

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

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Dying man taken to hospital in Transit van

LAST SATURDAY night, when a 35-year-old Portsmouth man fell down some stairs at his home, there were simply not enough ambulances in the town to take him to hospital.

Six minutes after the first emergency call was made, the police were called instead and they were forced to take him to hospital in their transit van. Tragically, the man was certified dead when he arrived at the hospital.

By John Pickard

This incident is an horrific indication of the sort of problems that will become commonplace, if the Tories' manpower and spending cuts are allowed to be steamrollered through local health authorities.

Ironically, the Portsmouth tragedy took place at the very time the area health authority was proposing cuts in the ambulance service.

Alex Rennie, NUPE area officer, told *Militant*, "The Winchester and Central Hampshire Health Authority approved only last Wednesday proposals (a) to close the ambulance station at Cosham and (b) to reorganise the service by changing the rotas.

"These proposals", he continued, "were based on inaccurate and incomplete information, but when our union tried to intervene at the meeting, to introduce other proposals, the chairman stopped us from speaking."

The trade unions, NUPE, COHSE and TGWU, decided there and then to hold a day of action a week later on Wednesday 12 October to bring public attention to the proposals of the authority.

Save the NHS!

But the terrible danger of further cuts in the service was starkly underlined by this tragedy three days later when, with only four ambulances available, there were five 999 emergencies—surely not an unexpectedly high number in a town the size of Portsmouth.

The Tories, nationally, are introducing a further £140m in cuts, leading directly to 6,000 job losses. It is left to the Thatcher government, no worker will be able

to feel confident the medical and ambulance services would be able to cope, despite the heroic work of the NHS staff, toiling under enormous pressures.

The whole basis of the health service—accepted by the vast majority of workers as a lasting and valuable achievement of the post-war Labour government—is now under threat.

The Tories are pushing the service headlong into an increasing dependence on the private sector. Profit and ability to pay are the guiding lines of efficiency in the Tories' idea of a health service.

It is ironic that some hospitals which were originally taken out of the hands of the private sector,

Continued on back page.

The price of Tory extremism

Photo: John Smith (IFL)



Ambulance drivers in Derbyshire. Cuts threaten the most vital services.



Margaret "The NHS is safe with us" Thatcher.

Militant supporters answer expulsions

ONCE AGAIN *Militant* supporters say just how much they are prepared to fight for a socialist future. In the third quarter of our fighting fund year £36,484 was raised. Over £9,526 in the final ten days and a total of £112,753 so far for 1983.

This was a tremendous achievement, especially in a holiday period, and considering that in September it must have cost the near 3,000 supporters who attended the Wembley Rally well over £10,000 in bus and train fares alone.

Some great last minute donations were received including £100 from Mike Singleton (Hove CLP) "towards a daily *Militant*," £23 workplace collection Torness Engineering site Edinburgh, £10 Norwich LPYS, and £5 ASTMS Edinburgh 763 branch. "This branch is not supporting the ban on *Militant*."

This was typical of many of the donations received in the last few weeks expressing opposition to the expulsion and bans. With donations like these we can't fail to go forward, and the new premises will be well within our reach next year bringing the prospect of a daily paper that much nearer.

So keep the money pouring in—make the next quarter the best yet.

Plymouth cuts protest

AS MANY workers would have seen from the television news, nearly 200 Plymouth health workers lobbied the local district health authority meeting last Monday, to protest at plans to cut 80 jobs over the next 18 months.

Before the meeting opened, we all went into the room in which it was being held, surrounding the 15 authority members on all four sides. After rejecting a proposal from the two trade union nominees on the authority, to hear a representative of the staff put over our case, the chairman adjourned the meeting, and he and other

members got up to leave the room.

At this arrogant show of disregard for the feeling of staff the door was locked and the packed room made it impossible for anyone to leave. Further appeals to the authority to hear our case, pointing out that job cuts would inevitably lead to cuts in the patient services were turned down.

Incredibly, at this stage one authority member seemed more concerned about stopping smoking in the room than ensuring we were allowed to speak!

Eventually, having demonstrated the unwill-

ingness of the health authority to stand up against the government-imposed cuts, the health staff agreed to leave and hold a short meeting outside.

At our meeting, it was clear that even if the health authority was not prepared to take a clear stand against the cuts, the ordinary members of staff through their trade unions would not stand by and accept the destruction of the health service.

By Mike Sheaff
(Secretary, Plymouth
COHSE branch)



Militant's Editorial Board at the press conference following rejection of their appeal against expulsion. Left to right: Clare Doyle, Ted Grant, Lynn Walsh, Peter Taaffe, Keith Dickinson.

LESSONS OF LABOUR CONFERENCE

LAST WEEK'S Labour Party conference has undoubtedly enthused Party activists and supporters. Workers participating in or observing events in Brighton, could clearly feel that Labour is now more united and poised to undertake a serious struggle against the Tories.

This newly-established mood of enthusiasm has even been reflected in the opinion polls, which, despite their doubtless inaccuracies, now put Labour only 3% behind the Tories, with the Alliance down to a miserable third place, with only 18%.

In marked contrast, however, the Tory Party, despite an overwhelming election victory, seems to lurch from crisis to crisis. As the *Evening Standard* explained (10.10.83), "The Chancellor stumbled over a hasty and obviously half-baked package of spending cuts. The Home Secretary made an ass of himself over hanging. The Health Secretary has cast doubt over the future well-being of the Health Service. The Transport Secretary has fudged the future of London Transport. The Northern Ireland Secretary has presided over a mass exodus from Ulster's most secure jail. And all in less than four months! It would be a pret-

ty dismal catalogue in four years."

Yet this seemingly endless series of errors reflects the underlying processes within the ruling class, shown by the resurfacing of disputes between the Cabinet and the so-called Tory 'wets' opposed to aspects of government policy. The Cabinet itself has recently divided on the issue of tax cuts and the degree of public expenditure cuts.

Even John Biffen, previously an arch monetarist, has warned against cutting expenditure too savagely.

No clear Tory strategy

It is because of the growing impact of economic decline and the rising opposition to the measures taken by the government, that splits have occurred amongst the strategists of capital. Neither 'dry' nor 'wet' Tory measures will be able to solve the fundamental problems facing British capitalism.

The slump in manufacturing investment has continued apace. The insoluble contradictions in capitalism are unresolved. All economic forecasts point to the petering out of the weak 'upturn' and to rising inflation.

Despite the largest parliamentary majority for decades, therefore, the Tories are faced with crisis and have no clear strategy as

to what to do. It is against this background that tremendous possibilities exist for the labour movement.

In the minds of many activists, Labour's prospects were clearly enhanced by the recent conference. The election of the so-called 'dream-ticket' of Neil Kinnock and Roy Hattersley was a pointer to the tremendous desire for unity which existed.

This indeed was the main factor in the scale of Roy Hattersley's majority for the Deputy Leadership, which was not at all an endorsement for unity at any price or a watering down of Labour's radical programme. Labour still is committed to support unilateral nuclear disarmament, a 35-hour week, a guaranteed minimum wage, and an increase in state expenditure in key services such as housing, health, education, etc.

Mandatory reselection of MPs and the election of the Party leader still remain firmly engraved in the Party constitution. Right wing proposals to introduce a system of individual balloting of party members were overwhelmingly rejected.

The mood for unity, therefore, cannot be interpreted as an overall swing to the right and the rejection of radical measures. Moreover, any attempt to roll back these policy gains will meet with the ferocious opposition of Labour's rank and file.

The opposition would be no less furious if there was any attempt to proceed with further witch-hunting activity. Despite the block votes going against the appeals, there was a hitherto unknown *standing ovation* given by half the conference to the expelled members of the Militant Editorial Board.

Labour's ranks oppose witch-hunt

Paradoxically, the Party expelled five good socialists at a time when there are very favourable opportunities opening up. The labour movement must prepare for the inevitable of struggles by working people and their families trying to protect their living standards.

The underlying hatred towards the Tory government will give rise to a whole series of industrial and social explosions over the next period. The recent upturn in the economy has already renewed the confidence of sections of workers struggling to defend their interests.

Industrial action at Vauxhall, in the Yorkshire and Scottish coalfields and now amongst the Post Office Engineers, is a small expression of the gigantic struggles which could unfold in the future. It is not excluded that Labour could be faced with the prospect of being return-

ed to office before the full five years of this Tory government's life is exhausted.

In this general context it is essential that Labour activists and supporters draw the necessary conclusions for a future Labour administration. Labour is committed to a radical programme of reform. Yet the question to be answered is how, in an epoch of crisis and decay in the capitalist economy, can such a radical programme of reform be implemented and maintained?

Keynesianism means inflation

Some have raised the 'theory' of a return to the pre-Callaghan idea of Keynesian economics. Faced with world slump and recession they propose all that is necessary is to increase state expenditure and thereby spend our way out of economic crisis.

If such methods were all that was required, surely the employing class would have carried them through as a means of easing the social tensions developing in society. The reality is that such ideas are incapable of solving the problem.

The methods of Keynesian deficit financing were tried in the post-war years of capitalist expansion and

merely served to fuel the fires of inflation, while resolving nothing.

The only possible way to ensure Labour's programme is implemented and maintained on a permanent basis is for a future Labour administration to be prepared to decisively break from the straitjacket of capitalist society. This is only possible on the basis of the implementation of Clause 4 Part 4 of the Party constitution.

Today, this means the nationalisation of the 200 major firms, banks and insurance companies, to be run democratically by working people. On this basis with a democratic socialist plan of production, it is possible to implement and maintain Labour's programme, utilising the thirty per cent spare capacity which exists within British industry at the present time, the skills and resources of the professional layers of society and the tremendous potential amongst the mass of the population.

Labour must take up the gauntlet and take the Tories on. But they must match their determination with a credible alternative. Socialist policies are not something for holiday speeches. They must be the cornerstone of Labour's drive against this rotten government.

Militant

Militant and the NEC elections

IT IS necessary to put the record straight after Nigel Williamson's attack on the supporters of Militant at Labour Party conference in Tribune (October 7).

On the eve of elections for the NEC, Terry Fields and Pat Wall, both candidates for the constituency section, withdrew in order to maximise the left vote and prevent Labour's right wing from gaining an NEC place in that section.

Their decision was taken in the light of reports since borne out, that certain right wing candidates were picking up considerable CLP support. Jack Ashley, for example, polled 250,000 votes, 100,000 more than last year and Gerald Kaufman's vote increased

by a similar amount.

At Sunday's opening conference session, a leaflet was issued by Terry and Pat, urging their supporters to transfer votes to the seven candidates on the left slate.

Despite this, *Tribune* chose to report the action of these comrades in the following way:—"The reasons behind the withdrawal of the Militant candidates are unclear. There has, however, been speculation that the plan to publish for the first time a recorded vote for the NEC would have exposed many delegates who in previous years broke their mandates in order to vote for Militant candidates."

Conference mandates

Williamson attributes this scandalous allegation



Audrey Wise narrowly defeated right-winger, Jack Ashley in the NEC elections.

to mysterious 'speculation' at the conference. This is nothing but a cheap journalistic trick, employed by those too cowardly to openly state their own point of view.

The claim that Militant supporters have in the past broken conference mandates is completely untrue. There is speculation that Williamson and *Tribune* knew this full well before the accusation was printed.

Tribune avoids making

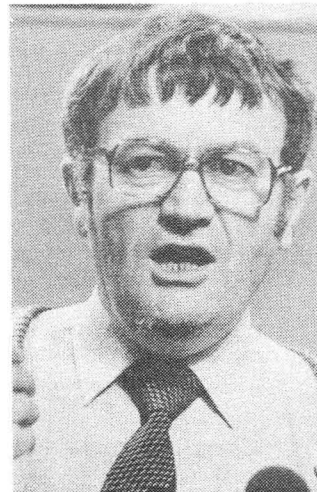
any comment on the fact that the withdrawal of Terry Fields and Pat Wall was probably decisive in denying right winger Jack Ashley a seat on the NEC. Audrey Wise's re-election over Ashley hinged on the relatively slim margin of 40,000 votes.

Therefore, far from having anything to hide, the supporters of Militant can indeed hold their heads high. This is more than can be said for other sections of the party.

I invite *Tribune* to comment on the fact that of the 39 MPs belonging to the Campaign Group, seventeen voted, not for Eric Heffer, the candidate of the left, but for Neil Kinnock in the leadership election. Among those 17 was Michael Meacher, the left candidate for Deputy Leader!

By Laurence Coates
(Former NEC member)

Terry Fields MP won Broadgreen for Labour with a 3,800 majority, withdrew from the NEC election to assist a left majority.



Pat Wall won over 100,000 votes in last year's NEC elections. This year he urged his supporters to back a list of left candidates to defeat right wing opponents.

AMERICAN negotiators expect the Soviet Union to begin large scale deployment of short-range nuclear missiles in Europe, once the US starts installing Cruise and Pershing II weapons in West Germany at the end of the year.

Mr Paul Nitze, the chief American negotiator at the Medium Range Arms Reduction Talks in Geneva, told the North Atlantic Assembly last week that he believed this was because the Soviet Commanders tended to be artillery men who liked to see their weapons deployed along the entire length of their defences in a tidy row of beans. "Those generals are all bean counters," he said.

These two quotes from *The Times* show the utter waste of time the Geneva arms reduction talks are, and also give an indication of the

Support CND march

political understanding of the intellectual pygmies who are supposed to be involved in peace negotiations. Perhaps a more apt name for those endless series of talking shops would be the arms expansion talks.

On October 22 possibly over 100,000 people in Britain, mostly young, will be protesting against the deployment of Cruise in Britain, and the thousands of millions of pounds spent annually by the world super powers on nuclear weapons of war.

LPYS members throughout the country will be participating en-

thusiastically in the mass protests. In the Northern Region YS delegates attended the inaugural meeting of Youth CND in the North. We suggested organising joint public meetings with the LPYS and planned rock concerts, and street activities in the future. In Newcastle we are urging members to book places on the CND train, and are appealing to trade unions and taking petitions around Labour Party meetings to raise money to send unemployed comrades to the march.

The LPYS will take part in the march and explain that we can have no faith in talks

between the super powers, whose involvement in weapons of war is only an extension of their respective systems of capitalism and Stalinism. At the end of the day, only by struggling for and achieving socialism can a lasting peace be guaranteed.

The LPYS will be on the march on October 22 flying the socialist banner, the struggle against nuclear war, and for socialism and peace.

By John Hird
(Gateshead East LPYS,
Northern Region
NC member)



Labour Conference defends disarmament

A LOUD cheer went up last week at Labour Party Conference when a resolution confirming Labour's opposition to nuclear bases, Cruise, Trident, and any fresh nuclear weapons was passed.

After the election defeat, Labour's right-wing had loudly trumpeted that party policy on defence was "unpopular" and would have to be modified.

They were wrong. But last week's decisions were not without contradictions however. The NEC statement spoke of Polaris submarines being included in current negotiations, and a resolution from Isle of Wight was turned down on a card vote.

Cathy Wilson, Isle of Wight delegate, contrasted the colossal amounts spent on defence world-wide with the neglect of the problems of the third world where millions of children died of hunger and water-related diseases.

These problems could be solved. It was not a question of solving the problems of war first, Cathy explained, a lasting peace was not possible unless linked to the struggle for socialism. But the NEC opposed the composite.

Defence adds to the de-industrialisation of Britain, Cathy explained. But what were workers being asked to defend? A system falling further and further into crisis. Stalinism, on the other hand, was unable to use workers' struggles to defeat capitalism but relied on arms to defend its own interests. Regardless of the NEC, socialism was the only answer.

Amazingly the NEC also opposed the composite because it argued for nationalisation of the arms industry. How can any socialist defend such an industry being run in the interest of a few parasites?

By A Militant Reporter

A NEW draft *Charter for Young Workers* will be launched this winter at the Young Workers' Assembly, organised by the LPYS and Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign, to be held in Manchester on 10 December.

A vigorous campaign around a clear programme of demands is essential to drive back the Tory attacks on youth. Victimisation and cheap labour are two of the Tories' main weapons.

The return of mass unemployment has meant that petty discipline measures and victimisations are now common place. One British Telecom apprentice reported that one of his workmates who was off sick with a serious illness was warned that his sickness record would have to improve; all this even though his doctor sent a letter saying that if he went to work it would jeopardise his health and the health of others.

The apprentice said, "Warnings seem to be dished out 'willy nilly' to try to scare younger apprentices. In my intake group at least half had warnings and threats of being sacked. Some with warnings and threats of sacking are quite good at their work but seem to be victimised if they put one foot slightly out of place."

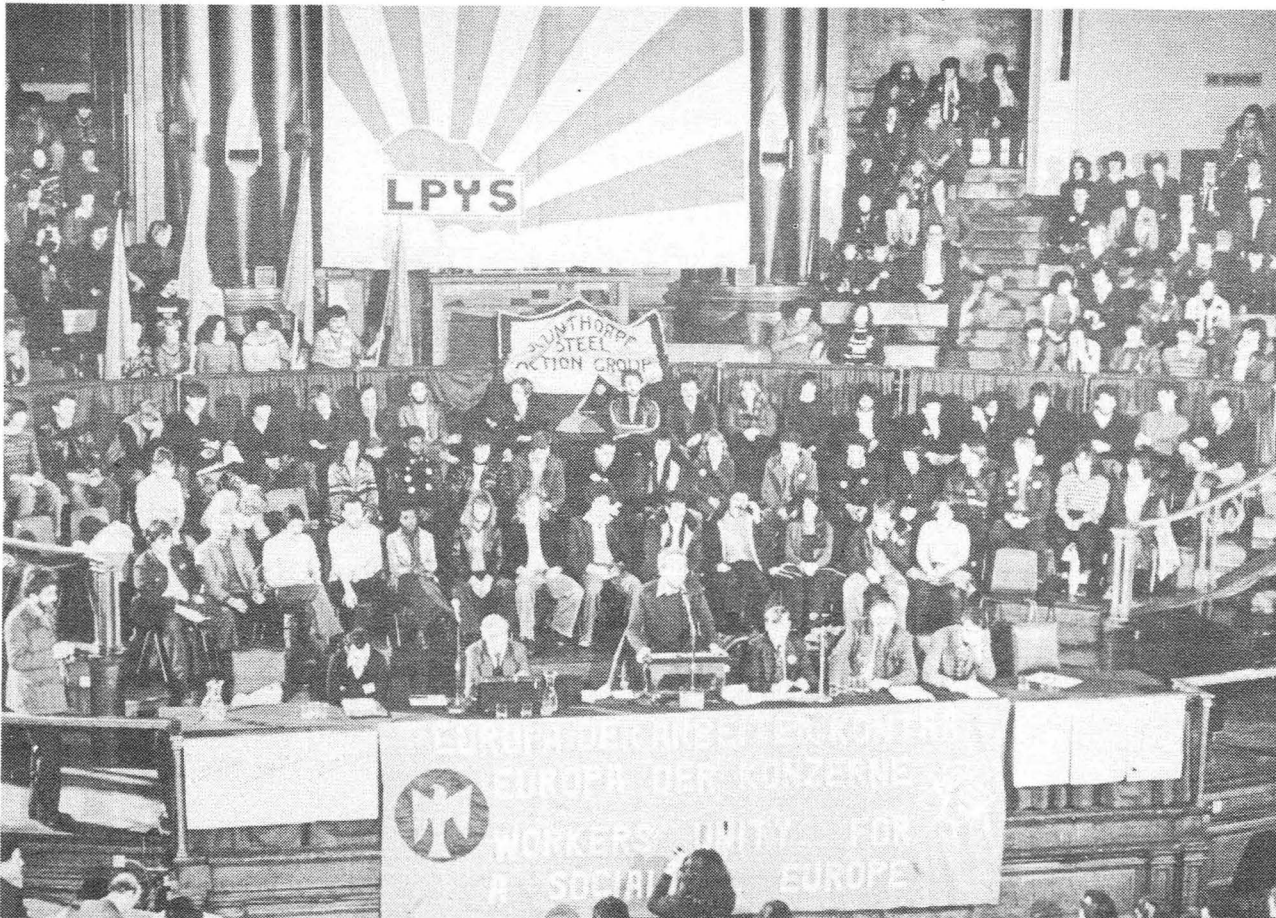
The search for a job and decent training has driven some youth to desperate measures. In Manchester one railway apprentice was found to be travelling to work from Birmingham every day; he was getting up at four in the morning and arriving home around half past seven.

Mass unemployment has also allowed the bosses to unleash a vicious assault on youth wages. In 1982 the Wages' Council minimum for 18-year old shopworkers was just £50 a week; yet disgracefully more than a quarter of young shop workers are paid less than this legal minimum. Now the Tories are talking about abolishing the Wages Councils.

Cheap labour schemes like the YTS have also been used to undermine pay, conditions and training opportunities. In the engineering industry, the number of apprenticeships has fallen from 29,000 in 1967 to just 10,300 in 1982 (of which 2,040 were MSC sponsored). Now the YTS threatens to end apprenticeships and proper training opportunities altogether.

The Tories' attacks on

Young workers' assembly



The campaigning work of the LPYS has been an example to the labour movement. This mass march and lobby of parliament in February 1980 against unemployment filled Central Hall, Westminster. The November Assembly will spearhead the fight to defend employed youth.

working class youth are seemingly endless, yet if they think they are going to have it their own way, then they are gravely mistaken. Young workers played a major part in last year's health service dispute for better pay and conditions. In future disputes youth will again come to the fore.

The 'Young Workers' Assembly' aims to draw together the struggles of young workers into a common fight against the Tories. The assembly will provide the spring board for launching a new *Charter for Young Workers* into every factory, office and workplace.

In 1945 new apprentices at the Metro-Vickers factory in Trafford Park, Manchester were each handed a copy of the *Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* by union shop stewards on their first day. Socialist ideas were discussed with young workers from the start. The new *Charter* will help prepare the fight back by re-establishing the socialist traditions of the labour

movement.

Each LPYS branch should now 'adopt' a workplace and build up links with young workers there. The target ultimately should be to establish LPYS workplace branches.

The assembly is being organised on a delegate basis although visitors will be welcome. Each trade union branch, shop stewards' committee and trade union organised YTS scheme will be allowed up to five delegates, Labour Party branches and other organisations will be allowed one delegate each.

Introductory leaflets, trade union letters, posters and stickers are now available from LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17. Special leaflets aimed at key industries under fire from the Tories will shortly be available. LPYS branches should supplement national material with locally produced workplace bulletins.

By Nick Toms

Black Youth Rally

A REPORT in *The Times*, (8.8.83), noted that "Black and Asian voters remained overwhelmingly loyal to Labour at the General Election and are forming an increasing proportion of Labour's electoral support."

Blacks, especially black workers, have an enormous hatred of the Tories and an attraction to the Labour and trade union movement, which is seen as the only force capable of transforming society and ridding it of the ills of racism and oppression. In the 16 years of Labour governments, however, there has been a failure to tackle the problems of blacks, especially black youth who face most severely the problems of unemployment and police harassment.

The LPYS, nevertheless, has been in the forefront of the fight on these and other questions affecting black people and the campaign will

be stepped up at this year's Black Youth Rally. The Rally is now only 2½ weeks away and by now all areas should be in full gear for the build-up to it.

In Glasgow there were LPYS speakers at a meeting of the Indian Workers' Association, where the Rally was discussed. Days of action have been organised in Leicester and Leeds. In Lancashire, a meeting organised by the LPYS around the Newham 8 campaign was attended by 75 Asians—all of whom are being followed up for the rally.

In Stoke, a meeting for Asians is planned at the local college. Reports are coming in daily of the enthusiasm being shown by the black community up and down the country for the rally. Comrades should not lose the opportunity to tap this enthusiasm in building for October 22.

By Colin De Freitas

1-DAY RALLY
**BLACK
YOUTH
IN BRITAIN
1983**

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

PLUS Grand Disco
7.30 till late
Jubilee Tavern
74 York Road, SE1
(Opposite County
Hall)

£5,420 answer to expulsions

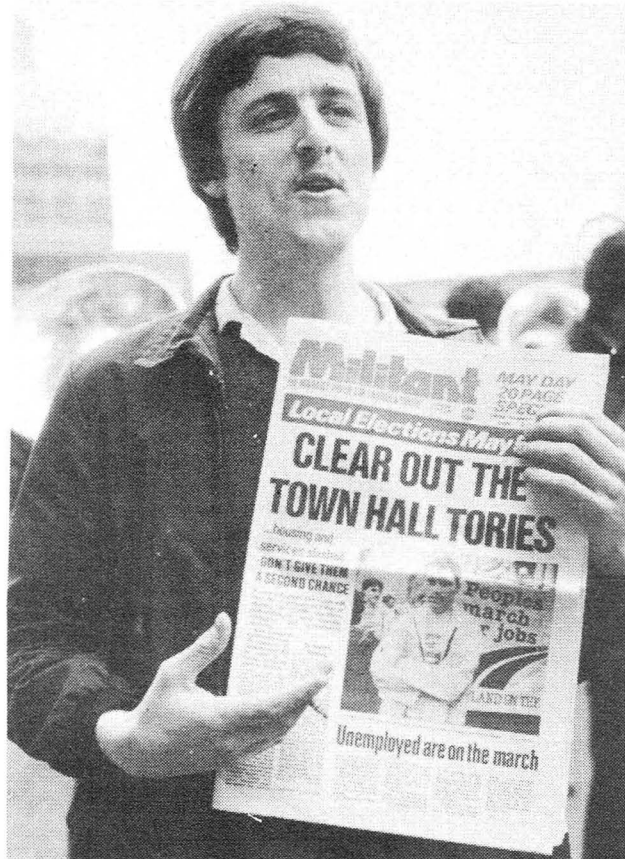
The vast majority of Labour's rank and file is opposed to expulsions. At the Labour Party National Conference LP members and trade unionists made this clear with donations reaching over £2,000 for our funds.

Up and down the country Constituency Labour Parties and wards rallied to our support. We received £30 from Wallsend LP, £10 from Gascoyne ward Barking, £10 promised from Sprowston LP, Norwich, £8 from a collection taken at a Birmingham Labour Party, and £5 West Derby CLP.

There was a tremendous response from Labour Party Young Socialists branches to send donations for the end of the quarter; £50 Bethnal Green YS, £25 Chichester YS, £20 Wallsend YS, £10 Stoke Central YS, £2.04 South Gwent YS, £1.80 Davyhulme YS, £1.62 Withington YS and £1.40 Southampton YS.

Amongst the individual readers who gave us money this week were: a Rolls Royce worker (Eastville) 50p, Mr Mullen, (pensioner, Rutherglen) who gives us 50p each week for his paper, J Kelly (unemployed, Newcastle) £1.50, C Gage (housewife, Sunderland) £1.80, N Griffiths (Chester) £2, Mrs Jarvis and David (East Midlands) £2, Mrs Kenny (Mansfield) £3, J Adams (Chapelhall) £5, Alec Rudling (pensioner Norwich) £5, Roger Fenner (Swindon) £7, Mrs Wiseman (Cheam) £10, Henry Root (Carron) £10, Les Huckfield £10, J Graham (Tuebrook) £15, Ginny Armstrong (Hackney) £20, and P Crack (Bristol East CLP) £30.

Thanks to all the trade unionists that donated this week; £19 TSSA supporters, £7 sale of badges donated by A Irvine (branch secretary 7/200 TGWU), £5 (TGWU 285 Cardiff), £5 (SOGAT Liverpool), £1.55 factory collection outside A C Delco Sefton and 30p Peter Turner (Coves TGWU, JSS Branch



IF YOU needed a good reason to help build Militant just take a look at the world of the wealthy.

★ Lord Weinstock — given a peerage in 1980—the years his firm donated £50,000 to the Tories.

★ Lord Forte—got the same in 1982—the year his firm gave the Tories 37,500.

★ Graham Wilkins of Beecham got a peerage in 1981 the year his firm gave the Tories 20,000.

We can't promise you a peerage but we hope it gets your goat enough to encourage a wave of last minute donations.

Labour votes for a daily

An essential part of the campaign to get rid of the Tories should be the creation of a mass daily Labour Paper. Indeed it was a *Militant* supporter who moved the resolution at last week's Party Conference.

Although the Labour Party NEC asked for this to be remitted, this was refused and with the rank and file delegates understanding the need for such a paper the resolution was carried. It is clear that some labour leaders do not want a daily paper that fights for the interests of working people. But at *Militant* we aim to link the desire of the rank and file members of Labour activists for such a paper with our own plans to produce a daily.

At conference last week over 1,000 papers were sold,

and up and down the country, other sellers met with similar success. In Perth, the comrades had sold out of papers by Saturday; at Sussex University 100 papers were sold in three days and in Bradford in one day 30 papers were sold outside a dole office and 30 at the bus station.

This is the way to build a workers paper! In the coming months *Militant* supporters will be using the opposition shown to the witch-hunt and the support for a workers daily as a springboard to build the support for socialism amongst working people. If you would like to become a seller contact 'Militant Circulation', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986-3828.

Secretary 2/10).

Marathons raised hundreds of pounds from sponsors. Thanks to all the numerous areas that held socials last week, which brought in large sums, including over £70 from Maesteg.

We received an enormous number of other donations this week. Making a grand total of £5,420 by last weekend. The donations prove time and again that workers do want to fight the Tories and that socialism is worth fighting for, every step of the way. Already many of our supporters have donated a day's pay and even a week's to our fund.

How about sending us a donation regularly—anything from 10p a week to £5, £10 or even more! The final figures for this quarter and the chart will appear next week.

By Kath White

Build the Militant

SEND YOUR PLEDGE NOW

I/WE PLEDGE A DONATION OF £ TO THE BUILDING FUND FOR A MARXIST DAILY.

I/We wish to see as soon as possible the appearance of a daily labour movement newspaper based on Marxism to combat the lies and distortions of the bosses' press and to end, once and for all, their vicious system.

Name

Organisation

Address

Return to: Building Fund, c/q *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

THE PROMISES of money for the Building Fund continue to pour in. Obviously our opponents as well as our supporters in the labour movement will be watching closely to see how we fare after the expulsion of the Editorial Board from the Labour Party.

The answer from our readers is to redouble the fight for the ideas of Marxism and to step up their financial support. They will be even more determined to see a building acquired in which a daily *Militant*

could be produced.

This week we have received a further £520 promised from the Nottingham area including two pledges of £100. £510 has been promised from the East of Scotland showing how widespread is our support. We anticipate being able to open up the fund to real cash well before the end of the month so...be prepared! Round up all the promises you can. Make sure there is cash in the bank to carry out our plans.

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 MEETINGS

"What we stand for"

OSWALDTWISTLE: Tuesday, 25 October at 7.30 pm at Harvey Street Community Centre. Speaker: Margaret Creear.

BOURNEMOUTH: Thursday, 13 October 7.30 pm at the Rechabites Hall, Kemp Road, Winton (near Winton Banks). Speaker: Cathy Wilson.

POOLE: Wednesday, 12 October at 7.30 pm at the Conference Room, Poole College of Further Education, North Road Site, Park Gates. Speaker: Cathy Wilson.

ROCHDALE: Thursday, 20 October at Main Hall, Rochdale College, St Mary's Gate. Speakers: Ted Grant, Cath McDonnell, Chair, NW Region LPYS.

"Which way forward for Labour?"

STALYBRIDGE: Tuesday, 25 October, 7.30 pm at 'Laughing Cavalier', Market Street. Speaker: Julie Morgan.

HUDDERSFIELD: Thursday, 20 October at 7.30 pm at Friendly and Trades Club, Northumberland Street. Speaker: Lynn Walsh.

BURY: Speaker: Julie Morgan. George Hotel, Market St, Bury. Thursday 27 October 7.30 pm.

GLENROTHES: Thursday, 20 October at Wrout Primary School, Warout Road. Speaker: Peter Taaffe.

TEESIDE: Monday, 17 October at 7.30 pm at Stockton YMCA, Room 2. Speaker: Margaret Reavey.

STOKE: Thursday, 20 October at 7.30 pm at Tunstall Town Hall. Speaker: Keith Dickinson.

BRADFORD: Tuesday, 18 October at 7.30 pm at Carlton Bolling School, Undercliffe Lane. Speaker: Lynn Walsh.

CARLISLE: Marxist Discussion Group meets fortnightly. Further information, contact: Iain Campbell, 124 Pettey Street, Carlisle. Tel: 21068.

KEIGHLEY: Wednesday, 19 October at 7.30 pm at 35 Devonshire Street. Speaker: Lynn Walsh.

CLASSIFIED

BRADFORD: Social—Live entertainment, disco at Michael Davitt's Club, Hubert Street (off Leeds Road), Bradford from 8 pm Friday 14 October.

FOOTBALL programmes bought. Any quantity. Excellent way of raising money for the Building Fund. Contact: Michael Ingram, 206 Honeysuckle Road, Bassett, Southampton. Phone: 551420.

ACCOMMODATION want for three comrades in London area. Contact Ben on Longfield (04747) 2167 evenings or weekend.

Militant Student NOW AVAILABLE
Articles on grants, NOLS and fighting the cuts. Essential reading for every

DISCO
Proceeds to the fighting fund
7:30pm Friday 14 Oct
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE PUB
WESTMINSTER BRIGGDE RD. SE1
(Near Waterloo station)
PRICE ONE POUND
Late Bar

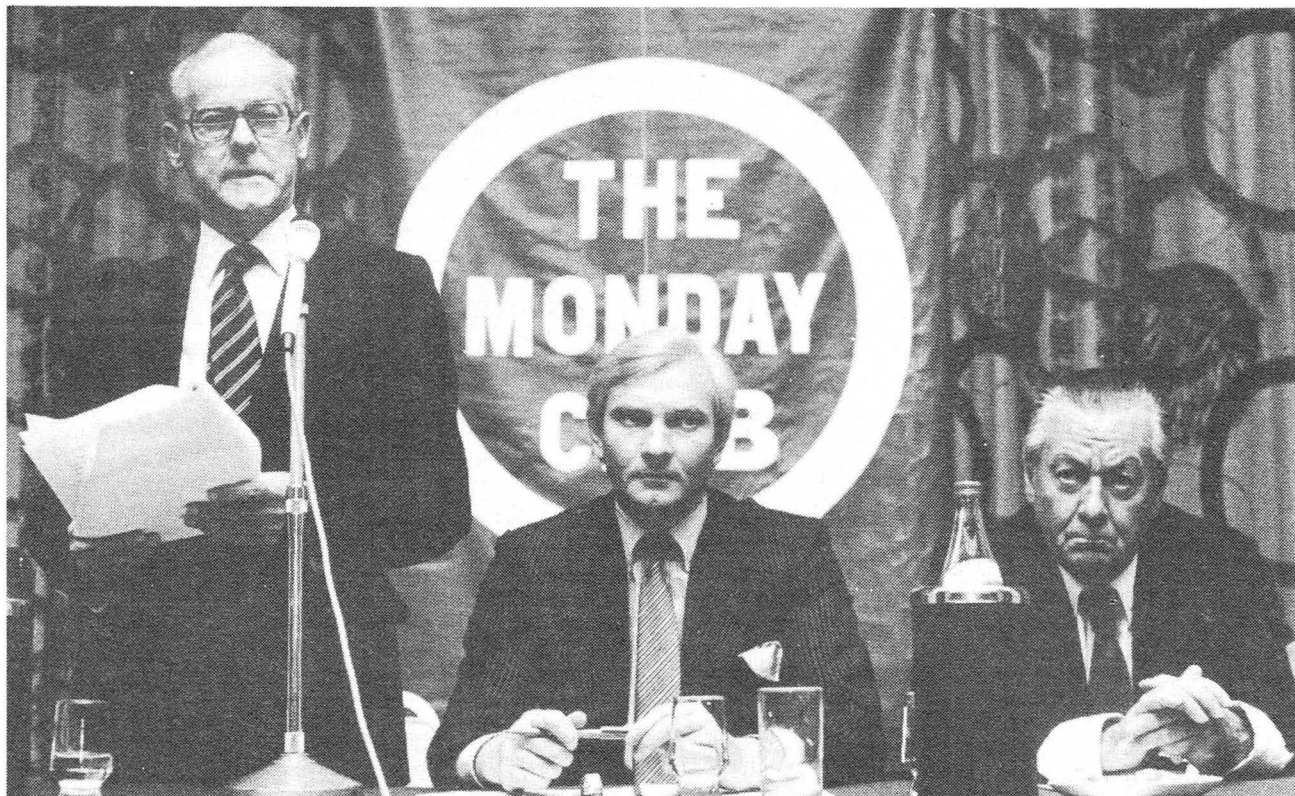
LONDON Militant social, Saturday 15 October 7.30pm. Goldsmith College, New Cross. Admission 50p. Disco, bar.

STREATHAM LPYS seek friendly matches with other London YS's and *Militant* supporters. Contact John on 671 1044.

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Afternoon: "Tebbit's Law" — Speaker: Nick Bradley (NUPE District Officer, Kent)
Film: "Look Back At Grunwicks"
Venue Parkstone Trades and Labour Club, Woodlands Hall, Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole. All Welcome.



Monday Club meeting at Tory Conference 1982. L. to R. James Molyneux, (Official Unionist Party) Harvey Proctor, mentioned in the YC's document, and Julian Amery. Photo: Militant.

Report documents fascist entry into Tory Party

According to Cecil Parkinson, "You cannot be a member of the Young Socialists unless you are an extremist".

However, at a press conference last May, the then Tory chairman dismissed allegations that there had been systematic infiltration of the Tory Party by fascists and racists. "There have been a tiny handful over a period of years," he said.

Parkinson's bland assurance has now blown up in his face, with the leaking of the report of the Young Tories' Committee of Enquiry of Infiltration by the extreme right into the Tory Party, a copy of which has come into the hands of *Militant*.

"...it becomes clear," says the YC's Report (para 5), "that there are links between organisations and individuals (of the fascist and racist right) that can best be described as a ribbon development of racialism within and outside the Party." And "this problem was not confined to the Young Conservatives alone", but involves a significant wing of Tory MPs.

Racialism is not just a vile prejudice, it is a weapon aimed at dividing the working class. Under the last Labour government, business interests backed fascist groups to provoke turmoil and harass the Labour government. Now they are in office again themselves, even some Tory leaders are alarmed at the grip that racist elements have got on sections of the Party.

Tory leaders, moreover, never miss an opportunity to accuse socialists who defend all democratic rights as "totalitarian". Yet it is clear that, until the issue was raised by the Young Tories, they have stood by while sections of their Party opened the doors to fascists who, if they ever managed to get power, would totally destroy all democratic rights.

Monday Club

The report particularly draws attention to a small group of recently elected Tory MPs, giving details of their past association with various fascist grouplets. It also mentions MPs who,

By Tim Moody

WISE (Welsh, Irish, Scots and English) is an umbrella group linking right wing Tories and fascist groups. MPs **Harvey Proctor**, **Nicholas Winterton**, **Michael Brotherton** and **John Stokes** have addressed WISE meetings at which fascists have been present.

The **Tom Finnegan** affair during the election—the Tory parliamentary candidate in Stockton South who was exposed as a former NF member from Birmingham—was only the tip of the iceberg. **Roy Painter**, **Buster Mottram**, **David White**, **Brian Weedon**, **Ross McKay**, **Michael Corfield** and **John Hamilton** are all former leading members or full time officers of the National Front who have now been accommodated into Tory Party membership.

From *Searchlight Magazine*.

while not belonging to these groups, nevertheless associate politically with figures on the extreme right, and form a link between the "outside" and the "inside" right.

Raking over the history of the notorious Monday Club, a group within the Tory Party, the Report recalled that "In 1972 the National Monday Club leadership moved against the extremists," who were then considered beyond the pale by most Tories.

Since then, "many of the individuals expelled from the Monday Club ... and who went into the NF are now back on the fringe of the Tory Party. They are well organised, and have lost none of their commitment." (Para 135).

Most concern is expressed about the "Tory Action" group (para 54), which they say was founded in 1979 to "organise the extreme right within the Conservative Par-



Don Mudie, shown here in his Nazi regalia, was a central figure in the 'Column 88' movement in 1975. His Nazi activities date right back to the 1950's. However, he was chosen as a Conservative candidate for the May council elections this year. (From *Searchlight Magazine*)

ty", and now "boasts the support of 25 MPs." The links of Tory Action, the racist "WISE" group and the "Focus Policy" group are, says the report, well documented. Both provide forums for extreme racists and fascists and act as bridges between these grouplets and the party itself.

Links with Italian MSI

Despite Marxism's long historical and theoretical opposition to the methods of terrorism, the Tories and the Tory press repeatedly try to smear Marxists with allegations of terrorism. However, the Report claims that the "extensive international links" of the League of St. George include connections with the Italian fascist party, MSI. Some of the extremists dealt with by the report are claimed to have been associated, among other groups, with this League.

As one of the new MPs standing on the extreme

right, the Report cites Neil Hamilton, MP for Tatton in Cheshire.

"In 1972," alleges the Report (para 73), "Mr Hamilton took part in a demonstration supporting the dictatorship of President Thieu (then ruling South Vietnam) along with Dino Abato, of the Italian Fascist Party, MSI, the youth wing of which is involved in far right terrorism.

"In the same year Mr Hamilton attended the MSI congress in Rome, paid for by MSI... the question (para 74) of why Mr Hamilton was present at this congress needs to be answered, particularly as MSI work hand in glove with terrorist organisations."

The report draws attention to the active involvement of Uxbridge and Westminster Young Tories in fascist and racist activity on the streets. It gives several paragraphs of details about one prominent member of Westminster Young Tories, Gareth Light, who was associated with members of the League of St George and

Fascists feel at home in Party

THE REPORT also points to half a dozen Tory candidates in recent local elections. One of these, Richard Franklin, who stood in the Norwich council elections this year, has now been expelled from the Tory Party.

But the correspondence appended to the Report is very revealing. In a letter (dated July 1982) Franklin writes: "those of us who have chosen to work quietly through the Conservative Party are not altering one iota of our basic ideology. Far from it, the new strategy merely represents a change of style."

Half Way House

Referring to the "National Front Constitutional Movement", Franklin says: "The more far-thinking nationalists saw it as a sort of 'half-way house' between the Conservative Party and the outside right. Reciprocal developments within the Tory Party include the formation of the 'Tory Action', a beefed-up Monday Club and the Salisbury Review... WISE also provides a useful meeting point."

Talking of the radical transformation of the Tory Party, Franklin exhorts his correspondent: "Compare the Tory Party today with the Tory Party of say, 1974 under Edward Heath. The change is nothing short of dramatic.

"The party and its supporters are now saying things and doing things that would have been unthinkable a few years back...

"Even the nature of the Right of the Conservative Party is shifting. It is moving from laissez-faire liberalism to nationalism. We also have a crop of fine-calibre MPs like Harvey Proctor who are making speeches that would have been considered beyond the pale a few years ago."

Organised Infiltration

However, Franklin warns his correspondent, "If you are thinking of joining the Tory Party for heaven's sake make sure you don't bring any nutters, or loud-mouths in with you. Their place is in the lunatic fringe where they can keep the left distracted and act as a yard-stick by

which our own 'moderation' can be judged."

What a devastating commentary on the developments in the Tory Party under Thatcher's leadership!

Ironically, it answers one of the points made in the Report's conclusion (137): "If one denies that there is a growing evidence to suggest organised infiltration is a reality," it argues, "then one is left with the contention that people formerly in the NF have joined the Conservative Party because they 'feel at home' in it".

Comparing the aims of WISE the so-called Welsh, Irish, Scottish, English, racist group it is possible to see why. These out and out racists call for "realistic repatriation of post-war immigrants with their families to their Homeland". With the Tories' immigration laws, their Nationality Act, their attitude towards the police and black people, and towards racial discrimination, it is difficult to see how the Young Conservatives are expected, as the Report recommends (Para 157), to "focus also on the Conservative Party's contribution to harmonious race relations".

Many of the WISE aims listed in its statement, however, read like crude re-statements of the nationalistic, right-wing themes heard recently from the Tory leadership: encourage pride in Great Britain; halt state interference in personal life; reward native inventive genius; stop the waste involved in the so-called welfare state; adequately punish criminals and reconsider the death penalty; promote "better understanding" between workers and management, halting communist infiltration into "our trade unions"; and combat internal "subversion" and the world-wide threat of "communism", etc. etc. etc.

In its recommendations, the Report calls for a permanent unit to monitor infiltration, together with steps to separate the Tory Party from the ultra-right pressure groups like Tory Action, WISE, etc. However, the purely cosmetic character of these proposed steps is indicated by the report's give-away comments (para 153) that these recommendations "should not in any way seriously change the existing structure and style of the party".

the NF. He lived at the address which was also given as the headquarters of "Heritage Tours", "an organisation purporting to show holiday-makers around London...in fact run by NF members".

One of the couriers for Heritage Tours, alleges the report (para 118), "is Roberto Foire, living in the flats, who is linked with armed robbery and fire bombing in Italy. Until recently, Luciano Petrone, once one of Europe's most wanted men,

also stayed in the flats."

"When the Daily Mirror phoned Heritage Tours to investigate these facts, Mr Light answered the phone. He claimed that he took messages for the company and that he was horrified to learn that 'Foire' was an Italian terrorist. (*Daily Mirror*, August 29, 1983)."

The report laments the fact that Westminster YCs, who "must have known of Mr Light's beliefs and acquaintances", failed to do anything about it.

When giving birth was four times as dangerous as mining

BIRTH CONTROL was not originally invented by scientists or by doctors, but by ordinary women. It was part of the folklore and folk culture of nearly all early societies.

In more industrialised societies, the burden of unwanted pregnancies for most women, especially working class women, was not the result of lack of technology but suppression of technology.

Today in Britain, contraceptive advice and supplies are available free of charge and to all who want them. But this was not achieved quickly or easily. It took decades of struggle, especially by working class women.

Even when Victorian sexual morality was most widespread, the rich and the professional middle class were able to limit their family size. In 1880 there was a greater variety of contraceptives available than in 1960. Free contraception for all was not available in Britain until 1974.

Like all other advances we have achieved, it took years of campaigning and struggle.

The Birth Control Movement campaigned, especially during the 1920's and 1930's, for doctors to prescribe contraceptives, for the state to provide clinics and for legalisation where birth control was against the law.

It tried to rescue birth control from its clandestine existence beneath the surface of "respectable" society by organising most of the clinics, evaluating contraceptives, publishing birth control and even doing research to develop effective chemical spermicides and to examine the effect of hormones on fertility (30 years before the drug industry).

Marie Stopes' first birth control clinic was opened in 1921. By 1936 there were 50 voluntary clinics (called voluntary because they had no funds from the state).

It is hard to imagine a more respectable organisation than the Family Planning Association (FPA) today. But its predecessors, and the individuals—like Marie Stopes in Britain and Margaret Sanger and Dr Hannah Stone in the USA—who campaigned most actively on the issues of birth control, were continually attacked by the establishment.

Medical journals refused contributions from Sanger and Stone, describing them as "sensational propagandists and hysterical ladies".

There were, however, contradictory points of view within the birth control movement. Many were socialists or at least radicals, who campaigned for the right of women to have the number of children they wanted, thus improving the conditions of women and the working class in general.

Others saw birth control as a means of preventing "inferior" races and classes from breeding too rapidly. This was the aim of the Eugenics Society, whose secretary CP Blacker was also the secretary of the Birth Control Investigation Committee.

More recently, the US government's support of birth control programmes in the third world has been justified in a similar way. After all the poor and the starving are a threat to US interests once they act on the knowledge that their economic crisis is the result of ex-

ploitation and inequality, not of rapid population growth.

At the height of the struggle for birth control, the labour movement consequently had an ambivalent attitude. On the one hand it was argued that the campaign for birth control was a diversion from the struggle for social change, rather than part of it.

On the other hand, other sections of the labour movement, especially the Labour Party women's organisation, were firmly in favour of birth control. Working class women were the backbone of the Labour Party between the wars.

The Labour Party itself supported birth control at its 1926 conference, but the issue met with great resistance from the leadership

Often discouraged by the leadership from becoming representatives on the leading bodies, or even from discussing general political matters, Labour women formed an active campaigning body, especially on issues concerning working class women. There were 100,000 in women's sections in the 1920s and nearly twice as many in the 1930s.

The Women's Labour League in 1924 pointed out to the Minister of Health that maternity had four times the death rate as working down a mine, the most dangerous job for men. And twenty times the number who died in childbirth were permanently disabled every year.

Infant mortality dropped from 142 per 1000 live births in 1900 to 68 per 1000 in 1932, while maternal mortality did not go down; it even rose from 1931-3. It was normal, not exceptional, for working class women to suffer from chronic ill health, and married women were excluded from the National Health Insurance scheme, unless they had

paid jobs themselves.

In any case, treatment for anything connected with childbirth was not covered by National Insurance. Such was the desperation of women with too many children, poor health and poverty incomes, that Marie Stopes received 20,000 requests for (illegal) abortions in three months.

Labour women campaigned particularly on prices, housing and health issues including birth control. From 1924 onwards the Labour Women's conference annually and unanimously demanded state provision of birth control.

The Workers' Birth Control Group was set up after the 1924 Women's conference to campaign on the issue. Although its secretary Dora Russell and several of its members were middle class, that organisation was orientated towards the labour movement.

It demanded free, state birth control clinics. Labour controlled boroughs, such as Battersea and Stepney, provided birth control at child welfare clinics in 1924, despite the threat by the Minister of Health to withdraw their grants.

The Labour Party itself supported birth control at its 1926 conference, but the issue met with great resistance from the leadership—including the Women's Executive Committee. In the 1920s opposition from the left wing in the Labour Party was based on opposition to the eugenics movement with which birth control was associated.

Opposition from the right wing including the leadership, however, implicitly accepted eugenic arguments in saying that birth control was not necessary because there was not a serious lack of food, housing, etc! Birth control was excluded from Labour's programme on the grounds that it was a personal, not a political issue.

After years of pressure, local authorities were in 1930 given the

power to provide birth control advice at child welfare clinics. However, this was available only to married women for whom further pregnancy would be a health hazard. But women were often referred to the voluntary clinics because there was a lack of birth control knowledge by the staff of the child welfare clinics.

In 1949 the Royal Commission on population recommended that the new National Health Service should provide birth control to people who wanted it, even if it was not a medical necessity. Unmarried people were still excluded, but in any case the recommendation was ignored.

In the 1960's the FPA and Labour Women were still calling for birth control to be provided by the NHS. But things were changing. The post war boom meant that working class as well as middle class families increased their standards of living, at least for a time.

Birth control became free, and officially available to both unmarried and married people only on the return of the 1974 Labour Government.

More people wanted to limit their family size, used the contraceptives available and began to demand better ones. There was a massive increase in the number of women at work outside the home, especially married women and mothers; and a big rise in the number of women in further education. These women all wanted effective means of planning when, or whether, to have children.

The number of women going to FPA and similar private clinics grew dramatically after the 2nd world war. Doctors prescribed the pill when it was introduced in 1960, and some provided other contraceptives, but birth control was

officially only available privately, even from the NHS doctors. You had to pay: for the consultation and for the contraceptives (though some local authorities subsidised clinics), unless the doctor said it was for medical reasons.

It finally became free, and officially available to both unmarried and married people only on the return of the 1974 Labour Government.

Ironically, the major advances in technology were made after the pharmaceutical industry had recognised the potential market for a contraceptive drug. The possibility of selling a drug to millions of healthy, not sick, women throughout their childbearing life, was too good to miss. By 1964 GD Dearle, the first firm to market the pill, were making a 38.9% return on their investment.

But of course, profit, not need, dictated the actions of the firms, and serious side effects of contraceptive drugs were established throughout the 1970's. The current scandal over Depo-provera, the injectable contraceptive, (see Militant 606) is only the most recent example of profiteering from birth control.

Working class women fought for the right to control their fertility. The experience was similar in many ways to most of the campaigns for reforms fought for by the working class, whether or not the issues were said to be "personal" or "moral".

The fight is still going on. Now the campaign is against NHS cuts and for an extension of services; and for the nationalisation under workers' control of the drug industry, and democratic control over the testing and licensing of new drugs, so that products are developed for our benefit.

By Vivien Seal
(Manchester
Labour Women's Council)



London June 1983—Counter demonstrators march alongside "Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child" demonstration.

Fighting the Civil War

WHEN I came to Petrograd in 1918 I realised that the airforce was totally inadequate.

We had planes from France and Britain, but those who sold those planes to the old regime cheated the Tsar. The planes were in a terrible condition.

There were about 300 pilots in all of Russia. But during the war with Germany, the Germans needed all their planes on the Western Front, so we weren't attacked very much by them.

The situation became worse during the civil war, when the English conquered the Baku oil fields, shooting 22 commissars. All our oil supplies were now gone.

We had to use wood alcohol. This was very bad for planes, and created a lot of black smoke, with flames belching out behind. But luckily the fuel was so bad, it could not burn clothes. Nevertheless it was somewhat disconcerting to be 3-4,000 feet up with flames all round you.

We had three main missions: leafletting, spying and bombing the railways. As I did not know Russian I could not say what the leaflets actually said, but they seemed to be very effective. There was a big opposition to the capitalist wars of intervention against the revolution and virtually all their armies muntined.

Class appeal

I personally met a number of Czechs who defected. Many Austrian and German prisoners stayed on after the end of the First World War, to participate in the fight against counter-revolution.

The main air fights were during the Polish war, 1920-1. There were French pilots on the side of the Polish government, but the

Anton Nilson talks to Jim Chrystie for Militant

Russian pilots proved to be excellent.

Sometimes enemy planes would come over very low, and be brought down by rifle shots. Trotsky had issued sharp orders that the planes should be kept, as they could be renewed and used by us, but often the soldiers hated the planes so much that they would destroy them.

14-hours a day

I was organising the air defence of Moscow then. On many occasions there were bullet holes through my plane, but I don't think any of them came from close fire. They weren't from other planes, they probably came from fire on the ground.

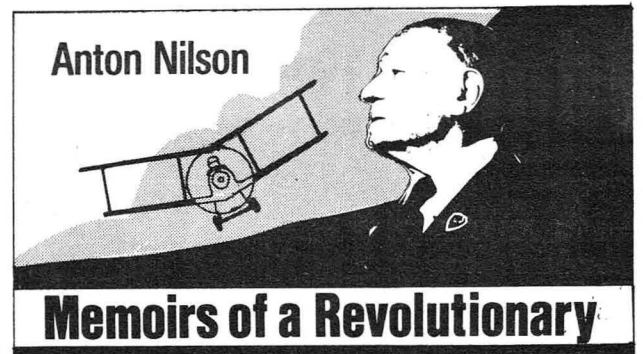
In the air force around Moscow we had to face a number of enemies. Not only were there White armies, foreign armies, but there were also Green armies—the anarchists. It was a tough job. We were flying fourteen hours a day. Our task was to scare the bandits.

The airforce had an enormous psychological effect. It created respect and fear among the enemies of the revolution.

Next week: Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolshevik Party.

This fourth part of ANTON NILSON's political life deals with his experiences during the Civil War.

This is part of a series of articles based on recent interviews with 96-year-old Swedish Marxist Anton Nilson.



'They tried to starve us to death'



WHEN I hear people talk of human rights I remember the reality of capitalism.

Eighteen foreign armies invaded Russia to crush the revolution; they came from England, France, Japan, USA etc. All of them were defeated.

When the capitalist governments were unable

to crush the revolution in blood they tried starvation. Those were terrible years, 1920-23, the years of the hunger blockade. No food was allowed in, and their armies rampaged through the countryside.

They tried to starve the Russian people to death. 30 million starved and seven million died. When Kolchak advanced from Irkutsk, he burnt all the stockpiled crops.

The man responsible

for relief work on the Volga told me what was happening. Hundreds of women were throwing their children into the river, rather than allow them to face slow death by starvation. That was the suffering imposed by world capitalism; in parts of the country, my friend told me there were even incidents of cannibalism.

Somehow we survived. The first relief from the outside came from Quakers in the USA. A

famous breaking of the blockade was that by Nansen the famous Norwegian explorer.

Those years were an enormous test of the collective spirit of the Russian people. But the Russians, the Turks, the Mongols etc did not want to go back to the old days. The fight against the counter-revolution forged the people of the Soviet Union together.

Inner City spiral of decay

I AM beginning to feel that everything I have relied on to make life just a bit better is being taken away.

In the past ten years, we've seen our local hospitals rapidly disappear. Now we're faced with being left with just one, the "Hackney".

Just how will the NHS cope? Even eight years ago, when my younger daughter, Belinda, was born in Mile End, they were short of linen, which meant babies had to make do in damp or dirty bedding. Goodness knows what it's like now!

No heart attacks or children!

Two years ago, a few days before my father-in-law died, hard-pressed casualty doctors tried to send him home after a heart attack. They only changed their minds when my mother-in-law refused and challenged them to carry him home up the four floors.

When my son was born last year at Barts, we had to wait three-quarters of an

By Lynne Faulkes
(Hackney South CLP)

hour for an ambulance; there had been a road accident and there's only two ambulances in this area. We only just made it to Casualty, where they found he was a breech baby. A few more minutes and we could have been in real trouble, as breech births can be dangerous.

This year Belinda broke her arm. We went to 'the Hackney', but after an X-ray they told us they couldn't deal with children. After an interminable wait we were finally transferred to Barts.

It was 11 pm before they finally gave her an anaesthetic and set it—7 hours later! Everyone was very sympathetic and sorry, but...

It's not only the hospitals. Our schools are being hit as well. Many parents have had to go through the worry of

seeing their child's school closed while asbestos was removed.

Belinda has been put into the second year at juniors, instead of the first, because 60 children were transferred from the infants, while there are only two teachers. A few years ago, when there was a row about a teacher not being replaced, we warned something like this would happen.

On the same day last month as the local health authority met to discuss closing four of the borough's hospitals, I was sent a letter from school. This warned: "The government has asked the Inner London Education Authority to cut its budget by £100 m. The government has said it will seek powers (it has none at present) to enforce this."

Criminal

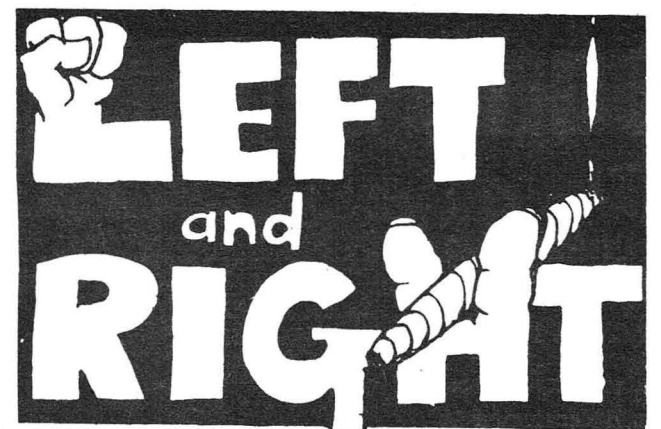
Then there's housing, which is a story in itself. A few months ago, I waited a whole morning outside the Housing Finance Office to see about rent rebates. When I finally got inside, I was horrified to hear and see the distress of those around me.

Pensioners, weeping because they'd never been in arrears before, were facing eviction because promised rebates hadn't arrived. People pleading, because they'd had to choose between eating and paying the rent. One woman behind me said she'd not eaten at all for the past week; what was going to happen to her?

The harassed staff were trying hard to sympathise but it was obvious they'd been through this many times and when I left, the queue was just as long.

And so it goes on. It really is little wonder that some people have become brutalised and turned to crime and violence as an outlet for their pent-up aggression and frustrations. Unfortunately, it's the rest of us who suffer from that too!

Getting rid of this Tory government can't come soon enough for us. We want a government that can and will solve these problems for us, which will start at once and do away with suffering and poverty, that will bring back hope to us, and ensure that everyone has a life worth living, and not one that means a constant struggle for existence.



Something striking in Sweden and Denmark

The British press and media, in its usual biased manner, gave massive coverage to the demonstration of 30,000 businessmen complaining about taxes in Stockholm on 4 October. Funny how a massive workers' march against the cuts in Copenhagen on the same day and the strike wave rocking Belgium didn't get a mention.

A militant passion

A new play about the Labour Party conference, *Passion in Six Days* by Howard Barker has just opened. Local Labour Party members were invited to the premiere in Sheffield. They walked out. The play is littered with bad language and one scene shows the 'Welsh front runner in a leadership contest' cavorting around with the naked wife of a *Militant* supporter. Bet you thought the Labour Party was all extended ward meetings, Sunday morning canvasses and tote collections?!

Labour's manifesto commitments

GLC Election
Manifesto May 1981

As long as the Tory Government remains in power the GLC will be under continuous pressure to cut back its plans, services and staff. This pressure will only be successfully resisted if a Labour GLC is able to draw the majority of Londoners behind a determined stand against the Tories.

In order to build such a movement a Labour GLC and ILEA will have to give a clear lead in refusing to allow Londoners to suffer either through the Tories policies or as a result of the



Ken Livingstone, leader of the GLC.

general crisis gripping British Capitalism.

Therefore a Labour GLC and ILEA will refuse to make any cuts and demand

that the Government provides the necessary finance to maintain and improve all Council services. Understanding that the Tory Government does not listen to pleas and only responds to pressure a Labour GLC and ILEA will appeal to the Labour and Trade Union Movement to take action, including industrial action, to support its stand.

Mass opposition to the Tories policies led by a Labour GLC could become the focal point of a National Campaign, involving other Labour Councils, against the cuts and for an immediate General Election and the election of a Labour Government.



Photo: Militant.

LONDON TRANSPORT is now heading for a £24m surplus instead of just breaking even. How did they do this? Fare rises? No, by big fare cuts.

750,000 Travelcards, weekly and monthly passes for bus and tubes have been sold, 50% above the forecast. These offer big cuts in fares on tubes and buses. Underground use by season ticket holders has grown by 30% to 40%, while single ticket buyers, who have also benefitted by fare cuts have grown by 5% to 10%.

On the buses, there has been a 50% growth in card holders and a 1% increase in other passengers. After years of decline, LT traffic is up by 15%, hence the profit.

This information was hidden away in an inside page of the Times. You can imagine the headlines in the Tory papers like the Evening Standard if LT was making a £24m loss! The Tories, in the name of efficiency, are proposing disbandment of such locally controlled bodies and the introduction of possibly a 27-tier bureaucratic structure for London.

Fight to save the GLC

LONDON WORKERS can expect "disruption, distress and hardship" as a result of Tory plans to abolish the Greater London Council in 1985 admitted Patrick Jenkin, Tory Environment Secretary recently.

London and the metropolitan districts are to be abolished in yet another attack by this government on services and jobs in working class areas.

The TUC has estimated that 300,000 jobs in local government will be lost as more and more cuts are made, sacrificed by the Tories to pay for the crisis in their system.

The GLC was originally established by a Conservative government in 1963, a period of relative economic prosperity.

GLC councillors have been directly and democratically elected giving Londoners an element of accountability over the many services the council provides.

The GLC is responsible for London Transport and the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) as well as other essential London services such as the London Fire Brigade, flood prevention and planning.

Such "luxuries" can no longer be afforded by the Tories. Faced with a deepening economic crisis, the Tories have now cast their eyes on abolishing the GLC.

They hope by so doing to remove a potential focus of opposition to their plans to cut or privatise services; Patrick Jenkin talks of removing the councils as "a source of conflict and tension".

Cutback in Services

The government plan to cancel GLC elections due in May 1985 and have the services run for a year by a board (Tory-dominated, of course) comprising one nominated councillor from each London borough. Then in 1986, almost all the GLC's powers will be transferred to an absurd proliferation of "Quangos".

The Tories' main aim is to centralise control over spending, enabling the government to cut back the services provided by the GLC and thereby cut even further into the living standards of workers in London.

Trying to justify their proposals

By Kevin Miles
(Greater London Labour Party
Executive Committee,
personal capacity)

the Tories have maintained through the press a barrage of propaganda about the GLC being a huge spend-thrift bureaucracy, supposedly wasting millions of pounds of ratepayers' money on "overpaid and underworked" staff.

In reality only 16% of the GLC's budget goes to pay staff (less than one-quarter of the average local authority staff cost). The wages' budget includes paying for firemen, building workers and all GLC clerical staff; only 7½% of staff are classed as "senior bureaucrats" accounting for less than 2½% of the GLC budget.

What the press have never mentioned is that the biggest single item of expenditure in the GLC budget is repayment of debt charges to the parasites in the City. The bankers and financiers—the sponsors of the Tory party—receive £475 million a year interest payments from the GLC—more than twice as much as is spent on wages!

The Tory plans would pose a direct threat to the jobs and working conditions of GLC, ILEA and London Transport employees, and to the quality and experience of services they provide to Londoners. It is vital that the labour movement defend the GLC against the threat of abolition.

Already the London Labour Party has declared its determination to fight the Tories and last week the Labour Party conference in Brighton unanimously declared opposition to abolition. The question now facing the the movement is what strategy is necessary to defeat the government proposals?

The Tories' fears about the GLC becoming a focus of opposition to their plans must be turned into a reality. The GLC leaders are in a perfect position to lead a fightback. By using their position and resources, and making a firm

Photo: Militant.



A school in East London, run by the ILEA, one of the vital services for working class Londoners.

stand, they could arouse enormous enthusiasm in their defence.

Much could be learnt from the example of Liverpool Council who have made provision for new jobs, new housing programmes; reduction of council rents, and a guarantee of no redundancies. A similar programme undertaken by the GLC would do much to enhance the confidence and trust in them among many GLC workers.

The Labour Group, in conjunction with the council trade unions must launch a massive campaign of propaganda among their workforce, explaining the implications that Tory plans will have for their jobs and working conditions. This campaign must also explain how the fight must develop, preparing a struggle involving industrial action, if necessary, to defend the GLC.

An important first step in this campaign was the briefing conference organised by the Democracy for London campaign at County Hall on 14 September. The attendance at this event of over 150 shop stewards and workplace representatives from all of the

unions within the GLC and ILEA shows the potential for a fightback. This must now be followed up by mass meetings in each of the workplaces to explain the issues to every single GLC worker.

Mass movement needed

The fight to defend the GLC cannot however be left up to the GLC, ILEA and London Transport employees alone. The whole of the London labour movement must be turned out in a campaign of general election proportions taking the issues into every trade union branch and shop stewards' committee, every workplace, every housing estate and every tenants' association, and every community association.

The GLC campaign must be linked into a national movement with other councils forced into confrontation with the government. The past attempts of the GLC leaders to postpone a fight with the government by increasing the rates may to an extent have undermined

their ability to convince workers they are prepared to make a stand in their defence. This however only serves to underline the importance of an energetic and bold campaign at this stage.

It is vital that the leaders of the campaign have, and are seen to have, confidence in the ability and the willingness of working people to fight back.

It was misleading for Christine Ohsan, the branch secretary of GLC and ILEA NALGO to ask shop stewards at the Briefing conference whether their workers would take "immediate" strike action on the issues, and then counterpose the difficulties of that with the strategy concentrating on lobbying and writing to MPs.

No room for complacency

Strike action is a serious issue for workers and it is the responsibility of the leaders of the unions and the GLC involved in this campaign to honestly explain the issues and prepare the membership for the action that is necessary to defend jobs and public services.

Harriet Harman, MP also placed the main emphasis on lobbying Tory and Alliance MPs. The GLC Labour Group have even appointed a former Tory GLC councillor (now an SDP member) Roland Freeman to work full-time co-ordinating the lobbying of MPs.

It is a measure of the strength of the GLC's case that even some Tories are declaring opposition or at least reservations about the government proposals.

Alan Greengross, the leader of the GLC Tories has called the government proposals "a bureaucrat's dream and a ratepayer's nightmare". Ken Livingstone has said that there is an "even chance that this pig's breakfast would be defeated in Parliament".

But there is no room for complacency. This defeat can only be assured not by persuading the Tories in logical debates but by the pressure of a mass movement of workers outside Parliament.

Such a movement must be built not just through posters and rock concerts but by going to the people of London and campaigning to save the GLC around issues which affect working class Londoners.

LEFT Labour conference 83

Reports by Roger Shriver
Photos: Denis Doran

Brighton notebook

Tribune rally



Neil Kinnock at the rally.

THE *TRIBUNE* rally was as usual, very big, with the audience jamming the Dome Theatre to hear top Labour politicians.

In a long list of platform speakers, Joan Maynard, Tony Benn and Ian Mikardo were applauded when they appealed to Neil Kinnock to stick to party policy.

Ian Mikardo advised Kinnock to "use a long spoon when you're supping with

the devil, particularly the Fleet Street kind". He warned him to fight the Tories not his own party.

Tribune meetings are usually stronger on emotion than on drawing up a perspective for future developments, which has been left to *Militant*. This time, though, Mikardo did point out that many changes were coming.

He anticipated growing economic crisis with major countries possibly defaulting on debts, a growing revolt of youth, splits within NATO and the Warsaw Pact, the disintegration of the EEC, explosive changes in Southern Africa and a possible major nuclear accident.

Unity was the theme of the meeting but the problems outlined by Ian Mikardo will show more and more policy differences within *Tribune*, and show Labour Party members the relevance of Marxist ideas.

Black workers and Labour

ONE OF the pressing demands from conference was for more involvement of black workers and unemployed in the Labour Party. *Militant* reporters spoke to two black delegates to conference.

Michael Idun from Dulwich. "Black people face many problems like police oppression. Unemployment hits us very badly, I've been out of work now for a year.

"But I don't agree with setting up black sections. I think it leads to tokenism. The ward parties and trade unions should be campaigning on the issues facing us."

Moses Miles aged 20, delegate from Gloucester Labour Party. "I've been unemployed for two years. I want a better future. The decision to expel the *Militant* Editorial Board was a disaster.

"It makes it a lot harder to recruit workers, black or white, if you throw out people working for

socialism, and just give them five minutes and tell them, right mate you're out.

"But other things have been very good like the decision on YTS. My girlfriend has been on those schemes. They're only there to cut dole figures. You end up an expert tea and coffee maker, you go to the shops and post letters for the bosses.

"We want better jobs and we want to protect workers on those schemes. We don't want the resolution hidden away in a conference report, the Labour Party will have to fight for it.

"Fancy speeches won't help the unemployed, and won't get votes from black or white workers. Tell the truth to workers like the comrade from Faversham, about the benefit people looking into his private life when he wanted a pair of shoes, and put up a fight for socialism. Then we can win the next election."

Counter Tory lies

ANOTHER resolution was passed against the NEC on Thursday morning, on a daily paper for Labour, after Jon Ingham (Leeds West Labour Party) reminded delegates of the role of the Tory dominated press in the election.

He called on the Labour Party not to stall any longer in organising a Labour paper, to take up the Tories' arguments and reflect directly the views of workers in disputes and fights to save jobs and services.

Pledge to support young workers



Bob Wylie speaking at conference.

AGAINST THE advice of the NEC, Labour's conference called for a campaign to organise workers on Youth Training Schemes.

Bob Wylie (East Kilbride CLP) emphasised that the labour movement was the only body able to win advances for young workers including union rates and rights, holiday and travel rights and union monitoring of schemes.

Bob told conference of the terrible health and safety record, the lack of safeguards and supervision on the schemes. Last December in Coatbridge, a trainee, Sean O'Brien died after cleaning a machine with an oily rag and warm-

ing himself by a gas fire. If we didn't control YTS, it would adversely affect all workers.

John Williams (Brighton Pavillion) explained that the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) formed by the LPYS wanted YTS abolished. In the meantime, young workers needed protection. He called for full support for the Young Workers' Assembly in Manchester on 10 December.

Some delegates, understandably reflecting trade union feelings called for "non-co-operation" with the schemes. But Willie Griffin, *ex officio* delegate from the LPYS explained the dilemma faced by the unions.

The LPYS and YTURC

fully supported unions in the mines and civil service who fought replacement of existing workers by YTS schemes. But hundreds of thousands of workers on the schemes needed organisation.

The YTURC who organised the February 1982 mass lobby of Parliament by trainees showed that young workers could fight against the Tories provided the trade unions and the labour movement lived up to their responsibilities.

This and a number of other excellent contributions ensured that the East Kilbride resolution was passed despite Dennis Howell for the NEC claiming that the demand for a guaranteed job was "unrealistic".

YS puts flesh on resolution

THE LABOUR Party Young Socialists held a lively conference meeting just hours after the resolution on Youth Training was passed.

But the YS were not sitting on their laurels. Everybody realised the campaign had to be taken out to young workers and the unemployed.

Steve Morgan the new LPYS representative on the National Executive refuted Dennis Howell's claim that a guaranteed job was unrealistic.

Youth unemployment is now eight times higher than in the '30s, and colossal amounts were spent on dole and even more on nuclear weapons.

The LPYS always concentrated on attacking the Tories, as the YS demonstration in October 1982 showed. The LPYS could end young people's suspicions about politics.

Dave Nellist MP said the YS and other Labour Party members had to put flesh on the skeleton of the YTS resolution.

At Dave's old workplace, Self Changing Gears in Coventry, the unions had forced management to pay trainees £55 a week. The labour movement had to fight for such improvements. The bosses only wanted the schemes for big profits, as Tebbit had admitted two

years ago when he envisaged whole factories on youth trainee rates similar to those in the Far East to reduce imports.

The money was there in society to implement the resolution. If we actively campaigned on that alone, the conference would have been worthwhile.

Lawrence Coates, retiring NEC member reminded the audience that at the start of the witch-hunt the right wing had predicted the end of the LPYS. But the YS have grown consistently.

Lawrence praised the resolution from Garston calling for links with industry through workplace

Militant Readers' Meeting



Ted Grant.

AS WE reported last week, the *Militant Readers' Meeting* was the best-attended ever at Labour's conference.

Ted Grant, political editor was speaking just over 24-hours after the expulsion decision. But, he emphasised, Marxism could not be expelled because no one could stop the development of events.

Ted showed how capitalism was in crisis worldwide but particularly in Britain after years of neglect of investment by the ruling class. *Militant* worked on the basis of scientific socialism and analysed processes in society.

We were not weighed down by temporary feelings of despondency amongst the working class or diverted from our understanding that workers would transform society.

For an analysis of the implications of conference see page 2.



Skinner backs pensioners

PENSIONERS lobbied Labour Party conference in their campaign for a better deal. A resolution calling for immediate action on pensions and social security was passed after Dennis Skinner made an excellent speech, supposedly arguing the NEC case for remitting the resolution to the National Executive, but convincing delegates instead to vote in favour.

Latin America

Uruguay

AS IS the case elsewhere in Latin America, the workers' movement in Uruguay is beginning to re-assert itself against a bloody and brutal military regime.

Last month more than half a million workers, a sixth of the population, were involved in a ten minute protest strike against the government. Other forms of protests, like banging pots and pans and turning off all lights at night, are growing month by month, as workers gain confidence in fighting the government.

In the US Congress a few years ago, Uruguay was referred to as the "torture chamber of Latin America". In a continent which includes the military regimes of Chile, Brazil and Argentina, this may seem exaggerated, but the regime which has ruled Uruguay for over a decade relies almost totally on repression.

"Human rights are to be respected", said the Institutional Act of 1976, "but they must be regulated in accordance with internal security". Vice-Admiral Marquez, one of the leading military figures has boasted, "it is not true as our enemies say that we torture everybody", but ex-prisoners' evidence of the torture during interrogation, and the "slips" by over-enthusiastic questioners, is damning.

Amnesty International suggested in 1979 that there were nearly 3,000 political prisoners out of a population of 3 million, one of the highest proportions in the world. This excludes the many people arrested, interrogated, tortured and released without being brought to

By Steve Higham
(Liverpool Broadgreen CLP)

trial.

The brutality of the government and the growing opposition to it are in marked contrast to the relative tranquility of the 1940s and 1950s.

In 1956 Uruguay had a *per capita* income of US\$937, the highest in South America. It had the lowest illiteracy, birth and infant mortality rates on the continent.

All this changed as economic crisis spread through South America, crippling Uruguay's industrial base. With a small home market, the economy is dependent on large foreign markets. The onset of crisis, with more import controls, taxes and tariff barriers in other neighbouring countries hit Uruguay hard. As early as 1983 only 50% of capacity was being used in industry.

Currency speculation

Rather than invest in agricultural and industrial production, the feeble, national capitalists, together with their partners, the multi-national corporations, notably the banking sector, drew huge sums out of the country, channelling it into foreign currencies and speculative investments.

Thus, between 1962 and

Opposition grows to 'Latin America's torture chamber'

1967, an estimated US\$246.4 million left Uruguay. The figures for GDP were higher in 1957 than during the following decade. Inflation rocketed, reaching 182.8% between June 1967 and 1968.

The capitalist class demonstrated that they were incapable, even in the period of world economic upswing, to develop the economy. So much more is that the case now, in a period of general world recession.

The earlier period however was marked also by a huge upsurge in working class militancy, as living standards fell unsparingly. For instance, in 1972, wages fell to pre-1950 levels. Strikes and protests were recurring. Repressive "states of emergency" were used to beat the working class into submission.

Individual terrorism emerged in the clothes of the Movement of National Liberation, more popularly known as the Tupamaros, a middle-class grouping, fond of kidnapping employers, forcing them to hand over loot, food and clothing to poor villages. Influenced by Guevara and others, the Tupamaros, though personally heroic, had no base in the ranks of the working class and were consequently crushed by the power of the state. Many of them are today rotting in prison.

Moreover, their activities gave the military a pretext for a massive extension of repressive legislation. Hence, in 1971 the armed forces

took over responsibility for the struggle against "subversion" and President Bordaberry handed them control of the police force.

In February 1973, the military announced their intentions of participating in political decision-making and called for a series of reforms. Thus, the military coup on June 27 1973 was not a one-off, swift, unexpected blow. Rather, the workers' leadership in Uruguay, were given more than sufficient notice as to the intention of the military to take power.

Strike too late

It is scandalous that when a general strike was declared by the CP dominated CNT (Convencion Nacional de Trabajadores), the Uruguayan TUC, it was not until after the military coup. The working class responded tremendously to the strike call. Over 500,000 workers, more than 50% of the labour force, took action. Factories were occupied. This lasted, magnificently, for two weeks.

But, it was too late by this time. The military wasted no time. On the day they took over, Government Decree No 466/973 declared: "The exercise of the right of assembly in open or closed, public or private places for political purposes may only be exercised with prior authorisation".

From day one, they have



ruled with the iron fist. All public and private sector workers who go on strike are dismissed without compensation.

All workers' organisations, including the CNT, have been declared illegal. The trade unions have been replaced by the "General Confederations of Workers of Uruguay" (CGTU); a military front for spies and shop floor "policemen" to ensure a loyal, obedient workforce.

Additionally, all politicians who held office or stood as left-wing candidates from 1967 to 1973 have been stripped of all political rights.

By introducing monetarist policies, coupled with this brutal subjugation of the workers, the capitalists were able to secure a slight upswing for several years. For instance, GDP showed an average growth rate of 2.8% during 1973-78—the first period of sustained growth since the 'fifties boom.

But this period has now

abruptly ended. For the first time, the external debt has exceeded US\$2 billion. In 1980, industry grew at its lowest rate for four years—less than 3%. Investment in agricultural improvements and plantations fell by an astronomical 41%.

Any foreign capital that has arrived in the country has done so for purely speculative purposes. Eighty per cent of the banks and finance houses in Montevideo are estimated to be in foreign hands. Uruguay is at the mercy of the giant multinationals, who are consistently squeezing it dry in the interests of profit.

This has been aided and abetted by the drain of military expenditure. An estimate in 1976 suggested that at least 49% of the total budget went on military and security expenditure.

This crisis has had a devastating impact on the already miserable living stan-

Continued on Page 11

Brazil general strike call

A GENERAL strike has been called by the newly organised Workers' Congress in Brazil in protest against a decree announced by the generals' regime to cut back wages below the fast-expanding inflation rate, (officially 152%).

This action will be against a background of growing social unrest unprecedented in the history of the country in its recent past. In the state of Ceara, the capital city has been surrounded by 300,000 people living in camps, victims of the recent drought.

Fears are growing amongst the government party of General Figueiredo, the PDS, that this mountain of human misery may erupt at any moment. According to a survey conducted by the regional government of Ceara, 20 million people are suffering from hunger and thirst in the Nordeste area.

In Rio where in the first eight days of September, over 30 supermarkets were

By Dave Churchley

ransacked by large groups of starving people from their shanty towns and the favelas, all available police and military police are on the streets in anticipation of further food riots.

The formation of the Workers' Congress is the culmination of the struggles even within the labour movement itself. The Communist trade unions have chosen in the past only to support those unions that are officially recognised by the labour ministry.

The union that has been in the forefront of workers' struggles since the early eighties is the Sao Paulo metal workers union led by Luis Ignacio Da Silva, known as Lula. The decision to go ahead with the congress without the support of the Communist Party and the approved unions, was vindicated by the size of the inaugural meeting. They had



Brazilian workers' demonstration in Sao Paulo.

hoped for an attendance of 3,500 delegates but the meeting was overwhelmed by 5,500 turning up.

The opposition to the newly formed congress will have to reconsider its position as control may soon slip away from their grasp. The government have made the strike illegal but at this stage any action by the generals could spark off massive demonstrations of unrest. Although the protest movements in Brazil had previously called for strikes at the end of July, its partial

defeat showed the need to co-ordinate future action through some structured workers' organisation.

Lula's own political party can only benefit from such a move, as the other opposition groups, mostly contained within the broad democratic alliance of the PMDB, are losing their support. Because of a rigged voting system, and a wariness at this stage for outright social change, recent elections had returned PMDB supporters in large working class areas of the

Sao Paulo region.

However, the lack of a clear alternative coming from the PMDB has caused many to reconsider their original choice. In an opinion poll published by the

Manoeuvres

Folhas de Sao Paulo 48% of those who had voted for the PMDB said they would now change.

This catastrophic decline in support has given some heart to Rio's governor Leonel Brizola. In his bid for

presidential power, Brizola is attempting to get the left parties, including the Workers' Party, to merge with his so-called Democratic Labour Party.

The political manoeuvres at this stage are taking a back seat, however, to the impending social explosions around the country. With an economy now under the direct guidance of the IMF and about to undergo its 37th devaluation this year, the generals are adding 93,000 to the army by the end of the year.

Portugal, USA, S. Africa

From Page 10

dards of the working class. According to official figures, real wages in 1979 were 44% lower than in 1971.

The government has abolished all rent controls, resulting in increasing misery and overcrowding for working people. Indeed, house prices themselves rose by 78% in 1980. Clothing, food, fuel have all risen astronomically. For instance, in July 1979, meat sellers reported such a huge increase in price of meat that consumption fell by 30%.

This explains the storm clouds on the horizon; the awakening of the working class; the beginning, once again, of struggle.

On August 27, 2,000 marched through the streets of Montevideo for an end to military rule. Motorists sounded their horns while housewives banged pots and pans to express their solidarity with the demonstrators. In mid-September 60 construction workers were arrested for striking against the regime.

Regime a sinking ship

This readiness to fight, despite everything, which is characteristic of the working class, has completely isolated the military, reducing their social base to nothing. It has effected even sections of the middle class.

The regime is in command of a sinking ship and like most captains in their position, nobody will listen to their orders. Hence, they have been forced to concede negotiations on a return to civilian rule. The government claims a commitment to calling general elections in November 1984, with a view to civilian administration in March 1985.

Their timetable, however, may not coincide with that of the re-assembling labour and trade union movement. The toppling of the regime is a burning necessity and the main task for the labour movement.

But this alone is insufficient. It is necessary for an end to capitalism itself and for a thorough change in society along socialist lines. Workers in the neighbouring countries, Argentina, Brazil, Chile and indeed throughout the continent, would clamour to follow the example.

Trade union traditions

The labour movement in Uruguay is not alien to struggle. Its traditions are solid. The first trade union federation, the Workers' Regional Federations of Uruguay, was founded in 1905. Uruguay emerged in the early 1900s with a parliamentary democracy and one of the earliest welfare states in the world.

In 1915, the demand for the eight-hour day was granted. Legislation appeared protecting child and female labour, old age and retirement pensions, a minimum wage and accident insurance were also introduced.

Once re-inscribed onto the banner of the movement, these proud traditions shall lay the basis for an end to capitalism and poverty and for a socialist transformation of Uruguay and Latin America.



Portuguese workers celebrated the overthrow of the rotten Caetano dictatorship in 1974 and looked forward to socialist change. The bankruptcy of the leaders of the labour movement, however, resulted in these hopes being dashed for a whole period.

Strike protests at Portuguese austerity

AS THE AUSTERITY measures of the Socialist Party-led coalition government begin to seriously affect workers' living standards in Portugal, the workers' movement has begun to strike back. Both the unions and the Portuguese Communist Party have announced major campaigns against the government to begin this month. The PCP, which received 20% of the vote in the last elections, commands strong

support in the urban industrial areas. In some working class districts around Lisbon, like Amadora and Benfica, over 50% of the vote went to the PCP.

After imposing all-round increases in food and transport prices, the Soares coalition fears the ability of the PCP to mobilise large sections of the Portuguese population against the government. Already the number of strikes have increased and workers have

taken to unorthodox measures to realise their demands. Striking glass workers have blocked railway lines to draw attention to their case and workers in Lisnave (Europe's biggest ship-repair yard) have repeatedly locked management in their offices until their demands have been met.

The Soares administration, unable to stop strikes because the right to strike is firmly enshrined in the Por-

tuguese constitution, has invoked the old fascist laws to warn off workers from taking further action. Up to ten years imprisonment is threatened for anyone who attempts to disrupt public transport, barricade roads, or stop "officials" carrying out their so-called "legitimate" interests. Workers who attempt to stop other workers and management from crossing picket lines will face up to three years imprisonment.

It is unlikely however, that these threats will deter workers from further action. Bank workers held up traffic in central Lisbon in the last week of September, during a protest against the re-introduction of private capital into the banking system and the two main federations, CGTP/Intersindical, are holding a conference this month to plan and coordinate future action.

By Bob Mannings

Teamsters' movement for democracy

AMERICA'S largest transport workers' union, the Teamsters, have voted by a 7:1 majority to reject the advice of the union's leadership to accept a cut in wages and benefits for laid-off and newly-hired trucking members.

Union locals overwhelmingly spurned the attempts of the newly-elected union president Jackie Presser to make deals without first testing the attitude of his union.

At a time when the trucking business is just picking up, as part of the overall economic 'recovery', this cut, amounting to 31%, would have opened the door to an all out assault on wages in 1985, the year that the National Master Freight Agreement expires.

This vote goes a lot further than the "breakdown in communications" that the Teamster union bosses would have their members believe. Presser had even gone to the lengths of confiscating copies of his proposals that had been given out at the National

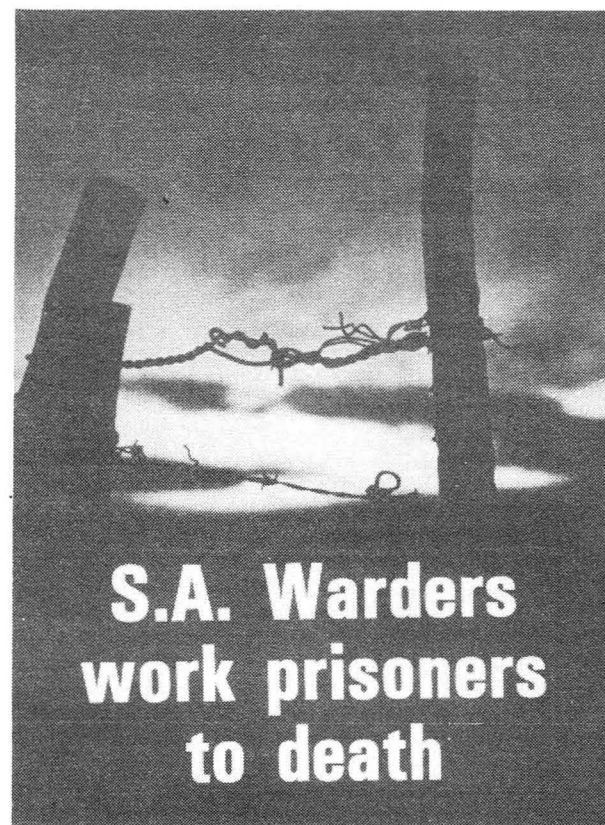
Negotiating Committee meeting in July.

The details, however, were leaked by supporters of "The Teamsters for a Democratic Union" (the TDU) to local papers and also reproduced in their own paper.

Pressure was kept up by the TDU by tallying votes against the deal as they came in and subsequently printing them in their paper. This was to overcome the notorious problems in the past with ballots in the Teamsters' union. Even after the count was delayed for five days, it gave Jackie Presser a resounding slap in the face. Not to be outdone, the union president said that the vote reflected "The democratic process...and silenced the usual complaints by dissidents".

A TDU supporter saw it differently "when the word (about a deal) comes from TDU it's a real embarrassment for local officials." It does not help Presser's case that about one-third of the teamsters local presidents must stand for re-election this autumn.

By Dave Churchley



S.A. Warders work prisoners to death

AMAZING scenes broke out in a South African court last month as four prison warders faced trial for assault. One of the prisoners called to give evidence suddenly produced a secret statement which he had smuggled into the court.

After hearing the evidence the judge in-

structed the prison governor not to take him back to his cell in Barbeton jail, at which point the prisoner, Barry Bloom, exploded that the prison governor could not be trusted: "That man has assaulted me personally. He is the man who is driving us all to suicide".

Then Bloom found that the warders were only being charged with assault, so he refused to give any more evidence. "This should not be a charge assault. I was

almost murdered by these people."

In the last 10 months, 12 prisoners have been shot dead or otherwise murdered by guards at Barbeton jail.

The circumstances of this trial showed vividly the reality of apartheid behind the glossy ads for holidays and jobs. In South Africa, dogs are treated better than blacks.

Work in 95 degrees of heat

The warders on trial, or as the judge called them the "heroes of the truncheon", were charged with causing the death of three African prisoners and assaulting 34 others. They had beaten the prisoners, so that their bodies were covered in welts and bruises. Then in temperatures of 95 degrees, they had forced the prisoners to work, pushing wheel barrows up hills.

In the searing heat, prisoners collapsed and were just left lying in the sun. But the guards looked after their dog; they took him to the shade of the trees. Three prisoners died from a combination of the beatings and heat exhaustion. But the warders were acquitted of murder; they were guilty only of causing grievous bodily harm.

By Jim Chrystie



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

MILITANT, Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

YTS—No national standards

Dear Militant,

I would like to raise one of the largest faults with the Youth Training Scheme.

When our "esteemed" union leaders suggested that shop stewards should be given the power to veto whether or not the scheme could operate, was any thought given to the bad press which would be sure to follow if a shop steward denied anybody the chance to gain work experience?

Given the rubbish churned out daily by the anti-union press, any steward

refusing to co-operate on YTS would be ripped to shreds. This would play into Tebbit's hands.

Surely when our union leaders discussed the YTS there should have been national standards laid down below which YTS could be implemented? This would have been far better than to leave it to individuals at shop floor level to deny anybody the right to work.

Yours fraternally
Dave Furze
EETPU shop steward
(personal capacity)

Builders' skills wasted

Dear Editor,

My cousin can't get a proper building apprenticeship because there are no vacancies. In Norfolk there are hundreds of building workers on the dole.

My dad has been on the council house waiting list for about seven years. He's been at the top for the last four years but has been offered nothing. He's a pensioner and suffers from arthritis, and lives in a caravan with holes in the floor. The toilet freezes over in winter and his

clothes and shoes go mouldy because they are permanently damp.

Is it too much to ask for the skills of unemployed builders to be put to building desperately needed council houses in Norfolk?

My dad has worked hard all his life for the bosses without complaint. He was made redundant aged 58 and left with no job and little self respect. All he asks for now is a decent place to live but the system that has used him all his life can't afford even that.

Yours fraternally
Jane Edwards
Norwich CLP

Militant on tape

Dear Comrades,

Leeds Militant supporters have now established a regular tape containing the major articles from each week's edition of the *Militant*. This tape is currently issued on a fortnightly basis, and orders for it are growing by leaps and bounds.

We already have 3 regular orders for the tape within our city of Leeds, and we have only been producing the tape for just over a month. To our knowledge, it is the only labour movement paper produced regularly on tape.

However, as yet, we have

only reached the tip of the ice-berg in the potential for this tape. We are sure that many comrades throughout Britain must know workers in their local Labour Party Branches, Young Socialist Branches, Trades Union Branches, etc., who cannot read the *Militant* because they are blind, partially sighted, dyslexic or slow readers, and who would greatly value a regular copy of *Militant* on tape.

Anyone interested in either receiving regular copies or the *Militant* on tape, or in finding out more about the service we are providing, should write to: Militant Tapes, 26 Ashton Ter-

Picket line of American Telecommunications workers last August in Chicago.



Resolution from India

A LETTER was received from India this week, enclosing a copy of a resolution sent from there to the US telephone workers recently on strike, (as reported in *Militant* issue number 665). We reproduce below the full text of the resolution, which is a small indication of the potential for international trade union solidarity.

---: RESOLUTION :---

It has been learnt from the report of *Militant* that 700,000 telephone workers of Bell Telephone Company and American Telephone and Telegraphs had to proceed on strike from 6 August, 1983 for settlement of their demands as detailed in the *Militant*, which could be settled as mentioned at "STOP PRESS".

Of course, we received the news late and hence could not reflect our feelings over the actions in time. However, the divisional executive committee unanimously greets with wholehearted appreciation and congratulations the organisation and the workers of the American Telephones for their settlement achieved and encouraging actions for all the workers of the world.

**Comradely Yours,
G R Upadhyaya, President
Dhavanagar Division branch
All India Telegraph Engineers Employees Union
Class III**

Benefits cuts

Dear Comrades,

My unemployed husband recently received notice of the increase in our supplementary benefits, which we will get at the end of November.

The generous increase in his weekly giro was no less than £1.20! We will also get 65p a week extra on child benefit for each of our three children, making the magnificent total of £3.15.

We were supposed to get a 3.7% increase—this being the official inflation figure for May, on which all rises in benefits were to be worked out. May was carefully chosen as being the month likely to have the lowest inflation rate for all the year.

The Tories then tried to

fiddle the figures even more, by using a 'special' inflation index with housing costs left out, as our housing costs are paid direct.

However, as often happens, this backfired on them, as their 'special' index gave an inflation rate well over 4%—and this is the rise we got—all well and good—but now for the other side of the coin.

As our elder son reached five in September, his milk token was stopped. So £1.47 of our rise is gone, unless he also stops drinking milk. He is also old enough to pay bus fares, so another £1.50 goes on getting him to and from school. We are thus left with 18p to compensate for prices due to inflation.

Yours sincerely
Julie Ingram (Mrs)
Southampton

Getting an Echo in Broadgreen

Dear Comrades,

The banning of the press, media and visitors from the debate at Labour Party conference on the re-instatement of the Editorial Board, is another desperate attempt by the right wing to avoid the embarrassment of having their arguments open to scrutiny by the rank and file.

In any case the TV would probably interrupt the Editorial Board during their arguments by 20 minute news flashes on the latest *Coronation Street* sensation.

But this action highlights the right's inability to defend their policies and purges against socialists who have a clear perspective for taking society forward.

I recall a comment by the anti-socialist editor of the *Liverpool Echo*, after Terry Fields' tremendous victory in Broadgreen: "If this victory gives the likes of Hattersley, Shore and Healey, sleepless nights, then it will give Thatcher and her government nightmares".

It seems that the right are indeed racked with sleepless nights, they have done their best to eradicate Marxism, but failed miserably, just as their policies have failed to eradicate poverty and unemployment.

Yours fraternally
J L Shevlin
Ashton-Under-Lyne CLP

No talks with Tories

Dear Militant,

Noel Davies (letters 30.9.83) criticises *Militant's* editorial of the 2nd September for pointing out the futility of the TUC leadership pleading with Tebbit and Co. not to attack Trade Union rights and workers living standards.

Bizarrely he says this argument is "somewhat paradoxical"—he fails to point out why, but instead repeats the very same arguments offered by the TUC leaders.

Both comrade Davies and the TUC leaders are good examples of the real paradox in this situation—namely, the potential strength of the TUC as a lever for social change remains as powerful

as ever but the leaders of the TUC, at best, have no confidence in the ability of the rank and file of the trade unions to fight the Tory government.

Comrade Davies concludes his letter by saying that the "...end product of talks must result in the restoration of the right to work for all people." This would be funny if it wasn't so tragic, since Comrade Davies is asking the leaders of the TUC to persuade Tebbit to concede socialism!

Yours fraternally
Dave Carr
Reading East CLP

an attack on enrolment day, selling over sixty papers, at least two of which were sold to ardent Tory supporters.

At the university freshers' fair, on the following Monday, 45 papers were sold, despite stiff competition from sectarians who sold three papers.

If students can see reason, particularly at university, which is certainly more middle class, then anybody can. No offence meant to student comrades.

Finally in reply to Mike John, if you do row down to the Falklands, remember to take Maggie T. with you and let her swim the last half the distance.

Yours fraternally
Adi Bedder
Leicester South LPYS

Refreshing

Dear Comrades,

With the start of term for polytechnic students, comrades in Leicester mounted

Help fighting fund

Dear Comrades,

Please find enclosed a cheque for the Militant Fighting Fund. This is my councillors attendance allowance. I shall be making regular donations to the fighting fund from this source, and also to my local party.

I'm sure that if all the Labour councillors who read *Militant* donated one month's attendance allowance to the fighting fund the target would soon be reached and the paper expanded.

Finally our workers' paper prints workers' criticisms of the paper, and it is quite correct that it should do so. However, I suspect that many who read but disagree keep their hands in their pockets. Prove me wrong comrades, carry on criticising our Marxist position, but defend financially our right to hold it.

Yours fraternally
Councillor Jim Bell
Wrekin District Council

Abortion—women's right to choose

Dear Comrades,

Reading an anti-abortion letter from a man in *Militant* 669 had the same effect on me as reading a letter from a Tory stating that health workers shouldn't go on strike because old ladies might die.

Yes of course we must be aiming towards a society in which no woman needs to make that decision from economic or social pressures. But in the meantime making abortion illegal would only mean that working class women who couldn't afford to pay extortionate fees to doctors for illegal abortions would be driven back to "back street abortionists" or try aborting themselves, with terrible deaths resulting.

Abortion must be made easier rather than more difficult and available at free day clinics, so that a woman could terminate a pregnancy in the very earliest stages without agonizing weeks of waiting and worrying.

Women don't have abortions for fun, and the decision to have one must always be in their hands, without interference from those who would like to moralize about the rights and wrongs of it.

In sisterhood
R Metcalfe
Norwich

Life in the fast lane—for some

Dear Comrades,

A recent report stated that 7 million people in Britain went without food at some time last year. At the same time Porsche, the luxury West German car manufacturers, announced a special model for the British market only, the 928 series 2.

The reason for this is that the UK is their second largest market in the world after America.

When asked why this should be, one theory was that incomes in Britain are more unevenly distributed than in other countries. Surprise, surprise.

Yours fraternally
T R Smith
TGWU 1/1080

CPSA-Say yes to Labour

MEMBERS OF the Civil and Public Services Association are to be balloted in late October to decide whether the union should establish a political fund and thus be enabled to re-affiliate to the Labour Party.

All socialists and local activists in the union must make every effort between now and the ballot to convince members of the need for this historic step forward for the union.

Along with every section of the working class, CPSA members have suffered savage attacks under the Tories. The clerical and typing workers organised into the union were already low paid workers, but under Thatcher, living standards for those Civil Servants have been cut by some 20%.

Members face cutbacks

About 90,000 jobs have been lost and staff like those in the DHSS and Unemployment Benefit Offices who already have to try to cope with the appalling problems found by claimants, are having to work under intolerable pressure. Our members in areas like British Telecoms are having to fight Tory attempts to jeopardise their solidarity, sell their jobs and their security under "privatisation" proposals.

Over the past ten years, time and again, we have been obliged to take industrial action to defend members' interests. At the end of the day industrial action on its own is often insufficient.

Political attacks are constantly taking place to undermine gains won through industrial action. The government uses political activity to strengthen its industrial attacks. It is political decisions—privatisation—that pose a threat to CPSA members' security and future.

The union, therefore, can only effectively defend its members' interests in the long term by linking individual fights to a fight against the policies of the government.

Tories oppose our policies

At annual Conferences of CPSA in recent years, policies have been thrashed out to further the interests of members, such as: the establishment of a minimum wage, the introduction of a 35 hour working week, longer holidays, an expansion of public services, and opposition to privatisation. But all of these policies will be fought against by the Tory government.

Nor are the policies of CPSA confined to protecting and promoting the interests of our members. The CPSA has a proud record of trying to champion the interests of other groups in society who the Tories attack.

Union policies cannot be won by industrial action



Photo: Militant

CPSA national officer John Macready with other civil service workers joined the POEU demonstration against privatisation of British Telecoms. Political attacks on the union need political as well as industrial responses.

alone. Members cannot take strike action on each and every issue. We need to change the government and work for one which will reflect our interests.



By Kevin Roddy
(CPSA NEC member)

Parliament is a forum for contending interest groups in society. Big business understands this. All the big breweries, banks and asset stripping corporations are represented in Parliament by Tory MP's, who are either on the board of directors or holders of massive numbers of shares. How absurd for a major trade union to hold back from championing its members interests in that forum.

We need workers' MP's, who will live on the same wage levels and standards as our members. We cannot rely on the bloated middle class careerists in the Tory, Liberal, and SDP parties to fight for lower paid workers—they champion entirely different interests.

Nor should CPSA affiliate to the Labour Party in order to give blind support to future Labour governments. Our members remember the anti-working class measures of previous right-wing Labour governments, like David Owen (when he was a Labour Cabinet Minister) taking "great pride" when crossing a CPSA picket line! The CPSA membership should organise to demand that Labour politicians do stick to policies in the interests of workers.

The longer that Thatcher's attacks continue, the more CPSA members will appreciate the vital necessity of a socialist Labour government. But unfortunately, while a growing number of active members are drawing this conclusion, sections of the CPSA leadership are trying to lead them down blind alleys.

In particular, General Secretary, Alistair Graham, at the recent TUC, gained wide publicity for a speech which was interpreted as attacking the traditional links between the Labour Party and the trade union movement. This "non-political" trade unionism is a complete contradiction of the policy of the union.

Our National Conference as recently as May decided that we should be campaigning to win the vote on affiliation to the Labour Party and thus strengthen those links. It is therefore possible that they will confuse the issue enough to hold back this historical step forward for a period of time.

If so, then members will learn through bitter experience. Those who foster the illusions that "reasoned" discussions with the Tories, or their shadows the Liberals and SDP, will solve any of our problems are, by this, acting against the interests of

the members.

The "leaders" may now be revelling in the pats on the head that they will earn from the Tory press for that stance. But in the not too distant future, they will face the scorn of members.

But it is still possible that despite the attitude of the union leadership, the ballot can be won. We can unite politically with other trade unions, re-tying the link broken by a Tory government by law in 1927.

Campaign vital

The most important activity over the next few weeks, therefore, will be the campaign that will be waged in the Branches, Groups and Sections of the union by those who have been convinced of the need for affiliation.

The elected Executive Committees in DHSS, the Post Office Group and branches up and down the country are taking the Conference policies to their members in an honest fashion and arguing for a "Yes" vote.

It will be an enormous step forward when CPSA does affiliate to the Labour Party. That gain for the labour movement is there to be won in the next crucial weeks.

●
The CPSA Broad Left will be producing a special journal and organising a series of meetings to build support for the affiliation campaign.
●

Fight low pay!

THE WOMAN'S day of action on October 29 offers the labour movement an excellent opportunity to draw working class women into the movement. A key issue that affects many working women is low pay.

About seven million workers in Britain earn 2/3 or less of the average wage (about £95 per week). Among this mass of workers, women are to the bottom of the scale. In retailing, there are over four times the number of women in manual jobs earning less than £75 per week. This can be seen repeated throughout industry.

However, given women still only earn just over 73% of men's earnings, it can be seen low pay is widespread among both men and women.

Compare this with the rises of the bosses of industry have awarded themselves. "Between those years (1979-'82) inflation rose by 49%, average earnings of male manual workers rose by 43%, and the pay of the top 28 directors rose by 93%" (*Financial Times* 4 October 1983).

Yet the Tories are at present in the process of removing protection for low paid workers, taking clauses out of the Employment Protection act. They are preparing to dismantle the Wages' Councils—one of the few legal protectors to low paid workers.

While the Wages' Councils must be defended, the only effective way to defend the rights of the low paid is through union action. The

TUC is committed to fighting for a national minimum wage of at least two-thirds of average male earnings. A minimum wage is the simplest and most direct remedy for low pay.

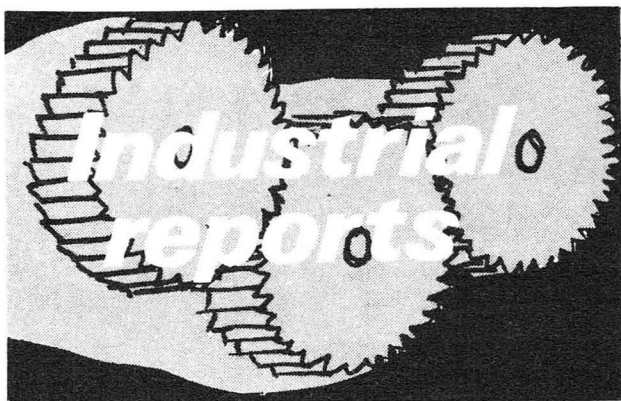
It would for the first time give to each worker the most basic right of all—a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. This demand is certainly within the reach of a socialist Labour government—the cost would only be about 5% of the national wages bill.

It would make a large impact on family poverty. A recent Royal Commission on low pay said that "most of those on low hourly earnings are married women, and married women are not usually poor"! But married women's earnings often prevent family poverty. If women did not work, there would be three or four times as many poor families.

The trade union movement must oversee the national minimum wage implementation. If the bosses say they can't afford it, the next Labour government must nationalise such firms, 'opening the books' to show how the bosses have ruined industry.

The Women's Day of Action should be used as a launching pad for such a campaign, which would get enormous support from low paid workers and draw millions of working class women into the labour movement.

By Gill Porter
(Peckham LPYS)



New strike flares

IN THE wake of Barnsley, Westoe and the Monktonhall battles, another 560 miners moved into action on Monday.

The miners at Cronton colliery in Merseyside, one of the few remaining pits in the area, walked out on a 24-hour strike after receiving news that the pit was to close.

The National Coal Board claims the pit has

geographical problems and is losing money. But the NUM commissioned its own survey and presented a report showing alternative plans and ways in which the pit could continue to produce coal.

The miners drew up picket lines while many others travelled to Bolton to lobby the NUM area executive for support.



The banner of the Westoe colliery NUM lodge in South Shields, who last week secured a victory after strike action against imposed shift systems. The miners will not accept the NCB's new dictates. Photo: Militant

Miners warn MacGregor

THE RECENT strike wave by 14,000 Yorkshire miners was sparked off by a disciplinary measure against a single member of the union in Barnsley.

However, the consequences of the dispute reach far beyond the issues which lay at the centre of the dispute.

It will undoubtedly instill confidence in mineworkers throughout British coalfields, not least those at Monktonhall currently struggling for the future of their pit.

Indeed, the trades union movement generally will have been lifted by the solid action of the Yorkshire miners. Given the historic victories won by the National Union of Mineworkers against the Tory government of the early 1970's, when the miners move into action it raises the morale of the entire labour movement.

Furthermore, the events in the Barnsley coalfield have shaken the National Coal Board to the roots. The recent ballots against strike action on national issues led the NCB to believe they could go onto the offensive. As the *Financial Times* (19 September) reported, "The closure dates for pits are being brought forward and work discipline is being tightened". However, the Coal Board will have had their illusions rudely shattered.

Striker over disciplinary action

At the centre of the strike was the NCB's disciplinary action against George Marsh, a member of Church Lane/Dodworth branch of the NUM who has worked at the Dodworth pit for more than 20 years, for assaulting an overman. George protested that he did so only after severe provocation.

Management sacked him, but he appealed against this, although management re-instated him as a new recruit at nearby Barrow pit. When he went there to sign on for the first time, he broke down—he could not face being uprooted from his workplace after so many years.

It was then that Dodworth members voted to strike in order to get George Marsh's reinstatement at their pit. Feelings were aroused

by the way in which the Coal Board seemed determined to punish a man despite a long and exemplary record of service, whilst apparently ignoring the actions of the overman.

Indeed the colliery manger, in front of Coal Board officials and NUM representatives, expressed the view that he could do with more like this particular overman. To many, this sounded like a licence to continue with the same hostile attitudes towards the membership.

Bold campaign by Dodworth

As the Dodworth strike action begun, the understanding that a similar thing could happen to anyone fuelled support for the strike from other pits.

The way in which NUM members at Dodworth campaigned for support in a bold fashion, confident of getting backing from the rest of the coal field, and determined to overcome all hurdles, ensured their success. Where they managed to organise mass meetings at other pits, the support was overwhelming. Where picket lines were established, all but a handful respected them. After bringing the 16 Barnsley area pits to a standstill, pickets began to go to others in Yorkshire, with equal success.

At Hickleton, (Doncaster area), men coming in for night shift on Thursday evening asked, "Where have you been, we have been waiting for you since Monday".

The build up of support for the strike was all the more remarkable considering the pleas from the Area leadership to accept the new compromise deal. Indeed, on a local scale some branch officials were obstructive. As Eric Richardson, Church Lane/Dodworth Branch President said, "We Found ourselves having to climb over branch officials to get to the members".

At one large pit, for instance, the platform only accepted a speaker from Dodworth after being overwhelmingly overruled by the mass meeting. The platform then offered to escort members past the picket lines. This suggestion only attracted about four votes, and the mass

meeting went on to vote with a massive majority to back Dodworth.

It was the Area Council's insistence that the Barrow option should be accepted and a lack of support from the Doncaster panel of the NUM, which influenced subsequent mass meetings at other pits to vote for a return to work, although the vast majority would not have crossed a picket line. The Dodworth branch, on the recommendation of the branch committee, voted for a return to work on the understanding that George Marsh signed on at Barrow, but was immediately suspended on full pay, pending an inquiry. He will not lose previous service or his pension etc.

This recent strike has revealed once again how explosive British society is today. Some 14,000 mine workers were involved over a comparatively small issue. Moreover, whereas in Scotland, a vicious Edwards/MacGregor type management has been waging a campaign against the workforce, Yorkshire has so far not been fully initiated into the new regime.

But as one Dodworth branch committee member commented, "If MacGregor intends to come in with this attitude, then he is starting wrong."

It is ironic that the so-called 'realists' on the right wing of TUC have been meeting Tebbit and Co for 'talks'. But while their talk fell on deaf Tory ears, in the real world outside, hundreds of miners were last week successfully carrying out 'illegal' secondary picketing!

Indeed the encouraging aspect of this strike was the large numbers who were taking part in the pickets and other activities. That level of involvement reflected the mood of the strike, especially amongst the younger members. This answers the nonsense of the Tory press and others that the new brand of youthful miners won't take action because they are too bothered about their mortgages.

Much anger and hostility was directed against the media as NUM members would clearly see it was attempting to manipulate their area dispute to undermine and ridicule the area and national officials. As Eric Richardson said, "The press

are trying to escalate this against our area officials. This is the finest union in the world and we hold those officials in the highest esteem".

Likewise, any idea from within the NUM that this was an anti-union strike, potentially anarchistic, should be flatly rejected. Workers are sometimes forced to take a stand that is opposed to the union leadership, even if considered left wing, as in the case of the Yorkshire NUM. On this occasion the area leadership misjudged the mood, and incurred the wrath of some members.

On a number of occasions the Yorkshire leadership made reference to other important issues pending, in particular the closure threat hanging over Cadby. Certainly it is important the membership are fully prepared for these battles and are not using up energy on other issues which could be avoidable.

However, by the same token, it is not always possible to pick the ideal battleground. Sometimes, a stand has to be made immediately. It is important to be prepared to lead fights if necessary on the apparently smaller, bread-and-butter issues, in order to keep the membership with you. Furthermore, battles like this can be used to build up the confidence, unity and solidarity of the membership for future battles. These events have revealed that, even at local branch level, some officials can get out of touch. However members will have had their eyes opened, and will fight for changes.

As several strikers stated, "This has brought about more unity in the coalfield than we have had for a long time. If the support is there to be tapped on this issue, it is there to be tapped in support of the fight on pay and conditions, and against pit closures."

With a renewed campaign on pit closures being launched by the NUM nationally, with a national pay claim under negotiation, the strike at Barnsley shows the miners are far from dead and buried as the Tories and coal board had hoped and will not tolerate attacks on their conditions.

Scots strike called

AS THE strike reaches an important stage, the struggle of Monktonhall miners over the future of their pit still stands strong as ever.

On Tuesday the Scottish Area Delegate Conference of the NUM gave backing to the Monktonhall miners, calling for:

★ A £2 levy of every Scottish miner for the strikers.

★ A call for a one day stoppage this Monday, October 17.

★ A lobby by Scottish miners of the National Special Delegate NUM conference next week calling for full support for the Monktonhall struggle.

The Scottish conference was lobbied by nearly 200 miners demanding support. Monktonhall at present is isolated, therefore it is essential that the dispute spreads. We are determined to fight for jobs and resist MacGregor's plans to close pits.

On Friday, Monktonhall miners were going to other pits to get support. Miners in other areas have already donated cash and support from the labour movement has been strong. Money has come in from teachers, UCATT, ASTMS and EETPU members and donations at Labour Clubs. Money has even been collected at non-union factories.

Solidarity has also been shown by workers: 25 lorries, driven by T&GWU members, have refused to cross a picket line of 150 Monktonhall miners at the Cockenzie power station. This stopped coal from going in which was to replace the usual supplies from Monktonhall.

The LPYS have organised public meetings in the area and have been collecting money. Mayfield LPYS had a meeting of 25 to hear David Hamilton from Monktonhall. LPYS, Labour Party and trade union branches should be sending messages of support and donations to the miners of Monktonhall.

The NCB management have been continuing their campaign of provocation. A miner at Francis colliery was sacked by management for refusing to stop a collection for Monktonhall. However, he was re-instated four hours later after the miners went on strike.

Pledges have been given to come out on strike by Francis colliery and the workshop at Monktonhall. The Monktonhall miners are showing the way forward in the fight against closures, and therefore must be supported by every section of the movement.

By Tam Dury
(SCEBTA Monktonhall,
personal capacity)

The battle begins

Militant
Editorial
Statement

ABERDEEN OVERTIME BAN

Graeme Allan, Branch Secretary and John Hay, Assistant Branch Secretary, of Aberdeen POEU spoke to *Militant* about the situation they face:

"We have nine members on strike and two members suspended by management for refusing to carry out the work of striking members.

"They are all in the Telex side of the business and thus not affecting residential subscribers.

"Management have also instructed circuits to be 'busied out'. This means that circuits will be utilised to maintain as full as possible London service at the expense of the people of Aberdeen. Clearly BT's political paymasters in the government and big business have instructed local BT managements to give them preferential treatment. We have protested against this on behalf of the people of Aberdeen.

"Our action is solid. We have called an overtime ban for the whole of the branch area, that is, in the Telecom side of the branch. This has been fully supported."

THE LOCKING out and mass suspensions of POEU members, plus the legal threat of an injunction to prevent the blacking of Mercury marks a new stage in the fight against privatisation.

In the words of the union's General Secretary, Bryan Stanley, it is "the most serious situation the union has ever faced". Skirmishes are over. The real war has now begun.

Anger is rising at management's provocation. There can be no turning back now. Only a major escalation of action on a national scale can repel these attacks, regain the initiative and take the fight forward.

Having failed to intimidate the members in the international exchanges by lock-outs BT are now attempting to exhaust the union's fighting fund by mass suspensions. The levy, recently suspended, must now be re-imposed. The £1 million already collected to pay suspended members is an impressive amount. But if 5,000 members are suspended it would be gone in two weeks!

A national overtime ban will no doubt be the call from branches. Aberdeen branch have already given a lead and are implementing a ban in their area. This should be coupled with a work to rule in certain areas of the business.

The re-introduction of the levy is not just to collect much needed cash but together with the overtime ban is a way to involve all the POEU members in a united response. Verbal assurances of support by itself are not enough to sustain small numbers bearing the brunt for all the members. This is especially so against the present determined Tory government and their well oiled press and media propaganda machine.

Examples of support in action would weld the members together and stiffen the resolve of those who are out. Regional Councils (URCs) and Area Co-ordinating Committees should be calling mass meetings addressed by members on strike, their branch officers and NEC members. This can unite the



members and prepare the way for a decisive response to BT's offensive.

The POEU leaders must also reject any interference with the union's defence of jobs by Tory invented laws. Mercury are attempting to slap an injunction

under the Tebbit Bill on the union to stop the blacking of Mercury.

The union leaders must stand firm against any legal intimidation, instead mobilising the members as the only guarantee of victory. No matter how good

the union's case in terms of 'natural justice' this would be ignored. Private profit and speculative gain at the expense of public service is the motto of the Tories and their allies.

The legal threats and BT's preparedness to smash the union

in the course of carrying out Tory dictates not only re-emphasises the inextricable link between fighting Mercury and privatisation but also raises sharply that all out strike action may be the only recourse to save the jobs and industry.

The London URC is to organise an anti-privatisation conference and invite other public sector unions to participate, so that Public Sector Alliances can be built and activated. All URC's should follow this example.

The union executive should contact the UCW, CPSA and STE leaderships to work out joint action including written instructions not to cross picket lines, not to do work normally done by POEU members and outline what positive supportive industrial action can be taken.

The TUC passed unanimously a resolution moved by Bryan Stanley instructing the General Council of the TUC to introduce "a co-ordinated campaign, including the co-ordination of industrial action" to defend public sector unions under attack.

The Public Sector Committee of the TUC should now meet with the POEU to work out this campaign.

Trades Councils must also be put on the alert to invite POEU speakers in specially arranged sessions to organise maximum solidarity.

Finally this battle is a political campaign against a politically motivated government who have a vendetta against the public sector. There must be a political response as well. The Labour leaders must make it clear that they give unequivocal support to the POEU and will put the Labour Party at the disposal of the union to assist in publicity to win the public's support.

Post Office Engineers did not pick this fight, but now it has begun every method must be explored to defeat the Tory plans. The POEU is fighting for the future of the industry, the service and the jobs and conditions of its members.

Armed with a clear, determined and decisive leadership victory will be certain.

In brief

THE BOSSES at Johnson's Paints got the brush off when 40 workers downed tools at the head office in Droylsden, Manchester, after management sacked the Health and Safety rep because of alleged petty offences. The workers point out that over the past 18 months four union reps have been sacked. The workers, members of GMBATU, say they are fighting to defend the right to belong to a trade union. Support to: A Chapman, 36 Belvedere Avenue, North Reddish, Stockport.

SIX MEMBERS of the Garment Workers Union are on strike over pay and conditions at Queensland Pleaters in Hackney, East London. They want the large part of their work which currently goes unpaid included in their piece prices; average earnings for holiday pay; and union recognition. Management are trying to break the strike by employing school leavers from the dole.

A HUNDRED engineers are on unofficial strike at Landis & Gyr in West London, which makes parts for British Telecom. The strike follows the sacking of two workers for not reaching 100% performance levels, although the strikers say the management are out to sack people with new Edward's style tactics. The strikers have been out for nine days and are campaigning to make the strike official.

JOURNALISTS, members of the NUJ, are now not crossing National Graphical Association picket lines at the *Stockport Messenger*. The NUJ members previously dropped secondary action after an injunction served on them by management, but are now involved in a further dispute. NGA pickets are on the newspaper's offices in Bury, Altrincham, Sale and Stockport, and a mass picket has been called for Tuesday, October 18, between 8.30 and 10 am.

LT JOB THREAT

LONDON TRANSPORT management has released a report on the future of LT's bus Engineering Works at Aldenham and Chiswick.

The report was prompted by the 1983 Transport Act, which compelled London Transport to buy the necessary goods and services for the support of the bus fleet from the private sector, if it can be shown to be cheaper than carrying out the work in LT's own workshops.

It says that many of the goods and services produced at Chiswick and Aldenham are highly uncompetitive and proposes to close down Aldenham works altogether by Christmas, re-locating the viable parts of the business in Chiswick, which will also have much of its current work taken away and contracted out.

The proposals, if carried out, would mean the loss of at least 1,300 jobs, and continuing uncertainty over the fate of the remaining 1,700.

These would be re-organised into small industrial units, each of which would have to compete with outside suppliers for LT's orders.

Under pressure from the trade unions the LT executive has postponed its decision on the proposals until November. A Works Committee has been set up to defend the industry and recommend a clear course of action on the report, seeking the support of the GLC and Labour MPs.

The London Transport Trades Union Council has organised a mass meeting of shop stewards and staff reps from the 21 unions in London Transport on Monday 17 October. Also, the executive of the London Labour Party unanimously passed a resolution moved by *Militant* supporter and TU delegate, George Williamson. It called on the GLC Labour group to use its authority to ensure an early withdrawal of the job threats.

This must be the beginning of a campaign to prepare the membership of the unions for action to defeat privatisation. This in turn must link up with a campaign to restore full powers to the GLC and break the financial straitjacket imposed on LT by the Tories.

By Rob Walsh
(Brent South Labour Party)

NALGO MUST WIN

RESIDENTIAL social workers have been involved in industrial action against local authorities since September 12.

This action followed an overwhelming vote in a secret postal ballot and is in support of a long-standing claim for a reduced working week and unsocial hours payment, to bring their conditions into line with those of other local authority white collar staff.

The Tory dominated national employers are refusing to discuss the claim. If no offer is made then NALGO are prepared for national escalation.

However, due to action by some local authorities escalation has already begun. Strike action has already been taken in some homes, Strathclyde, Harringey, Salford, Hampshire and Essex.

In Labour controlled Southwark the local authority has offered negotiations provided the action ceases.

Militant supporters on the Council are arguing that the local authority must support NALGO's claim, but the authority must not break the national dispute. It is vital that the labour movement unites to support NALGO's claim.

Labour controlled authorities should unite to offer a national meeting with NALGO to pursue their claim and demonstrate their support for the claim.

It is necessary for the industrial action to be stepped up.

This could only be done by involving other sections of NALGO, particularly the finance staff. This is the only effective way of pressuring the national employers into negotiations. If action remains restricted to residential social workers then there is little chance of forcing the Tories to negotiate—this action affects mainly Labour controlled authorities. It is vital to hit the Tories where it hurts.

The Residential Social Workers have a just claim, difficult to win unless other sections

of the labour movement are involved. The Tory media makes great play of the suffering of children and others, cynically trying to whip up opposition to the dispute. It is therefore vital that every section of NALGO and local authority workers are used to press for the claim. It is necessary to ensure care for the clients in these homes but the service will be improved by ensuring Residential Social Workers win their justified claim.

By Theresa Wrack

MONDAY STRIKE CALL

NEXT MONDAY, October 17, all Residential Social Workers are being called out on a 24 hour strike. This call follows a national delegate conference of the residential workers, members of NALGO, on Tuesday.

The day strike will enable residential social workers from all over the country to lobby a meeting between the national employers and staff on Monday at 41 Belgrave Square, in London at 10am.

Also at the conference, a resolution from Strathclyde calling for moves to identify areas for action that will most effectively hit the Tories was passed. A resolution for a ballot on all out action was defeated.

By Ian Riddell
(Camden NALGO delegate)

USDAW Broad Left National Committee meeting, Sunday 23 October, 2.30pm. The Feathers Hotel, 119-125 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 3. Open to all USDAW members. Pooled fare will operate.



POEU members in action against the Tories on 11 October.

Photo: Militant

Dying man

(Continued from front page)

to be incorporated into the NHS, are now returning to their origins. The Hoyle cottage hospital, for example, featured in the *Sunday Times* (October 9) was taken over in 1948 and is now returning to be a private hospital.

The Labour Party must join hands with all the unions in the health service and fight for the retention of the NHS. It must support all the struggles of these workers and the declarations of any 'rebel' health authorities against any cuts or job losses.

Moreover, the Labour leaders must bring to the fore the policy recently agreed at party conference, to bring all health care into the public sector.

If this were made a key element in a socialist campaign, the Labour Party would have no trouble reversing all the electoral losses of recent years and would be in a commanding position to push the Tories out. Once back in government, Labour could set about the vital rescue and improvement of the quality of the health service.

POEU fights off management attacks Stand firm for victory

The Post Office Engineering Union action against privatisation has begun to bite.

Mercury, the private Telecoms firm, have slapped an injunction on the union. Senior British Telecom management have introduced a mass lock out amongst the key London branches, to try to defeat the union's direct action.

An extremely effective work to rule in the International Telephone Branches severely disrupted International communication. By Friday of last week 60 out of 130 countries had been cut off. British Telecom responded with a mass lock out of 1,600 POEU members in the International Services Branch and Stag Lane International.

Management occupation

In the early hours of Saturday morning, senior BT management entered three international exchanges with a police escort, at Wood Street, in the City, Mondial House in Blackfriars, and Stag Lane at Edgware. Workers were ordered to leave and the buildings secured with the help of a private security firm.

POEU members who work in International Telephones were in-

By a POEU member

structed through letters sent to their homes to report to non-operational buildings on Monday morning, where they would be expected to sign commitments to work normally.

At the same time, lower grade managers were ordered into the buildings and told to do engineers work, under the threat of dismissal.

On Monday morning the 1,600 POEU members in International branches decided to reject the "loyalty" oath and to strike from then on. In marvelous display of solidarity the local STE Branch, representing lower grade managers, went on a half day stoppage, disgusted by the intimidation of their members by senior management.

Management's reaction to the solid response from International was to immediately escalate the action in order to try to break the strike fund of the POEU. Until now, members suspended or on strike have been paid by a levy of the membership, which is in excess of £1 million. BT management

have suspended thousands of engineers in other areas of London, not directly involved in the action, in order to undermine the union's assets.'

Senior management have clearly shown their willingness to counter selective action through ruthless intimidation and lock outs. Unsure of support, even amongst their own men, they have openly connived with our enemies outside the industry to break the union and to oversee the destruction of the industry, in which the work force have invested their lives and skills.

The BT Board is full of government appointees, who have played no part in building up the public industry. Their loyalty is clearly to their political masters, and not to the industry, the service or the workers.

No to the pirates

The union's policy is clear. No to Mercury and no to privatisation. We are committed to fight to defend our jobs. BT's reaction has challenged selective action tactics, but there are many more options open to the union.

Many areas are now calling for a national overtime ban. If necessary, POEU members will need to take

all out action to defend our jobs against privatisation.

Our opponents may well have overstretched themselves. The response of the STE International has isolated a handful of senior management and their stooges over privatisation within BT. The military style takeover of buildings and the ruthless manner in which workers were evicted will not only have raised the anger of our membership but have also involved members of other unions not taking part as yet in the action (UCW, CPSA P&T etc).

In addition, Mercury's injunction has provided the POEU with a second platform alongside the privatisation issue to present to the rest of the labour and trade union movement.

The privatisation struggle is common to the public sector. Tebbit's legislation is an issue for the whole movement!

We must stand firm on Mercury, we must stand firm on privatisation. We must resist the intimidation of the Tory courts, and be prepared to take the struggle forward, in whatever form necessary to ensure the defeat of the Tory government proposals and the protection of our members jobs.

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