of big business .

TWO YEARS ago the first of the Social-Democratic Party's "rolling conferences" met. It was heralded by an unprecedented campaign in the media, as the launching of a "new political force", destined to "break the mould of British politics".

According to the commentators, a "radical alternative" to the sterile Labour/Tory see-saw was being created. The Social-Democratic Party was to be destined for government at the next election.



Today, the somewhat premature utterings of the hired scribes of Fleet Street and the dreams of SDP leaders alike, seem a little distant. One of the original SDP leaders and Labour traitor, Bill Rodgers, has tempered his initial flush of enthusiasm and is now preparing for government "from 1992".

In the light of the election defeat, however, Labour activists will undoubtedly be asking "what perspectives exist for the Social-Democratic Party?" Is it, as some of its erstwhile spokesmen claim, about to replace Labour as the main opposition to the Tories?

To imagine such a development likely, or even possible, the SDP leaders and media commentators are at best merely dreaming dreams.

The SDP was sponsored and created by the strategists of capital for a specific reason. Faced with the radicalisation of the Labour Party, the ruling class were terrified at the prospect of a Labour government being returned. They had no confidence that a Labour administration, under pressure from the ranks of the labour movement, could be relied upon simply to play the docile role of managing the interests of capitalism.

Big Business

The SDP was created with the express intention of splitting the Labour Party and preventing its return to government. A few noble peers, disgruntled Labour MPs and councillors, faced with a loss of comfortable careers, deserted the workers movement.

Big business was prepared to finance a party splitting off from Labour by up to £15,000,000 to ensure the strategy was successful. But in its objective of splitting the Labour Party, the SDP was a total failure: the overwhelming majority of Labour Party members remained loyal.

It was, however, partly successful in splitting the Labour vote and winning disgruntled Tory voters, concentrated in the South.

For the ruling class the creation of the SDP and the Liberal Alliance was therefore a success. But today they are no longer as central to the strategists of capital.

As SDP leader, William Rodgers, himself put it, "The fact is that boardrooms are very happy with a Conservative government and are very happy that the Labour Party is in its present state. So there is no real reason for them to support us."

However, it was an indication of the tremendous potential for radical Labour policies that the SDP only made headway by appearing to be a new radical force. With a massive campaign to explain a socialist alternative and the necessity for a root and branch transformation of society *Labour* would have been the new radical force and the vast majority of SDP voters could have undoubtedly been won over.

Failed policies

The SDP in reality offers nothing new. Far from breaking the mould, they are the mould. They stand, simply, for the return to the old, tried and failed policies of the past.



The very ideas they advocate, they themselves carried through under the cloak of right wing Labour ministers, especially between 1974-79. With the developing crisis in the economy, the then Labour government was compelled to carry through attacks on workers' living standards, and preside over massive rises in unemployment. Expenditure on the welfare state was slashed.

So long as a Labour government was content to remain within the strait-jacket of a diseased and decaying capitalist economy, such a course was inevitable.

Shirley Williams, as "Labour" minister of education, carried through the first and most "radical" cuts in education expenditure since 1945. Current SDP leader David Owen, as Foreign Secretary, carried through the extremely "radical" policies of propping up the Shah of Iran, whose regime was responsible for the slaughter of thousands of workers.



These SDP "reformers", carrying through a programme of counter-reform when in government, paved the way for the cynicism and disillusionment amongst many Labour voters, that lost Labour the 1979 election. The very cynicism which their ideas produced provided the basis for the support that they then attracted with massive media support under the new banner of the Social-Democratic Party.

Posturing as a new and radical force they were able to attract votes, especially those of dissatisfied sections of the middle-class.

Yet in reality, as a party backed by big-business, they stand for policies little different to those offered by the main party of big business—the Tories. As the *Times* (Sept 13 1983) put it, "between the lines David Owen was accepting much that Mrs. Thatcher is doing as providing the basis on which the SDP must try to build its own policies."

Decline

However, for strategists of capital the SDP has served its immediate purpose. Big business has ceased, for the moment, its financial support.

The SDP itself is now faced with crisis. Having failed to win the overwhelming majority of Labour Party members to its ranks, and its "breakthrough" being denied, it is now faced with demoralisation and decline.

Many of those Tories attracted to it returned to their old loyalty in the General Election, particularly in light of the Falklands conflict. Party membership was overwhelmingly middle-class—57% in professional and managerial jobs, only 7% in manual jobs, 54% living in residential suburbs—and is rapidly falling.

Officially, membership

has declined by 5,000 since mid-1982 and by 1984 party officials estimate it will have 12,000 fewer members than in 1983. Its full-time staff has been cut from 53 to 28.

This decline is an indication of the real situation facing the SDP. In a period of capitalist crisis and increasing class tension there is no room for a so-called "centre" or "middle party".

Increasingly, as workers regain their confidence to struggle—especially with a small up-turn in the economy—industrial explosions are inevitable. Future clashes on class lines will ensure that the SDP is ground between the opposing interests of the labour movement and those of the ruling class.

Campaign

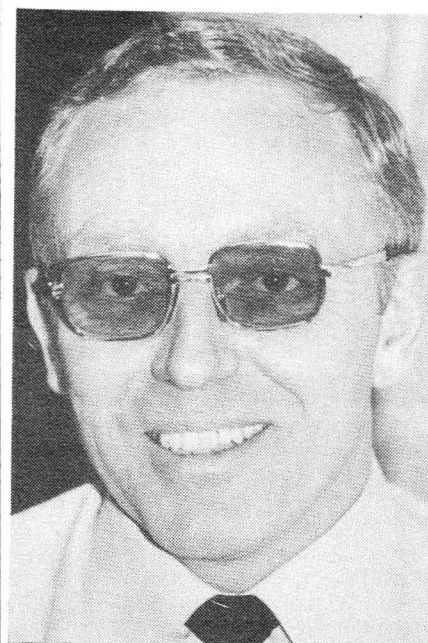
In this situation even those sections of the middle-class who recently lent their support to the SDP could be drawn behind Labour if there was a serious campaign explaining socialist policies, exposing the link between the SDP and big business, offering a solution to the problems of mortgage repayments, interest rates, unemployment etc.



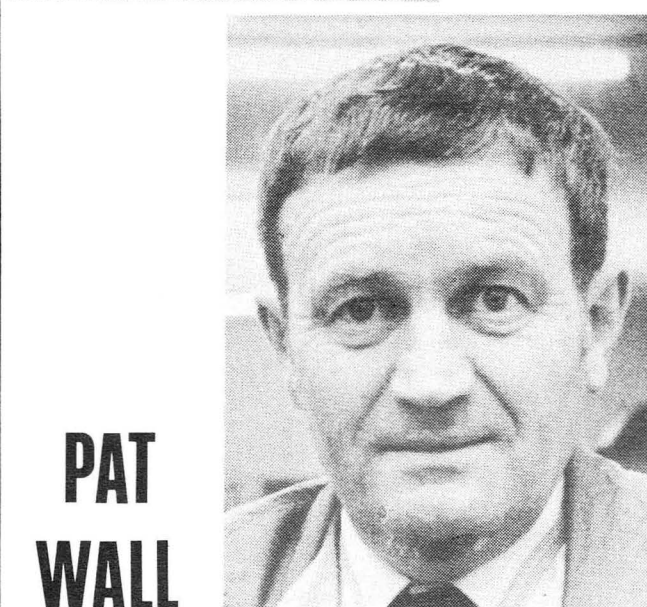
For Labour's rank and file, the SDP issue is not yet dead, however. The SDP have rejected an immediate merger with the Liberals and one reason is undoubtedly Owen's hope of a further split of right-wing MP's from the Labour Party, who could be drawn into the SDP.

Indeed, with a possible victory for Michael Meacher in the deputy leadership contest, a further split is apparently already being discussed by sections of Labour's right-wing. Labour's ranks must be alert and prepared for such a development.

The resolve to ensure that Labour is committed and will fight for a transformation of society along socialist lines, as outlined in Clause 4, part 4, of the party constitution, must be increased. Only in this manner is it possible to implement and maintain the radical programme of reform that the Labour Party is committed to, and win behind its banner the support of large sections of the middle-class, temporarily drawn behind the SDP, as well as the many workers temporarily disillusioned in the Party.



TERRY
FIELDS



PAT
WALL

Marxists stand for NEC

TERRY FIELDS MP and Pat Wall have been nominated by their constituency parties to stand for election to the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party.

Terry Fields has been a fireman for 26 years until his recent election to parliament where he won with a 4% swing to Labour. He was a member of the Fire Brigades Union executive, 1977-83 and was their nominee last year to the NEC, where he secured 1.3 million votes. He has been a member of the party for 16 years.

Pat Wall has been a party member for 33 years, standing as the Labour candidate in Bradford North during the election. He is President of Bradford Trades Council, and is a previous candidate in the constituency section for the NEC, last year receiving 103,000 votes.

Witch-hunt— Regional EC's response

TWO DAYS after the *Militant* rally, the London Regional Executive Committee of the Labour Party passed a resolution opposed to the "dictatorial decision" of the NEC to ban the sales of *Militant*.

Not only did the committee vote—by 24 votes to none against—to refuse to implement the decision, but it was resolved that all CLPs in London would be written to by the Regional Executive, urging them also to refuse to carry out the NEC decision.

The same determination to oppose NEC thought control was, however, not shown at a meeting the same week of the Scottish Council of the Labour Party. At this meeting, an LPYS motion condemning the ban on *Militant* sales was voted down when a counter-motion was put.

The counter-resolution, although re-affirming the Scottish conference decision against any expulsions for political views, merely "noted" the NEC letter. Before the vote, the chairman ruled that "noting" the letter meant its implementation, ie carrying out a ban on the sales of *Militant*. There was therefore no possibility of misunderstanding.

Nevertheless, a majority of the meeting voted for this counter-resolution. The Scottish Council of the Labour Party has a majority of so-called "lefts", and it now seriously weakens their credibility as left wingers in the eyes of the rank and file of the party that most of them have voted, because of their political disagreements with *Militant*, to ban the sales of the paper. A fuller report will appear next week.

Needed £29,000 in four weeks

WITH ONLY four weeks to go we still need to raise £29,000 to reach our October target.

Of this week's total £1,000 came from the proceeds of a highly successful South Wales Summer Camp with more still to come. At the Wembley Rally the collection raised a tremendous £5,850 which is all the more remarkable as the "Building Fund" was launched at the same time and £39,000 was pledged (see page 3). This shows the preparedness of *Militant's* supporters to make a sacrifice when it is needed. And it is needed now!

Every penny and every pound is vital to enable us to take the message of Marxism out to millions of workers who want an alternative to the misery of life under capitalism. They want a fight by leadership of the labour movement.

Yet Frank Chapple, who has just retired as TUC President, has said that his services to the labour movement will be in a different direction. According to the *Financial Times* he will be spending his time being more active on the boards of the Tote, of the National Nuclear Corporation and of the Inner City Enterprise Group. "For the rest," he says, "I hope I'll be offered some part-time perks, just as long as there is no hard work involved."

Most workers do not have any "perks" to look forward to when they retire, let alone part-time ones. The more we can build our funds the more we can build an alternative

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 8 October
Eastern	1399		2400
East Midlands	937		2650
Humberside	416		1450
London East	1339		3100
London West	745		1950
London South	1159		2700
Manchester & Lancs	1519		3000
Merseyside	1097		3300
Northern	1254		3500
Scotland East	968		2000
Scotland West	730		2700
Southern	1461		3700
South West	579		2000
Wales East	414		2000
Wales West	1425		2300
West Midlands	961		3150
Yorkshire	1213		3300
Others	3992		4800
Total received	21608		50000

This week's total £8,315

to the likes of Chapple.

This is obviously recognised by many workers and is reflected in the increasing number of donations from Trade Union activists. Among those this week were John Bleaken (Bristol GMBATU) £8.00, T. Walker (Gedling TGWU) £4.00, Dave Wilkinson (Nottingham NUM) £2.00, Mark Hosgood (Manchester NUJ) £5.00, Steve Renshaw (Leeds ASTMS) £3.00 and L. Smith (London UCW) £2.00.

Thanks to all of them and to the many others including G. Young (Nottingham FTATU) who paid £2.00 for his *Militant*. A group of print workers in Garston donated £10.10 and £7.40 came from a workplace collection at Torness. Have you asked your workmates to make a donation to the *Militant*?

The individual donations we receive show the support for our ideas in every part of

the country. Thank you to Peter Wharton of Newham, East London, who gave £20.00 and to those who sent in £10.00 including Pete Crack (Bristol East CLP) and Lesley Smirke and David Reid, both of Mossley Hill CLP. Alan Barker of Newham gave £5.00 as did John Brookhouse (Aldridge Brownhills CLP) and Jaquie Wilson (Pudsey CLP). £2.00 donations came from R. Kavena from Hornchurch, Sandra Fowcett from Brent and F. Moran of Birkenhead CLP.

Most of the money that came in each week is in amounts of £1.00 and under so remember that every single penny counts. Thanks to Brian Lawless and Tony Warren of Liverpool who each gave £1.00, Ann, an unemployed reader in Keighley, £1.00, D. Quinlivan (Wigan) £1.00, V. Townsend (Birkenhead CLP) £1.00 and to Dave Hill (Nailsey CLP)

0.77p.

Some of our readers find ways of raising money and keeping (or becoming) fit at the same time. £22.00 was raised through a sponsored walk in Caerphilly and £9.00 through a sponsored bike ride in Portsmouth. Other, less energetic, comrades find easier ways. £1.60 came in from the "hiring out" of pamphlets!

As we near the end of the quarter every reader should be thinking of ways of raising the much needed cash to make the target. If you are a new reader and you agree with our ideas why not make a regular contribution to the fighting fund? There are millions of workers who have not yet come across our paper. Help us to change that by giving us the finance to produce an even better and more regular paper.

By Nick Wrack

NEEDED—An answer to Fleet Street

DESPITE our disagreements with Arthur Scargill's statements on 'Solidarity', the treatment he received from the press last week was scandalous. They stopped at nothing including personal vilification in an attempt to cause splits amongst trades unionists and miners in particular.

Our tremendous rally on Saturday, on the other hand, went almost unreported! The press almost acted in unison to prevent any news of the growing support for our paper.

A workers' daily could show to thousands of workers the need to transform society along socialist lines. As Marx put it "the class which has at its disposal the means of material production consequently also controls mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means

of mental production are on the whole subject to it".

We for our part are attempting to build a Marxist daily paper and are asking for all readers to donate and campaign to make this possible. At the TUC conference we had record sales and we are optimistic that we shall also have record sales at LP conference. All our sellers will be mounting a sales campaign during the week of Labour Party conference to ensure that the lies of the bosses' press are overcome and that a fighting socialist message is taken to as many working people as possible.

If you would like to become a seller of *Militant* please contact *Militant* Circulation Dept, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

By Dave Farrar

Black youth rally —leaflets available

LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS
1-DAY RALLY ON

BLACK
YOUTH
IN BRITAIN
1983

SATURDAY
22ND
OCTOBER
1983
COUNTY HALL
LONDON
SE1.
STARTS 10am.

★ FIGHT BACK AGAINST THE TORIES!

★ WORKERS UNITY AND SOCIALISM!

P&P LISTS NO, 150 Walworth Rd., London SE17

Above leaflets available from A Bevan, Labour Party Youth Officer, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17. (See article on page 6)

ads

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

MILITANT READERS' MEETINGS

MAIDSTONE: Friday 16 September at 7.30 pm at Brickmakers Arms, Perryfield Street, Maidstone. Speaker: John Pickard on "Middle East Crisis".

TEESIDE: Militant Readers Meeting on Latin America 7.30 pm. Thursday 22 September AUEW Hall, Borough Road, Middlesbrough.

SWINTON, on Wednesday 21 September, Speaker Pat Wall, 'Which Way Forward for Labour?' At Swinton Civic Hall, S. Yorkshire.

PRESTON: "Fight racialism, fight unemployment!" Speakers: Javed Iqbal (*The Struggle*—Pakistan socialist paper) and a speaker from the Newham 8 Defence Committee at 7.30 pm on Tuesday 20 September at RAOB (Bus Club), Ribbleson Lane, (near the prison), Preston.

CLASSIFIED

WHAT has happened to the Socialist vision? Public Forum organised by the Socialist Party of Great Britain, with guest speaker, Jeremy Seabrook. 8pm, Thursday 15th September at Islington Central Library, Fieldway Crescent, off Holloway Rd., London N1 (near Highbury and Islington and Holloway tube stations). Admission free.

TEMPORARY Accomodation for two people wanted in West End/Ealing Contact John McClelland 986 3828.

VACANT FLAT Forest Gate, London E7. 1 double room £30 pw, 1 single room £15 pw + damage deposit + 1 months rent in advance. Contact Jane or Mark 01-552 3204.

FLAT AVAILABLE sharing with comrade. £12 per week. Four miles outside the Polytechnic of Wales. Brychan Davies, 20, Davies Street, Porth, Rhondda, Mid Glamorgan. Phone 0656 63502.

JOHN ARCHER invites all who sympathised with and wish to commemorate the work of Mary Archer to come to her Memorial Meeting, on Saturday, September 24, in Room 152, County Hall, London, SE1 at 7.30. International speakers. Discussion. No charge for admission. Collection for memorial publishing fund.

RE-ADVERTISEMENT
AMBULANT male, disabled comrade, requires nurse for holiday. Medical attention need: minimal. Contact Iain Campbell, Carlisle (0228) 21068.

Will the girl who phoned Iain in Carlisle on Sunday 7 August, please phone again. Developments since that time mean he now has need of a nurse from 1-7 October. Other inquiries welcome.

HAYES *Militant* Barbeque. Eat Joe's delicious kebabs and burgers. £2 (£1 unwaged). 8 pm Saturday 17 September. Phone Julia on 01-845 9660 for details and tickets.

BETHNAL GREEN & STEPNEY LPYS, Social: Hayfield Pub (Mile End Road near Stepney Green Tube), Saturday 17 September, 7.30 'till 12.

WORKSOP: Debate: Joe Ashton MP V Lynn Walsh (*Militant* Editorial Board) organised by Worksop Trades Council at Worksop Town Hall at 7.30 pm on Friday 23 September.

BLACKBURN LPYS, Public Meeting: speakers from Newham 8 Defence Campaign and Javid Iqbal from Manchester LPYS on Thursday 15 September at 7.30 pm at Bangor Street Community Centre, Bangor Street, Blackburn.

BOW & POPLAR LPYS Public Meeting, "No to Privatisation" at 7.30 pm on Thursday 15 September at Bromley Public Hall, Bow Road (Nearest Tube: Bow Road). Speakers: POEU NEC Member, Myrna Shaw (Tower Hamlets Health Workers' JSSC), Chandra Dagupta (LPYS Regional Committee).

OXFORD MILITANT supporter 100 Club results:

Week 656—No 34 Unsold
Week 657—No 17 Julie Jacob
Week 658—No 4 Roy Bentley
Week 659—No 90 Dave Chapman
Week 660—No 97 Pete Haworth
Week 661—No 8 Kieran Braden

Week 662—No 55 Dave Thomas
Week 663—No 71 Tim Sparrowhawk
Week 664—No 89 Val Archer
Week 665—No 82 Malcolm Morris
Week 666—No 92 Richard Tomlinson

WOMEN AND THE STRUGGLE FOR SOCIALISM

Southern Weekend School

24 & 25 Sept. Clockhouse Community Centre, Defiance Walk, Woolwich, London SE18

SPEAKERS:

Family:

Teresa McKay, Ipswich Women's Council

Women and the Colonial Revolution:

Speaker from SALEP

(Southern African Labour Education Project)

Positive Discrimination:

Jen Pickard, Newham North East Women's Council

Low Pay:

Margaret Crear, Rochdale Women's Council

The role of a Trade Union Activist:

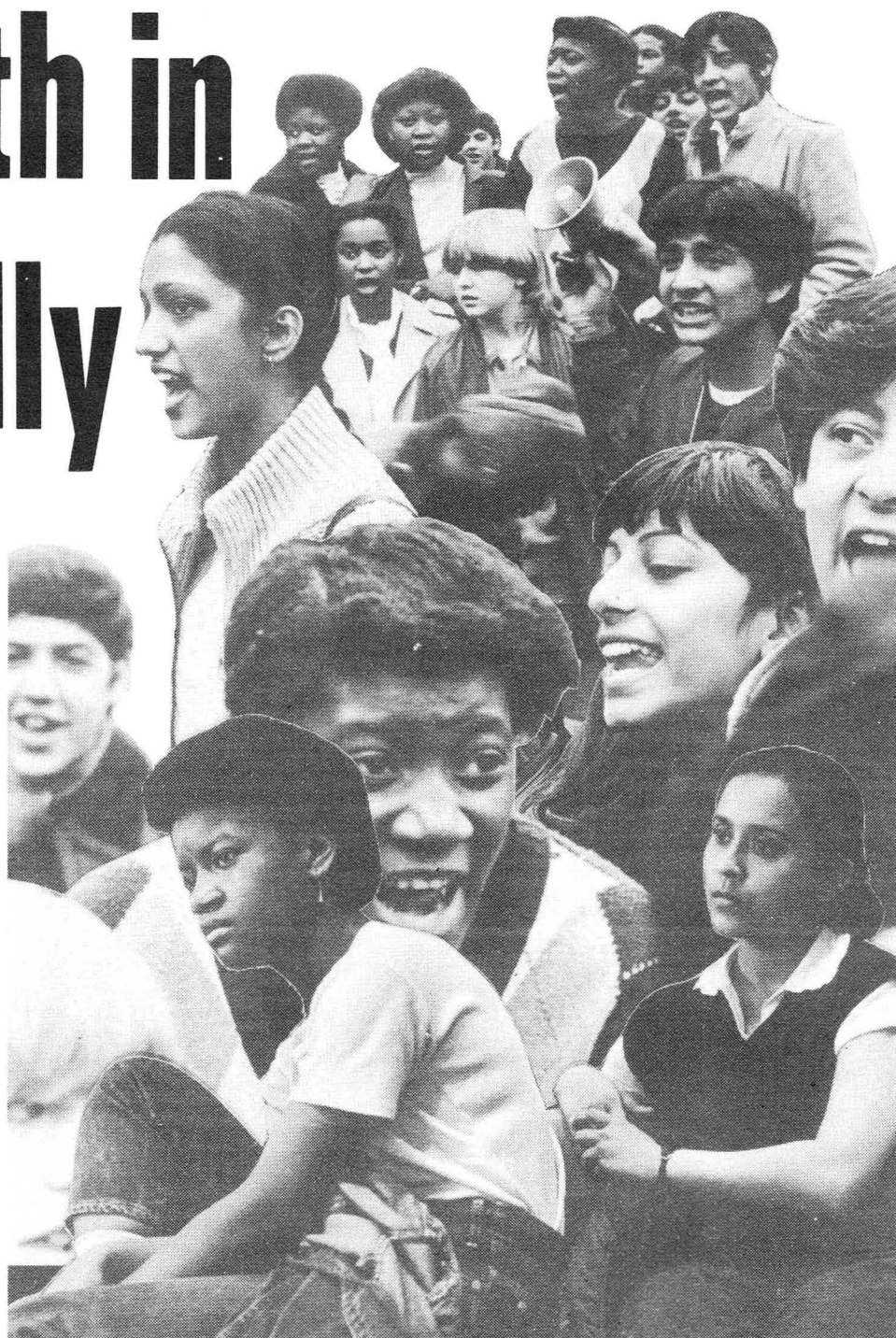
Ann Silvester, National Executive, IRSF

Video: Sexual Harassment at work

School fee: £2 (at door). Crèche available. Snacks on sale.

Accommodation can be provided with local comrades. If you need accommodation, please contact: *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8.

Black youth in Britain rally



In the recent General Election, the Tory advertisement "British, not black" claimed that "with the Conservatives, there are no 'blacks' no 'whites' just people". But glossy advertisements cannot hide the reality of Tory racism.

The truth is that in Tory Britain, some people are more "British" than others. Thousands of blacks are being denied the status of "British" citizen simply because they cannot afford the exorbitant fees which the Tories are now demanding.

In most countries citizenship is provided free of charge (or at a nominal fee) to those people who are entitled to it. But this is no longer the case in Britain. The Home Office policy now is to grant citizenship on a strictly profit making basis. Since 1975 "naturalisation" fees have risen from £40 to £200, whilst fees for entitlement to registration have risen from £10 to £70.

Double standards

The House of Commons Home Affairs Committee has estimated that profits from nationality fees for 1982/83 will amount to £6m, meaning that applicants would have paid more than double the cost of processing their applications.

The hypocrisy of the Tories was recently revealed by the case of the two Ramsey brothers. Born in Barbados, they were threatened with deportation

because neither their parents nor grandparents were born in Britain. Yet despite the fact that their case did not come within the rules governing "United Kingdom ancestry", the Home Office were prepared in this instance to "act outside the rules and grant the Ramsay brothers the right of settlement in this country".

Perhaps this case signalled a welcomed change in Tory Home Office policy? Certainly not, because, fortunately for the Ramsey brothers, they happened to be white. This case was the exception, not the rule. Tory policy means one rule for whites and another for blacks.

Passports in your own country!

Thousands of blacks who have a legitimate right to settle in this country are prevented from doing so because of the brutal way in which the racist laws on immigration and nationality are applied. Tory double standards means that many Bangladeshis, for instance, are forced to wait up to ten years for their cases to be decided.

But discrimination against blacks is not only confined to those living outside Britain. A recent survey conducted by Oldham Council for Racial Equality showed that the practice of demanding passports from blacks as proof of legal residence has now become widespread throughout the DHSS. This illegal practice, of course, has not been applied to whites. So much for being "British" in Tory Britain.

Black workers gave their answer to the Tories by tur-

ning out in large number to vote labour in the General Election. Only an average of 6% of Asians and West Indians voted for the Conservatives, compared with 66% for Labour.

Labour movement

But it would be a mistake for the labour leaders to take this massive support for granted. Now, more than ever, the labour movement must follow the lead of the LPYS, by launching a campaign to win the active support of black workers and

youth in the fight to build a mass movement that can defeat the Tories.

The labour movement and black organisations should give full support to the forthcoming LPYS "Black Youth in Britain Rally", on 22 October, at the County Hall, London. At the rally, hundreds of black and Asian youth from all over Britain will be coming together to thrash out ideas on the vital issues facing black people. There will be sessions on racism and discrimination, unemployment, education, the police, black nationalism and many other issues.

Guest speakers at the Ral-

ly include CLR James, Terry Fields, MP, Darcus Howe, Paul Boateng, Bob Lee, representatives from Newham 8 and Colin Roach campaigns and leading LPYS speakers.

Leaflets and posters

Leaflets, posters and a variety of model letters to trade unions, schools and youth clubs, FE Colleges and black organisations are available for order, free of charge from the Youth Officer, the Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London, SE17.

Knock on any door!

"AN AREA completely lacking in facilities for people of all ages" is how Jimmy Scott described the area of Liverpool Dovecott.

Jimmy, who is 17, explained that all he does is sit in a field every day, because he has nothing to do, and nowhere else to go.

Larry Murphy and his family have been trying to get rehoused for three years. His sister suffered from cystic fibrosis, and the house is detrimental to their health. The previous Liberal council had not built houses for rent for three years, meaning that this family still remain in the same accommodation.

It is too late for them now, as his sister died two weeks ago. Larry is in no doubt about who is to blame; "I feel that the council was responsible and we must make sure that it doesn't happen again". Larry is now a member of the LPYS, and his brother Jimmy has asked about joining.

These are just two of the many examples of what is happening in Dovecott. West Derby Young Socialists have been campaigning against youth unemployment in the area, over the past few weeks, and have received a tremendous response to our ideas.

Knock on any door, and the response is the same. People are sick and tired of the way the area has been let down, and they are willing to do something about it. The campaign will come to a head with a public meeting on the problems of Dovecott. The people have been galvanised into action and will not stop until things have improved.

The problems at Dovecott however, are not unique. There are Dovecotts the length and breadth of the country, in every district and in every town. It is the duty of each LPYS branch to organise a campaign in their own areas. They should give support to the working class community in their struggle against the Tories. This must be the number one priority.

By Gary Bogart
(West Derby North LPYS)

YS against Tory pirates

BRITISH TELECOMS is a big money making industry, where the international and main trunk lines make 78% of the profit and subsidise the loss making but vital local and rural cables where over 70% of the workforce are employed.

Bruce Pickard the local POEU branch secretary explained to 50 young workers and unemployed at a LPYS meeting in Newcastle why opposition to Tory privatisation plans for BT was so important.

The meeting was organis-

ed at just over a week's notice over the Bank Holiday with all main exchanges in Newcastle, Gateshead and Wallsend being visited and leafleted.

Bruce described the plans as "piratisation" because all the most profitable parts were up for grabs by the big business interests who got Thatcher re-elected. Jobs would be lost and services restricted to the profit making sections.

In the first phase of battle, over project Mercury, union blacking of firms involved has been very effective. Barclays Bank have pleaded with the POEU to stop it, as it was Barclays Bank International not the British bank who were involved!

The system is chaotic.



BT's board have tried to cut corners by laying cables along railway lines where they have suffered from vibrations and electrical interference, and are being disrupted by London's huge

pigeon population!

In reality far from improving efficiency they are laying a system far inferior at the cost of workers jobs.

John Hird from the LPYS raised the need to spread the campaign within the labour movement and called for the formation of a public service alliance. With the vital role

of BT, this would be able to bring big business to its knees and drag Thatcher down with them.

Meetings like this are essential to build for the LPYS Young Workers Conference on 10 December in Manchester which will launch the LPYS Young Workers Charter. A regional weekend school on privatisation and fighting cuts on Holy Island on 14-16 October will bring together young

PHOTO: Militant
POEU members protest at privatisation.

workers particularly from the public sector to develop a campaign.

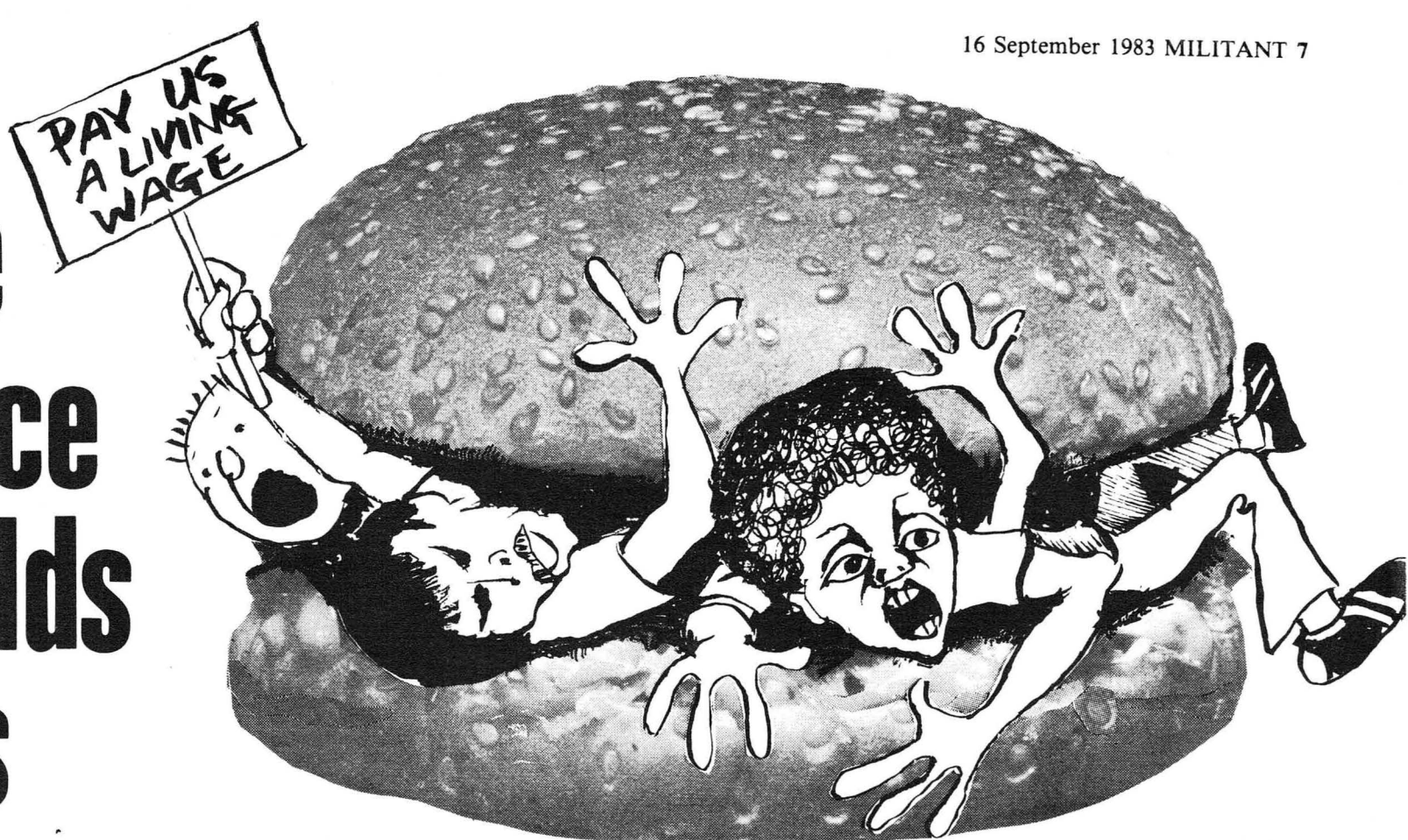
The policies and the drive of the LPYS have never been more needed in the unions. Socialism could transform New Technology from the bringer of dole queue poverty to a force which could bring shorter hours, the steady reduction of the most mundane tasks and improvement of output without the scourge of unemployment.

In this area, speakers from the POEU will visit YS meetings and the YS will tour the BT workers to strengthen links.

In all areas of the country, in all industries, the result can only be of benefit to both the LPYS and the trade union members.

By Northern Region LPYS members

Non union cheap labour The Difference McDonalds Enjoys



“HAVE A nice day” is the slogan most people associate with McDonalds. If you work for them you might as well forget it.

Behind the friendly TV image lies the reality of a company which makes millions of pounds a year, not from hamburgers but by employing its staff under disgusting wages and conditions.

By C Brown
(Newham NE LPYS)

This is what I found when I worked at the Regent Street branch of McDonalds recently. I started on an hourly rate of £1.62 and soon discovered that even without tax deduction I was barely taking home £70 after working a 50 hour week.

Dismissal threat

One 16-year old part timer was being paid £1.22 an hour. The manager told him that, “unfortunately it was against the law for him to be paid any more”. With such levels of pay it is hardly surprising that nearly all the full-time staff were forced to look for second jobs on top of working six or seven days a week.

Added to this is a constant threat of instant dismissal. Employees are threatened that if they are seen to stop work for literally one second, they will be fired.

To enforce this there is at least one manager walking around, shouting orders, to make the staff work faster. This pressure is put on in an environment where you are surrounded by red hot griddles and vats of boiling fat!

On top of these slave labour conditions employees usually only get ¾ of an hour break during an eight hour shift.

When I started I was told that if I wanted a locker to keep my clothes in I would have to pay a £2 deposit. After being handed a ridiculously oversized and worn out uniform I was told that if it was damaged in any way, even as a result of my work, I would have to pay £25 to have it replaced.

As it was compulsory to wash your own uniform, I was also informed that there were laundry facilities on the premises but that we would have to pay if we wanted to use them.

The final straw was the health and safety conditions tolerated by the store. One

girl, Susan, was threatened with dismissal when she complained that a grill handle was too hot to touch as it wasn't insulated properly.

When she replied that if the store had a union such negligence would not be tolerated the manager said that, “McDonalds was too strong to allow a union to exist and would smash it by sacking staff who joined.”

After two weeks at McDonalds Susan was fired. I was fired the same day for complaining to a fellow worker about the way staff were treated by the management.

As I left, I put it to one of the managers that McDonalds totally abused their staff. He claimed that it was all due to the effects of the recession. In that one branch there were average takings of £3,000 a day and an annual turnover of over a million pounds.

In fact, the only effect of the recession on McDonalds has been that it has provided an opportunity to boost profits even higher by ignoring staff welfare.

The only chance for catering workers in places like McDonalds to safeguard their rights and conditions of employment is to link up with the labour movement and unionise their industry from top to bottom. To do so will undoubtedly require great struggle and determination, particularly when fighting an American multinational such as McDonalds.

Many of these problems face workers in the retail industry but the determination of workers was shown when another American based company, Woolworths, was forced into conceding union rights to its employees. The workers in the catering industry must follow the example of shop workers, and show companies like McDonalds that no company is “too strong” to resist workers once they have begun to organise themselves.

UNLESS YOU push and ask, you don't get things from the social; they don't tell you anything. My problems started before my son was born. For technical reasons, I got no maternity grant.

I even had to wait 18 months for child benefit. In the end I got six months of the child benefit due to me. Somehow Marc, my son, and I survived.

The next hurdle was finding somewhere to live. When I went to the council for housing they came out with the amazing advice that I needed either a husband or another baby to get somewhere.

In fact a friend of mine from school in the same situation deliberately got herself pregnant a second time so that she could get a council flat. The room where she was living was so damp that her first baby was continuously ill.

Not one housing agen-

Coping as a single parent

JOANNE, a single parent from Plymouth, was interviewed by MICK WHALE

cy would take me on because I was pregnant. The trouble is they don't build houses for people's needs.

When you are a single parent you can be tremendously isolated. You can't go out because you can't afford a baby sitter; the average in Plymouth is £2 an hour. The more you can't go out, the more the baby becomes dependent on you and the harder it is to leave it.

I get £16.60 a week towards £25 a week rent. The rest comes out of my £34.20 allowance which has to feed and clothe me and Marc. The only way I could get replacement clothes as Marc was growing so fast was to

single his existing clothes and show the social.

I got no cot allowance. They said Marc should sleep in my bed. However the hospital said it was unhealthy for mother and baby to sleep together.

They came round once and said they had reports of a man going into my room and coming out late. It was my brother but they insinuated that we were sleeping together. In the end my brother, who was in the army had to go down and sort it out.

When I went for a clothing allowance they visited me and searched my belongings. I had no winter coat and one pair of plimsolls. Despite the

fact that winter was approaching they said as long as I had something on my feet i.e. my plimsolls, I was OK.

It's time somebody did something about one parent families. We don't need hostels but places where we can be independent. We need a cheap babysitting service and a decent nursery system. Some nurseries won't take a kid from a single parent family; they say it might be a bad influence.

We need to be alright financially. Child benefit goes up in April but you don't get the increase 'till November yet prices still go up in April. Our allowance should go up as prices go up.

End domestic drudgery

OPEN ANY glossy magazine or turn on the television and what do you see?

Immaculate smiling women washing floors, lovingly folding away snowy linen or cooking up delicious meals for their handsome husbands and bonny 2.2 children who obligingly troop in starving.

This seems far removed from my getting down on hands and knees to wash muddy floors or standing for hours on end doing piles of filthy washing, even with the “luxury” of a washing machine. And what about everyone's favourite, ironing?

One Sunday magazine tells me that an essential item for my kitchen is a fish ket-

tle “for poaching whole trout or salmon”. A far cry from my trying to get a family meal together, with the toddler crying round my legs, the older kids arguing over TV, and a hungry husband due home any time. Not to mention the grind of shopping, trying to stretch the money to impossible lengths and then dragging it all home only to find I've forgotten something.

Again my mind goes to the media, glossy, grinning women cavorting about the supermarkets with their trolleys. Where did I go wrong?

I find little pleasure in peeling potatoes, washing pans, scraping plates or any of the traditional women's jobs. Nor do most people. We're not all wrong!

If we could all afford it, new technology could lighten the load enormously, automatic washing machines

and tumble dryers make washday a thing of the past. You just put a load in and forget it, or even better communal laundries where, again with all that modern technology offers, washing could be done properly, ironed on machines and delivered back to us fresh and folded just like those adverts.

By Karen Spooner
(Hull Labour Women's Council)

In food preparation up to date cookers, microwaves, food processors etc would take away a lot of the drudgery. But what a boon it would be to be able to drop everything and all go to a communal restaurant, not a dingy canteen serving third rate meals, but a well run

establishment where families could meet together, and with other people, to enjoy good food in a social atmosphere.

Full workers' control would ensure that wages and conditions would be first class. In this way housework could be cut to a minimum, so freeing women to take up employment or higher education. With the introduction of a shorter working week the remaining work could be shared by both partners to give everyone more time to spend in social or leisure facilities.

All of these benefits could be achieved under true socialism when the resources available would be utilised to the good of the working class. Only in this way will women be liberated from the drudgery of housework and come to take a full part in the running of society.

DUBLIN 1913-

IRELAND AT the turn of the century was an impoverished mass of humanity.

It faced colonial repression from British Imperialism which used Ireland as an agricultural 'milch-cow' for its own industrial society. At home there was increasing exploitation from the new Irish capitalist class

Dublin itself was a giant slum. As the 20th century reached its teens, Dublin had a higher death rate amongst its 300,000 population than even Calcutta. 20,000 families lived in single rooms in run-down, rotting tenement blocks. By 1913 unemployment stood at eight per cent, and inflation had left Irish workers no better off than they had been in the 1890's.

Wealth was concentrated in the hands of a clique of Catholic businessmen, who were enmeshed in the hierarchy of the conservative Irish Nationalists. For example three prominent Nationalist members of the Dublin Corporation, O'Reilly, Corrigan and Crosier, were the big landlords of the Dublin slums.

Indeed Arthur Griffith, founder of Sinn Fein and leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party was later to join in on the attacks on Larkin, Connolly and the impoverished masses of Dublin.

Their opposition to British Imperialism was not based on the need for the emancipation of the Irish masses, but the opportunity to extend their own parasitic existence. Their goal, their 'freedom', was free trade and the lifting of tariff barriers imposed on Ireland by the British ruling class.

Impoverished workers

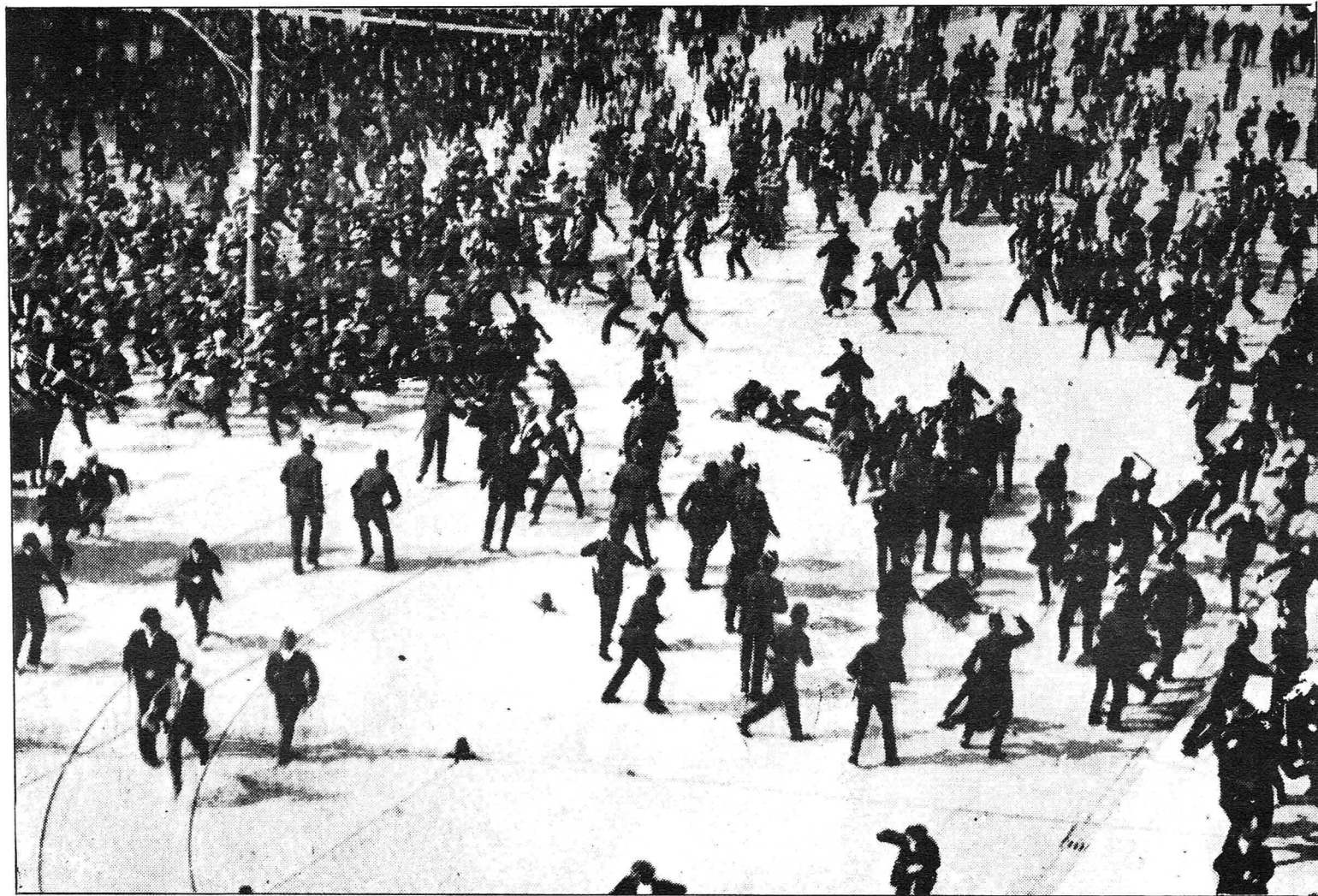
Dublin was not an industrial city but based on commercial and shipping trades—as such the impoverished workers had found no easy path to trade unionism. However, the spark that was to set Dublin ablaze was ignited in Belfast in the north, six years earlier.

1907 in Belfast saw the first major class struggle in Ireland. Unlike Dublin the city was based on heavy engineering and Larkin had arrived in Belfast to begin the unionisation of these industrial workers. During the bitter dockers strike to defend trade union rights Larkin effectively utilised the tactic of sympathy strike action amongst other sections of the movement, that left the bosses paralysed. He also used the class politics of socialism to cut across the sectarianism that had been used to divide Protestant and Catholic workers.

Although the Belfast strike was betrayed by the right wing leaders of the TUC, massive progress was made in uniting workers around the trade union movement. Larkin went on to establish the Irish Transport and General Workers Union, after he was suspended from the National Union of Dock Labourers. This work was consolidated by James Connolly when he took up position as secretary of the Belfast ITGWU in 1911. This strong, non-sectarian trade union acted as a beacon to workers in the rest of the country.

The Belfast struggle and the recruitment to the ITGWU gave workers new hope and confidence that the bosses could be taken on. In Dublin this confidence was strengthened by a small boom in the economy. Small scale strikes suddenly flared up and the ITGWU grew. Whereas its membership was only 4,000 in 1911, as the Dublin workers flocked into its ranks its national membership mushroomed to a magnificent 30,000 by 1913.

But the 'Green' bosses of the south also drew lessons from the struggles in Belfast and especially feared the new tactic of sympathy-strike action. A champion for this rising capitalist class came forward in the form of William Murphy, a conservative Nationalist boss who owned the tramways, railways and most of the press in Dublin, with interests



Bloody Sunday—August 31 1913—police attack the workers' demonstration in O'Connell Street.

abroad in West Africa and in his so-called enemy, Britain.

While his main paper, the *Irish Independent* attacked the new scourge of 'Larkinism', he presided over the formation of the Dublin Employers' Federation which united the city's 404 employers into one unit.

This consolidation of the growing Irish capitalist class prepared the ground for an attack on the fledgling Dublin trade union movement. With Home Rule on the agenda of the British Liberal government (which depended on the votes of the Irish Nationalist and Labour MPs) so the new Irish bourgeois wished to 'get their house in order' before they fully took over the reins of exploitation from British Imperialism. They did not want to be usurped at the 11th hour by a strong, unionised labour movement.

The small economic boom came to an end in 1913. As unemployment began to climb up again, so Murphy and the employers took the opportunity to go onto the offensive.

Their plan was simple—they would crush the workers' basic right to belong to a trade union.

On August 15 the battle began. Murphy ordered his newspaper dispatch workers to resign from the union or be sacked—40 workers were paid off at once. Ironically, the first action taken by the labour movement (in what was to involve a third of Dublin's population), fell to Murphy's newsboys—the ragged street urchins who sold the paper on Dublin's street corners. They refused to handle Murphy's papers in protest.

As the strike spread amongst print workers, so Murphy turned on his Tramway Company. He again demanded the workers sign the 'non-union' pledge. Larkin stepped in calling for lightning strikes. 700 tram workers responded, leaving the trams wherever they happened to be.

In response to this, Murphy visited Dublin Castle, the seat of British rule. This champion of Irish nationalism appealed to the British administration to invoke all the weaponry of colonial rule for the cause of the Irish bosses. A mass demonstration called for the following Sunday was banned, and

extra police were drafted in.

Larkin was later arrested after publicly burning the banning order and urging workers to defend themselves against police attack. Connolly was arrested on a similar charge and sentenced to three months.

On the Sunday thousands of workers turned out for the banned demonstration. Larkin—released on bail after protests from London and Dublin Trades Councils—outwitted the authorities. Disguised as a clergyman, he entered the Imperial Hotel which overlooked the mass demonstration, and addressed the workers.

The infuriated authorities again arrested Larkin and police baton-charged the crowds. Hundreds of people were bludgeoned to the ground in what became known in Ireland at that time as Bloody Sunday. A near police pogrom followed, with the police running amok in working class districts, smashing the workers' meagre dwellings and injuring hundreds. This was not without a spirited defence however. And the police themselves suffered 200 injuries.

In September, the Great Lock-out began in earnest. Taking Murphy's lead, the 400 employers shut their gates on 25,000 workers. The famous factories of Dublin—Guinness, Jacobs etc—went silent. Not one of the 25,000 would be taken back on unless they resigned from their union.

Even the capitalist courts, for what they were worth, declared this action 'against the concepts of individual liberty'. But legal niceties such as these were brushed aside by the capitalist class on the offensive.

It soon became clear that Murphy and the Federation intended a war of attrition on the workers. As the poet George Russell protested in a letter to the *Irish Times*, the bosses were "determined deliberately, in cold anger, to starve out one-third of the population of the city, to break the manhood of the men by the sight of the suffering of their wives and the hunger of their children."

The importance of the vital need for support from the international labour movement soon became clear. The British labour movement had a special duty to their Irish brothers

and sisters. Indeed the anger of the British labour movement at Bloody Sunday and the lock-out had been expressed by protests at TUC congress in August.

However, indignation of a different nature was troubling the brows of the gentlemen of the right-wing TUC leadership. They hurriedly arrived in Dublin hoping to settle the strike. Already, following appeals from Larkin, sympathy strikes had begun at the Liverpool docks, followed by railwaymen in Birmingham, Yorkshire and South Wales.

With the impotency of the right wing TUC leaders exposed in this straightforward class war between labour and capital, the right wing turned all their efforts to trying to cool the heels of the outraged labour movement, who instinctively rallied to the cause of the Dublin workers. Indeed, the railwaymen's 'leader' Jimmy Thomas actually aided the bosses in dismissing striking railwaymen.

Solidarity movement

The TUC sidetracked the growing solidarity movement by organising a food campaign for the starving Dublin workers. While this was essential, it should have been organised alongside a campaign of boycotts and sympathy strikes—but it was used in isolation and as a substitute for real action by the right wing.

Larkin well summed up the mood of anger of the rank and file when he stormed that the TUC leaders had "neither a soul to be saved nor a body to be kicked!"

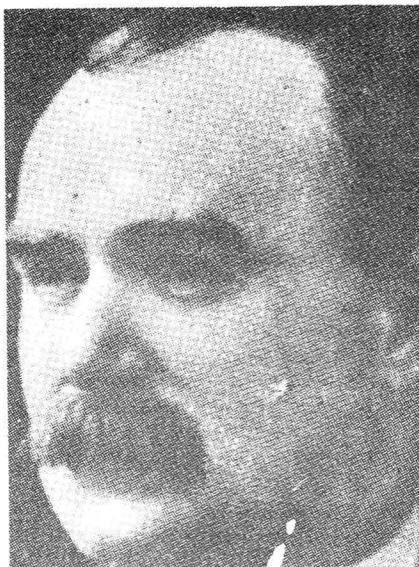
Even so, with all the enthusiasm of the British labour movement channelled into the food campaign, it was of course a huge success. Workers from pit villages to the predominantly Protestant Belfast shipyards willingly gave their pennies and shillings. By the end of the lockout over £150,000 had been raised to finance the food ships that began arriving in Dublin every week stocked with food from the CWS.

Internationally, donations came in from America and Australia, and French dockers prepared to black all Dublin goods.

Meanwhile the lock-out escalated with the building bosses and small farmers locking out their labourers. And even children at the Rutland Street school were dismissed after refusing to use textbooks supplied by a blacked firm.

However, as evictions grew as workers fell behind with their rent, a scheme was begun by Irish suffragettes to evacuate Dublin children to the homes of British workers.

The Dublin bosses were quick to seize upon this opportunity, raising the sectarian



James Connolly

THE GREAT LOCKOUT

THIS SUMMER marks the 70th anniversary of the Great Dublin Lock-out of 1913, the most momentous event in the history of the Irish labour movement.

BOB WADE traces the course of this titanic battle between labour and capital which lasted for seven turbulent months and was led by the two giants of the socialist and trade union movement—James Connolly and Jim Larkin.

spectre perfected by their Orange cousins in the north. Good Catholic children, they cried, would be sent to the homes of 'Godless English socialists'. Priests actually led mobs in violent forays against the striking workers. Producing a crudely forged certificate, they even claimed Larkin was a member of the Orange Order. In Belfast 1907, Larkin was accused by the Orangemen of 'conspiring with Catholicism'—in Dublin 1913 he was called a Protestant!

This blatant use of sectarianism blew up in the bosses' faces however. Connolly cleverly called off the scheme, urging the workers to 'put them to the test' and use the Catholic church's charity and relief organisations. The Catholic church was so overwhelmed they suddenly took a more conciliatory line to the evacuation scheme.

As the lock-out dragged on into October, scabs began to pour into Dublin recruited from the unemployed masses of Liverpool and Manchester. The workers responded by dropping individual picketing and holding mass pickets to stop the scabs. The bosses retaliated by arming the scabs—a young girl picket was shot dead by one of these desperate scum.

In November, British troops were placed at the disposal of the Dublin bosses. Murphy and the other champions of Home Rule gladly found their fortunes defended by the bayonets of British Imperialism.

It was at this stage that Connolly began the formation of the Irish Citizens Army, a trade union defence corps to defend the workers on the picket lines.

The ICA began firstly as a means of drilling workers to instill discipline into the mass of willing pickets. But with events beginning to boil in the North—where Lord Carson and the Orange bosses, with the encouragement of British Army officers, were forming and arming Ulster Volunteers to fight Home Rule—the ICA appeared armed with staves and hurly sticks.

The workers reckoned that if the Carsonites could take up arms to defend their narrow class interests, then why should the Dublin workers not do the same to defend basic democratic rights?

The ICA had its desired affect and the

ferocity of police attacks at least lessened.

As the ICA increased its size and training programmes, Larkin and Connolly again went to Britain to make a further appeal for British workers to support the Dublin trade unionists. Although the port of Dublin was closed through industrial action, scabs were arriving through Belfast and Derry. Blacking committees had been formed throughout Britain and the railwaymen were refusing to handle Dublin goods, but with the scabs unchecked the situation would become hopeless unless the dockers at Glasgow and Liverpool held sympathy strikes.

Larkin and Connolly argued for a general strike or at least a national blacking campaign, but still the TUC leaders vacillated on the issue even refusing to call a special TUC



Larkin disguised as a clergyman, arrested by police after addressing the mass meeting on Bloody Sunday.

conference to discuss the question.

However, such was the temper of the rank and file, pressure eventually forced the TUC to call a special conference. But it was not held until 4 December—**four months after the lock-out had begun**. The conference itself consisted of 350 full time union officials. Given the nature of the conference, only two real courses of action appeared before it. The right wing proposed merely to increase the levy to allow more funds for Dublin, while the left put forward a motion of a boycott of Dublin and to back it up "if necessary" with a national strike to prevent victimisation.

Sadly, the scales were tipped against the Dublin workers when Ben Tillet, the militant



Police escort a delivery of Heiton's coal in O'Connell Street during the lock-out.

leader of past battles on the London docks, condemned the tactics of Connolly and the Irish labour leaders. The cauldron of class struggle in Dublin proved too hot even for former heroes of the movement. The boycott motion was lost by over one and a half million votes.

Now with the Dublin workers starving and effectively isolated, it was only a matter of time before they were forced back to work.

The first sign of fissures on the workers' front came when the dockers were ordered back to work—even so they refused to do so at first. However, as late as Christmas 9,000 were still out. But with the return to work in February of the 3,000 strong Builders Labourers Union and the exhaustion of the relief fund (despite the brave efforts of the British Socialist Party and the engineers' union to keep the fund going), the mammoth struggle finally came to a close in March with the return to work of the Jacobs workers.

Although thousands of workers were forced to sign Murphy's pledge, many continued membership of their trade unions and continued paying subs. The battle resulted in a draw. The workers were not victorious, but nor had the bosses been able to break the back of the new trade unions.

Drawn battle

As Connolly put it, "The battle was a drawn battle. The employers despite their Napoleonic ruthlessness and unscrupulous use of foul means, were unable to carry on their business without men and women who remained loyal to the union. The workers were unable to force the employers to a formal recognition of the union, and to give preference to organised labour."

Importantly however, the struggle had exposed the role of the Irish capitalist class, that an independent Ireland on a capitalist basis would not lessen the exploitation of the Irish masses, and that labour was the only force that could bring about the true emancipation of the Irish masses. As Connolly concluded in his pamphlet *Labour in Irish History*:

"Capitalism is now the enemy... The merely political heresy under which the middle class doctrinaires have for nearly 250 years cloaked the Irish fight for freedom, has thus run its course... the Irish toilers from hence forward will base their fight for freedom not upon winning or losing the right to talk in an Irish Parliament, but upon their progress towards the mastery of those factories, workshops and farms upon which a

people's bread and liberties depend."

Five months later, Europe was plunged into the horrific bloodbath of the First World War. Tragically towards the end of the war, when the revolutionary wave that swept the continent following the Russian Revolution reached Ireland, its labour movement was without its two great leaders.

Connolly, isolated and despairing at the head of an exhausted labour movement, led the heroic but premature Easter Rebellion of 1916. On Connolly's capture, Murphy acted out his revenge by leading the campaign which led to Connolly's execution.

Larkin, meanwhile, had gone to the USA in 1914 to raise funds for the depleted ITGWU (whereas the union was receiving £1,000 in contributions a day at the height of the lock-out, by 1915 the available funds were £25). During the Russian Revolution Larkin agitated in support of the infant Soviet Union, but was imprisoned for his activities in 1919. He was jailed in the notorious Sing Sing prison, and could not return to Ireland until 1923.

With the lack of a class lead in the ensuing struggle for national liberation, sectarianism gained the upper hand, setting back the workers' movement decades.

But in the unfolding crisis of capitalism today, the army of labour is again on the march, in the north and south of Ireland. The trade union movement despite almost insurmountable difficulties has not been broken by sectarianism. The forces of Marxism are gaining strength in Ireland as a whole. In the coming battles between the workers and the decaying capitalist system, Irish workers will draw great inspiration and lessons from the momentous struggle of the down-trodden Dublin workers of 1913.

Read
Militant Irish Monthly
The Marxist paper for workers'
unity and socialism

20p Contact your local
Militant seller or MIM,
75 Middle Abbey Street,
Dublin 1

France bolsters 'sphere of influence'

DESPITE THE current lull in the fighting, life for the people of Chad remains a nightmare.

The media have mostly left, because poverty without war is not 'news', but all the horrors remain. In probably the poorest country in the world, capitalism has nothing to offer but poverty, instability, and war.

Average life expectancy for men is just 29, and for women 35, but the desperate struggle for life facing the people of Chad was ignored for decades. Yet when a Libyan-backed movement threatened to take control, all the technology of the twentieth century immediately flooded into the country.

The Reagan administration dispatched heat-seeking Redeye missiles, AWAC reconnaissance planes equipped with the latest computers, and a ground satellite station to communicate with the US 6th Fleet patrolling off the Libyan coast 1,000 miles away.

The French government sent 3,000 troops with armoured cars, anti-aircraft missile batteries and a range of other logistic support. Modern jet fighters have also been sent to the capital Ndjamen, to prop up the pro-Western Habré regime.

Since June, over £25 million worth of military equipment has flooded into a country which instead is desperate for economic development.

Starvation

Out of a population of about four million, it is estimated that over one million face starvation. A further one million are suffering from the effects of drought and over 200,000 have fled the country as refugees.

The responsibility for the grinding poverty and the twenty-year long civil war in Chad has to be laid quite firmly at the door of imperialism, especially French imperialism. Under direct French colonial rule the country was divided into two regions—'Chad utile' (literally—usable Chad) and 'Chad inutile' (unusable or useless Chad).

By Jim Chrystie

They developed 'Chad utile', in the South, where the non-Muslim population was forced to grow cotton for export. The Muslim, Arabic-speaking North, was put under harsh military administration, which did not 'end' until 1965, five years after independence.

Throughout the colonial period, and after, French troops were used to crush revolts in the north. Independence did not bring stability. The French handed over political office to a succession of regimes favourable to their imperialist interests and based on the south.

In 1968 a number of northern opposition groups came together to form the nationalist movement, FROLINAT. With a largely nomadic population in the North, and without the anchor of a working-class base, the FROLINAT leadership, came to reflect the interests of various rival factions, basing themselves on the patronage of various foreign governments.

With French imperialism backing its southern puppets, the FROLINAT leaders first turned to Libya's Gaddafi for support, and he took advantage of the instability in Chad to annex the Aouzou region on the Chad/Libyan border, an area thought to be rich in minerals.

In the mid-1970s the French, still the dominant power in the country, with over a thousand military and civil 'advisers' and a military aid agreement, re-assessed their options in the unending war in Chad and switched support to Hissene Habré, leader of one faction in FROLINAT; in 1978 he was made Prime Minister.

Habré has been dubbed 'the Pol Pot of Chad'. *The Guardian* reported, 31 January 1981, how he had murdered large numbers of opponents even within his own faction.

The fact that Mitterand is now backing Habré is an indication of how far his government has been unwilling to break with French capitalist interests, at home and abroad.

In his early days in office

Mitterand seemed prepared to back Goukouni Oueddei, whom his paratroopers are now opposing. Oueddei, leader of a rival FROLINAT faction, had taken power in 1980, supported by Libyan forces, ousting Habré who fled to the Sudan.

Mitterand offered Oueddei aid if Libya withdrew, at the same time sending reinforcements of French forces to neighbouring regimes, formerly French colonies and now nominally "independent".

Peace keeping force

In 1981 Libya agreed to withdraw its troops, to be replaced by forces from the Organisation of African Unity. The OAU "peace-keeping" force which replaced the Libyans came primarily from Nigeria, Senegal and Zaire, all regimes opposed to Libya and prepared to act on behalf of the interests of imperialism.

Within eight months of the Libyan withdrawal, Oueddei was overthrown, and Habré reinstalled in power. This was an American-backed coup—according to French secret service reports, the US government gave Habré \$10 million to launch his attack from the Sudan. The OAU troops in Chad did not fire one shot in Oueddei's defence.

Earlier this summer, Libyan troops returned to Chad and threatened to return Oueddei to power. This sent shock-waves

through Western capitals, but there was a difference in tactics between the French and US governments.

Reagan saw it as an opportunity to intensify pressure upon Gaddafi and perhaps bring him down. America's threat to intervene in what had been a traditional 'French sphere of influence' forced Mitterand's hand.

But the French intervened to check Gaddafi, not overthrow him. They have been trying to negotiate a deal. French capitalists have lucrative business dealings with Libya, and after the USSR, France is the main supplier of arms for the Gaddafi regime.

French and US interests

So Mitterand has talked about a "federated" Chad, in effect dividing the country in two. The French paratroopers have formed a defensive front across the country, warning Gaddafi, thus far, but no further.

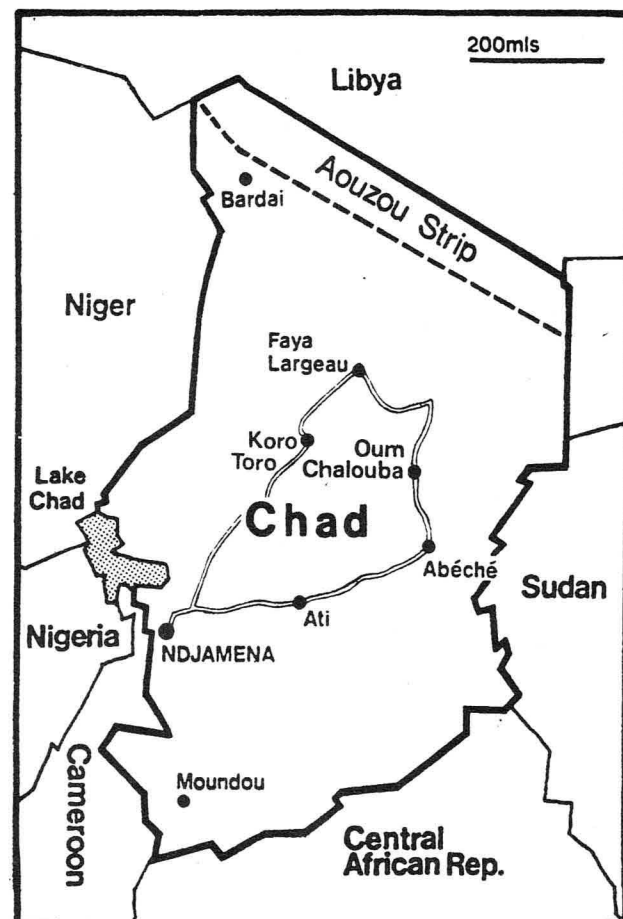
But the current lull is unlikely to last long. For despite their tactical difference, both the US and French governments are united in their overall aim.

They are sacred that a Libyan-controlled Chad would become a launching-pad for instability in Central Africa. The French and the US governments would be quite prepared to escalate their military activities to safeguard capitalist interests in the region.

For the importance of Chad is not primarily its economy. Indeed, in January 1981, Chad's Minister of the Economy declared: "We haven't got an economy any more".

All the talk about probable quantities of uranium and oil in Chad is pure speculation, at this stage, as there has been no proper survey of the country. Even the *Financial Times* argued last year that "Chad is not an economy worth fighting for" (10 June 1982).

But on the other hand its strategic position and the threat of revolution throughout Africa has made it an escalating battleground. Around its borders are other



'All that capitalism can offer Chad, the world's poorest country, is poverty, instability and war'

regimes rotten-ripe for social revolution.

The "pro-Libyan" coup in Upper Volta and the links with upheavals in Ghana and elsewhere all spell danger for the interests of capitalism in Central and West Africa. Sudan is already facing a new rebellion in its southern provinces. The Dacke regime in the Central African Republic, installed by the French, is only kept in power by the presence of thousands of French troops. In Cameroon and Niger there are ethnic links with Chad.

No capitalist solution

Beyond the immediate neighbours, the rotten regimes of landlordism and capitalism are terrified about the possible effects of a defeat of a pro-imperialist regime like Habré's. Mobutu, the corrupt ruler of Zaire, whose own government has been saved more than once by French intervention, has rushed in troops to back Habré.

Without imperialist intervention, the Habré regime would have already been overthrown. The US and

France are trying to draw the line in Chad, even if it is done literally by dividing the country. They want to bolster up their client regimes and put pressure upon or even overthrow Gaddafi.

While it is impossible for the US to intervene with its own ground troops, because of its involvement in Central America and the domestic opposition this would arouse, the interests of imperialism are being protected by French and Zairean forces with the USA offering to pay the "transport" costs.

But in France public opinion especially amongst the labour movement, would not stand for a long bloody war in Central Africa. Until recently Mitterand promised that not one French soldier would ever be sent to Chad.

He has caved in to American pressure. But one opinion poll, already shows that 53% oppose his decision whilst only 28% back him.

End capitalism

In the long run, it will prove impossible for capitalism to hold the line in Central Africa. Militarily they face the danger of being sucked into the quicksands of Chad. Moreover, the war could drive the Oueddei faction further to the left, thereby threatening to end the rule of capitalism in the country once and for all.

Even if imperialism were to patch up a deal with the opposition forces, there would be no lasting stability in Chad. The conditions of mass poverty and exploitation there and in the surrounding countries would inevitably result in fresh conflicts.

Capitalism and landlordism have created appalling social and economic problems in Central Africa and on the continent as a whole, and until these are resolved, by social revolution and the establishment of a Socialist Federation of African States, the social system can only offer a continuing cycle of wars, revolutions, counter-revolutions and upheavals.



French paratroopers sent to bolster the regime of Hissene Habré, whose barbarities have led its leader to be dubbed "the Pol Pot of Chad".

AUSTRALIA

CHILE

IRELAND

The billion dollar strike

Everything at Mount Newman iron ore mine is gigantic. A whole mountain is being literally dismantled.

Blasting dislodges 300,000 tonnes at one go; carving the hillside into terraces. Huge shovels scoop 50 tonnes of ore and load it into 200 tonne trucks, the biggest in the world.

After crushing, the ore is loaded into trains, each 144 cars long, to Port Hedland 250 miles away on the coast of Western Australia where it is shipped all over the world, much of it to Japan. But on the day I visited the mine the whole operation was stopped.

Nothing moves

Not a digger, truck, conveyor belt or train moved. \$550 million of equipment, sited on billions of dollars worth of ore was absolutely useless without the labour which operates it. Mount Newman workers had been on strike for six weeks over the company's refusal to keep apprentices on for six months after they have served their time.

Leading strike committee members including Tony McRae, Acting Convenor for the Electrical Trades Union and Dave Fulton, Convenor for the Metal Workers, explained the background to the dispute.

Mt Newman is 750 miles from Perth, 500 miles from the nearest reasonable sized town. If you don't like the shops at Newman you have to drive over 100 miles along dirt roads to the nearest grocery store, in a 'town' with a population of 40.

Desert conditions

For weeks in the summer the temperature is 110° or more. In the early days of the operation around 1967, the workforce lasted on average six months.

Immigrants to Australia were recruited off the ship and there were many stories of workers arriving at the airstrip at Newman, poking their heads out into the heat and desolation and jumping right back on the plane to Perth. In order to achieve the stable labour force essential to such a complex operation, the company was forced not only to pay high wages but also to create tolerable living conditions for workers and their families—to "turn it into a suburb of Perth" as Tony put it.

So housing was rented out very cheaply, with substantial allowances for electricity (for air conditioning) and

By Andrew Glyn

water. Workers were given two free flights to Perth for themselves and their families and so forth. The company turned a patch of desert into a town—families stayed, children went through school, the workers slogged away on the site and the profits rolled in.

But the world recession has affected even such a productive operation as Mt Newman. Although each tonne produced is still extremely profitable, especially after the devaluation of the Australian dollar earlier this year, production has been reduced as demand from the world steel market has slumped.

There have been no compulsory redundancies but manual workers have been reduced from 1690 to 1350 through natural wastage. In the past, apprentices always had the certainty of a tradesman's job if they chose to stay.

Apprentice guarantees wanted

Last November the company told the union that they could no longer assure these jobs and in May apprentices were told they would be sacked at the end of their time in August.

On 18 July the Metal Workers and Electricians went on strike after the convenors failed to get the company to give apprentices jobs of tradesmen who had left. The claim is now for all apprentices to "be guaranteed 6 months post-apprenticeship employment as tradesmen, and that they be given a minimum of 4 years employment (total)".

This is hardly an "extreme" claim as Tony pointed out. While the unions would have liked to secure guaranteed permanent jobs, an additional 6 months employment as tradesmen would at least give apprentices the experience to become confident and competent craftsmen (the electricians actually need the extra 6 months before they receive their licence).

Moreover many other big mining companies in the area have provisions for employment of apprentices on completion of their time. But the company refuses to budge, claiming it would breach the principle of "managerial prerogative" and reportedly telling white collar staff that they could not give in as it

was a matter of 'pride'.

They are not short of money. The profits of the operation were some \$150 million last year and behind it lies the wealth of the joint owners—AMAX of the USA, the Australian giants Broken Hill and CSR, the British firm Selection Trust and Mitsui and Itoh from Japan.

The workers, however, are rock solid. At the latest meetings only 8 out of the

362 workers on strike voted to end the strike.

The rest of the manual workforce has been laid off without pay since the beginning of August. Despite the fact that dole queues soon stretched into the desert as laid off workers stood in line to claim benefits, the majority support the strike. Many white collar staff also support the strike financially. Part of the explanation is the company's attitude; as Dave Fulton said, "the work is hard, the company is hard and you've got to be hard".

The so-called 'community' radio station for example has been pressurised by company stooges to take no announcements from the strike committee. When the committee sent a record request for "Back in the USSR" to be played for the mine management it was announced as being requested by a group of people who

couldn't be named for another group of people who couldn't be named!

But the overwhelming support for the strike is not just based on the company's arrogant attitude and petty tactics. The fight for apprentices' jobs is a fight by the whole town for a future for its young people. Nearly all apprentices come from the families of Newman workers and the overwhelming majority of Newman families have at least one person working for the company.

Workers confident

The Strike Committee is confident of victory. Whilst the company boasts of the ore stockpiled at Hedland, Tony and Dave pointed out that much of it was useless,

having subsided into the river bed—it would practically have to be mined again! They are convinced the strike is biting and the company will be forced to concede.

This is not the only important struggle in the industry. About 200 miles away at Tom Price the workers for Hammersley Iron are conducting a series of rolling strikes in support of a 35 hour week. On September 1 they too were laid off, with the company admitting that stocks of ore at the port would be exhausted within a week. Across the continent in Victoria, General Motors workers are fighting 1,000 redundancies.

These disputes, and others over wages, have shattered any notion that the election of Bob Hawke's Labour Government would usher in an extended period of industrial peace.



Part of the 5,000-strong London demonstration on 11 September marking ten years of Pinochet's coup in Chile. In protests during the previous three days in Chile, at least 13 people were killed by gunfire, either from police or armed right wing civilians.

Photo: Denis Doran

Abortion vote a blow to women's rights

THE CONSTITUTION of Southern Ireland has been amended to ban abortion following a referendum on 7 September. After a campaign using the full reactionary power of the Catholic church, 841,233 voted for the amendment with 416,136 against.

It was the rural areas which formed the backbone of the campaign to attack women's rights. Of the 41 electoral constituencies, only five voted against, four in Dublin and one in Dun Laoghaire. The turn out too was low; only 54% voted.

The right wing Fianna Fail deputies who pushed the amendment wanted to ensure that abortion could never be legalised. But work-

ing class women do not demand the right to abortion for trivial reasons. In a country where contraception is extremely difficult to obtain and where recession is causing tremendous difficulties in providing for families, the right to abortion is essential.

Induced abortion was already illegal in Ireland, but the rich have never been bothered by that, being able to pay for operations, but since the 1967 Abortion Act in Britain, many Irish women now come across for abortions in Britain.

The church enthusiastically supported the amendment. The Irish Times showed photographs of elderly nuns from an enclosed order, some of whom had

been let out of the monastery for the first time for sixty years! It was the trade unionists and socialists alongside women's organisations who campaigned against the move.

For instance, groups of trade unionists in Cork issued a statement pointing out that social progress and measures against religious discrimination were longstanding objectives of the trade union movement and called for measures instead to improve the lot of working class women in Ireland and make abortion less necessary.

The weight of the Catholic church may have won a victory here, but any feeling by reactionary politicians that

this heralds a period where they can ride roughshod over the working class will rapidly be dispelled.

Large sections of the capitalist class saw this referendum as a welcome side-show to hide the worsening state of the economy. But bread and butter issues of jobs and living standards are making Irish workers very angry.

A bus strike in the major cities and yet another occupation in Dublin against a factory closure show the working class are far from cowed into submission. The labour movement must ensure that as part of a socialist programme, the Labour Party and trade unions take up clearly the issues of women's rights and campaign forcefully for repeal of this constitutional change.

Letters

IEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO
MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

A workers' paper

Dear Comrades,
Never has there been a greater need for a labour movement-backed daily newspaper to combat the lies and distortions of the Tory controlled media. Therefore, it is vital we start building sales of the *Militant* in all the major factories and estates, so we have the bedrock of support and regular readers needed to make a daily paper viable.

However, I believe that in order for a *Daily Militant* to get the concrete support of working people it would need to be an alternative newspaper in the real sense of the word i.e., contain a TV guide, sports page, interest stories as well as

political news and campaign news, etc.

A *Daily Militant* would have to reflect all aspects of working class life. This would mean that it would have to rely on a massive regular input of letters, articles and material from its readers—to a far greater extent than the Tory press does. It would have to be not a paper for workers but a *workers' paper*.

In this way it would be a campaigning paper and would have the strength and capability to survive.

What do other readers think about the *Daily Militant*?

Yours fraternally
Ray Duffill
North Hull LPYS

Any Questions

Dear Comrade,
How dare Frank Chapple refer to the tragedy of June 9th in his opening speech to TUC conference. Readers of *Militant* will be aware that this individual was openly campaigning for the enemies of the Labour Party during the election.

Chapple might reflect the prejudices of a certain layer of workers demoralised by fear of unemployment and the continual barrage of right wing propaganda from most of the media, but in no way does he represent the in-

terests of working class people.

His snide remarks against Arthur Scargill and his fawning over the Tories show him to be no friend of the labour movement. I would recommend him not to bother with the half way house of the SDP but join Reg Prentice where he truly belongs—in the Tory Party.

Certainly when Chapple came to Tunbridge Wells in an *Any Questions* session was cheered by the Tories and booed by the socialists in the audience.

Yours sincerely
Patrick Funnell
Tunbridge Wells

Fight for a change

Dear Sir,
I would like to point out the humiliating situation I found myself in recently simply because I was ill. I was off work for two days under Doctor's orders. When I returned to my job I was dismissed.

It was my first job after two years unemployment. Feeling degraded and demoralized I went to the Citizens Advice Bureau who abruptly told me that if I had worked for less than a year,

which I had, the employer had every right to dismiss me without any reason.

I am a teenager and desperately want work and yet it seems that because of heavy unemployment employers think they can treat you as dirt. This can not be right. Something will have to change. I've joined the LPYS to fight for that change.

Yours sincerely
Julie Allison
Chesterfield

Labour leader in a hurry

Dear Comrades,
One of the leading members of the Labour Party, Gerald Kaufman, addressed the fourth anniversary of the Bangladeshi Welfare Project for which I work.

He had at least three weeks' notice but the day before the event his secretary contacted the project and informed us he would have to leave at 3.00pm, even though the programme commenced at 2.30pm.

On the actual day he told us that he was leaving at 2.50 and tried leaving before we began.

In his speech he then said he was honoured to stand on the same platform as four beautiful women and he hoped that this wouldn't be taken as a sexist comment as this was one of the few communities where a woman's beauty could still be appreciated. Then he left.

The four representatives from the welfare project who Gerald Kaufman referred to were insulted by his behaviour. The two Asian women on the platform were also embarrassed by a man referring to their looks in public, a fact that anyone with the slightest knowledge of Asian culture would have known.

Gail Tattersall
Davyhulme LPYS

More on Monarchy

Dear Comrades,
I would like to reply to the letter by Mark Liddiard (issue 662) arguing that we should not demand the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords, since such a policy is unpopular with the working class.

While this is no doubt the case (although I find support is nothing like so overwhelming as the Tory press would have us think), it is our duty as socialists to put forward clearly the reasons why we believe in the abolition of these outmoded and wasteful undemocratic institutions.

On the election of a Labour Party committed to socialist policies, the capitalist class might well use the monarchy as a means of rallying the forces of reaction against the wishes of the electorate, expressed through the ballot box.

In doing this, the bosses, the upper ranks of the armed forces and the landed classes would be aided by the remnants of power vested in the Queen, including the rights to dissolve parliament, to appoint or sack the Prime Minister.

In such a period, the monarchy would become a figurehead to attempt to destabilise a socialist government, and for this reason, maintaining this feudal relic would be a dangerous error.

Yours Fraternally
Pat Bell
Swansea LPYS

Spilling the biscuits

Dear Comrades,
Militant seems to be gaining readership in high places.

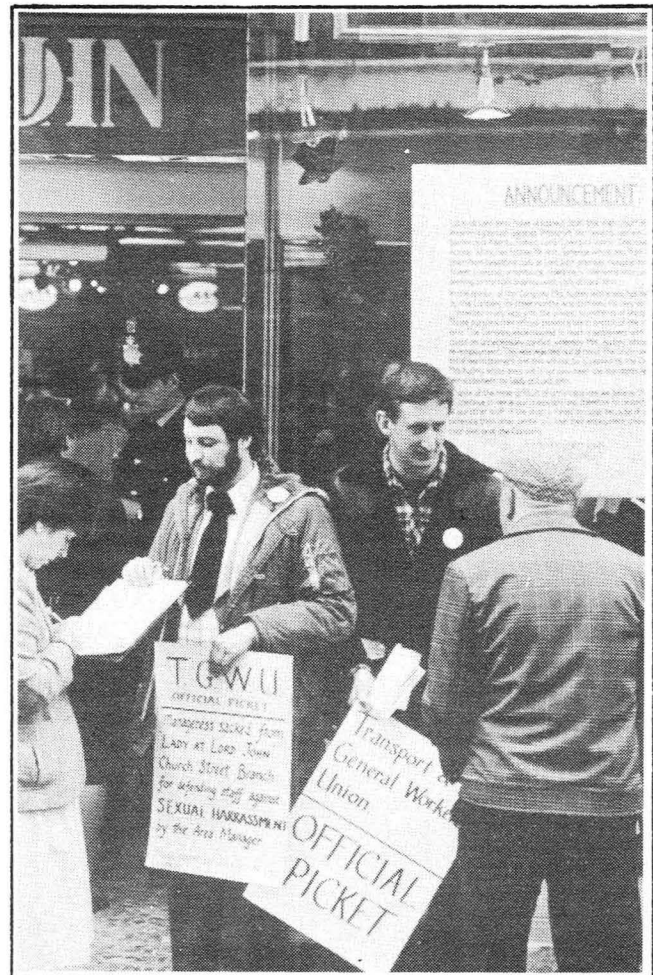
On his recent visit to United Biscuits, Ashby, company chairman Sir Hector Laing was touring the shop floor, shaking hands and exchanging pleasantries with some of the workers. However, when he got to me, he pointed his finger and said "You wrote a letter to a certain newspaper about my involvement with other companies, didn't you?"

This was a reference to my article in *Militant* 658. So I said "Yes, that's right."

He then lectured us on how it was good for business for him to be on boards of other companies, as he could secure orders that way.

If you're reading this, Sir Hector, I'd just like to say that your work and that of your colleagues on various boards hasn't done much good for UB Workers at Liverpool or Osterley. My article was not an attack on you personally—rather it was an example of the way capitalism works (or does not work, more accurately).

Yours Fraternally
Keith Pattenden
USDW UBE33



Pickets were arrested outside Lady at Lord John shop in Liverpool. Photo: Thomas Carroll.

Any complaints

This letter was sent in response to a letter and a copy of *Militant's* article on the Lady at Lord John dispute in Liverpool. We reprint it for our readers' information. Section 49 of the Police Act 1964—try that on your local bobby next time you're selling papers and told to move on. On second thoughts—don't bother, write a letter in the safety of your own home.

FROM THE HOME OFFICE.

Dear Mr Parry
Your letter of 20 May to the Prime Minister about incidents at a shop in Church Street, Liverpool, in April was passed to this Department. I apologise for the delay in replying.

The actions and decisions taken by police officers in the course of their duties are operational matters and as such are the responsibility of the Chief Officer concerned. I am not able to comment on specific incidents, but I understand that the pickets were arrested in connection with the offence of obstructing a highway.

It is open to any of the persons involved in the incidents in question who feels that the police acted improperly or unlawfully to lodge a formal complaint under section 49 of the Police Act 1964. However, I understand that to date no complaint has been received. I herewith return your copy of *Militant*.

Yours sincerely
S Menzes

Italian article

Dear Comrades,
I had to go to my brother's wedding in Milan.

The article in *Militant* on the Italian elections was very handy. I saw posters of the Christian Democratic (the Tories), the Socialist Party and the Communist Party.

We talked about the elections in Britain and in Italy. No one likes Mrs. T.

So thanks to our own Italian correspondent for a good article.

Yours fraternally
Patrick Westmore
Isle of Wight

Sectarianism in Scotland

Dear Comrade,
After waiting on a train from Glasgow to Motherwell on Saturday, I witnessed the enormous effect that the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland has on working class youth in the West of Scotland, especially Glasgow.

Hundreds of Glasgow Rangers fans piled on to the trains singing anti-IRA songs before Rangers played Celtic at Parkhead.

Many of the fans were YS age and I realised that though it would be difficult to win these young people to the ideas of Marxism, it is very important that we do so. If these people are ignored then we are merely leaving them to reactionary organisations.

Susan Riley
Motherwell South LPYS

Political surgery required

Dear Militant,

If you need medical treatment for depression, then Dr Vernon Colman has got just the answer for you. Commenting on a report that showed that twice as many women as men are going to their doctors because of depression, he prescribed:

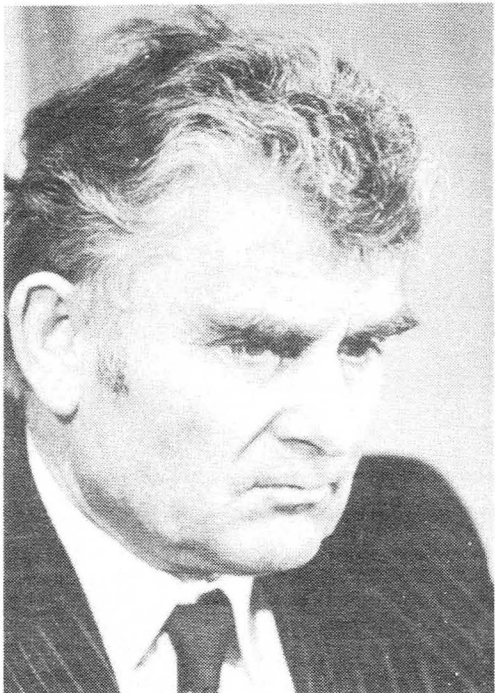
"Buy yourself a rocking chair. It's a great way to rock away the blues... Take a break from time to time. Go away for a day or two... Learn to dream properly". (*Manchester Evening News*, 16 August). Experts have called the rise in reported depression the "stay at home blues".

Unfortunately Dr Colman is all too typical of doctors who cannot see the social reasons for illness. Sometimes it seems that the well-off in the medical profession live on a different planet.

This expert even stated: "It is difficult to understand why anyone should suffer from depression these days—few of us have to worry about finding enough to eat or somewhere to live."

That may be true for him, but for thousands of people in Manchester that is their daily reality. There are over 35,000 on the city's housing waiting lists alone.

Yours fraternally
Sue Pass
Wythenshawe
Manchester



Bill Sirs, General Secretary of the ISTC...



and some of his members

Preventative medicine—stopping closures

Dear Comrades,
I was amazed to hear Bill Sirs on the Channel 4 programme *Comment* putting forward his ideas for saving the NHS.

His answer is preventative

medicine—making people healthier and thus making less use of NHS facilities. His idea of preventative medicine is strange however, to say the least. For he then went on to pillory those who 'abuse' the NHS by drinking too much, working too much and smoking.

Perhaps he has forgotten that many workers are forced to risk their health by

working long hours to earn a living wage. One of the major causes of alcoholism amongst the working class is poverty and despair. Just go to one of the towns that have collapsed as a result of steel closures over the last few years, Brother Sirs.

Yours fraternally
Clive Walder
Brighton LPYS

chalets between 10am when the campers leave and 2pm on Saturday afternoon when the next intake arrive—all without the aid of a vacuum cleaner.

Bobby Butlin best typifies the attitude of the bosses. At an auction where he was selling a selection of paintings

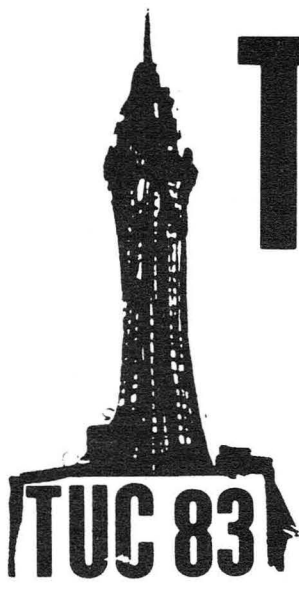
discovered hanging in Butlin's camps around Britain since the 1950s, asked which painting he liked best Butlin replied "the one that brings in the most money."

Yours
Malcolm Richardson
Leeds

No fun at Filey

Dear Militant,
I went on holiday to the Butlin's camp at Filey on the East Coast.

The chalets were a little 'grubby' and smelled of 'damp'. And no wonder! A chalet maid informed me she was paid £9 for cleaning 15



Talking at the TUC

DELEGATES AND visitors at the TUC in Blackpool talked to *Militant* about their personal impressions of the conference.

Hilary Dunn, USDAW delegate. "I think the decision on Tebbit was wrong, because you can't talk to him, you've got to fight him. On YTS schemes we should make sure we've got a lot of control on how they're going to be implemented and that the rights of the youth are protected."

Betty Bell, NALGO executive and delegate. "I was disappointed. A lot of people don't need to come because you can leave

it to the general secretaries the way they control the block vote. That was quite an eye opener. In my own union we had a pre-meeting on Sunday afternoon and then we didn't really need to go to the conference the rest of this week. The good thing about it as far as I'm concerned is that there is a lot of money around which means I can make a large donation to my political beliefs.

Alex Corina, NUPE, spoke to *Militant* whilst lobbying the TUC for support for the occupation of Thornton View Hospital in Shipley. "Thornton View Hospital has now been occupied for over a month. It began on the 5 August when over forty people—supporters, relatives, GPs, councillors, and over 30 members of staff occupied the hospital to prevent closure by the regional health authority and the district health authority.

"There are over 100 staff and there are 82 beds. What a "work-in" means is that instead of like a factory, where you shut the factory gates and the idea is to keep people out and where machinery comes to a halt it, in a hospital work-in you are trying to keep people in, to keep the hospital running normally and prevent it from closing. In any one day it will have a staff of about forty who work days and then you have supporters who comprise the pickets on the gates and on the doors. The purpose of this is to stop the running down of the hospital.

"What management have done in the last few months is to take on temporary staff as permanent staff leave. The intention is that eventually the temporary will outnumber permanent staff so that when they want to close the hospital they just pull all the temporary staff out.

"We want to bring to the attention of the TUC nationally that there is an occupation in Bradford and that it's the first occupation ever in the Yorkshire Humberside region. There have been only seven occupation of hospitals in the last ten years nationally. So the occupation of Thornton View has na-

tional implications and we believe it's the beginnings of the fightback in the NHS to prevent the Tories from cutting, and to prevent privatisation and to prevent them closing hospitals. We are not only drawing attention to Thornton View here today but to all cuts in the health service.

Ann Jones, CPSA visitor, attending her 13th congress: "One of the widest feelings among visitors this year is that the resolutions and debates aren't facing up to the problems of 4.5 million people unemployed, trade union victimisations and the new Tebbit proposals. Yesterday, for instance, on the debate on Tebbit's laws there was only one resolution, the one from the Bakers' Union, that had any relevance to defeating the proposals.

"I'm astonished at my own union president, Kate Losinska, who stood at the rostrum and talked about how the proposals were sensible and reasonable and how we shouldn't break the law. She said that the congress really needs to represent the ordinary members of the unions yet she has used every effort in the past to thwart the will of our conference, to actively go back on union policy.

"The latest example is on Labour Party affiliation. More and more trade unionists understand that a political voice is even more essential at this time with the government trying to smash the trade union movement. This week, with the general council elections, we have seen organisational changes to hold back the labour movement as a whole, but it's never been possible to do that and it's not going to be possible now."

A Labour Movement Daily?

By Andy Beadle
(Deptford Labour Party)

"Less extreme than the Morning Star, less popular than the Daily Mirror and more committed... than The Guardian."

THE TUC last week decided to set up a committee to find ways to finance a labour movement newspaper.

Millions will welcome the prospect of such a voice against the Tories. But can the new paper sustain itself financially? And will it genuinely reflect the lives and aspirations of working people?

To look into the first question the TUC commissioned Lord McCarthy to conduct an inquiry and present a report: *The feasibility of establishing a labour movement newspaper.*

There's no doubting the need—look at the existing press! *The Sun* just had its wrists slapped by the Press Council for its "exclusive" interview with a Falklands' widow. The interview never took place!

Since then the *Daily Mail* too has been censured for dishonesty by the Press Council!

The dailies are dominated by just four millionaire press barons. They account for 80% of national circulation.

If they lie about secondary matters, even to their own kept poodle, the Press Council, what can we expect when their class interests are at stake?

In the 1979 general election, McCarthy reports, 66% of the press backed the Tories and only 27% Labour; 43.9% of the electorate voted Conservative to 36.9% Labour. In 1983 the figures must be even more disproportionate—with only the *Daily Mirror* backing Labour—on condition it kept to the old right-wing policies and leaders.

The trade unions have a particular interest in a new paper. During the 'winter of discontent' in early 1979:

"It was evident that (the press) sensationalised and trivialised the effects of the



The *Daily Herald* (started by the London Society of Composers as a strike sheet) was launched as a newspaper with the goodwill of the Parliamentary Committee of the TUC and with the active encouragement of the Secretary of the Trades Union Congress CW Bowerman who, with W Matkin, Secretary of the General Union of Carpenters and Joiners, at first represented the Parliamentary Committee on the *Herald's* board of directors, but the new paper's militant policies angered Ramsay MacDonald and his closer associates in the Labour Party. Another newspaper, the *Daily Citizen*, was launched as their official organ. And in 1913, the Parliamentary Committee's support of the *Herald* lapsed.

disputes... that they demonstrated outright hostility in their opinions which were freely and inextricably linked with their presentation of the "facts", and that they deliberately harassed, in their private lives, individual trade unionists who happened to be in the news."

In the popular press in particular McCarthy says, "Trivia is disguised as news, the emphasis is on entertainment at the expense of information. Stunts and bingo have taken the place of news." He could have mentioned mole-hunts too.

Starting a labour paper would not alter the character of the existing capitalist press. Labour must have a clear programme for

democratising the press as a whole (see *Militant* 645). But first Labour and the trade unions need a voice to get their own ideas heard.

The McCarthy report proposes a 32-page tabloid, the same format as the *Sun* and the *Mirror* for example, but without the trivia and "pin-ups".

However the report reads more like a prospectus for potential investors than a rallying call to launch a workers' paper.

Of course a sound paper requires a serious approach to finance. Without its own paper we are dependent on the existing big business media to put across (and distort) our policies.

What McCarthy Does not

give us is a socialist appraisal. We are talking about a class newspaper, counterposed to the bosses' media. We need to know who will read it, finance it and write for it.

McCarthy conceives the paper as competing in the existing daily market. It would be distributed through wholesalers, printed on an outside press, written by journalists lured from existing dailies backed up by material from the major press agencies.

How was the market tested? Research Bureau Ltd consulted "a sample of 800 respondents recruited at random across the whole socio-economic spectrum..."

The hard-core circulation

figure arrived at is about 300,000. In other words approximately the number of shop stewards and labour movement activists in this country. Had it occurred to the TUC leaders to consult their activists directly they could have saved £27,000 spent on "random" surveys.

The way to launch a labour paper is to involve and enthuse the activists. Then they can be persuaded not only to buy and read it but to write for it and increase sales by getting other workers to buy it.

What of the finances? It is remarkable that McCarthy expects the new paper to reap a profit on a fraction of the circulation of its capitalist rivals. There is no suggestion that the journalists should be on an average worker's wage.

The revenue from advertising is expected to represent a large part of the paper. But here is the problem.

Will big business really want to advertise in a labour daily? And even if they did, can we expect a firm to continue to advertise if the paper is siding with their workers in a dispute?

The *Daily Herald*, with four million readers, made a loss because it couldn't get big advertisers. *Militant* itself faces a boycott by the wholesalers as well as the big advertisers. In fact we can't even advertise in most other journals!

Our fighting fund is an example of how to break the big business stranglehold—appeal to the readers and supporters for the necessary cash.

This is the only way to raise the initial funds for the paper without strings attached.

The £6.7 million launch fund is less than the cost of a pint for every trade unionist in the country. If an appeal was raised to explain the nature of the project to trade union members, a levy of an extra week's subs would finance the new paper very quickly.

Neither can the paper solely rely on existing press agencies which supply Fleet Street and the provincial press. A labour paper must look to its own supporters for its material.

It would be able to establish a reputation for putting the workers' view by utilising its close links with the unions to obtain first-hand reports.

Such questions are neglected by McCarthy. But as trade unionists strive to transform the TUC into a fighting leadership, will the paper become a mouthpiece of the Congress leaders?

When Len Murray told *Financial Times*' NGA members to go back to work, would such a paper have supported him?

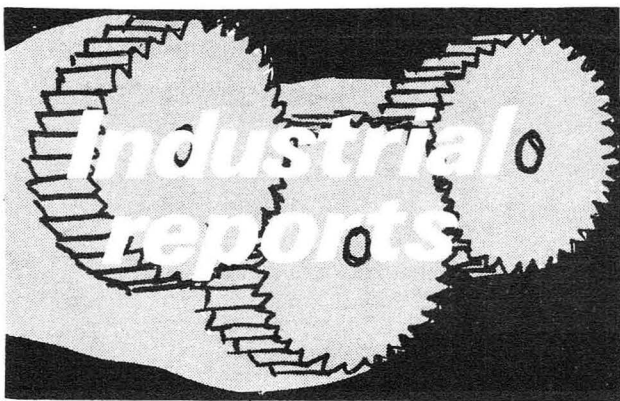
An 'independent' editor would have to come down on one side or the other. Who would the editorial staff be accountable to—the workers' movement or the auditors?

McCarthy suggests that trade union and labour activists could help publicise the paper but nowhere are they given a direct role to play.

Rather than envisaging a campaigning lever for socialist change the report approves the idea of "a left of centre newspaper less extreme than the *Morning Star*, less popular than the *Daily Mirror* and more committed to the Labour Party and TU movement than *The Guardian*."

This prescription, first formulated by the Royal Commission on the Press, is hardly likely to inspire as much active participation as the average bingo competition.

Militant welcomes the prospect of a labour daily. But unless it is founded as a workers' paper—just as the trade unions and Labour Party were founded as class organisations—it will face a stormy future. Indeed it may even fail to get off the ground.



Stop pit closures

DAI DAVIES (chairman) AND MIKE GRIFFIN (secretary) of the NUM Penrhwi-ceiber Lodge spoke to FRANK CUTHBERT.

HAVING SUCCEEDED in closing Lewis Merthyr and Brynllw collieries, the National Coal Board are seeking more closures. One of the methods they employ is linking up pits underground and gradually shifting the output to one pit.

Last year the NCB carried out a feasibility study at Deep Navigation Colliery in the Merthyr Valley. It has now been revealed that they plan to link

this pit with Penrhwi-ceiber colliery in the Cyman valley, with all the coal being transported to Deep Navigation. This would mean, to start with, that 189 surface workers at Penrhwi-ceiber would become redundant. Both Deep Navigation and Penrhwi-ceiber NUM lodges are opposing the move.

Penrhwi-ceiber lodge is in close communication with Deep Navigation, Taff Merthyr, Trelewis Drift (near Taff Merthyr) and Merthyr Vale (Aberfan) lodges, all of whom are opposed to such link ups.

Three faces are worked from

Penrhwi-ceiber, including the one now in dispute. One is due for closure soon, and the northern face has water problems which would make it uneconomic.

The shift of work to Deep Navigation would undoubtedly be a precursor to closure of Penrhwi-ceiber, though the deputy area director has admitted that there are twenty years of reserves between the two. The men in the pit are resentful. Management's plan was to develop the face from Penrhwi-ceiber, so even local management are shocked by the NCB plans.

The lodge at Penrhwi-ceiber are under no illusions about the difficulties of fighting pit closures, but the NCB is taking on one of the traditionally most militant pits in the entire coalfield.

Crisis point is being reached now in South Wales as so-called "receiving" pits are saturated with men transferred from closed pits.

Chris Herriot, Monktonhall NUM (personal capacity):

AT MONKTONHALL, NCB pressure has been intensified over the past month, with the appointment of a new manager.

If management plans to create 300 redundancies are thwarted the union's authority will be challenged. Recently the area delegate had his wages stopped after visiting the NUM area of office on union business, despite

having informed the general manager he was going.

But this is nothing compared to the pressure on the men. In one section, L43, 60 men received 14 days notice of termination of employment, which were withdrawn if production targets were reached.

When production was not achieved due to a legitimate mechanical breakdown, the board did not implement the sackings. The threat still hangs over their heads however.

The response of the rest of the men was immediate—if sackings took place there would be strike action. The purpose of management is to smash morale.

Previously, management complained of staff shortage and cut the faces from 8 to 5. This was a blow. If they succeed in obtaining 300 redundancies two more faces would be cut, and this points to the eventual closure of the pit.

The fact that all future developments have stopped shows that the pit is on the NCB hit list. Development is the future of any pit. There is no replacement of old machinery. A machine that had taken months to assemble is now being dismantled to go to another colliery. Also a large Dosco machine, costing thousands of pounds and just transported underground has been raised to go to Polkennet.

STOP PRESS: As we go to press, news has just come in that a strike is taking place at Monktonhall.

BSC private steal deal

'PHOENIX TWO' is the next stage in the British Steel Corporation's management/Tory plans to privatise the steel industry. After the creation of Sheffield Forgemasters, there will be a new firm, British Engineering Steels, created with private firms GKN and Lonrho having the controlling interest.

This sell-off of public assets will result in plant closures, job losses and worsening conditions for steelworkers.

The reason that the private firm of Hadfields will be first to close ("phase one" of "rationalisation") is that redundancy payments will come cheaper. 750 workers will lose their jobs in this closure.

The aim of Phoenix Two is to reduce the workforce in engineering steels by 4,000—this means jobs at Templeborough, Aldwarke, Tinsley Park and Stocksbridge may be drastically cut.

Since 1979-'80 BSC's workforce has been reduced by 88,000 and in South Yorkshire 38,000 have gone since the mid '70s.

The BSC plants will come cheap to Lonrho and GKN, they

are believed to have advanced £600 million for the whole of BSC Special Steels—an absolutely rock-bottom price for some of the most advanced plant in the world—without having invested a penny in it.

Their own plants—Brymbo in Wrexham, and Hadfields, have suffered from years of underinvestment and are outdated. Yet through this deal they get the new continuous casting plant at Stocksbridge, Aldwarke's modern mill and Templeborough's advanced continuous caster. In addition, Lonrho will collect £10 million from the closure of Hadfields—£8.5 million of this will come from BSC!

The establishment of a South Yorkshire anti-privatisation committee involving all affected unions, the trades councils and local and county councils could co-ordinate a campaign locally and press for a national conference to be held to plan a united fight back.

By Alan Arderton (Sheffield Central LP)

AEI at TUC

ON MONDAY 5 September members of the AUEW at AEI Cables in Bootle were locked out over the union claim for decent pay and conditions (see *Militant* 666).

In June, the same workers were given a Pewter Tankard, a £10 Premium Bond and a party by management as a thank you for their co-operation. Rates of pay are low with production workers receiving £83 per week—well below other Cable manufacturers on Merseyside.

Mark Avis interviewed Brother J. Hamlyn, one of the strikers lobbying the TUC. "We put on an overtime ban and a 'work-to-contract'. The main-

tenance electrician was asked to turn in on nights to cover for an electrician who was off. He'd already worked eight hours in the day and explained to the manager that if he came in he'd be breaking the overtime ban and he wasn't prepared to do it. The night shift was sent home and as a result of that the rest of the workforce came out in sympathy.

"We're in a funny situation because we work for GEC but we rent land from another firm which itself is GEC owned, we can't stop everything going through the gate because we would be guilty of secondary picketing. I say this is a GEC firm and stop the lot."

Messages of support and donations to Steve Summer, 69 Manica Crescent, Liverpool 10, Merseyside. Help and assistance is particularly needed from within GEC.

Nigg: no deal over our heads

MORALE IS threatened by rumours flying around the Nigg Bay Highland Fabricators dispute.

Although a package has been agreed at national level by the officials of the three major unions and talks held in London no meeting has been held to discuss these proposals with either the convenor or the shop stewards.

The convenor Rab Wilson hopes that the rumours will soon be out of the way and details of the package put before the members.

It appears that a certain amount of management intimidation has been taking place, with information now coming out that phone calls are

being made to trade union officials criticising the role of the shop stewards and in particular of the convenor.

Rab Wilson feels that the membership are being crushed under a lack of communication and unwillingness on the part of union officials to involve them in the dispute.

He believes that the trade union officials have adopted a "cavalier" attitude. He also stated, however, that "they can do all the talking they like, at national level, but unless the ingredients are there I am sure my members will not accept any package".

By David Churchley

John Brown: blow for Clydebank

JOHN BROWN Engineering (JBE) the largest employer in Clydebank has announced that 500 jobs will have to go due to lack of orders and the failure of a take over bid by Hawker Siddeley.

JBE manufacture gas turbines for power stations. They got caught up in Reagan's Russian trade embargo controversy last year, being a subsidiary of an American parent company.

Now the tables have turned: JBE made a net profit in the last financial year—£1.3m—but the parent company John Brown PLC has losses of £8.6m and it is this, along with lack of orders, that has brought the announcement of 500 redundancies.

But the full package contains a series of demands: 500 redundancies; one year no strike

clause; recruitment on temporary contracts; areas required to work excess overtime and areas required to operate short-time work.

It is obvious that the 500 redundancies are only the tip of the iceberg. The response from the workforce has been to call an overtime ban and a ban on holiday working and also refuse to work with sub-contractors.

This has come as a terrible blow for the people of Clydebank who have seen thousands of jobs lost in the last ten years. Escalation of the industrial action may well be the only way to stop the redundancies and further attacks by management.

By K. Baldessara (Clydebank LPYS)

JAGUAR

THE BEGINNING of a new confidence among car workers could be seen when assembly workers at Jaguar's Browns Lane plant in Coventry struck for two hours last Friday in protest over their bonus scheme.

"We rely on the bonus" workers told us. "Without it we'd be among the lowest paid workers in Coventry. Yet staff often get more than us, while we're the ones who make the cars."

The bonus itself is part of a BL agreement which will not be changed until 1984. Workers saw this stoppage as a gesture of protest. The stewards' statement to the company expressed their anger at arrogant remarks made by Jaguar executives to the press, such as "we are after a satisfied customer rather than a satisfied workforce."

It also made clear that after taking the blame for the crisis in the industry, car workers now want their share in its revived fortunes. "Workers have not shared in Jaguar's recent outstanding successes," they pointed out.

By Tony Cross

St Helens says save Pilks

ENOUGH IS enough! That was the mood of shop stewards from Pilkingtons glass works at a meeting called by the Labour-controlled town council in St Helens on 25 August.

The meeting was called in response to the firm's continued rundown of its operations in the town. Pilkingtons, the world's largest flat glass manufacturer, have shed 7,000 jobs in St Helens over the last five and a half years and now employ only 8,500 in the town, with 13,000 unemployed.

The jobs have been lost, in the main, without any struggle by the unions but the company's decision to build its new glass plant in Corby in the West Midlands rather than St Helens has outraged shop stewards. This was reinforced when stewards from the fibreglass plant in the town informed the meeting that the company intended to cut back their workforce by 400.

As a first step in the cam-

paign, 100,000 leaflets will be distributed, financed by the council, and a petition is to be compiled. A meeting is to be sought with the firm to discuss their future plans. But it is only the strength of the trade unions that can ensure the campaign is successful.

The town council have played an invaluable role in establishing the campaign and it is important to win the widest possible support from the community, but if Pilkingtons are determined to move out of St Helens as it appears they are then public opinion will not be enough to stop them. At the end of the day, it will only be action by the trade unions, overcoming past divisions, which can ensure the success of the campaign and that jobs remain in St Helens.

By Mick Slater (ASTMS, 714 and a member of the Campaign Steering Committee, personal capacity)



Photo: John Smith (JFL)

"WE SHALL not, we shall not be moved" sang health workers from Thornton View Hospital as 400 marched through Bradford in pouring rain last Saturday as part of the campaign to stop the hospital from being closed.

The general secretaries of COHSE and NUPE were there to add their support for the staff work-in as was Max Madden

MP, who called for both Shipley and Thornton View Hospitals to be saved.

Nurse Betty Elie (COHSE) called for supporting strikes if management took action against staff. Nurse Hazel Ward (NUPE) summed up the mood of the rain-soaked marchers. "I don't know who the Government think they are but my God we'll

give them a bloody fight!" The work-in is now in its 6th week. Messages of support and donations please to Betty Elie, c/o The Resource Centre, 93 Little Horton Lane, Bradford 5

By Steve Wilkinson (Chairman, Joint Campaign against Closure)

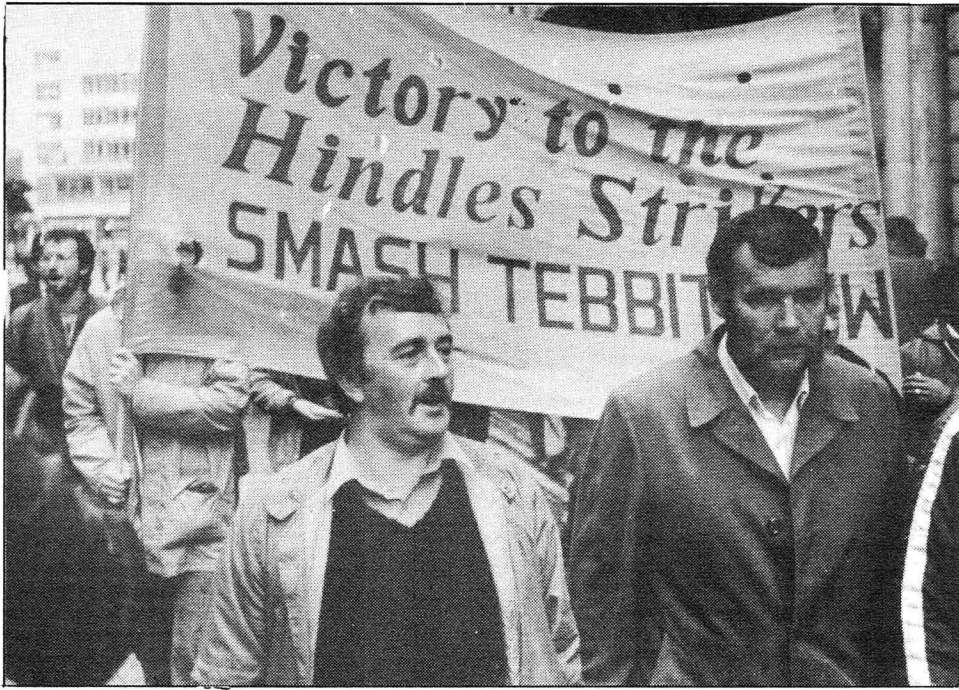
Workers' notebook

AN INTERESTING sight noted by the Observer a few weeks back—former AUEW general secretary Sir John Boyd at the Savoy for the dinner of the South Africa Club. As the columnist was not slow to point out the conversation at such a gathering was more likely to centre around South African apologetics than the struggle for trade union rights, especially in the company of people like Lord Chalfont and Mrs Thatcher's PPS Ian Gow.

A SADDER but equally instructive scene took place a couple of weeks ago near Coventry. The curtain finally fell on the attempt to keep the Meriden motor cycle plant going, with the appointment of liquidators by 200 creditors owed a total of £3.8m. The meeting was merely a sad formality, in that nothing has been produced at the plant since February and only a handful of the 2,000 workers who took part in forming the co-operative in 1975 remained.

IN 1982 for the third year running the membership of TUC affiliated unions fell by about 500,000. Total membership declined from a 1979 peak of 12,172,500 to 10,509,500 at the end of 1982. But the proportion of the workforce which is unionised has only dropped slightly. In 1978/79 52.6% of potential trade union members were actually unionised. That figure declined to 50.6% in 1982—but still represents a powerful weight in British society.

LAST FRIDAY Talbot UK declared a half-year profit of £1.5m compared with a £40.6m loss for the same period last year. That is the first profit declared for a decade by Britain's fourth biggest car manufacturer. Car production in Britain has been 29% higher in the first six months of this year than in 1982, though the peak was 106,000 vehicle in May when the industry was building up stocks for anticipated record August sales.



HINDLE'S WORKERS held a march through Bradford to celebrate a victory after a pre-hearing tribunal last Thursday. They won the right to be heard at an industrial tribunal, completely taking by surprise the bosses' federation. They are now in the 26th week of their strike, having been sacked. Congratulations' telegram even came from Terry Duffy, AUEW National President. And Divisional Organiser Ray Andrews at a rally at the end of the march called for Executive Council support for secondary blacking. They celebrated their victory by continuing the strike. Messages of support and donations to: AUEW Offices, 2 Claremont, Bradford 7.

THORN EMI Bosses' dirty tricks

MANAGEMENT AT the Thorn EMI factory in Padiham, have attempted in vain to break the morale of the 700 AUEW members, who are on strike over pay. They have used one dirty trick after another only to find that the resolve of the workers has hardened.

When the strike was only one week old a notice was placed in the security lodge to explain that holiday pay, contrary to all past experience, would not be paid in full for the September holiday week until after the dispute.

This was followed by the announcement that twenty-nine people would be dismissed for breach of contract—in other words for taking strike action—the right of every worker.

Last week management sent a letter to all employees claiming that the unions had engineered the strike by breaking off negotiations prematurely and

that the claim for a double figure increase would do great damage to the company's business.

Shop stewards speedily drafted a reply explaining that we have been available for negotiations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

We emphasised that negotiations broke down only after procedure was fully exhausted, involving the full-time district official, Mr. Allan Robinson. In addition, we reminded workers of the dramatic improvement in the company's financial position in recent months, and of the sacrifices they have made in the past when the company has been hit by the recession. A copy of our letter was sent to management who immediately contacted the convenor and deputy convenor for a meeting.

Talks culminated in management re-stating their offer of 4% but saying they would continue

negotiations, re-instate the sacked workers and restore their holiday pay only if there was full return to work. This angered the workers even more. There was overwhelming support for the strike at a mass meeting at the Burnley Labour Club last Thursday. Indeed, as far as the workforce are concerned the management team has exhausted all credibility in negotiations.

As the holidays begin we can see our policy of round the clock picketing has paid off. More lorries came to the factory on the first day of the holiday than all of last week. Management, hit by the picketing have informed other companies to come in during the holiday period, expecting the picket to be off.

By Jason Hunter
(AUEW shop steward
Thorn-EMI, Padiham)

Residential homes dispute

FOR YEARS residential staff employed by local authorities have been discriminated against in terms of working conditions. This has taken the form of no extra payments for weekends, public holidays and nightwork before 10.00pm.

All local authority workers (including manual workers in residential units) are paid extra payments if asked to work outside their normal daytime hours.

It is calculated that if this claim is successful, it will mean a pay rise of £35 a week for basic grade staff.

We intend to show our employers we are not willing to accept a service where the most disadvantaged members of society are denied their basic human rights due to poor staffing levels. They, not us, lack commitment to a decent standard of care.

By Iain Riddell
(Residential Shop
Steward Camden
NALGO)

Glasgow

VERA MURCHIE, shop steward for Downraig Children's home, Castlemilk, Glasgow, talked to STUART BATES, Strathclyde Branch, Residential Disputes Committee after the NALGO members walked out and the home was closed on Monday 12 at 9 am.

How did the action arise?
There was not sufficient cover for the staffing quota and union guidelines are very strict on this. The members decided they would have to take industrial action, that is walk out and close the children's home. The key for the home and the children left were taken to the divisional headquarters of the social work department, and left there.

What was management's attitude?

Management tried to force responsibility for the children back onto the residential workers, and eventually the key and the children were left and the members walked out of the divisional headquarters building. Local management were very unco-operative and unsupportive despite being NALGO members themselves.

The members are very solid—100% behind the action. They feel very aggrieved at the fact that it had taken five years to come to this stage, and are determined to win the claim. They do feel however, that it requires proper support from other members within the NALGO branch, and fellow workers generally.

What next?
First of all, now that temporary staff are being recruited to cover for the overtime, management would not expect a repeat of yesterday's action very often.

The other members of the branch must become involved in this dispute. The need now is to consider quick escalation of the action in order to hit the employers themselves. Such action has to be properly worked out, but could take the form of picketing regional headquarters buildings, stopping meals, demonstrations etc, in order to highlight the action to the general public.

Make Vauxhall pay!

WHEN VAUXHALL unions met the company a fortnight ago they replied to our twelve points with ten 'no's, one 'may-be' on holidays and a 4% increase.

We wanted a 25% increase, a 38-hour week, improved holidays and some other small changes.

The union side prepared to leave. The company came back with 5%—their 'last offer'. Talks broke down.

At Ellesmere Port there was an immediate walk-out by T&GWU members, followed by AUEW a day later. At Luton there were walk-outs and gate meetings all over the factory.

Many resolutions called for strike notice to be served. In three nights last week only three hours work was done. The company threatened lay-offs.

At a Luton mass meeting stewards reported that they were reluctant to recommend strike action until they could assure blacking of all General Motors imports, which could make up for lost UK production.

The members overwhelmingly supported them in rejecting the offer and refusing further talks until the company realistically improve the offer. The JWC has a free hand to call action without further reference back to members.

On Monday T&GWU representatives met National Officials at TUC conference to gain support for blacking.

Since 1978 12,000 jobs have disappeared at Vauxhall. With redundancies and layoffs, working conditions have deteriorated.

Along this road, worse is to come.

The latest 5% wage offer is tied to new shift patterns and flexibility of labour; it means more jobs lost.

On the other hand General Motors are boasting that their record 16% share of the car market means they're in the black for the first time in years. They're offering to pay out more than £50,000 on holidays for sales room owners.

For workers only the threat of strike action has made any impact in the past few years. When fourteen days notice of strike action was given over bonus payments, they were suddenly increased from 50p to an average £8 a week. Last year just one day's stoppage 'persuaded' the company to drop all the repressive strings to an 8% wage increase.

Union representatives must bear this in mind. The burning anger of the workers must not be frittered or extinguished.

Since the Tories came to power we have suffered a twenty per cent cut in living standards. We are saying 'enough is enough'.

The leadership at the three plants must act. If the company threaten lay offs we should challenge now wait.

We should make it clear that even 7½% is not enough. We've paid with our sweat to make the bosses' money; now we want our share, and we're ready to fight for it.

By Robin Harris
(TGWU Vauxhall Luton
shop steward,
personal capacity)

Belfast hospital dispute

NUPE MEMBERS at Musgrove Park Hospital in Belfast have been on strike since 25 August.

The Northern Ireland Eastern Health Board holds a monthly meeting in the hospital at which they get special meals prepared by the hospital cooks and catering staff.

Previously staff were given overtime for this. It was seen as 'function' work, but management decided that such meals should be part of 'normal' work. In response to management's bullying tactics the workers have refused to do the meals.

At the fourth refusal the

district personnel manager phoned NUPE headquarters to say he would be going to the hospital. The full-time official phoned Danny Deeds and Charlie Curry, joint secretaries of the hospital NUPE branch and they called a union meeting, also informing two local managers of their intention.

The district personnel manager arrived and stormed in to the meeting (25 August). The workers have been on strike since. Twenty NUPE members in the kitchens have been sacked and twenty-three other members came out in sympathy. Eighteen porters are out after refusing to work with scab labour and there has been terrific support from other unions.

By Stephen Mulholland

AUEW elections

AUEW MEMBERS are in the process of voting for a series of important full-time positions.

The mood of engineers in the face of redundancies and short time working is changing and a further shift to the left can be obtained despite the bosses' interference in our elections.

AUEW members are urged to circulate and vote for the na-

tional broad left slate which we reproduce here.

National Organiser: second ballot, Harry Hewitt Dutton and Terry Butler. National Organiser: first ballot, John Kydd. Regional Officer (Div No 6): second ballot, Pat Kean. Divisional Organiser (Div No 17): first ballot, Phil Higgs. Assistant Divisional Organiser (Div No 19): first ballot, Ray Bromley. Assistant Divisional Organiser (Div No 20): first ballot, George Slesser.

Charnwood council

CHARNWOOD Borough Council highway maintenance workers struck on Monday 12 September against a drastic cut in their pay.

A new bonus scheme was sprung on the men completely without consultation; if implemented it would mean a wage cut of about £25, leaving most of the workers £60 or less to keep them and their families.

Strikers have received a letter from management to the effect that by striking they have broken the terms of their contract, and that unless they returned to work by 7.30 am on Tuesday they would have "voluntarily resigned".

In brief

PICKETING At Chloride's Clifton Junction plant, Swinton, continues round the clock. The strikers are trying to get all Chloride products blacked throughout the industry. Management have been trying to present their offer as a straight wage increase. In fact it has to be self-financing and is designed to divide and weaken the workforce.

WORKERS AT Glacier Metals in Glasgow won a quick victory against management attempts to victimise convenor Ray Kennedy. The hundred workers went on strike a week ago last Thursday and forced a dropping of threatened disciplinary action after Ray removed an article pinned on the notice board by management.

THE STRIKE of sub-contract workers at Esso in Southampton reported in *Militant* last week is continuing. The strike has not been made official however, and the TGWU are telling drivers to cross the picket line. The picket has been getting a bit thin but there is a mood of bitter determination to win in the face of the bosses' refusal to negotiate.

TALKS ON the shipbuilding workers' national wage claim were fixed last week to start on 12 October following a meeting between Jim Murray of the Boilermakers, Alex Ferry, general secretary of the CONFED, and British Shipbuilders' chairman, Graham Day.

TWO BRITISH subsidiaries of Canadian combine, Massey Ferguson, saw industrial action last week. About 400 clerical staff at the Coventry Massey Ferguson plant staged a one-day walk-out in protest at a pay offer of £1 a week following three months' negotiations. Nine hundred machine shop workers at Perkins diesel engine plant in Peterborough walked out in protest at the introduction of new working practices.

BAD NEWS for Northampton. The Sunblest bakery there is to close for six months for a £2 m refit. When it re-opens the 150 workforce will be much reduced. In the same week it was announced that 160 at Long and Hambley (a rubber to metal bonding firm) are to be lost. The firm was taken over a year ago by Tarmac and the work is being transferred.

SCOTTISH MINING equipment firm Anderson Strathclyde, taken over by South African-owned conglomerate Charter Consolidated (see *Militant* 662) has announced 200 redundancies despite just winning a £13.4 million order from China.

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INSIDE SPECIAL FEATURE ON DEMOCRACY IN THE UNION Pages 3, 4, 5, 6

PHOTO: Denis Doran



London North Central Internal branch members of POEU lobby TUC Conference against Tory 'piratisation' of British Telecom.

Militant

WHAT MILITANT STANDS 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.

POEU Special Conference STEP UP ACTION TO DEFEAT TORIES

Delegates to the Post Office Engineering Union special conference on privatisation will make vital decisions for the future of the union, its members and the industry.

It is essential that we confirm and extend our industrial action strategy laid out at our Annual Conference to stop Tory plans that will smash our union and a profitable and efficient public service.

Since the Tories were first elected in 1979 they have consistently attacked our members' job security, in the first place splitting the industry into post and telecommunications, then breaking the monopoly, liberalising the industry and allowing pirates such as Project Mercury to make use of the public network for private profit.

No Mercury services have been successfully interconnected and industrial action is being taken against Mercury backers Barclays Bank, BP and Cable & Wireless.

The POEU Conference of June this year also decided to "immediately embark on a campaign of industrial action to safeguard our industry, jobs and working conditions" if the Tories an-

By Phil Lloyd
(Swansea POEU)

nounced their intention to go ahead with privatisation of BT.

That conference also elected a new NEC willing to implement such fighting policies. A 15-8 right wing majority was turned into a 14-8 left majority.

Members had seen the failure of the right-wing's polite publicity and parliamentary methods. Even when the old NEC responded to rank and file pressure and called a demonstration in October 1982, and in June '83 brought out members in the Westminster and London City branches, the enthusiastic response was soon dampened down. The June industrial action was called off at Michael Foot's request as endangering Labour's election chances. We saw the result of that. On June 23 the POEU also introduced a pound a week levy to finance industrial action. This

was recently suspended.

The Tory victory was a set-back but members know what Tory plans mean for us. Even the press has talked about tens of thousands of job losses. That is the prospect if we don't fight.

The arguments put by Leicester Internal to the special conference merely repeat the mistakes of the past. In the face of a massive Tory majority there is even less chance that parliamentary pleading will save us. The change in the NEC was a recognition that new, more incisive and determined methods were necessary if our battle was to be won. The June Conference gave a clear mandate for industrial action if the government pushes ahead with its plans. The Tories, with the support of 31% of the electorate have no mandate to carry through an onslaught against our jobs and service.

Action should now be our immediate task, selective in its targets at first, yet across the country in its dimensions. The lessons of the 35-hour week campaign are relevant here. As action developed, so did support for the action around the country. Then we only lifted our little finger to reveal the power we have. Now the stakes are much greater. We have a tough opponent it is true, but we are in the heavyweight class too and with considerable punching power—if we have the will and confidence to use it.

The levy should be reimposed. With industrial action

on selected targets across the country any problems with levy collections will disappear. If members can see that we are determined and serious in our campaign against the Tories, then they will be determined and serious in their response to the levy and the action.

The government will be watching closely our responses. Experience has proved that hesitation or delay on our part emboldens them to come at us harder. Nationally selected, economically sensitive targets plus national supportive action, ie. mass meetings, workplace stoppages, demos, could repel these attacks but it may be that an all-out strike cannot be avoided.

We should not shrink from this possibility, because the alternative to defeating the Tory plan will mean the destruction of our industry, jobs and union.

It is not with pessimism that we should approach this battle. Other unions during the period that the Tories have been in power have succeeded in deflecting the Tory attacks. The gas workers and waterworkers did so, but only by national united industrial action.

We have enormous industrial power and we must use it to defend our members. Our NEC at Special Conference must give a bold and confident lead, and call for resolute action with the maximum unity. With such a lead, we can win.

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