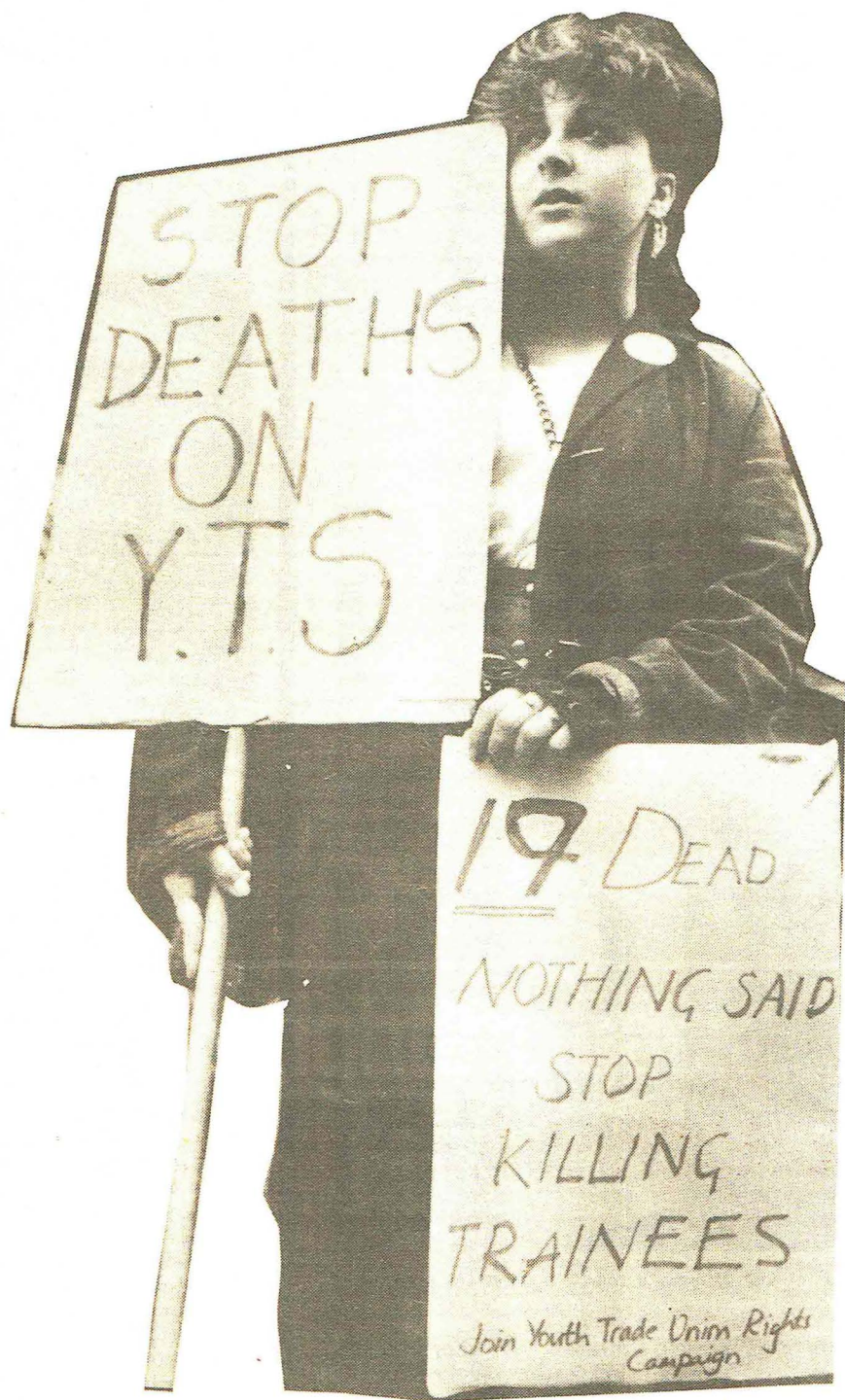


# Parents' outrage at YTS deaths



Photos: Denis Doran/Militant

MPs Dave Nellist (left) and Terry Fields (back row) join bereaved parents Mrs and Mr Lewis and Mr Cain on the delegation on Wednesday.

**LAST WEEK, Jeff Frood, a YTS trainee from Linwood in Scotland, had his finger partially severed while working unsupervised on a machine with no safety guard.**

When he went to hospital the nurse told him he was the 24th casualty from a YTS scheme they had dealt with that week.

**By Bob Wade**

In the past three years on the Youth Opportunities Programme and the new Youth Training Schemes, there have been over 3,000 injuries and 19 fatal accidents.

The Tories claim they are implementing YTS out of some concern for the young unemployed. Yet clearly these cheap labour schemes have given the bosses a green light, not only to drive down youth wages, but to wipe out decent and safe conditions at work in a bid to maximise the bosses' profits.

But this abuse has not gone unanswered. On Wednesday an angry delegation of bereaved parents, Labour MPs and members of the Youth Trade Union Rights Campaign met the Tory minister in charge of YTS, Peter Morrison, to demand adequate health and safety levels, and restraints on the blatant abuse of YTS.

One of the parents, Richard Cain, whose 17 year old son Derek was killed on

a YOP scheme in Sheffield, told *Militant*, "It's about time somethings was done. The new YTS scheme has only been in operation for two months and there have been two deaths—percentage wise that's a higher death rate than YOP."

Not only do trainees have inadequate safety protection, but the Tories have also effectively stripped youth trainees of their rights. Mr Cain said, "Trainees do not get National Insurance. With no NI the companies trainees work for cannot technically be classed as employers. This causes a hell of a lot of problems for parents if their children are injured, through having to pay court costs etc if they claim for compensation.

It means trainees are not fully protected by such basic rights as the Sex Discrimination Act, the Race Relations Act, and they cannot take employers to tribunals."

Added to all this is the massive exploitation YTS trainees face. Mr Cain gave a graphic example: "I talked to one YOPster recently who had to work 60 hours a week, yet was paid no overtime. This is not training—clearly his employer couldn't do without him working late, and was using him purely as cheap labour."

## POEU Step up action

THE POST Office Engineering Union battle-line against privatisation has been extended to centres outside London.

Engineers in Birmingham, Liverpool, Swansea, Manchester, Warrington and Birkenhead have been brought out in support of the main action in London.

After victories against widespread 'bussing' and the Mercury injunction (applied for by the scab private telecommunica-

tions system Project Mercury) the campaign is going well.

Top Tories have been falling over themselves to reassure their City friends that the bargain sale of this major public asset is going ahead despite the POEU action.

**By a Militant reporter**

Mercury's appeal against rejection of their injunction is going on right now. They've got the most expensive QC in the country pleading for them.

2,400 POEU members are on strike, suspended or locked out; the threat of sackings hangs over about twenty.

British Telecom management are holding fire until after the POEU conference and the result of the appeal.

But it's clear from the statements of Sir Kenneth Baker, Minister for Information Technology, and Mr John Moore, Financial Secretary to the Treasury that the Tories will not allow them to back down.

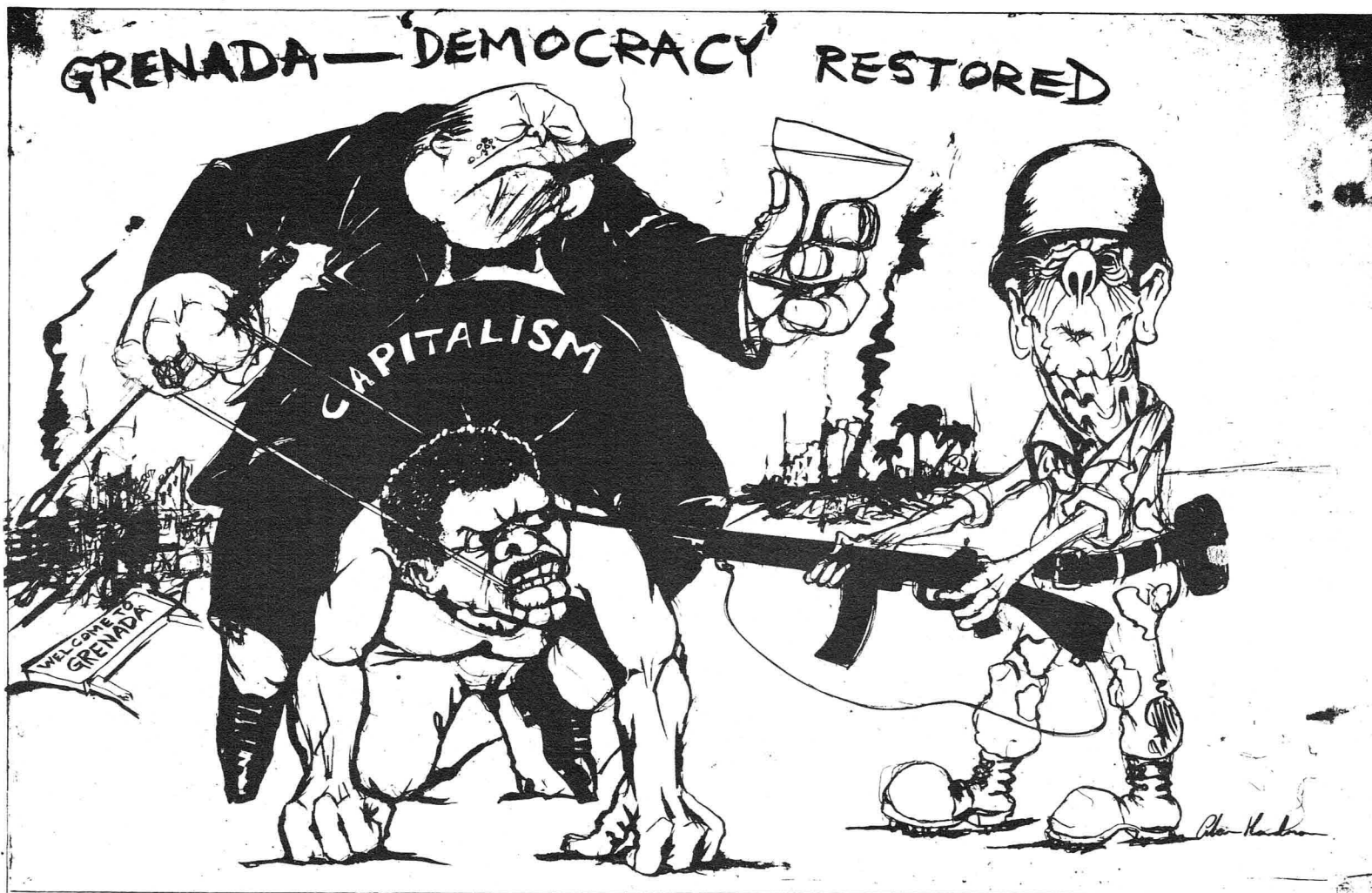
Mr Moore, in particular, issued a warning

that should be taken to heart by the entire labour movement. "No state monopoly is sacrosanct", he told a stockbrokers' conference in the City last Tuesday.

In other words, the Tories plan a mass destruction of jobs and services. British Telecom is just first in line.

That is why the POEU conference must steel itself for a long and bitter struggle.

That is why every worker and labour movement organisation in the country must support the POEU.



# Grenada - Timebomb for US imperialism

RONALD Reagan's assertion that he ordered the invasion of tiny Grenada in order to "forestall chaos" looks like a black joke after his admission that US artillery and aircraft bombed a hospital in the capital, St George's.

Nothing that was done by the short-lived military regime of General Hudson Austin can compare to the mayhem and destruction wrought by the American invasion forces.

When Austin took over the island in a coup, it was reported that nine people were killed, including the prime minister Maurice Bishop and some of his ministers. But since the US invasion, Reagan's own "coup" has already cost twice that number in American, at least three times the number in Grenadian and up to seven times the number in Cuban lives.

Every one of the lies and excuses put forward by Reagan has been shown up to be paper thin. His estimate of well over a thousand Cubans on the island has now been whittled down to the same figure put forward by the Cubans themselves before the invasion. Plessey, the British company responsible for the main contract to build the new airport, have strenuously denied that their building specifications were remotely like those for a military airstrip.

For capitalism, policy in the Caribbean or elsewhere is never determined by lofty ideals but by its profits, power and prestige, and its markets and other strategic interests in the area. Nowhere on Reagan's list of priorities is there any room for "democracy", "legality" or any other of the fine phrases he so hypocritically uses. He was not so much concerned about the lives of people on the island as the profits of Wall Street.

## imperialism

Local capitalist interests also rushed to welcome the invasion, for similar reasons. The right-wing Jamaican Minister of Commerce and Trade expressed his gratitude to the US for saving the interests of investors in the area and "putting to bed" the Grenada problem. At a meeting of Hong Kong businessmen, he asserted, "I support the American intervention 100 per cent". For these hard-nosed money-makers, the interests of the

porters on the one side and Bernard Coard (Deputy Prime Minister), General Hudson Austin and their supporters on the other.

But the coup that overthrew Bishop was based entirely upon a movement from the top, not in any way upon a movement of workers from below. While Marxists would not have supported the coup of General Austin, however, even his regime would have to be supported against the

### Militant Editorial

majority of Grenadians have no marketable value, but their investments do.

The government of the New Jewel Movement, under Maurice Bishop, had mass support because it introduced concrete reforms to the benefit of the majority of the population. Were Bishop still alive he would easily win any election held at the present time.

However, Bishop's government was not one based upon an active and healthy regime of workers' democracy, with committees of workers constantly checking, discussing and controlling the functions of the economy and the state. The key sectors of the economy remained in private hands, despite the reforms of the New Jewel Movement.

In the months before the coup, Bishop appeared to be moving to the right, towards an accommodation with US imperialism, creating disagreement within the ruling circles of the government between Bishop and his sup-

interests of local capitalists and a government imposed by American bayonets.

The faction of Austin and Coard appeared ready to move further to the left than Bishop, hence Reagan's determination to use the coup and the ensuing confusion as the pretext for going in. Austin's government would indeed have been forced to make greater social changes and introduce further reforms, or it would itself have been overthrown in the longer term, even if it did initially prepare to make concessions to businessmen and international investors.

But American imperialism is so concerned for its interests in the Caribbean and Central America that it cannot allow the existence of any revolutionary regime with mass support. Reagan planned to overthrow Bishop, despite the concessions he was prepared to make, long before the coup that brought Austin to power.

What applies in Grenada



A section of last Monday's march against US invasion of Grenada

applies with even greater force in Nicaragua—as long as the Sandinista regime exists, the White House will not allow of any concessions or compromise and instead will push ahead with its plans for intervention.

The regime established by the USA in Grenada will inevitably be one based upon business interests. It has been reported (*Caribbean Times*, November 4-11) that the invasion force is systematically rounding up all the former leaders of the New Jewel Party obviously in an attempt to destroy the movement entirely.

The government imposed on the island from outside, therefore, will not have any roots or support in the majority of the working population. In the long run, that

means a renewed opposition will develop and the workers of Grenada will take up once again the fight for their own interests against those of the hoteliers, businessmen and international capitalism.

And in the meantime, imperialism will find that the shock waves created by the invasion will create problems and pose threats to their interests greater than those presented by General Austin. The invasion has "internationalised" the Grenada issue in the minds of many Caribbean workers and will reinforce support for a programme advanced by socialists in the region for a Federation of Democratic Socialist States, as an answer to the impasse of capitalism and all its social ills.

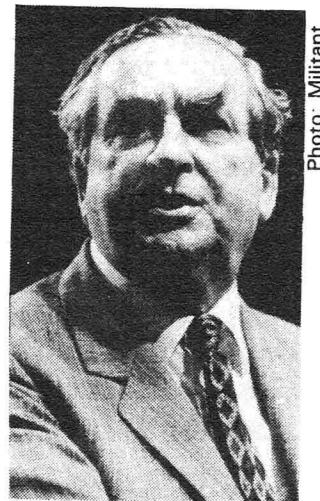
**Demonstrate against US invasion of Grenada. Assemble 12.30. Saturday Nov 5, Speakers Corner, Hyde Park. Labour movement, Grenadian speakers**

## Shadow cabinet - PLP ignores ranks

LABOUR ACTIVISTS will be justifiably angered by the results of the Shadow Cabinet elections.

The recent party conference re-affirmed a commitment to a radical programme. Labour's right wing didn't seriously attempt to change it.

Yet the mood was in no way reflected in the Shadow Cabinet elections. Top of the poll was Denis Healey, who didn't even have the credibility to stand in the leadership contest.



Denis Healey

Peter Shore, who received an unprecedented zero votes from CLPs in the leadership contest, was third. In the main, those on the left such as Joan Maynard, who was re-elected to the NEC and clearly reflects the aspirations of Labour Party members, came at the bottom of the poll.

The PLP election does not reflect the mood of the party nationally and it is not prepared to put at its leadership those who support party policy.

As disturbing to most party members will be the actual appointments within the Shadow Cabinet. Neil Kinnock at conference gave a clear commitment that the party programme could remain unchanged. However, the most senior posts have been allotted to opponents of party policy.

Denis Healey, despite his total opposition to unilateral nuclear disarmament, has been given Foreign Secretary. Peter Shore, despite his lack of commitment to Clause 4, part IV, is responsible for Trade and Industry. John Smith, a leading figure in Labour Solidarity and supporter of the witch-hunts, has been given responsibility for employment.

It is in effect a right-wing Cabinet mostly opposed to party policy.

The case for bringing the Shadow Cabinet elections into line with the method of electing the leader and deputy leader has been made by these results. They stand as a clear pointer of the need to maintain the pressure in support of radical socialist policies.

Photo: Militant

# Liverpool council

## 'We'll fight tory axe'

LIVERPOOL IS now in the front line of local councils threatened by the Tories' plans to restrict expenditure and abolish metropolitan councils.

The magnificent stand by the Labour controlled Liverpool City Council has provoked further angry denunciations from Tory MPs and ministers.

According to the *Financial Times* (31 October), Patrick Jenkin, the Tory Environment secretary, will deliver a final warning to the council to "toe the line on spending" or face suspension and the imposition of commissioners.

But the council are determined to stand by their election pledges and mobilise support to meet the government challenge head on.

Below we reprint the main points of a new pamphlet produced by the City Council's Labour group, *Rates, services and jobs: the campaign in Liverpool*:

Faced with continuing cuts, attacks on public services and a local economy that was bleeding to death, the people of Liverpool turned to the Labour Party in the May local elections. Liverpool had experienced a decade of almost uninterrupted Liberal/Tory coalition whose policies were exposed as bankrupt.

The Labour Party fought the elections on a radical socialist manifesto:

- No to privatisation of public services.
- No redundancies in the council work force.
- Creation of new jobs to improve public services.
- A council house building programme.
- Reducing council house rates by £2 a week.
- Re-organising the City secondary education system by creating comprehensive neighbourhood community schools.
- No rate increases to compensate for government cuts in public services.

However, the 1983/84 budget inherited by Labour from the Liberals and Tories gave rise to immediate problems. To restore the cuts they had planned for the next two years, to implement the basic proposals in Labour's manifesto, and with penalties these would



Workers in Liverpool protest against the former Liberal/Tory city council over the cutbacks in 1978. There is much support amongst Liverpool workers for Labour's battle to restore services hit by the cuts. Photo: Militant

incur, the Labour group would have to find an *additional* sum of £72 million from the city ratepayers.

This would constitute an impossible burden for the workers of Liverpool. The only choice facing Labour therefore was either to retreat and become the handmaidens of the Tory government, or to continue to fight on the socialist platform endorsed by the local electorate.

Under the Liberal/Tory rule, the Labour Party supported the establishment of the local authority unions' joint shop stewards committee, which now represents 95% of the council workforce.

Meetings were held between the Labour Party, the Labour group and the JSSC to discuss council budgets and agree to a common strategy. On gaining control of the city council, Labour introduced a number of changes designed to significantly increase involvement of the council workforce in the running of

the authority.

These important links between the unions and the Labour council were further developed by a mass meeting in September. This was attended by 850 stewards and the policies and financial position of the city council were explained by members of the Labour group.

### Liverpool is now in the front-line of Tory attacks

The Labour group are putting forward a six point plan as a basis of the fightback campaign—

- ★ There must be a common strategy and campaign involving all the Labour councils. No Labour group can act in isolation from the rest of the movement.
- ★ The full involvement of local authority trade unions is essential.
- ★ The campaign must be taken into and involve the

wider trade union movement.

★ Local ward Labour Parties must campaign in the community and involve tenants associations and community groups.

★ Members of Labour groups must be steered to face and resist the pressure from the government and employers.

★ The electorate must be kept informed of the campaign and the destructive nature of the government's plans.

The springboard for this campaign will be the November 19 demonstration in Liverpool.

It has the support of national trade unions, other Labour authorities and the NEC of the Labour Party. It will be addressed by the chairman of the Labour Party, Eric Heffer and Neil Kinnock the leader of the Labour Party.

The Labour group finish the pamphlet saying, "We are not in the business of carrying out the monetarist policies of this government.

We will not cut public services to compensate for money withheld by this government. We will not reduce the city council's workforce and thereby further intensifying the local recession.

"We were elected to protect and expand public services and create jobs in the face of a massive haemorrhage of private capital from Liverpool and Merseyside. We intend to carry out these manifesto promises."

### MILITANT SELLERS' RALLY

There are a few places left at the *Militant Sellers' Rally* this weekend. If any sellers would still like to take up these places please contact us immediately at: *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

# Witch-hunt threatens party unity

## Blackburn

EARLIER THIS year *Militant* supporters in Blackburn were subject to much local and national media coverage after a localised witch-hunt based around the so-called 'Gregory report'.

Ten months later and those 15 Labour Party members named in the report—compiled by ex-public schoolboy Michael Gregory who talks of 'Militant conspiracies' in Blackburn CLP—have not been given a chance to answer the allegations made.

It would have been thought that after the new mood witnessed at Labour Party national conference, and the increasing disarray of the Tories, the local CLP would have gone onto the offensive in the defence of workers' living standards.

Unfortunately this does not seem to be the case for some sections of Blackburn

CLP—in particular Michael Gregory's party in Ewood ward. This party has just passed a resolution, moved by Mr Gregory's wife, which called for "nothing short of extreme disciplinary action against those members named in the report."

Rumours in the party and reports in the local *Lancashire Evening Telegraph* talk of possible expulsions of up to nine Labour Party members by the end of the year.

These demands have been accompanied by outrageous behaviour. At the Ewood ward meeting, although I was named in the resolution, I was not allowed to be present at the meeting to answer any of the allegations, as I had requested.

Disgracefully, on Saturday afternoon the secretary of the LPYS was threatened by the Ewood party member who had seconded the resolution. He also told her that he had written a letter to the police telling them to keep an eye on local *Militant* supporters. The LPYS Secretary, Kay Wright, has

put a formal complaint about his actions to the party chairman.

These witch-hunting actions by the right-wing and their friends are an attack on hard working members of the Labour Party, who are being persecuted purely for their support for the ideas of Marxism. Besides the work put in during the general election, *Militant* supporters have also been prominently involved with the 'Well Women Clinic' campaign which has just won it's battle for a women's clinic for the town. Also, a successful public meeting was held around the Newham 8 Defence campaign, at which 75 people, mainly Asian youth, attended.

Yet despite of all this campaign work, *Militant* supporters are being singled out for bureaucratic attacks because our opponents have lost the political debates as support for the ideas of *Militant* has grown locally.

We in Blackburn will fight this witch-hunt and fight to get the local Labour Party to concentrate all its strength at

the point of attack against the Tories.

By Peter Harris  
(Blackburn CLP)

## EETPU

AN ATTEMPT is being made in the electricians union, the EETPU, to carry out a witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters and bar them from union office.

The Chester branch has put a resolution to the union's national conference next week which calls on the executive to "rid the trade union movement and the Labour party of the Militant Tendency".

The same branch, under the rules changes section, also demands *Militant* supporters are banned from "seeking election to any position which the rank and file decides". Already in the EETPU since 1964, members of the Communist Party are banned from holding office.

However, other resolu-

tions to the conference show that these witch-hunting moves are completely out touch with the rank and file of the EETPU.

Several resolutions call for the ending of bans. Others express opposition to the expulsions in the Labour Party, and the LPYS are congratulated for their work in recruiting youth to the Labour party, while the cut in the LPYS budget—carried out last year—is also condemned.

(EETPU CONFERENCE—SEE INDUSTRIAL PAGES)

## Bristol

BRISTOL EAST Labour Party, the constituency of Tony Benn, has voted down a resolution opposing the ban on sales of *Militant* at Labour Party meetings.

The party's general committee voted against the resolution moved by *Militant* supporters, by 18 votes to 14. Significantly, the 'left wing' secretary and a prominent local supporter of the Labour Co-ordinating Committee both voted against the resolution.

The campaign against the bureaucratic, witch-hunting tactics against *Militant* prompted by the leadership must be stepped up, and it must be stressed time and again to those who claim to be on the left that these moves will not be restricted to *Militant* but used against the rest of the left at a later stage.

## USDAW

THE RIGHT wing are trying to push the witch-hunt into the unions.

The general secretary of the shop workers' union, USDAW, following the decision of the National Executive of the Labour Party, has told divisional union officers that the sale of *Militant* is banned from USDAW meetings and that USDAW premises should not be let out to *Militant* functions.

However, the USDAW leadership's decision was taken without any consultation with the membership and flouts union policy. The 1981 annual delegate meeting of USDAW, while noting the enquiry into *Militant*, came out clearly against bans and proscriptions within the labour movement.

# £55,000 needed by New Year

WITH CHRISTMAS now on the horizon many workers will be asking how they are going to afford to buy presents, food and drink. However, there are some, you will be glad to know, who are free from such worries.

They could be buying the special Tickford Lagonda car for a mere £85,000. This will get them an interior of leather, burr walnut, deep pile carpet and electronic fittings housing two colour televisions, a video, stereo system and drinks cabinet. For people who can own a car better than most others' houses obviously the crisis in the economy has not yet reached their pockets let alone their heads.

But perhaps they won't be spending Christmas in Britain. One day trip to Paris ends up staying in the £6,800 a-night royal suite at the Nova Park hotel off the Champs Elysees. This sort of obscenity should be enough to convince workers of the need to fight for the end of the system which produces it.

In that fight we will need every penny you can afford. To reach our target of £100,000 by the end of the year, we will need to receive £5,700 every week, nearly trebling what we receive each week at present. If you want to put an end to this system with all its inequalities then support the paper that leads the fight for socialism. Copy the example of the many readers who send us regular donations or organise fund raising activities for *Militant*.

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Total 7 January
Eastern	2235		5150
East Midlands	1978		5050
Humberside	1031		2700
London East	2654		6350
London West	1454		3650
London South	2387		5650
Manchester & Lancs	2552		6350
Merseyside	2383		6500
Northern	2423		6400
Scotland East	1813		4200
Scotland West	2038		4900
Southern	3474		7600
South West	1094		3550
Wales East	1052		3450
Wales West	2054		4200
West Midlands	2324		5700
Yorkshire	2777		6600
Others	7336		12000
<b>Total received</b>	<b>43059</b>		<b>100000</b>

## New Half-Year Chart

Among the individual donations this week are Dave Staples (Gloucester) £20, I Davies (Coventry TGWU) £10, L Robson (Wallsend) £8, and Greg Moran (Bradford) £6. Those who sent in £5 include R Robson an unemployed reader from South Tyne, Frank Coleman (TGWU, Dalston), Pete Howard (Erith CLP) and P Lunn (EETPU). Thanks also to T Walker (Nottingham TGWU) £4, A Gorgiou (Hastings) £3.40, Harry Browning (Llanelli) £3, Chris Poole (unemployed, Milton Keynes) £2 and R & M James (Marden CLP) £1.

We have also received excellent collections from *Militant Readers' Meetings* held around the country. From Preston, £61.55; Bradford £37.12; Rochdale, £57;

Sunderland, £17. Sprowston branch LP in Norwich sent in £10 and £50 came from a disco in Bonnyrigg, £38 from a social in Stevenage and £40 from a disco in Bromsgrove. On top of all this we have had money from sponsored marathons, walks, jumble sales and market stalls. There are countless ways of raising funds so make sure your area is organising something. Start preparing now for a big party at

Christmas and New Year. It is vital that we reach our target so remember, your help can speed up the day when we can consign the idle rich to a proper day's work like the rest of us. Then the waste and excess of this form of society will no longer exist but will be replaced by the rational allocation of resources according to need.

By Nick Wrack

**THIS WEEK  
£2,161**

## BUILDING FUND NOW OPEN

IF EVERYONE who has already promised a contribution follows the example of David Read and Lesley Smirke from Liverpool, we will soon be laughing all the way to the new premises.

They pledged £100 each and sent us £1,000 each! What better way of saying they want a Marxist Daily newspaper and they want it SOON!

A 30,000 sq. ft. building is the MINIMUM first step for providing the resources to produce a daily. The *Militant* supporters who have set up the Marxist Daily Club to collect funds for this, aim to have enough in the bank by the New Year to be able to proceed with acquiring a building. So...send in your £100s and your £50s as fast as you can.

Go to others in the labour movement and to your own trade union, shop stewards' commit-

tee, Labour Party or LPYS branch and ask them to take out a stake in the future of the movement by 'investing' £100 or £50 in our Building Fund.

Pledges for the Fund are still pouring in and should reach a total of £100,000 in the next week

or so. Anyone who hasn't got the money now, can tell us how much they want to send, save up and then send it in by January 1984. Special appeals, pledge forms, paying-in forms etc are all available to help in this campaign. Contact us with any queries or offers of help.

### I/WE PLEDGE/ENCLOSE 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.....

Cheques and P.O.s payable to 'Marxist Daily Building Fund'.  
Send to: BUILDING FUND, c/o *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

## Getting Militant Better Known

FOR THE third week in succession sellers in Bradford have excelled themselves. On Friday 90 papers were sold in the streets and on Saturday morning another 50; it is clear from these figures that socialist ideas are not on the run. The demand for socialism is there if only the Labour leaders are prepared to meet it.

A good way of getting *Militant* better known is getting the local library to subscribe or leaving old copies in places where they will be seen by a lot of people i.e. doctors' and dentists' waiting rooms or bus and train seats. So remember don't throw old copies away, use them to build our support.

The recent decisions of the miners, Fords and the continuing struggles of POEU and NALGO social workers show the mood to fight in the labour movement, so help get the ideas of *Militant* across to as many people as

# 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

BRADFORD: Marxist discussion group fortnightly. Details from: Bradford 669840.

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

## CLASSIFIED

"CONGRATULATIONS to Terri and William Martin on Canterbury on the birth of Daniel—baby militant—from Richard Suffee—The Freudian Society—"

*MILITANT* supporters in Glasgow send get well greetings to Billy Lygate—a life-long fighter for socialism.

DEBATE: "Northern Ireland—Which way forward?". Debate between Richard Venton (on behalf of *Militant* and Rob Clay (MP, Sunderland North). Sunday, 13 November, 7.00 pm—at the Sheltered Deck, Kings Road, Southwick, Sunderland. For further details contact: Ray Physick, Sunderland 653994.

BIRMINGHAM AUEW Broad Left meeting at 12.00 prompt. Saturday 5 November at White Lion, Queensway, Horsefair. All members welcome.

THIS space could be yours. Advertise in *Militant*! Write to *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828 NOW!

# MILITANT STUDENT RALLY

Open to all students  
at university, polytechnic or FE College

On Saturday 19 and Sunday 20 November at  
Liverpool University Student Union

Sat 2pm: Fighting the Cuts

Speakers:

Pauline Dunlop, Kath McDonnell

7pm: Film: *The Battle of Chile: The Coup d'etat*

Sun 10 am: Seminars on:

"A socialist programme for FE Students"

"Building a mass NOLS"

"NOLS and the workers' struggle in Eastern Europe"

2pm: Debate on:

"Which way forward for Labour?"

Speakers:

P. Taaffe and Geoff Hodgson (LCC)

Tickets:

(cost £4 each or £2 for FE students) and leaflets now available from: "*Militant* student rally", 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Cheques payable to "*Militant* Student Publications."



Everyone needs their *Militant*

Photo: Gordon Nardell

possible. All major workplaces should be visited with copies of *Militant*, to see if they are prepared to take a bulk order.

For further details contact: *Militant* Circulation, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN or phone 01-986 3828.

# Apprentices hammered by Tories

**GONE ARE the days when an apprenticeship, despite its low pay, at least meant a guaranteed future in industry.**

The number of apprenticeships has been hideously cut back in the past fifteen years in Britain. From 242,600 in 1967, it has fallen to 123,700 in 1982.

Engineering apprenticeships have been cut back in even greater proportions, from 20,000 in 1967 to 10,300 in 1982—and 2,000 of those were sponsored by the MSC.

One of the biggest threats to apprentices today however is without doubt the Youth Training Scheme.

The Tories claim YTS is a new form of scheme. Unlike YOPS, they claim it will offer a bright new future for school leavers, giving one full year of comprehensive training, including 13 weeks at college.

Unfortunately nothing could be further from the truth.

YTS, an extension of its predecessor, the Youth Opportunities Programme, has a double role to play for the Tories. Firstly, it is to police the youth through conscription into industry and thus, hope the Tories, prevent a further outbreak of the desperate rioting that rocked the cities in 1981.

Secondly, it will not only provide a source of cheap labour for the bosses but also be used to drive down existing wages and conditions of apprentices and young workers generally.

A leaked Tory document (published by *Time Out*) stated;

**"Young people on YTS would receive a modest allowance well below the normal wage. It would be possible to prescribe a lower training wage for those being trained by the employer (including apprentices). This would be a means of achieving a particularly desirable objective—the lowering of training wages—which**



British Rail apprentices demonstrate against redundancies at Horwich BR engineering plant. The Tories are threatening apprenticeships with YTS.

is...unlikely to be achieved voluntarily."

One casualty has been inflicted already—apprentices in electrical contracting firms have had their wages cut from £41 to £27.88.

We can also see the real danger YTS poses to young engineering workers.

Already YTS is being used as a substitute for real apprentices at Marconi in Chelmsford. There, 36 apprentices used to be taken on each year—that has been cut to nil, in favour of 51 new YTS trainees.

YTS is clearly being looked at as an alternative to a first year apprenticeship.

After this, according to David Young (Chairman of the MSC), there's the YWS (Young Workers' Scheme) which is being groomed as a quasi-second year apprenticeship for 17-18 year olds.

This scheme will subsidise employers for each YWS trainee they take on for £15—as long as the trainee's wages are kept below £40 a week.

The YTS will undoubtedly blow up in the Tories' faces, especially when trainees are working alongside apprentices knowing that they are carrying out similar work for less money and are unlikely to be taken

on after a year's training.

With these events likely to take place, it's crucial that both YTS and apprentices within industry unite and struggle for the same aim.

Alongside this must run the campaign to get the maximum support possible from young apprentices for the Young Workers' Assembly in December.

The fight back must start from here, to defend jobs and to give young workers a future to look forward to.

By Colin Adams  
(AUEW Dagenham)

## Fight for YTS rights

**LABOUR COUNCILS up and down the country have been victims of repeated financial attacks by the Tories.**

In this situation, many Labour councils have been tempted to maintain their staffing levels by employing school leavers on YTS schemes. This is however merely falling into the trap laid by the Tories, using youth as cheap labour.

This question assumes a particular importance now, as the Tories are about to launch a further attack on local government through rate-capping and the abolition of the GLC and the metropolitan counties.

The London Regional Committee of the LPYS has recently taken up the question of Labour councils and YTS. At the September

meeting of the London Labour Party executive, the LPYS won support (by 15 votes to 11) for a resolution calling on Labour councils not to use youth as cheap labour on YTS, but instead to introduce more apprenticeships and proper jobs for youth, with training and the full rate of pay.

At the next meeting of the LPYS Regional Committee a fuller resolution was passed clarifying our position, and setting out the conditions under which Labour councils should take on youth. We argued that Labour councils should where possible use the Manpower Services Commission subsidy, but that all schemes introduced should include full trade union rights and rates of pay, a guaranteed job and no reductions in apprenticeships or job substitution. Since this resolution was

Also the District Committee has total control over the Junior Workers' Committees.

Unfortunately the present leadership within the AUEW have wound down this Youth section. Even so, there are a few Junior Workers' Committees still running in places such as Scotland and Coventry.

Now the AUEW leadership have launched a campaign to recruit YTS trainees into a new non-paying section (Section 5).

LPYS members in the AUEW should demand within the union that the leadership revitalises the Junior Workers' Committees, and at the same time demand a rules change to allow YTS trainees into these Committees, with the age limit as a whole being raised to 24.

## POEU youth

**THE YOUNG Workers Assembly in Manchester on December 10, organised by the LPYS, must be seen as a focal point for all youth active in their trade unions.**

In the Post Office Engineers Union, currently locked in battle against privatisation, a Youth Section has been built to act as a voice for youth within the union.

We are sending details of the Assembly to every POEU branch in the country with an offer of a speaker to explain the aims of the event. Also, a special leaflet has been drawn up and already thousands of these have been distributed on POEU picket lines and outside exchanges.

Activities such as this publicising the event must be carried out in every union, with campaigning work on the shop floor. This Assembly will be a tremendous opportunity for masses of young people from every type of work place, college or dole queue to express their views, ideas and problems.

By Steve Jones  
(POEU, POR and Mechanisation branch)

## Bradford campaign

**BRADFORD HAS died under this Tory government. Most of the great engineering plants and textile mills have closed down. There is nowhere to go and nothing to do—except fightback.**

When you walk through the town centre everyone goes round with their head down. Everyone's braced off with life under the Tories. But the mood in the LPYS is different.

The Young Socialists sent a speaker to the Trades Council and they have put the letters for the Young Workers' Assembly on their mailing list. This means every trade union branch will be circulated in the Bradford district. But we don't stop there!

Idle LPYS branch (Brad-

ford North No 2 branch) is going to organise a dinner-time meeting near the Wharfedale Speakers Factory and at two local supermarkets, Hillards and Sainsburys—three places where there are lots of low paid young workers.

Every factory Thatcher has so far spared will be visited by our unemployed 'hit squad' We're going to leaflet other non-unionised factories.

The Bradford bosses had better watch out. We want a future and we're going to fight for it.

By Richard Murgatroyd  
(Secretary, Idle LPYS)

schemes and £80 per week while at work in the offices in the last six months. In practice their pay will be averaged out over the year, giving the trainees a wage of over £52 a week over the year (in accordance with the rate agreed by NALGO nationally).

The GLC scheme is not perfect—even some of the GLC councillors have expressed reservations about it. But nevertheless it represents a vast improvement on the sort of scheme envisaged by the Tories.

By Kevin Miles  
(LPYS rep. GLLP Executive)



# The rise of Stalinism



To stay in power Stalin had virtually the entire old Bolshevik leadership killed or imprisoned.

The final part of the political life of ANTON NILSON deals with the rise of Stalinism and the socialist way forward.

IT WAS the failure of the German Revolution in the early 1920s which forced the Russian Revolution into a dead end.

I remember meeting Zinoviev, (a leader of the Communist International) shortly after he returned from Berlin in about 1924-25. He was totally pessimistic. He thought the situation in Germany was hopeless.

In this pessimistic mood the question of whether you could build socialism in one country was first raised. Up till then the Russian Revolution had always been seen as the beginning of world revolution. I recall big meetings in Leningrad to discuss all the political issues.

Stalin had no interest in world revolution, unlike Lenin, Zinoviev and Trotsky. Stalin should have stayed a second-rate leader. It was the defeat of the German revolution, because of the betrayal of the Social Democratic leaders, which paved the way for Stalin's terror.

Under Lenin there was no dictatorship. I remember when I saw Lenin in May 1919 at Red Square. He was walking to the 12 platforms, with people to help him clear the way through the masses. He was a gentleman.

But with Stalin it was totally different. He took the state police, which had been formed against counter-revolution, and turned it against socialists. He made it his police, a state within a state.

It was a military organisa-

tion. We called it The Green Army, as they wore green uniforms—it was very different from the other Green Army of the anarchists in the civil war.

With Stalin as dictator there was terror throughout the country. It was not so bad when I lived there (up 'till 1928). But I knew what was going on.

In 1928 I was ordered to work at the Russian trade mission in Sweden and there I heard the reports from inside Russia: it was terrible. Also I visited Russia a number of times in the 1930s.

I don't condemn Trotsky for what he did to counteract it. He tried to follow the line of the October Revolution. But because of Stalin's Green Army, he had to use methods which had not been used before in the Bolshevik Party. I think that Trotsky, Zinoviev, Bukharin and Radek were all trying to follow the October revolution, especially Trotsky.

The impact of Stalin is still there. Three years ago I was in Leningrad as part of a film which was being made about my early life. In an interview for TV and radio I happened to mention the name of Stalin. The interview was immediately interrupted, and I was told I must not mention his name.

I asked some Russians about this and they told me that Stalin's name was never to be mentioned. Officially he is not hated; he is not condemned; he is not praised; he is nothing; he is wiped out. But in his home town he is still a God.

## Expelled from the CP

In the early 1930's I was expelled from the Swedish Communist Party, after they held a debate with the Nazis I said that it was completely wrong.

If the Nazis came to power, I said, they will not discuss with the CP; they will hang us. Because I broke party discipline I was expelled.

## Future lies with 'October'

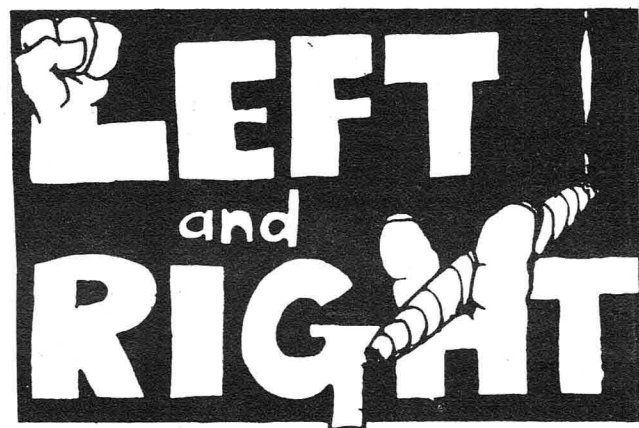
Today in Sweden politics seems to be dominated by the Social Democrats. But they have no real future. They cannot renew themselves, because they are based upon a private capitalist economy.

You must have a clear socialist line against capitalism. Middle of the

road policies are no good. Either capitalism will lead to catastrophe or we will have a socialist break through and save mankind. And the only way to follow is the October Revolution.

Our first task is to save ourselves from nuclear annihilation. In Sweden today there are many socialists. I have never seen so many socialists; they are even among the educated.

But the decisive thing is there is no socialist leadership. My political life has been based on one belief: "October is correct".



## Ever wish you were better informed?

The Economist is currently conducting an advertising campaign with the above slogan. But their track record is not so good.

The New Statesman recently contrasted what their personalities say in the advert with what The Economist actually said at the time. The Economist advert quotes De Lorean saying how sound his car firm is. The implication is clear; he should have studied The Economist. But if he had, he would have been told: "In the short term, De Lorean's prospects look reasonably healthy." (15 August, 1981).

It's the same for their other personalities. When Nixon was on the rack for his cover-up, The Economist leader headline was: "Nixon decides that honesty is the best policy" (21 April, 1973). They backed Heath against Thatcher, and this month they declared that Parkinson was safe, because he was indispensable.

Perhaps the moral is that if you want to be well-informed, don't trust a big business magazine.

## NHS wipe-out

If you want to clean up on the Stock Exchange at the moment we recommend the laundry firms. They have their eyes firmly fixed upon the health service. At present only £18 million, out of the NHS £900 million laundry bill, is in the hands of private firms. But with the Tories ordering health authorities to put the laundry service out to contract, private firms are steamed up with anticipation of future profits.

Brengreen shares are now one of the highest rated on the Stock Exchange, selling at thirty times their normal annual figure. The whole business is awash with take-over bids. Pritchards are bidding for Spring Grove and Brengreen have been trying to get hold of Sunlight.

## Necessary Sacrifice

As part of the Tories' campaign to cut the budget deficit, the DHSS are demanding £144 back from a blind couple.

When Mrs Teece in Ayrshire found that she was pregnant with her third child, despite a sterilisation operation, she asked a friend to look after her first child for a few months. Mrs Teece was ill and desperate as she had the operation because doctors had warned her that future children could go blind. She offered her friend money, but often the friend refused to take it.

Now the DHSS have worked out that she should repay £144 out of the family allowance, and if the couple cannot pay, they are considering taking them to court. It should fill up a big hole in the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement.

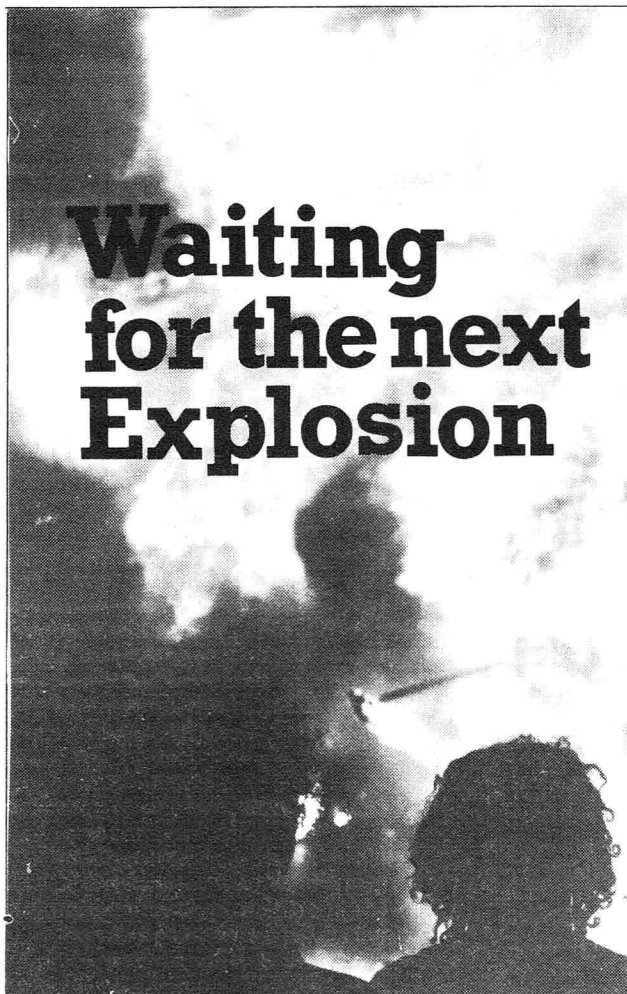
**SIMON COLE**  
(Hackney South LPYS)  
reviews *Inside the Inner City* by Paul Harrison, published by Pelican, price £3.95.

WHEN I first picked up this book I expected to find some dry sociological text-book full of statistics.

I was wrong. The statistics are there, but there is nothing dry or academic about it. In short this is a brilliant description of the effects of recession on ordinary people.

As the author says: "There is no shortage of surveys and academic studies... This book tries rather to convey the human side of the situation."

He concentrates his case study upon the worst borough in the country—Hackney—where nearly a third of the population are out of work and one in five homes are deemed "unfit for human habitation." Previously Harrison had written about the Third World. But as he says; "having spent four years looking at acute poverty around the globe I felt I could hardly ignore it on



my own doorstep".

The best feature of the book is the vivid account by local people of their problems. Sarah Jones a single mother of seven, without electricity for two years: "It's not a welfare state no more. You ain't got a chance. What have

you got on a Monday morning? You haven't got a tea bag."

Whether it's the housing, social security, the conditions of outworkers or sweated labour in the rag trade, the book manages to capture the frustration, anger and

despair of the inner city.

It shows that the problems of these areas incorporated in a concentrated form all the inequalities of our society. Deprived areas such as Hackney are an inevitable consequence of a capitalist society.

The futility of trying just to deal with the symptoms on a local basis is pointed out by the author: "Improve one particular location, and another inner-city area would burst forth elsewhere. Dress and heal the open sore in Hackney, and another will erupt in Tottenham or Leyton."

If *Inside the Inner-City* does have a weakness, it is in the sphere of solutions. Whilst it recognises that it is necessary to look at the economy as a whole, all the author can offer in terms of concrete proposals is a nebulous "workers control", profit sharing, council tenancies to be converted into forms of owner occupation and "a new consensus on values: on the importance of compassion and a far greater measure of equality and participation."

The inner city is a powder keg. Thatcherism has lit the fuse, and sooner or later it's going to go off. This book tells you why.

# Torn apart by loan sharks

INSTITUTION	INTEREST CHARGED
Bank	9%
Finance Company	13%
Money lending Company	39%
Trading Check Company	50-60%
Loan Sharks	No Limit

**THE COURT case of a money-lender who charged 800% interest for his loan highlights the nightmare millions of people face.**

One woman told me:  
"I borrowed the money to buy the children some Xmas presents (1982). He gave me £30 cash but wanted 4 weeks child benefit orders which come to £42.00 in return. He kept my book as security and only gave it back to me once a week to cash.

"After 4 weeks I had to borrow more money but I cannot remember how much. I just continue to borrow and repay."

Another added:  
"The first time I just borrowed £20, but since then I have borrowed more and more. I did not know how much I have borrowed or how much I have repaid."

One money lender admitted that in two and a half years he had lent £9,500 in more than 2,000 deals. He was jailed for two years on five charges including: lending money without a licence, deception and illegally withholding payment books. Compare such justice against the years of misery caused to the unfortunate borrowers.

## Threats of violence

In his defence it was callously claimed that he was merely fulfilling a need. "All of his customers were willing participants." Some of his 'willing customers' had been frightened by bogus court orders, threatening phone calls and even acts of physical violence. So he could get repaid.

In Britain there are some 15,000 registered money lenders. But the real picture reveals a small number of very large banks and loan companies who dominate the market for lending money. They will not lend to the unemployed, nor the low paid. So this section of the working class is forced into the mirky pools of the loan sharks.

Sir Gordon Borrie, Director General of Fair Trading, stated at a recent conference in Nottingham on loan sharks, that the consumer

must share some responsibility for this situation. In reality families are forced into the hands of the loan sharks as the only means of subsistence. In some estates of Nottingham unemployment is nearly 80%; it's so bad that here even the black economy has collapsed.

Sir Gordon says that if people come forward with complaints about loan sharks there are legal remedies. But what are they?

The central plank in preventing the illegal lending of money is the Consumer Credit Act of 1974. This major piece of reform has still to be fully implemented.

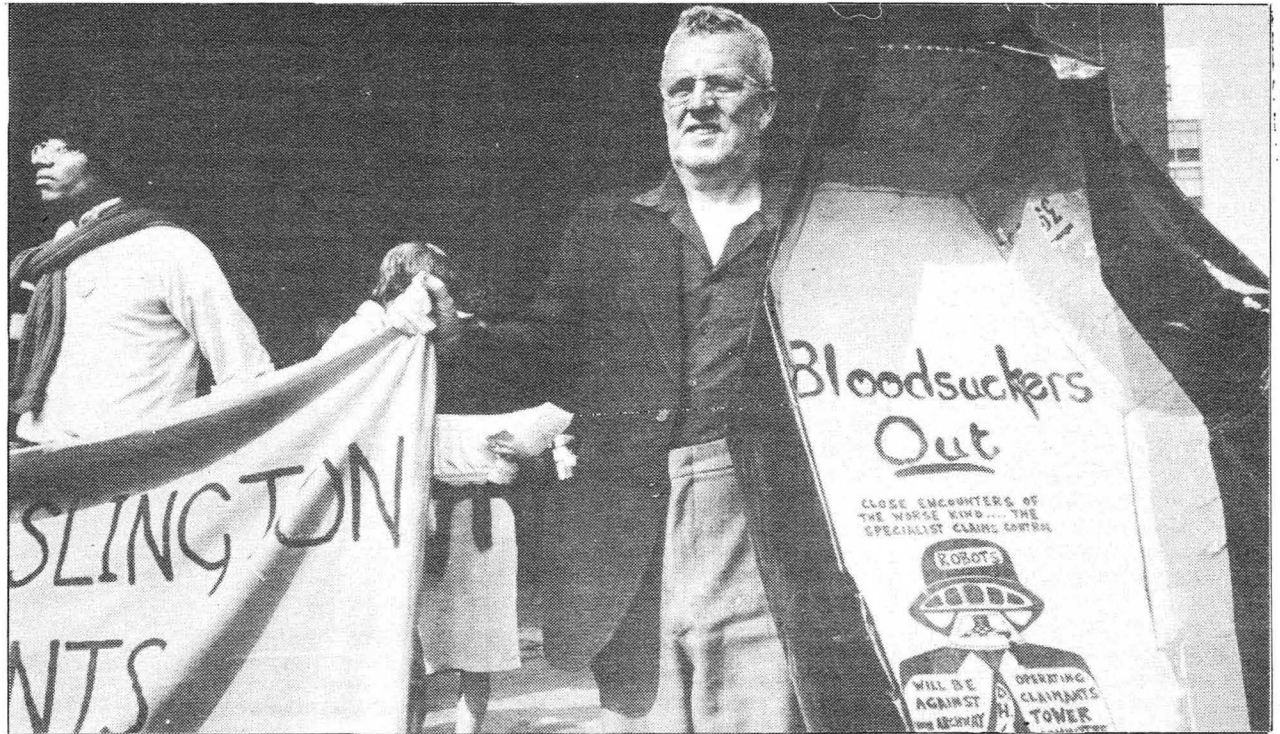
Money lenders are still not required to set out in writing the terms of their loan. Some parts of the Act which assist the work of the Department of Fair Trading are soon axed, e.g. liaising between Central Office of Fair Trading and the local branches. Some of the Department watchdogs have been sacked as part of the Tory cutdown on public spending.

What then are the alternatives? The much welcomed Credit Unions, a co-operative movement of small creditors, are floundering. Out of the 80 societies which have been registered, five have already been told to stop all further transactions and four more are similarly threatened unless their management procedures are not corrected.

It seems that their financial commitments have become too great for them to carry. Clearly the Credit Unions are no alternative to the banks and finance companies of capitalism.

Calls have been made to tighten up the loop holes in the 1974 Credit Act, but these proposals fly in the wind of Tory enthusiasm for free trade and the entrepreneur spirit. The only answer to the loan sharks is to drain the very pool of capitalism in which they fester.

By Steve Bewick  
(NUPE)



Social Security claimants face attack on all sides. Snoopers want to stop them getting money, and loan sharks want to squeeze as much out of them as they can. (Above) Demonstration outside DHSS offices.

Photo: Militant

## Know your rights

- It is illegal for a money lender to canvass loans on the doorstep or in the home without a prior invitation in writing.

- Loan agreements made by unlicensed, illegal moneylenders are not enforceable in court.

- It is illegal for a moneylender to take possession of a supplementary benefit book or family allowance book as security or to obtain repayment of a loan.

- If a consumer thinks that the amount he or she is being charged for borrowing money is extortionate, or that the agreement is otherwise grossly unfair, it is possible to have it examined by a court.

- It is a criminal offence for a moneylender to try to recover a loan by using undue harassment of the debtor such as appearing outside the debtor's house in a van emblazoned with the words "Debt Collections" and demanding payment.

- Borrowers who think they are being treated badly in any way—should contact their local trading standards department or citizens advice bureau or write to Sir Gordon Borrie at the Office of Fair Trading, Field House, Bream's Buildings, London EC4A 1PR.

## GRAMMAR SCHOOLS FAIL FIRST TEST

**SOLIHULL'S TORY Council has been forced into partial retreat. Their proposal to re-introduce grammar schools met with such massive local opposition, that at the council meeting of 14 October, they postponed any decision. Instead they decided to study the education system "at the earliest possible moment".**

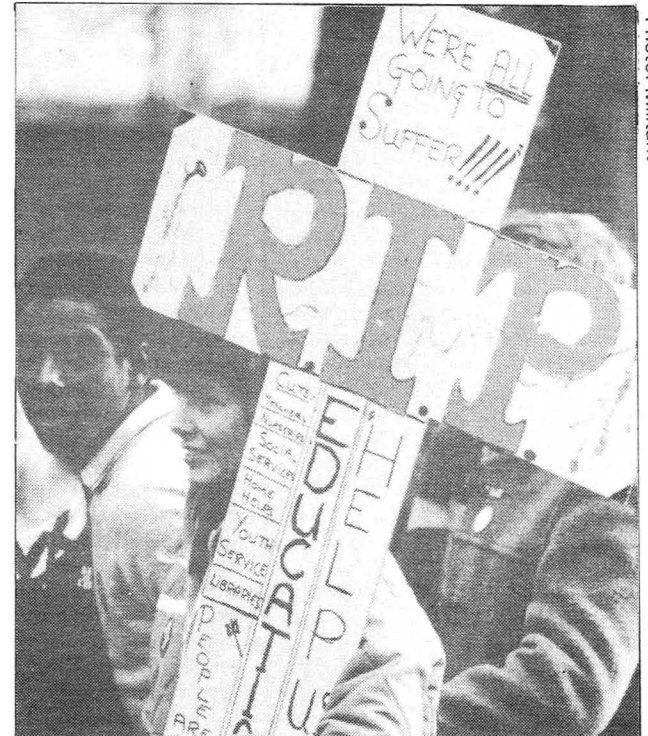
The Tories have not abandoned their plans altogether, but the large lobby of teachers, parents, students and LPYS members concentrated their minds wonderfully. After all there is no educational justification for re-introducing grammar schools.

Even under the narrowest of criteria, comprehensive schools have not been worse than the old, rigid, divided system. Since the abolition of grammar and secondary schools, there has been a 10% rise in 'O' level passes and a 20% increase in the number of 'A' levels passed. Yet Solihull's Tory leader, Councillor Meacham, who sends his children to public school, wants to reintroduce selective secondary schools.

The proposal has aroused widespread opposition. The local teachers union are 100% opposed to the return of elitist education. Parents, especially middle-class parents in the south of the borough, have been vociferous in their opposition.

In the week before the lobby, the teachers' union, NUT, called a public meeting. After hearing Cllr. Meacham, one Tory parent bitterly commented: "I hope my child's education is not being sacrificed to further Cllr Meacham's political career."

Gordon Green, from the NUT's Executive, pointed out that Solihull seemed to have no idea how their new scheme would be implemented; the old 11-plus was widely inaccurate. Labour's education spokes-



Solihull Tory council have a long record of cut backs on social services and education. (Above) Anti-cuts demo, 1981.

Photo: Militant

man, Nigel Hazelwood, pointed out the Tories had made no mention of their proposals in their local election manifesto.

Clearly Labour will oppose the attempt to turn back the clock to the days of the unjust and divisive world of the 11-plus. But we should also be clear that just to establish comprehensive education has not ended social division in education.

Solihull itself is a divided borough. In the south it is the heartland of Tory Britain. But in the north, on the other side of the main Coventry-Birmingham road lies Chelmsley Wood—an overspill from Birmingham, with high rates, rents and inadequate or non-existent social facilities.

Middle class parents in the south are proud of their schools' achievements. They have better facilities than those in the north. These are supplemented by parents' donations for school equipment, such as a new computer.

Indeed some parents have been so keen to get in the

catchment area of schools such as Tudor Grange (not exactly like TV's Grange Hill) that they have been prepared to pay well over the market price for houses.

In the north it is somewhat different. As one ex-student of Simon Digby school in Chelmsley Wood, told me: "The facilities in Chelmsley Wood are next to useless. Most students in my form stopped on to get more qualifications. The rest went on to YTS. Only three got jobs."

"In Solihull parents tend to give their children more encouragement. They are able to map out a future for the kids. They buy revision books for exams and are even able to give special provision for homework, such as a specially converted room with a desk and equipment. Most of my friends ended up doing homework in front of the telly or on the kitchen table."

By Terry Watts  
(Meriden LPYS)

## Who said there are no jobs?

### JOB CENTRE

JOB GROOM  
DISTRICT NR SITTINGBOURNE  
PAY £6 PER WEEK (LIVE IN ALL POUND)  
HOURS  
DETAILS TO WORK WITH HIGH CLASS HORSES AND MUST HAVE HAD AT LEAST ONE YEAR'S EXPERIENCE OR HAD OWN HORSE.

(Above) Job card at Sittingbourne Job Centre.

# The German Revolution

SOCIALISM DOES not fall like a pear from a tree. Even when every element of capitalist society has disintegrated, when the state itself has fallen apart, when the workers are prepared and organised for action, and millions of the exploited are ready to follow them, then, more than ever, the situation demands determined and conscious leadership.

In October 1923, sixty years ago, the Communist Party leaders stumbled accidentally into an unprepared, ill-organised and finally botched-up attempt at a rising in Hamburg.

The situation in Germany was revolutionary. Preparations were being made by the Central Committee, the leadership of the Communist Party, for armed insurrection. At the last moment under pressure from capitalist society, the leadership drew back.

Only in Hamburg, due to the arrest of a courier with the instructions to call off the uprising—without real preparation the CP organisation, without involving the Hamburg workers in a general strike or the armed uprising in Hamburg and other towns resulted in an heroic if abortive movement only of the CP members and close sympathisers in Hamburg itself. The result was inevitable disaster.

**The missed opportunity was disastrous for the German and International working class.**

It resulted in a consolidation of Stalinism in the USSR and the International Communist Parties, and led, subsequently, amidst starvation and despair, to the triumph of Nazism and World War.

Of the leaders involved, almost every one ended up among the piles of corpses in one of Hitler's concentration camps. It is painfully clear that the lessons of such catastrophes as this one, have taught absolutely nothing to today's international working class "leadership"—whether in Greece, Italy, Chile or Great Britain. It is urgent that every socialist, every class-conscious worker (and it is from these that tomorrow's leadership will be drawn) does draw the lessons from such events—to be forewarned is to be fore-armed.

## Fatal crisis

The fatal crisis was not unprepared. It had its roots in the tremendous difficulties faced by a young inexperienced leadership of the workers' movement, trying to adapt itself to an ever-changing pace of events which hurtled the movement forwards and backwards from one movement to the next.

From 1918 on, the German working class had shown itself more than ready to lead mankind out of an epoch of hunger and blood. As the predominantly industrial country, the revolution in Germany reached deeper into the consciousness of society even than in Russia. The revolution of 1918 smashed the monarchy, brought parliamentary democracy, factory councils, the eight hour day and a nominally "socialist" government.

**It gave rise to soviets throughout the country, even in the most "backward" parts. If the Social Democratic government had been sincere in its "socialism" or if there had been as large or influential a Communist Party as there was by 1923, if there had been a Lenin or a Trotsky, there is no doubt that the whole course of 20th century history would have been a happier one.**

As it was, the Social Democratic leaders used the total force of state thuggery at their command to

By  
**Julian Silverman**

drown these hopes in blood. Again and again, with the Berlin risings of 1919 (during which Liebknecht and Luxemburg were murdered), the 1919 Bavarian Red Republic, the 1920 general strike which brought General Kapp's military *putsch* down in four days—the organised workers proved their determination not to be crushed.

World capitalism trembled: the world balance of class forces hung on the fate of the German revolution. As that "grand old liberal", the canny Lloyd George put it: "The whole of Europe is filled with the spirit of revolution... the greatest danger is that Germany may throw in her lot with Bolshevism, and place her resources, her brains, her vast organising power at the disposal of (the workers)".

Temperley's semi-official *History of the Peace Conference* reported that the "German troops had been contaminated with Bolshevik propaganda during the occupation of Russia".

The Allied victors had seized what they could of the Reichwehr's munitions, but had generously allowed Germany "sufficient troops to deal with any exterior danger from Bolsheviks and so forth..." and "to suppress Spartacist insurrections".

To avoid being caught by the Allied Control Commissions with more than the allowed count of rifles, machine guns, cannon etc, the state "loaned" the war machinery to all kinds of "veterans associations", "defence leagues" the Nazi "Storm Battalions" and that rag-bag of mobsters, psychopaths, bohemians and disgruntled ex-officers, the infamous "Freikorps" etc.

**Politically, the bosses relied on the Social Democratic leaders to confuse and disorientate the masses. When action was required they called out the thug gangs.**

They had transferred the seat of government to the ancient city of Weimar, as they hoped, from the turbulence of Berlin. But from the opening scene on, the comedy was played to mounting confusion, as leading actors were carted off to the wings, and pre-arranged pistol shots rang out.

The bizarre gangs were called to rage around, "helping the police", committing political assassinations, threatening and attempting military coups. When their cases came up, they got off lightly with a wink at the judge.

The strategists of big business understood that they had to break up the forces of their class enemy, to separate the vanguard from the mass, and dispose of them separately—to base themselves on the uneven rate of development of the different semi-autonomous "Lander" that made up the Federal Republic: to play off the exuberance of one set of workers, coming new to the struggle, against the fatigue or caution of others.

After the 1920 general strike had dissipated its energies in rear-guard fighting in the Ruhr, big business felt it had a breathing-space at last. The period of mass spontaneous risings was at an end.

The hopes of the enemy would depend, from now on, on the ability of the young Communist party to win the confidence of the masses through an extensive period of pro-



A Red Guard under arrest.

paganda, agitation and organisation. Instead, alarmed at the prospect of the "stabilisation of capitalism", the Communist Party leaders allowed themselves to be provoked, in March 1921, into staking their future upon a desperate gamble to "electrify" the masses. Their disastrous adventure, an attempted insurrection in Central Germany, resulted in the loss of many of the best local working class leaders, and the near break-up of the Third International.

Lenin and Trotsky were almost alone in asking: "Comrade Communists... Have you won the majority of the working class? What have you done to make every worker understand what is at stake in the struggle? Have you explained this in clear, simple and precise language to the toiling masses, including the most backward ones?... Have you organised a far-reaching intelligence network in the enemy's camp? No, comrades, your preparations are inadequate..."

To this the reply came: "What was new about the action was precisely that which we are criticised for: namely, that the party went into struggle without concerning itself about who would follow it" (!)

Lenin and Trotsky explained that there was nothing for a Marxist to be afraid of in the temporary consolidation of capitalism. Rising investment would mean more at work: less unemployment would strengthen the unions.

**It was a question, not of the immediate conquest of power, but of the conquest of the masses.**

Capitalism was by no means stable for an indefinite period. The Communist Party could prove itself in day-to-day work.

"Of course" Trotsky warned, "if it fails to pass over at the first opportunity from defence to offence, then... entire countries would be hurled back economically into barbarism, tens of millions would perish from hunger... and upon their bones some sort of new equilibrium of the capitalist world could be restored. But such a perspective is sheer abstraction".

Having routed the March 1921 movement, capitalism sunk back with flushed cheeks, but this was not so much the bloom of health as of fever.

## War-profiteers

From 1914 onwards the "war effort" had consisted of squeezing every last drop of blood and sweat out of the workers in and out of uniform to create a monstrous breed of multi-millionaire swindlers, black marketeers and war-profiteers. Without "natural" outlets, and blockaded from all sides, the state raised money from the simple expedient of printing it.

By 1918, already, five times as many notes were chasing an ever-diminishing supply of goods. In all this, their policy did not differ greatly from that of all the imperialist nations. But the victors were determined that Germany should pay the whole cost of daring to challenge British and French imperialism. She was, of course, deprived of her colonial possessions, her army and navy, a large percentage of her merchant navy, railways, etc.

The Allies seized 13.1% of her former territory (which included, for example, 74.5% of her iron ore, 26% of coal production). In addition, the peace treaty finally settled on \$132 billion worth of

"reparations" in money or in goods (and since this was obviously impossible, 6% interest on the outstanding debt each year).

In the event of default, they were threatened with a renewed blockade and/or military occupation. The normal peacetime activities of imperialist nations, quietly trying to run each other's markets, plunder each other's sources of cheap labour and raw materials etc—these were denied to German capitalism. So the super-rich fed on the rich and the rich on the poor.

Men like Hugo Stinnes spent the money granted him by the government as compensation for the loss of one of his mines to the French, by buying up thousands of mines, banks, electricity and navigation interests, hotels, paper mills, newspapers and other publishing concerns.

He financed politicians and political parties, bought his way to the top of the "German Peoples' Party" and became "the most powerful man in Germany" who "destroyed more private property than all the socialists".

## Conscious reflation

Big Business' weapon was inflation. Their banks would loan them paper currency to buy up all the small and medium size business they could lay their hands on. By the time they repaid the loans, the money was virtually worthless.

Thus they engaged in feverish activity which paved the way for complete collapse. That the inflation was a conscious weapon was explained by Stinnes himself:

"It was necessary to sacrifice some (ie someone else's) capital for the purpose of sustaining the life of



Starving Munich workers tearing apart the remains of a horse.



# 1923

TO MARK the sixtieth anniversary of the 1923 German revolution, we reprint the edited first part of an article, first printed in *Militant* ten years ago. The second part will appear next week.



the nation... for if the masses had remained unemployed, then doubtless Bolshevism would have seized Germany, and, however dreadful... in Russia... (it) would have been even worse in Germany, because in Germany it was a matter of a predominantly industrial country... The weapon of inflation would have to be used in the future too, without regard to the resulting capital losses... (Interview with US Ambassador, June 1922). Up to the end of the year, the inflation did lead to a kind of boom.

Exporters, in particular, found that they gained more from rising prices than they lost through rising costs of raw materials, replacements etc. This was when the dollar value of the Mark had fallen from its post-war parity of 4.2 Marks to the dollar to 493.1 in July and 17,972.0 in January 1923.

## Ruhr occupied

At that time the new ultra-reactionary government of Poincaré took advantage of a minor default in reparations payments (telegraph poles and a tiny quantity of coal) and, together with Belgium, they sent in troops to lay hands on 80% of Germany's steel and 71% of her coal—the Ruhr. (This action annoyed British Business, who had no desire to see France dominate Europe and whose ailing coal industry depended on exports to France). Besides, as Lloyd George had cried out before, occupation would be “stirring up an influenza puddle (of revolution) next door”!

Every element of the conditions for a speedy and effective transfer

of power from a tiny minority to the vast majority, led by the industrial workers, existed by the latter half of 1923 throughout Germany, but for a leadership capable of recognising the fact and knowing what to do.

We are not talking about another 1921 adventure, or a simple mass spontaneous reaction. The exploited class was not prepared to go on as before. The exploiting class could not go on as before. The middle layers were at the least wavering, and could have been quickly won to the side of the workers.

The army and the police contained many elements who could have paralysed the repressive power of the state. The workers were actually organised and ready, waiting for the call to action which never came.

To the capitalist economy the Ruhr occupation came as the final straw. Its last lifeline had been wiped out. Investment all but ceased, factories simply stopped production. The only “remedy” to give the appearance, at least, of meaningful activity was Stinnes' old remedy: the most bizarre inflation in history.

**Over 30 paper mills, and 150 printing firms, (how many of them were Stinnes' own?) were running continuously day and night, producing banknotes, delivered twice a day by aeroplanes before they lost their value. By November 15th, a dollar would fetch 4,200,000,000, 000 Marks!**

**“An object which had been previously worth 24 cents now cost a sum which would formerly have equalled three times the entire National Wealth of Germany”—and the rate was falling hourly.**

The boom consumed itself the moment when “costs of replace-

ment exceeded selling prices, stocks dwindled and plants were worn down... Finally the collapse of the money system was complete and all and sundry were swept into the disaster” (all except Stinnes and his kind, of course) “Money no longer fulfilled its essential functions... people reverted to primitive methods such as barter...”

So this was where the culture and civilisation of the German people, the “vast organising power” was being led to, under the capitalist system. A return to the stone age! The political consequences of the economic disaster were enormous.

The regime was as unable to act politically as it was economically. Military resistance was obviously out of the question. Any further action would inevitably mean promoting the initiative of the workers, and it was not clear in which direction the workers would point the guns.

The government (a crisis cabinet of “neutral” businessmen under Cuno) tepidly called upon the Ruhr civil servants to engage in “passive resistance”. This was at once turned by the Trade Unions into a General Strike throughout the Ruhr. By May, the workers of Bochum spontaneously moved on to the stage of an armed insurrection.

The French had been careful to send the most politically backward troops they could find, black Senegalese. But this did not prevent the Insurrection from being greeted on the French side with calls of “Down with Stinnes! Down with Poincaré!”

As industrial discontent was rising, the arms millionaire Krupp used an incident with the French troops to provoke a strike, allowed troops to shoot down strikers, headed the funeral demonstration and fled to Berlin. Much to the embarrassment of the French Prosecutor, he returned to face charges of “inciting a riot”, and spent the critical months in comfortable patriotic “martyrdom” in a specially large “cell” with an ever-open door, visited and fed by his wife and friends!

## Workers' suffering

Associations of Business chiefs demanded tougher action against strikes, an end to the eight-hour day; they even approached the French authorities with a request for them to lengthen the working day in the Ruhr. Thus, the reaction, while hoping to find a mass base through national chauvinist hysteria, could not resist the temptation to use all the weapons at its

disposal to defeat the “enemy within”, including foreign armies. The result of the impasse was chaos.

Even as early as February, when inflation was only starting its headlong plunge, the Minister of Health was reporting: unparalleled deaths from hunger and TB (in one school, one in ten pupils was found to be suffering from this wasting disease) and from cold—particularly the very young and very old.

In some areas, schools were found to have 80% of their children undernourished. Babies were left on the doorsteps of children's homes and clinics which had already been forced to close down for lack of funds. Infant mortality rose to above the highest war-time level. One infant hospital reported that 30% of its patients died within 24 hours of being admitted. Other hospitals reported having to find a million marks a day for heating alone. Old age pensioners could not buy a postage stamp.

## Organised workers ready

**Unemployment reached the incredible figure of 30% (including those on part-time work) according to the official figures for November. Yet unemployment pay would not buy a bottle of milk a week. Among the other grisly statistics: the suicide rate reached its highest level.**

Doctors and professors found themselves turfed out of their apartments. A microscope might cost 5 million marks, or well above the total grant to a university. Many learned lexicographers, philologists, art historians and theologians, tired from digging canals or building railway embankments, almost became converted to a materialist view of society!!

As one of the complained: “Years of paper currency mean no more and no less than the death of learning and science... all flowering of learning and science is tied to certain economic pre-conditions...”

War loans, mortgages, savings, insurance etc., all of these were wiped out. The middle class found itself expropriated not by the “Red Peril”, but by Big Business. Banks would send them curt notes explaining that they could no longer afford to service their 850,000 DM deposits; therefore they were returning it, rounded up to a million marks. On the envelope would be a 5 million mark postage stamp!

Having sold their heirlooms for bread and soap, they joined the millions rooting around garbage cans. No wonder that many ex-businessmen “saw clearly that once you side with the old ruling class against the workers, you may be the one who will get swallowed in the end” (as the daughter of one of them reminisced), or that, when they listened to a Social Democrat propagandist, “some of them wanted to beat him, others got so angry at Big Business that they wanted to start a revolution immediately.”

Can there be any doubt that determined action by the working class would have won the majority of them away from the anti-semitic demagoguery that was to make Nazi-fodder for them?

This could have drawn them together with the poor peasants, the unemployed and the semi-proletarian masses of the cities into a massive movement that would have made reaction impossible.

The organised workers were ready for action. Big business' trick of estimating its prices in gold-value and paying wages only in

paper currency “provided 24-28 gold billions of extra profit for big business”. But the crisis hit the workers at a time of rising confidence. The result was wave after wave of demonstrations, factory meetings and largely successful strikes.

## Shops looted

Lorries, packed to capacity, would arrive with banknotes. There would be a rush to join the endless queues outside the shops. Inflation was so rapid that those at the end of the queue might find that their wages had lost half their value! Some firms like Krupp's, issued their own notes. A shoe factory, for example, might issue shoe tokens, exchangeable for goods.

But every value dropped into the same bottomless pit. There were food riots. Shops were looted. (Cynics sneered at the organised way this was carried out: “Proletarian discipline, you see. No one to take more than three tins of food.” Actually this is a great tribute to the refusal of the masses to “go under”).

But the crest of every wave of action broke against the very nature of society. The ebbs were used as an opportunity for regrouping and preparing for yet more decisive action. Factory Councils under the leadership of Communists, grew in strength and influence. Often they substituted themselves for the functions of soviets: thousands attended their meetings.

**Combat “Hundreds” were formed. The movement was drawing together for an onslaught on capitalism. In August, they called a nation-wide general strike. The government fell after three days. The new premier Stressemann (installed by Social Democratic president, Ebert) declared that he was heading “the last capitalist government”.**

The reaction was thrown into a thousand directions at once. “Passive resistance” had collapsed. Lithuania had sliced a chunk of Germany for herself. Some “Quislings” allowed themselves to be used by the French Separatist Republic; others were involved in anti-French “terrorist” actions. Some supported a restoration of the monarchy in a separate Bavaria, the Nazis were preparing for a military coup, starting in Bavaria and ready to march on Berlin.

General von Seeckt, commander of the armed forces, held a meeting with Severing, the Social Democrat Prussian Minister of the Interior, who, in the Prussian police, controlled an armed force second only to that of the army itself. A “black” (ie secret) Reichswehr was formed, with the aim of drawing the disparate massacre brigades into a united counter-revolutionary army under the control of the state. The state itself was falling apart.

Meanwhile the “Proletarian Hundreds” were growing. By October they contained some 250,000 men. Many of them had obtained arms from sympathetic “Reichswehr” soldiers—in other words, not even this specially recruited volunteer army was politically reliable! The scene was set for revolution.



Members of the reactionary Bavarian Freikorps.

Available from  
World Socialist Books  
*The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany*  
(Trotsky) £4.50  
*Fascism, what it is and how to fight it*  
(Trotsky) 70p  
*The menace of fascism*  
(Grant) 50p  
1 Mentmore Terrace,  
London E8 3PN

# INDIA

## -reject the popular front



Indira Gandhi: Workers' parties cannot trust capitalist politicians.

### THE TOILING masses of India face a grim future. Industries, both in the private and public sector, are running way below capacity.

Private industries, faced with falling profits, are increasingly demobilising their factories, either by closures or reducing them to such a sick state that the government has to take them over.

Industries in the public sector suffer huge losses owing to lack of investment, inefficient management and playing second fiddle to the private sector. This in turn jeopardises the future of a large number of ancillaries and small scale units which depend on the public sector for a market and for supplies.

While the country urgently needs development, huge stocks of steel are lying idle in steel mill yards. Increasing taxation on consumer goods and basic industrial essentials like coal, petrol and electricity pushes up prices of every commodity; inflation is at present running at 15%.

The government praises India's agricultural production but at the same time has to import huge quantity of grain from abroad.

Villages see bloody clashes between landless labourers and landlords over land, and sharing of crops; fights for minimum wages and against social oppression in the name of Caste. Towns are filled with more and more unemployed youth, and criminal operations are increasing. The picture is one of decay and destruction.

The Congress (I) government at the centre is at a loss. The attempt to boost the economy by IMF loans and import liberalisation has put the economy into further disarray. India is now in a vicious debt trap.

The Prime Minister in an attempt to boost the sagging capitalist economy on the one hand is making frantic appeals to the IMF, World Bank and the developed Capitalist countries. On the other hand she is trying to mobilise the less developed capitalist countries of Asia and the Middle East, to develop trade links with those countries and also to put political pressure on the developed countries and international financial institutions to dole out more assistance.

The capitalist class are seriously worried and have started splitting and accusing each other of responsibility. This is clearly seen in the breakdown in Gandhi's Congress (I) party, leading to constant reshuffles of the party machine both at the national and state level followed by replacement of Chief Ministers and other dignitaries in Congress (I) run states.

Besides this, a section of the capitalists are regrouping, with the floating of two electoral fronts—the "National Democratic Alliance" of capitalist parties and the "United Front", composed of the religious based Janata party (which ruled corruptly between Gandhi's corrupt periods of power) together with a number of parties to the left. The "United Front" is also trying to rope in regional and communal parties as well.

In India's present horrific crisis, the parties of the working class must take a scrupulously independent line and refuse to be drawn in-

to alliances with capitalist parties which tie workers to the bosses' coat tails. This "United Front" is really a popular front which has caused disaster for workers in numerous countries such as Chile in the past.

The left, particularly the Communist Parties, instead of trying to build a real united front, of left parties on a socialist programme are veering towards this bourgeois trap. The Communist Party of India (CPI) is in a quandary.

Its political mentors in the Communist Party of the Soviet Union hold Mrs Gandhi to be a leading force against nuclear war and imperialism. They insist on an alliance with Congress (I), Indira Gandhi's party.

While a section of CPI want to follow this path, at present the anti-Indira lobby is strongest and after a clash, a prominent pro-Indira lobby leader of the CPI has been expelled.

Another major left party, the Communist Party (Marxist) is blowing hot and cold. Nationally they have expressed clear intent to come to an understanding with the "United Front". The CPI (M) have attacked Congress (I) particularly on central government's treatment of the states. But it is in a left front government in West Bengal and Tripura states and to keep its position safe it has already a tacit understanding with Gandhi.

The objective conditions of India are ripening for mobilising the working people to overthrow capitalism, as the recent year-long strike of 250,000 Bombay textile workers has shown. The left leadership, for lack of a revolutionary Marxist perspective are sadly forsaking this opportunity to lead the working class to emancipation.

By an Indian correspondent

# After Argentina's elections

## THE RADICAL Party won the Argentinian elections on 30 October with 52% of the vote against 40% for the Peronist Party, the Justicialists. It ended seven years of military dictatorship.

Since 1946 the Peronists have led all previous civilian governments; this was the biggest victory for the Radicals since 1928.

The Radicals are a capitalist party whose victory was welcomed by the Tory government in Britain and by the international bankers. But the Radical leader Raul Alfonsín conducted his election campaign largely on demagogic demands for control of the armed forces who have made Argentina into a huge torture chamber since the 1976 coup.

Alfonsín claimed his party opposed the military junta's plan for "self amnesty" where the Army officers, the murderers and torturers of the workers and all opposition forces, tried to prevent retaliation of the working class by 'amnestying' all who committed crimes "for political reasons".

The plan had led to huge demonstrations of opposition by the working class and demands for a trial of junta leaders like the Nuremberg trial after World War II. The military had already destroyed many files on their activities in the "dirty war" in anticipation of popular revenge for the thousands who disappeared during army rule.

To prevent a complete explosion, Alfonsín offered action against the most obvious torturers. But the entire officer caste, backed at the start by the vast majority of the capitalist class are implicated in the crimes of 1976 to 1983.

It was only the pressure of the workers which forced even elections in Argentina, not the conscience of the bosses. A capitalist government like Alfonsín's will not take serious action against their own army, their own state



Mothers of disappeared prisoners at a rally in Luna Park, Buenos Aires.

machine. They may act against a few scapegoats, but they will not support a thorough purge of the reactionary officers.

The Peronist leader Luder did not even get that far. He said the amnesty was probably "legal" and therefore couldn't be challenged by a future government. The Peronist movement was already deeply split, reflecting the different class interests within this party. Many leaders had collaborated with the murderous AAA right wing assassins in the last Peronist government and many of the right wing union leaders had openly collaborated with the junta since the coup.

The Radicals' call for trade union reform also got a certain echo amongst workers. Regardless of the reactionary purpose to which any capitalist government would put this interference, the discredited union leaders, unelected strong-arm men and collaborators with the military enemy attracted little sympathy.

The Peronist campaign merely said "The workers' happiest days were Peronist" but Peron himself

# DUTCH WORKERS

JUST A month or so after Belgium's general strike, workers in the Netherlands are now taking action against a right wing government.

Holland's ruling Christian Democratic—Liberal coalition plan to cut public sector wages and social security benefits by 3½% from 1 January.

Unemployment of over 15% is about the highest in Europe, and the comparatively high level of benefits are a cushion to some extent. Now the government want to

push down all wages by slashing public sector pay and benefits.

But the unions are resisting the government. Railworkers have been on strike, only suspending the strike for one day to take protestors to the anti-Cruise missile demonstrations.

There has also been a work to rule in the post office. Bus drivers, television workers, even police, may take action, and public sector unions have threatened to bring the port of Rotterdam, one of the most important in Europe to a standstill.

# USA—being poor in a rich man's land

BY THE standards of say, Latin America, workers in the United States are affluent. The US government poverty level is £6,574 for a family of four.

But in the USA itself such an income means considerable hardship, and in 1982 no less than 35 million people, 15% of the population lived below that figure. This is the highest percentage since 1965 before the limited anti-poverty programmes of the Johnson administration.

The figure is likely to remain high for some years, an American Congress committee has been told, because of high unemployment. It would cost £30,000 million to bring these incomes up to the poverty level.

The poverty classification is raised every year to account for inflation but the starting point for tax payment is not, so many poor Americans are paying tax on incomes below the government's own poverty level.

transform the Peronists.

Right wingers such as Lorenzo Miguel and Herminio Iglesias who lost the election for Buenos Aires governorship will almost inevitably be pushed out of the leadership providing a shift to the left in the Peronist movement. Within a few years the inevitable failure of the Radicals will most likely propel a left Peronist government into office.

Alfonsín says he wants to convince big business their interests are better served by political parties than by military coups. Since 1930, no civilian government has lasted the full course before military takeover. This threat would hang over the head of a left government in a period of capitalist crisis.

The workers' organisations must keep an independent viewpoint and fight not just for democratic rights but for an end to the diseased capitalist system which periodically turns to the jackboot. Socialism is the only guarantee against the return of brutal military rule.

By Roger Shives



**"WE MAY cause a little economic trouble, a little publicity and aid (to opposition groups) but we don't overthrow governments."**  
**US Senate Intelligence Committee, speaking on Grenada in 1981.**

31 October: A protest in London against the US invasion

Photo: Denis Doran

## A history of 'intervention'

THE INVASION of Grenada is not the first intervention by US troops in the Caribbean. The most important have been:

**CUBA.** After the Spanish-American war, Cuba was occupied in 1899-1900 and 1906-09. The naval base at Guantanamo has been in existence since 1903. Interference until 1933 when Batista dictatorship installed. After Castro took power came the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961.

**HAITI.** 1905 US took over customs office to guarantee debts were paid. 1915-34 US military occupation with forced labour of local population.

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC.** The 1916-'24 occupation set up a puppet police force. In 1965, 20,000 troops prevented the radical Bosch government taking power.

In Central America, the US have attacked Mexico, Panama, Honduras, Nicaragua and Guatemala with a threatened invasion of Costa Rica to effect a change of government.

In Nicaragua, two decades of US occupation only ceased when the tyrant Somoza seized power in the '30s, while in Guatemala, a succession of various right wing regimes followed the American invasion, "Operation Success" in 1954 to overthrow the reforming government of Jacobo Arbenz.

# No stability in the Caribbean

**AT THE time of writing US invasion forces in Grenada are still encountering determined resistance.**

**The press would have us believe that opposition is solely from Cuban advisers but these workers, mainly construction workers, have mostly been arrested or killed.**

**By Roger Shrides**

The Grenadian Revolutionary Army, a one-thousand-strong force in an island with a 110,000 population are keeping the biggest, best equipped army in the west bogged down, have forced Reagan to double US troops to 6,000 and enforce a curfew to maintain "order".

Reagan used the assassination of Maurice Bishop and the takeover by Hudson Austin as the pretext for invasion but the US forces were set for attack a month ago and have contemplated action for some years.

The American government and military produced many excuses for intervention, chaos on the island, Cuban influence, even Russian missile bases. But none hold water.

Their real reason apart from the need for a trial run for invading Nicaragua was the existence of the radical New Jewel government. This threatened the stability of capitalism in an area of vital importance to US trade with Africa and Latin America and of great strategic importance, along with Central America.

With Bishop's coup in 1979 the US tried to undermine the government from the first. In 1979, the St Vincent government asked the USA to intervene against Grenada. The government were denied help after a hurricane destroyed the banana crop and pressure was put on to stop the EEC giving aid to build an airport.

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States was set up to counter Bishop. It was given police powers, the US supplied boats and arms. There were NATO 'exercises' against an imaginary country called Amber (there is a Grenada district of that name) while the US touted ex-dictator Gairy around to find a Caribbean home for the "King across the water".

When the New Jewel Movement came to power, the effects spread from island to island. In Dominica one of the countries involved in the US takeover, signs on the walls in the capital Rosau read "Gairy gone, John next" referring to their own corrupt dictator Patrick John, up to his neck in deals with the South African government.

Geest, the British banana exporters who also operate in Grenada, paid their Dominican workers £6 a week and hired out tied cottages with no services or sanitation. Even though the right wing Freedom Party of Eugenia Charles won the 1980 elections, the strikes of 1979 were a warning for the ruling class. In Antigua and St Lucia, strike waves and political unrest followed Bishop's takeover.

### Economic collapse

With the safety valve of emigration withdrawn, all the problems of the area grew. The dangers to capitalist interests had been obvious with the radical government of Manley in Jamaica and even more when in 1975 Forbes Burnham, installed as a CIA puppet to prevent a left government a decade before, nationalised 90% of the economy in Guyana.

Even though Manley's government was destabilised and Guyana forced back more into the capitalist camp, pressures were rising. Now in a period when even advanced capitalist countries like the USA experience short booms and long deep recessions, economic stability is further away than ever.

The Caribbean is a collection of small weak states left disunited by European colonial powers and where capitalism is too weak to unite the islands. A social federation is essential for the Caribbean.

## The New Jewel

In the four years since the New Jewel Movement took power, there were enormous social advances in Grenada. Unlike other Caribbean countries, unemployment fell from 50% to 14% due to improvements in the use of agricultural land and labour-intensive projects.

The economy grew by 40% and Grenada even achieved better terms of trade from the USSR and Cuba for agricultural produce.

Trade unions grew, women became involved in public life, prostitution and casino gambling were eradicated. Literacy reached 95% through adult reading schemes and improvements were made in health care, leading to greatly reduced infant mortality.

Even though 60% of the economy was still in private hands, US imperialism feared firstly that if Grenadians wanted to maintain these reforms, they would be prepared to abolish landlordism and capitalism and secondly that the example of Grenada would lead to revolutionary moves throughout the Caribbean.

CARICOM the local Common Market comprising just ex-British colonies is the only economic link. The total population is only 4.2 million and that has acted more to provide larger markets for US goods than to develop the Caribbean, while within the community, the bigger countries benefit at the cost of smaller states.

The US put forward the Caribbean Basin Initiative to try to 'stabilise' Central America and the Caribbean, allowing duty free access for some goods to the USA, but growing protectionist feelings in the USA led to the courts banning the import of iron rods from Trinidad.

Meanwhile, the traditional bases of the economy, the old plantation crop of sugar, and the banana trade are collapsing. Sugar's European markets are eroded by competition from EEC beet and now by artificially produced sugar. As an example St Kitts, the newest independent island produces only half the sugar it did in 1960.

The banana trade has been hit hard, both by storms devastating the islands and by a massive fall in prices.

The rise in oil prices was just another hard knock for most Caribbean states but it made the oil refining island of Trinidad one of the richest countries in the area. Billions of petrodollars were pumped in after 1974, agriculture was neglected, though a small at-

tempt was made to industrialise.

Unemployment officially went below 10% by 1980. But now oil production has gone down 30% in 5 years and oil prices have plummeted due to recession. The good life has been tasted then snatched out of workers' hands.

### No hope under capitalism

The bauxite boom which lifted Jamaica's economy in the '60s is just a memory too with a 30% slump in production which will only be partially reversed in the present short boom. Tourism in the region has also been hit by recession.

The failure of the right wing Jamaican government of Seaga after the defeat of Manley underlines the impossibility of a lasting solution. Unemployment and inflation wrack the economy, and despite "incentives" to invest there is no motivation as industrial capacity is already underused. American advisers complain that local businessmen would rather sell ET dolls than invest in industry. The multinationals meanwhile are still pulling out of the country.

The withdrawal of food subsidies brings back malnutrition, while the electricity, water and telephone systems collapse. Strikes are returning as wages go down and workers recover their confidence.

## ... and the old mongoose

Sir Eric Gairy, the previous prime minister, supported by Nixon was a dictator close to both the mafia and the Chilean junta, who had his ex-convict murder squad, the Mongoose Gang trained by Pinochet. A devotee of voodoo he held black magic conventions in Grenada.

Gairy made a fortune but left just £7 in Grenada's Treasury! He rigged elections and had his opponents killed. Possibly 60% of the population left the islands. But this man, who thought himself appointed by God to lead Grenada, was not overthrown by the "democratic" US forces. He was a staunch defender of private property.

Politically, too, what stability can the US bring? A US marine interviewed on a TV programme belied the propaganda about the massive local welcome in Grenada. Despite the undoubted confusion and mourning at Bishop's overthrow, the US are not seen as "liberators". "In the morning, they give us Coca Cola, but in the evening they take pot shots at us" said the marine.

A US admiral has warned it could take weeks if not months even to contain the initial resistance. The armed might of the USA may prevent immediate explosions in Grenada and elsewhere, but once the implications become clear, all hell will be let loose, particularly if the US try to reinstate Gairy. But even if a more subtle solution, an "untainted" right winger is installed, the period of toleration will be slightly longer.

The effect on the rest of the Caribbean can best be seen in Trinidad. The government did not support the invasion, as they face a strong working class where many oil workers come from Grenada. Oil workers planned protests at Bishop's assassination; they will not welcome this form of "solution".

The disaffection will even reach particularly black workers in USA and Britain in the near future but in the Caribbean, the US invasion will be like taking a pin out of a hand grenade.

# Letters

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

## Pensioners living 'day to day'

Dear Comrades,  
I've just read a letter from a pensioner to Katie Boyle saying how hard it is to survive on a pension now that her husband has retired. What did Katie suggest? "Get some guidance".  
How can you give guidance on how to live on a pittance? Cut down on food, go to bed early, to save on heating and electricity bills? Go to the library in the afternoons to keep warm? It's ridiculous.  
When my Gran, bless her, was alive she relied on her large family to help her and support her, which did nothing for her pride and independent nature.

Now her invalid son, my uncle, depends on his brothers and sisters almost completely. He can just about afford the rent and one bar on his gas fire. Food and clothes are bought for him by my mum and aunts. It made me sad and angry when I was down there last. He told me that at night he has to wear his coat because he can't afford the other two bars on his fire.

Surely he, and hundreds of others, are worth more than this. As for Katie Boyle and her class, well they have no worries about their retirement. They have nest eggs saved up don't they. Our people can barely live day to day, let alone save up for a rainy day.

Lynne Tice  
Hull

## Tebbit's business cycle

Dear Comrades,  
While I realise your letters page is not an agony column, I would be grateful if you could put my mind at rest on the following question.  
In view of the recent

Cabinet changes involving Norman Tebbit, does this mean that in the future we will have to get on our bikes and search for industry?

Yours fraternally  
Worried  
Blackhall

## Lucrative bankruptcy

Dear Comrades,  
British industry is going through an upturn, at the present time, according to the capitalist economists. This may well be so but has it made any difference to the bosses' confidence in their system?

A new magazine has just begun publication which may give us a clue to the long-term prospects for industrial recovery. The magazine will be glossy, will take adverts from all sorts of firms and will be aimed at a select audience. It's called "Receivers and Liquidators Classified", and will advertise the stock and machinery which firms that have gone out of business want to sell.

According to the editors there are now 250 companies going bust every week. That's three times as many

as in 1979. Naturally there is a virtual industry made up of auctioneers, liquidators, etc. This serves to confirm literally, the bankruptcy of capitalism.

Yours fraternally  
Pete McNally  
Coventry NE CLP

## Appeal for help

Dear Comrades,  
There will be a local bye-election in the Hylands Ward of Hornchurch on November 10 1983. Our candidate is the well known socialist and trade unionist Tony Hunt.

We hope all comrades will give us all the help possible to secure his return. Please Telephone Cyril Whitelock on Hornchurch 72631 with offers of help.

P Power  
Hornchurch

## Right-wing manoeuvres

Dear Comrades,  
A friend of mine has just returned from a two week TA exercise. For two of these days it seems, Britain was under a tremendous 'threat' from within.

Being an ex-squaddie, I wasn't surprised to hear about the exercise. I've been on similar exercises myself. Apparently a nasty bunch, funded by the Russians, were planning to raid an arms dump at Aldershot. These people call themselves CND.

The political wing, of the violent wing, of this peace movement (still with me) are nothing more than a bunch of Russian agents, and they are also in the immediate area and had to be watched out for. These people called themselves the Militant tendency, and were not to be

trusted.

At the same time an ally of these people—a member of the IRA—was also lurking about. So, all these 'bad guys' had to be stopped. The briefing for this exercise must have been a real gem. To socialists it seems ridiculous but imagine you are a young person, not too clear about this system, and open to this sort of thing—Militant Tendency, Russia, left-wing, IRA bombs, killings, left-wing!

One of the ways to stop this propaganda is through the introduction of trade union rights for the armed forces. This would help bring rank and file servicemen closer to their brothers and sisters in civvy street, and undermine capitalism's last line of defence.

Yours fraternally  
Bob Harker  
Gateshead East CLP

## Tory vote mistake

Dear Comrades,  
"Do not worry the NHS is safe with us"—Rubbish. Look what's happened now—staff in all departments of the NHS losing their jobs. Nurses and doctors forced onto the dole. Hospitals being closed when people have been waiting for years for a bed.

Not all of us can afford private hospital fees like some members of the Tory party. I even voted Tory in the last election—what a terrible mistake.

Militant supporter  
Isle of Wight

## Rail 'charm schools'

Dear Comrades,

The British Railways Board have come up with the novel idea of 'charm schools' to teach staff involved with the general public how to be nice and improve BR's image.

Railwaymen don't need charm schools to be nice to people. Many low paid railwaymen share the same concern as the general public about the rail system, and want investment to improve the system.

Many railwaymen, however, are at the forefront of the public's wrath when services are running late or cancelled because of staff or stock shortages. Explosive situations can easily arise and attacks on staff are now commonplace in certain areas.

No amount of appeasing the Tory government will stop this. Railwaymen will see that the way forward will be united trade union and labour movement joint attack to get rid of the Tory government and its anti-working class policies.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Hardy  
Nottingham and District  
Rail

## Militant moralising

Dear Militant,

I read with surprise the article 'Victorian Values' in issue 672 concerning the recent Cecil Parkinson affair.

I took the point: one minute the Tories are raving about "the immoral Labour Party" and the "family splitters" of the left, and the next, they're doing it themselves. But we condemn them because they do practice double standards and not for the act itself. Extra-marital sex and having illegitimate children aren't immoral in themselves whether it's a Tory doing it or not!

Militant doesn't usually indulge in personality attacks—there is more than enough political ammunition. I certainly am not sympathetic. After all, as you point out it's really no skin off his nose and definitely not so financially, unlike a similar situation for a working person, for whom having a kid often means financial suicide. And so as I'm concerned, the more uncomfortable a Tory, the better I like it. But as far as the actual activity itself is concerned, I would not condemn anyone.

Let's stick to political hammering and leave the moralising to the Tories!

Yours fraternally,  
M. Langmead  
Bristol SE LPYS

## Plan for Land

Dear Comrades,

At Labour Party Conference there was a short debate on rural areas. Although I live in a town I spend what little spare time I have hill-walking.

I wonder what other readers think about the solutions to the problems in rural areas. Two specific areas interest me. One is the increase in private forests—planted as a tax avoidance scheme I think—and the government's threat to privatise the Forestry Commission, which now has some regard to the visual impact of miles of boring conifers.

The other is how to preserve the uncultivated land—moors, hills, commons etc—both from agriculture and erosion by walkers and others.

As far as I know it is Labour Party policy to nationalise agricultural land, but what about open hills and moors.

It seems to me that all land and forestry should be publicly owned, and then its use could be democratically planned. I'd be interested to see what other readers think.

Yours fraternally  
Margaret Manning  
Manchester Withington  
CLP.

## Tory deceivers

Dear Militant,

As a physically handicapped person I know the Tories have gone back sixty years, for that's how old I am. In 1924 there was no such thing as dole, but a real means test. I was in an Ipswich orphanage 15 years and in a boys home in London during the blitz.

I was conscripted into the army in December 1942 and went to North Africa and Italy until 1947, and we fought for so-called democratic freedom. Yes, the Tories were well and truly wacked, but I in 1945 like millions of other ex-servicemen, payed a hell of a price.

It makes my wife and I mad when we see the traitors who sell their votes to the Tories. I've asked many people whether they voted Tory but they won't admit it. The Tories are a bunch of deceivers. That's why my wife and I support Militant, it is an honest paper. I warn the Tories—your days in government are coming to an end.

Yours fraternally  
JM Taylor  
Coventry

## Health waste

Dear comrades,

I work in the health service in a catering department. There is an awful lot of money wasted on over-ordering of food. Not because the cooks don't know how much food they need. It is because the managers insist that they are the only ones who have the brains to do the ordering.

At my hospital the supervisor comes through the kitchen twice a day. She never goes in the stores so she never knows what's in them.

If you put people in charge of nationalised industries they can only run them properly if they have a vested interest. The only ones who have a vested interest are the workers. The bosses seek to undermine the nationalised industries and the workers in them.

Yours fraternally  
John Talbot  
Leicester NUPE

## High Peak socialism

Dear Editor,

An LPYS branch is being formed in the High Peak at the moment. On the face of it, this is the last place you would think to find an active LPYS branch, with a Tory council and only one Labour MP ever.

But feelings and ideas are changing. Glossop in the High Peak has the worst youth unemployment in Derbyshire, and there have been no vacancies at the careers office for two months.

There is a growing bit-

terness in this once prosperous area. Nationally the Labour party must show they take youth seriously by providing the money it needs. If it doesn't, how can the party expect young people to see it as the party of youth?

Young socialists in the High Peak already have the complete support of the Constituency Labour Party. With a higher budget what we can achieve is immeasurable.

Yours sincerely  
Andrew Divall  
High Peak CLP

## Cartoon Tories

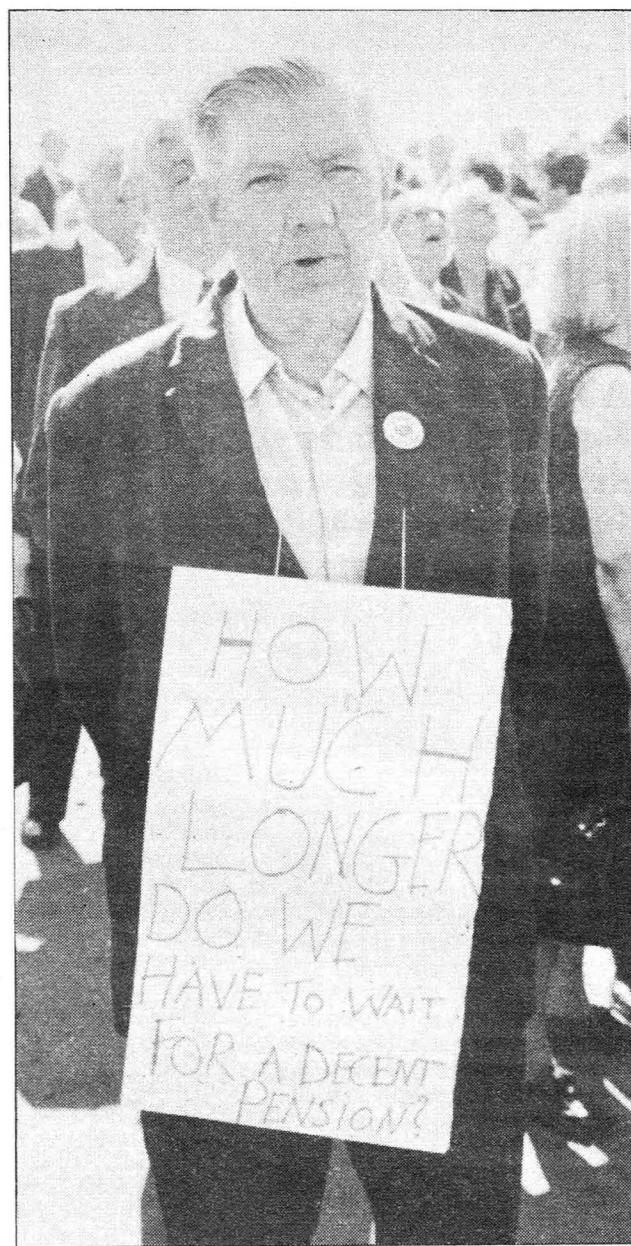
Dear Comrades,

While selling papers in Hartlepool shopping centre on Saturday, we noticed a small group of people wandering around dressed as various characters ranging from Donald Duck to Worzel Gummidge, handing out leaflets to passers-by.

Thinking this was just some charity stunt, we didn't

take too much notice. However, they approached us and gave us a leaflet. It read 'Hartlepool Conservative Association Autumn Fayre! The crowd drawing attractions included home-made cakes and flower arranging. No doubt this is the Tories' idea of real world politics.'

Yours fraternally  
M Lutz  
Hartlepool LPYS



Once retired, workers are of no value to capitalists.

## Pensioners—expensive nuisance?

Dear Friends,

I read recently 'NHS cuts may kill, can kill, will kill. What's the difference? Surely the object of the Thatcher exercise is to do just that. The low wage earners are expendable, as are their children. After all robots can take the place of many of these.

The unemployed are an acute embarrassment to Thatcher and her cronies. They are most certainly expendable. The pensioners are a very expensive nuisance. They toil not, neither do they spin. They just turn up at the Post Office once weekly and drain £32.85 from the state. We 'geriatrics' should presumably be able to get out of the way should we fall ill and need treatment.

At 70 years young I have no power, political or other-

wise, with the exception of my vote which I have never failed to use since I had it in 1934.

I do however talk to people, young and old. In the shops I point out the price rises. I get into discussion on nuclear armaments and power stations. I tear huge strips off people who say, "I didn't vote, my one wouldn't count" They are the very people who put Tories into power, so please rise up one and all. Talk to everyone in the shops, buses, trains, to those who need to be converted. Let's get on with it. Fight with all your might not only against cuts in the National Health Service, but against all the other injustices meted out to those in need.

Frieda Fenby  
Littlehampton

# Two skilled workers in the North-East write about unemployment and the bosses' hypocrisy

## OUT ON THE STONES

THREE YEARS ago I was in a well paid job. As a shop steward I had helped to organise a factory which, according to our union district organiser, was one of the highest paid in the North East.

On the shop floor we had control over agreements, times for jobs and work practices.

However that was three years ago.

While away at my union conference in November 1980, management issued redundancy notices to all thirty men. Management told us that they hoped to receive new orders, for this reason notices were staggered. In fact as each notice came up they were rescinded.

### Redundancy money won't pay bills

When my turn came, however, I was informed that there was no work available. This was at 4.00 pm, the shift was due to finish at 4.30 pm, which didn't leave time to organise opposition.

It was undoubtedly a case of victimisation. Some time later I met a lad who had been talking to management on the shop-floor. This lad asked when I was to be taken back as they had plenty of orders. He was told that he had too much to say and that anyway the boss now had control of his factory.

After I had gone there were no wage rises. Times for the job were renegotiated. Some of the welding times were cut by half. This firm produced equipment for the safety of miners. Good welding was a necessity—cutting times so drastically could only affect the quality of mining safety equipment.

I went through the procedure for unfair dismissal but due to a 'misunderstanding' between the lawyer and the union executive member I was too late in appealing.

At first the dole was not too bad. With £600 redundancy money plus earnings

related it was possible to survive—for a while. That soon changed—especially when the quarterly bills started to arrive.

My first period of unemployment lasted ten months. I got a job lasting five weeks with a firm that also dealt in mining equipment. The important difference was this was a non-union shop. I had never worked before without the protection of a union, a shop steward or a workforce prepared to take collective action.

This firm allowed people to have individual union cards in order to get contracts with the NCB. But any dissent meant instant dismissal, as the boss could choose from the reserve army of labour. Safety was non-existent. There were no glasses, welding goggles—you had to provide your own.

One day I needed some first aid. When I opened the first aid box all it contained was a few safety pins. You even had to provide your own elastoplast!

One day when the firm's lorry driver fell off the trailer we had to use an upturned canteen chair for a man who had a possible back injury. He was taken to hospital by car. Before the car had gone out of sight the foreman had clocked off his card.

It was a decent wage for 39 hours, but you had to work 60 or 70 hours to get it. Altogether I worked for this firm on three occasions. The last occasion was for four weeks. The first three weeks was night shift—six, twelve-hour shifts—some men actually worked seven!

The fourth week I worked Sunday 8.00 am to 4 pm; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 8 am to 9 pm; Thursday (pay day) 8.30 pm to 7.30 pm. During this time you only got a half-hour dinner break plus two ten-minute tea-breaks and a cup of tea on the job. Friday I worked 7.00 am - 5.30 pm. Home for a bite to eat, back to work at 9.30 pm, to work night shift 'till 7.30 pm on the Saturday morning.

When I arrived at work on



Photo: Militant

the Monday morning there was only enough time to put on my boiler suit and open my tool box before the owner thanked me for my efforts and co-operation and then immediately gave me the sack.

The amount of overtime worked was a condition of employment. Failure to comply meant instant dismissal. The management had a regime of terror to stop workers organising. Any informal conversation was virtually impossible as it would get back to management and the people involved would be sacked.

### Victimisations

One bloke who worked there tried to put across the ideas of *Militant*. He was sacked by 10.00 am in the morning. There are probably thousands of factories throughout Britain like this—where workers are black mailed because of the dole queues.

One of the reasons I had to work for such a firm was that unionised firms operate a blacklist. I have examples of being offered employment in a shipyard and other engineering factories only to be knocked back when my

record as a shop steward has been traced.

I also know of a case in the 1960s where a worker told a foreman to f— off. To this day he cannot get employment with British Shipbuilders—yet more proof that management have blacklists.

While I was on the dole kids were rioting on the streets of Toxteth and Brixton. Throwing stones at the police. I can understand that frustration because existence on the dole has given me experience of it.

Being afraid, for example, to answer the door because it may be debt collectors. Not being able to visit elderly parents, even when they are ill, because you can't afford the bus fares. Birthdays of loved ones are missed because you cannot afford a present or card. Watching your wife cry at Christmas, unable to buy her mother who lives alone, a present.

At times I have felt like throwing stones at somebody, but deep down I know that is not the way. The TUC was brought into being into 1868, the Labour Party was founded in 1900. It is now 1983 and I'm going to bed hungry at night.

An old socialist once said to me that there is enough

work out there to last humanity thousands of years. We are being deprived of that work because the factories are run for profit.

Our leadership has to

realise that socialism is not something that can be put off until tomorrow. They have to fight for the working class or stand aside for those prepared to fight.



Photo: Militant

## Shipowners - on another planet

AS A former merchant navy engineer I have discovered that the shipowners of the British merchant fleet are world leaders in the Orwellian art of doublethink.

In 1981, I was unemployed for six months and during this time I was seduced into applying for a job on a "flag of convenience" ship owned by a company called Planet Shipping.

The fact that if I gained employment on this ship it would mean having my GCBS registration terminated caused me some trepidation at the time, but like many others I was enticed by the short-term prospect of earning a wage.

The fact that in the future I would be unemployable as far as the British merchant fleet was concerned was pushed to the back of my mind. I answered the advertisement which had appeared in a na-

tional daily and awaited developments.

A few days later I received a reply from Planet Shipping inviting me to attend an interview in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, at all places, the P&O Shipping Company offices.

First of all however, I must explain the workings of the merchant navy employment machine.

In the UK the workers who man ships in the British merchant fleet are chosen from a pool of labour registered with the General Council of British Shipping. The GCBS is the British shipowners' private club, and jobs on all ships under the British flag are obtained through this organisation.

One of the rules of the GCBS is that any person who sails under a foreign flag will have his registration revoked, thus excluding him from any further work in the Brit-

ish merchant navy.

Because of the high standards of safety required on "British flag" ships, many shipowners are reducing expenditure by transferring the registry of their ships to other countries and sailing their ships under "flags of convenience".

### 'Convenient' for the bosses

Because there is no adequate international legislation dealing with safety standards for workers, these ships are allowed to deteriorate, due to skimping on, or lack of, repairs to machinery and safety equipment. They become what is known in the trade as floating coffins.

An increasingly large percentage of accidents and fatalities at sea oc-

cur on these flag of convenience ships. During this time of high unemployment the temptation to sail on foreign flag ships increases, especially for married men with families to support on the small amount of benefit money they receive from the state and the "pool money" from the GCBS.

Given the fact that the GCBS expels workers for sailing on foreign flag ships, it may seem contradictory that one of its members allows a foreign flag operator to recruit workers on its premises.

On analysing the situation however, the reasons for the hypocrisy become clear.

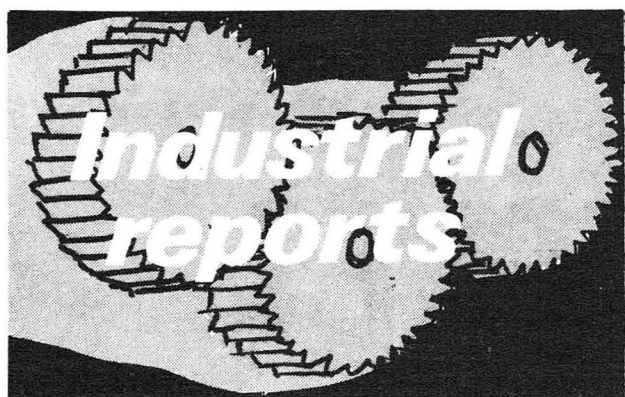
At the moment the GCBS is obliged to pay benefit to any registered seafarer who is unemployed and signing on at the GCBS Labour Pool. Foreign flag operators have no such obligation,

and any worker who gains employment on a foreign flag forfeits his benefit rights from the GCBS.

Every worker who goes to a foreign ship allows the shipowners to transfer the registry of another ship to a flag of convenience; lowering safety standards and thus increasing profits.

All of these things are helping British shipowners to decimate the British merchant fleet, and force workers to take cuts in living standards, safety standards, and working conditions.

As for myself. I failed to get the job with Planet Shipping, and after the initial disappointment came to my senses. I realised how close I had come to being an unwitting tool of the bosses.



## CPSA Broad Left Prepare for 1984

84,000 civil service jobs have been destroyed since the Tories won the 1979 general election—according to government figures.

Members of my union, the Civil and Public Services Association, face ferocious Tory attacks on their pay, jobs and conditions.

The right-wing leadership of the union, by trying to do diplomatic deals through discussion with the Tories, are blocking any effective fight-back. They have also played a prominent role in sending the TUC down that blind alley.

It is vital that the CPSA Broad Left conference in London on 5/6 November unites around a clear programme and strategy to replace the right wing NEC majority at the 1984 elections.

Most of the active membership of the union—those who go to CPSA conference, and take on voluntary work in the branches—give their allegiance to the Broad Left.

They do so because of our record in fighting, often against ferocious opposition from the right-wing, for important policies adopted by the union, by the union.

The CPSA Broad Left fought to establish that CPSA would stand for:

- ★ A national minimum wage
- ★ Flat rate (rather than percentage) pay increases:
- ★ The 35 hour week:
- ★ Regular election of the union's senior full-timers:
- ★ The defence and expansion of public services:

Practically every policy that the union is supposed to stand for was pushed by the Broad Left. The unfortunate fact is that the right-wing leadership do not put them into practice.

A disastrous example of this has been the lack of a real campaign for re-affiliation of the union to the Labour Party.

In May our national conference called for an extensive campaign. The right wing responded by putting out one feeble leaflet. Little encouragement was given to branches and area committees to organise meetings explaining the issues involved. The union's general secretary appeared at the TUC arguing publicly for the trade

## Bristol and Balham

THE CAMPAIGN against overtime by DHSS staff in Bristol (Militant 672) has achieved some significant gains.

Selective industrial action or the threat of it has resulted in:

Withdrawal of overtime from three of the offices and the withdrawal of all notices issued to staff in Bristol stating they were "surplus to requirements". At the same time staffing geniuses at DHSS HQ have "discovered" 700 extra posts which can be allocated to local offices nationally!

Management underestimated the members' commitment to the action, and the momentum built up has taken them by surprise.

The action continues and media coverage has been good

(Breakfast TV included!)

However money is desperately needed as the two unions involved (CPSA and SCPS) are trying to fund the action locally, though the action is official.

Please rush donations/requests for collection sheets and messages of support to C. Davidson CPSA DHSS, Godwin House, Wilder St, Bristol BS2 8RD.

By a CPSA member,  
DHSS, Bristol.

TWENTY FIVE CPSA and SCPS members of SW London DHSS offices picketed Balham

# Shell: ..hit them again!

**SHELL management don't know what's hit them!**

"If we had to go back tomorrow with 4½%, the new unity forged between the TGWU and the Craft Unions would be a victory for us." This comment from a striker at Stanlow indicates the success of the dispute so far.

Tanker drivers have shown tremendous solidarity. Their support has been total, despite intimidation from management, who are stopping wages and have changed their instructions on whether drivers should cross picket lines.

An injunction against strikers, on the grounds of so-called 'secondary picketing', was a major blunder by the company. Not only has it proved totally useless—they can't find the

named strikers—but has hardened attitudes.

The attitude of many strikers was summed up by Ian Challinor, senior TGWU shop steward, at an Ellesmere Port LPYS public meeting. "This offer comes from the Tories, Shell aren't in it."

The pickets are planning Christmas decorations. A Christmas tree has already appeared at one gate. The morale of the strikers is very important

and there's no mistaking their determination.

This dispute has developed rapidly. Nationwide we've seen the rejection of the company's offer, support from the tanker drivers and escalation to one-day national action.

If this momentum can be kept up victory is on the cards.

By a Shell ASTMS member

**HARRY O'NEILL, Shellhaven TGWU convenor:**

"4½% is just not enough, the workers want 12%. Shell is probably the richest company in the country, they are attempting to carry out the CBI line on low wage increases. The workforce is extremely moderate, with this being the first dispute over pay in their history, and their first strike for eleven years. The workforce has had enough. They have lost jobs by the hundreds recently."

## EETPU

THE 1983 EETPU bi-annual conference will also be the six-yearly rules revision conference.

The agenda reflects pressure to the left from the rank and file. Resolutions on the agenda include demands for a 35-hour week to fight unemployment, no co-operation with voluntary redundancies and a united campaign for jobs by the unions and the Labour Party.

Members demand "an aggressive attitude" by the Executive in a fight against Tory anti-union legislation.

Others call for the defence of youth from "employers hungry for cheap labour" (implicitly criticising the leadership's acceptance of reduced wages for apprentices).

Rank and file determination to defend and further members' interests is also reflected in proposed rule changes. "Full-time officials should be democratically elected and paid the average wage of members plus justifiable expenses" says one proposed rule change. This is vitally important; it would ensure that we all fought together, with determined leadership, for better wages and conditions.

Several branches call for an end to the ban on Communist Party members holding union office, and of the rule which forbids communication between branches.

Consultation with members before negotiated agreements are signed, is called for.

It is an indication of the undemocratic running of the union that rule amendments are necessary to make conference policy decisions binding; At present the Executive Council support only selected conference decisions.

If these rule changes are carried it would open up a new chapter for the EETPU. With greater democracy the members could take their place in the fight to defend jobs, services and conditions.

(For comments on the debate and proposed witch-hunt of Militant supporters in the union, see page 3)

## NGA—strategy for next decade

DELEGATES TO the National Graphical Association Special conference gather at a time of crisis in the union, principally to carry out a cost-cutting exercise due in part to the burden of maintaining a large number of unemployed.

The real crisis, though, goes much deeper and must soon be faced up to. The causes are many and are interlinked New technology has swept the trade like a flood tide and has left little of the craft structure standing.

The general industrial and political climate of the country has had a marked effect on us—the Thatcher factor—including anti-union legislation. Now comes "Operation Breakthrough", the printing and newspaper bosses' own code-name for their attack on union practices which, at the moment, give some measure of protection to our jobs.

It is a credit to the resilience of our union that we have not only survived but done so with our strength intact. The current restructuring being proposed will help to maintain our current position in the near future.

Proposals that the National Council should be composed of lay members, that disciplinary matters will be completely independent from the National Council and the regional structure (which many saw as a barrier to effective action) be abolished, are to be welcomed.

Other changes, not the purpose of this conference, would help even more in changing the union into a fighting organisation. This would include the regular re-election of officers (at national level it's currently a job for life). An annual conference is another demand to be taken up. A bi-annual conference is inadequate when you consider the attacks on us by the bosses and the government.

We can no longer afford to tackle our problems in a piecemeal fashion—it is becoming essential that we develop a strategy for the next decade and beyond.

That strategy must include our print colleagues in SOGAT 82 and NUJ—the problems of direct imputing demanning and "Operation Breakthrough" combined with the economic climate make this imperative. The cliché takes on new meaning: "United we stand, divided we fall!"

Our first aim must be to put aside petty differences so as to

unite to meet the challenge. Nothing less than one union for the whole industry will give us the protection we need. And nothing less than a fighting, dedicated leadership will be able to meet the challenge. That means a leadership prepared to make itself answerable to an annual conference of the Union of Print and News Personnel; a leadership prepared to subject itself to re-election; to accept the average wage of the members.

To unify those in work with those out of work, we should

**HARRY O'NEIL, Convenor TGWU Shellhaven Essex, spoke to John McKay for Militant.**

"Initially, in protest at the 4½% offer by management, we were going to have a 24 hour stoppage. But the groundswell of anger from the membership resulted in all out action commencing tomorrow, 2 November.

"ASTMS had earlier decided for an all-out strike, so we put this to TGWU members at the last meeting yesterday, and they unanimously decided to back that move. On the question of the court injunction, the TGWU Convenor is in daily contact with the strikers in Merseyside, and when asked about the threat of injunctions his attitude was that they would not be intimidated by court action. They will be calling on support from the AUEW and indeed EETPU workers at Shellhaven and also will be asking the tanker drivers not to cross the picket line.

follow the example of Liverpool Unemployed Chapel. We must prevent the bosses pitting worker against worker.

Alongside a determined campaign throughout the labour and trade union movement for a living wage for all we must fight for a shorter working week and link this to a wage that doesn't depend on overtime and bonus schemes.

By Reg Lewis  
(Liverpool NGA)

## Stockport Messenger

A MASS delegate meeting of all print unions and Labour Parties was held in Manchester on Thursday 2 October, to build support for the NGA and NUJ members involved in the Stockport Messenger dispute.

Almost 600 delegates from Greater Manchester, Liverpool and Lancashire turned up to hear Bill Keyes, General Secretary, SOGAT, Tony Dubbins, General Secretary elect of the NGA, Ken Ashton, General Secretary, NUJ, call for massive trade union action to assist our brothers in this dispute.

This is a dispute where the rule of secondary picket action involved and action is being applied by the courts following injunctions taken against the union.

Speaker after speaker from the floor agreed that if the general secretaries gave a lead then the membership of the union would do the rest. The

NGA has said that it will defy the courts and has already refused to pay fines. SOGAT has responded by saying that if NGA's funds are threatened by the government then SOGAT will finance them indefinitely.

This action shows the determination of workers in different unions to forget old differences and to unite in the fight against the Tories. Mass pickets of print and other workers are being organised for Stockport, Bury and Warrington branches of the Messenger's newspaper group.

It is vital that as many trade unionists as possible attend these pickets to show their support. For further details or messages of support write to, Graphic House, 27a Greek Street, Stockport.

By Bernard Maguire  
(W H Smiths  
SOGAT FOC)

## J.T. Orange—16 weeks

AFTER SIXTEEN weeks five members of the National Graphical Association (NGA) are still picketing JT Orange, a small printers in Islington, London.

They have been joined by SOGAT 82 members who have honoured the picket line.

The response from fellow trade unionists has been magnificent, not one has crossed the picket line, and 90% of the customers have been turned away.

The lock-out started after what was seen as victimisation, when management tried to force two redundancies on the NGA members. During the course of negotiations an NGA member gave in his notice, but management refused to accept one fewer redundancy.

They have refused to go to

ACAS. It is clear management's object is to break the union.

The Father of Chapel (FOC), reflecting the determination of the picket told me, "We will stay out another 16 weeks if necessary. If we don't win it will be the green light to other bosses and victory for Tebbit. Although we are only a few, this fight represents the battle by printworkers to retain union organisations—which is the only way we can maintain our living standards."

Messages of support and donations should be sent to: JT Orange Strike Fund, c/o John Geleit, London Region NGA, 12-14 Theobalds Road, London WC1X 8PF.

By Peter Jarvis  
(London Region NGA)

# All eyes on POEU conference

POEU MEMBERS enter the re-convened conference more confident than ever.

Privatisation is widely recognised as a disaster for working people, though a financial bonanza for the super-rich and parasitic City sharks. Even BT management are now in conflict with the government and share the misgivings of some Tory ministers and big business speculators about the government's 'liberalisation' plans. Mercury has been at least temporarily rebuffed in the courts, and BT have capitulated on sackings until after the conference.

Our confidence and the waverings of the enemy stem from our members' determination to use the power we possess. Events so far have completely confirmed our analysis: resolute industrial action is the only way to shift the Tories.

The Tories miscalculated. They mistook the doom-laden speeches of one or two right wingers (at the Special Conference in September) for widespread pessimism. POEU members did not pick this fight but they are not prepared to see their jobs go for the greater glory and profits of the Tories and their allies.

The solidarity and loyalty to the union has been a credit to the whole of the labour movement. It has put the faint-hearts to shame. And all this



The recent POEU special conference confirmed the action against Mercury and privatisation.

Photo: Militant

has been achieved by the merest whiff of grapeshot.

Selective action has now been stepped up and the levy has been re-introduced. The branches in big industrial areas have now been brought into the action, but it is still necessary to involve all

members at each stage of the battle. The levy does this to a small extent but as many members as possible must take an active, not merely a passive, part in the campaign.

A national overtime ban/work to rule would increase involvement and help

cut across any feeling of isolation amongst those bearing the brunt of suspensions, threats of sackings and intimidation by the management.

Mass meetings addressed by POEU members on strike, or suspended, are essential to discuss and organise support

collectively. They are an important way of countering Fleet Street, which is quiet at the moment but always in reserve with its anti-union poison.

The eyes of the Tories and BT, as well as POEU members, are on this conference. BT

have delayed sackings, no doubt hoping for signs of weakness in the ranks.

The message from conference must be loud and clear; the POEU will continue to fight, will step up the action and use all means necessary to defend jobs, the service and the industry.

Having failed to break the union's defences by 'bussing', the use of lock-out in London and the threat of sackings, BT could 'go for broke' and try a total lock out and or mass sackings. It is possible that (after enormous, open and behind the scenes pressure) the ruling against Mercury could be reversed. The union's funds could be threatened and its leaders jailed if the union sticks to its policy not to interconnect and defies a court ruling.

The POEU would have no choice but to respond by all-out strike action, invoking agreed support from the TUC, appealing for immediate industrial support from the UCW and other BT unions. And demand that the Labour Party and whole labour movement launch a massive solidarity campaign.

This conference must act to strengthen the morale, resolve and fighting spirit of the members. Above all, we must prepare the union for whatever attacks may come from the Tories, BT and Mercury.

In this way victory is assured—not just for the POEU but for all workers.

## 'It takes money to buy drink'

POEU members have contributed to making the telephone service in Britain one of the best in the world.

All subscribers in Britain, from the most rural of users to those in central London have access to ninety-three per cent of the world's phones by direct dialling. 178 countries can be reached by Telex. High-speed packet-switched data is available to twenty-one countries.

BT, and before that Post Office Telecommunications, has consistently made hundreds of millions of pounds profit. These few statistics destroy the Tory myth that private enterprise would provide a better service!

But privatisation is not a whim or purely an ideological issue for the Tories. Talk's cheap but it takes money to buy drink, as they say in Glasgow. Hard cash is the name of the game. It is no coincidence that over the years, firms such as GEC and others involved in the telecomms industry have been some of the biggest contributors to the Tory party.

These donations were not given by big business purely out of friendship. They were an investment. British Telecom, or more accurately the immensely profitable parts, being the hoped for reward.

During the boom years they were content merely to rob the service by forming cartels to maximise profits. Every engineer remembers the infamous 'cable ring'. This was a secret banding together of suppliers of cable and wire to artificially keep up prices. When exposed they were forced to repay the Post Office several million pounds.

In the crisis now prevailing, they want to go the whole hog—swallow the juicy profitable bits and spit out the rest. Most of BT's employees work for what would be the rest.

The future standard of service for residential and especially rural subscribers can best be judged by the announcement in Parliament that the new privatised British Telecom would be charged to honour its commitments to consumers, "where there is a reasonable expectation of demand and usage".

In other words service would be provided only if it appeared to be highly profitable. The threat to the jobs and conditions of POEU members working in these areas is colossal. The danger of BT ending national pay bargaining and instituting a system of pay rises (or not) dependent on income in the area is all too real.

Who are we fighting? Although the present action is

against Mercury it should be recognised that this is only round one. The Mercury issue is being used by the Tories as a battering ram, firstly to test, and if possible, to break, the fighting capacity of POEU members.

It is crucial that we win this round. The myth peddled by BT management that they are opposing privatisation and trying to secure guarantees from the Tories has been shattered by their recent behaviour.

The so-called neutrality of BT management was exposed by the appointment of Mr Deryck Van der Weyer as deputy chairman. It just so happens this gentleman is a top banker at Barclays. Barclays Bank just happens to be one of the three constituent firms making up Mercury!

## Glasgow

IN GLASGOW ten members were pulled out by the union on Monday.

They maintain an old Baird Trunk ND which handles STD into Glasgow. A foreman (a POEU member) has been scabbing. But that is only a temporary hold-up before the action begins to bite.

Management recently announced their intention to cut the budget on CA&L work by an equivalent of 30-man hours. They propose to do this by re-deploying fifteen men or cutting rotas for Saturday cover. They backed down when the branch took a firm stand with a total ban on overtime.

Glasgow members only contact with the national action so far has been through the industrial action bulletin, which is welcomed as a new departure by the left NEC. There is now full support for the levy and the action despite management attempts to undermine solidarity. They have posted unsigned and unattributed copies of the scurrilous *Guardian* editorial to all exchanges and held a series of small local meetings to put pressure on isolated members.

## Swansea

SWANSEA POEU has called six PABX workers out on indefinite strike.

We went to Head Office last week and discussed with the Industrial Action Strategy Committee (IASC), the possibility of an extension of selective action. We came away confident that within a short time Swansea would be part of the action.

On Thursday 27 October we had an "hour letter" instructing us to withdraw the labour of six PABX members with specialist skills. A meeting was immediately organised of all PABX members, and the strikers were selected. It was also decided to hold a mass meeting at the Central Telephone Exchange, to coincide with the strike action.

A meeting of several hundred took place within hours for workers to be informed of the strike action, and the strikers were sent off with best wishes and a determination to win the dispute. When we went to inform the General Manager he was concerned we hadn't given him 48 hours notice of the strike!

Later in the afternoon a member working in the Repair Service Centre, (RSC) was instructed by higher management to 'work as directed', which would mean doing work

normally done by the six strikers. To his credit our member resisted the pressure. He was told that from 3 pm he would no longer be paid, and to leave the building at once. When our member left so did the whole RSC.

Our branch committee meeting, held immediately after work, debated the strategy of selective industrial action and fully supported the instructions of the NEC. The call for a national overtime ban was also supported.

We consider that the NEC should now implement the overtime ban and a work to rule, and involve all branches and members in the campaign.

Figures were quoted of 15-20 hours overtime being worked in some areas. How can we have thousands of members out on the stones, and still allow the employer to use other members for overtime! The NEC should now be organising mass meetings of all our members to discuss these issues.

We at Swansea are confident, and determined to take whatever action is necessary to defeat our enemy. If it means taking on the Tories, then so be it.

By a  
Swansea branch officer

## Liverpool

A MEETING of Liverpool Internal branch voted unanimously to up the levy to £4 and passed a resolution to call on the EC to change the rules so that it could be higher.

There was a strong mood for extending the action though there is general acceptance of the EC's selective action tactic so far.

There is a fighting mood. One older member was insisting that the minute anyone was sacked an all-out strike should be called. Because some members argued for a continuation of the selective action even under those circumstances, he walked out,

calling the Branch Committee a load of scabs—strong language in Liverpool!

Twenty Liverpool Internal members have been brought out, nine in Birkenhead and fifteen in Warrington. The action will affect John Moores, Barclays Bullion, Unilever, Shell, Vauxhall, Midland Bank computer and Royal Insurance.

All the workers out are specialists who can't be replaced easily. STE are backing the action and there's been no trouble with management so far. CPSP P&T have collected £200 for the strikers.

## Bristol

POEU MEMBERS in Bristol had their first taste of BT's new management style last Thursday, when eight members of Bristol Internal Branch were "bussed" to the BT Tower, in London, to replace workers who were suspended or out on strike.

The Bristol membership refused to be intimidated, and showed their solidarity with the eight by cheering them off on Thursday morning. With the backing of the union locally and nationally, they refused to cross the picket lines and were "bussed" back to Bristol where they were cheered again.

They have now been sent home without pay, for refusing to sign a document promising to work "normally".

Working "normally", according to BT, is being ordered to travel from Bristol to London with an overnight bag. People will travel from Exeter and Birmingham to do your work in Bristol.

The eight engineers who were "bussed" to London were told they would be there at least a month, and possibly until Christmas. When they refused to cross the picket line they were told they wouldn't be paid—at midday—even though they didn't get back to Bristol until late afternoon. As far as BT management are concerned, it's no more Mr Nice Guy.

The Bristol membership have traditionally been moderate. This mood is changing rapidly not because engineers suddenly want to go on strike, but because we are being forced into a corner by senior management.

Far from being intimidated and divided, we are getting ready to come out of our corner fighting. Many of the engineers who attended a mass meeting called at short notice in the Central Exchange Car Park, came prepared for a walk-out. This attitude shows a decisive change in the mood from even a few days ago. The lesson is that when the dispute reaches them, the members are ready and willing to fight.

By a Bristol  
External branch POEU  
member

### EETPU & POEU CONFERENCES MILITANT MEETING

Claremont Hotel, 270 North Promenade  
Tuesday 8 November, 7.30 pm

Speakers:

Terry Fields MP

(Broadgreen)

Phil Holt

(POEU NEC)

Dave Kinnon

(EETPU delegate Nat/Industrial Committee Supply)

Chair: Jim Greer

(EETPU delegate)

All delegates and visitors welcome

## Heseltine - Cruise protesters may be shot

By John  
 Pickard

**PEACE PROTESTERS** at Greenham Common could be shot by armed guards if they continued to carry their protests into the base itself. That was the stark warning issued by Tory Defence Minister Michael Heseltine in Parliament on Tuesday.

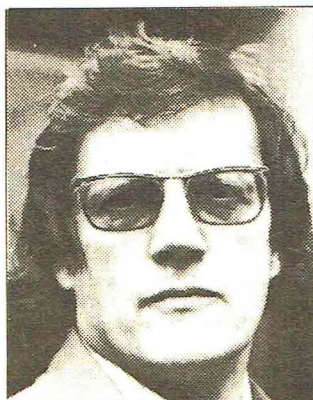
Roland Boyes, Labour MP for Houghton and Washington, had asked Heseltine if he would give an assurance "that he will instruct the commander and person responsible for Greenham Common Cruise Missiles base that in no circumstances will shots be fired at peace protesters."

Labour MPs were shocked to hear Heseltine "categorically" refuse to give any such assurance.

Roland Boyes spoke to *Militant* about his reactions to the statement:

"A lot of members on both sides of the house were shocked and surprised to hear a British minister suggest that un-armed women demonstrating for peace could be shot. I think it's adding a new dimension to British politics that trained army personnel cannot deal with women demonstrators without necessarily or possibly reverting to the use of firearms."

"This is an absolutely disgraceful, totally unaccep-



Roland Boyes MP

table state of affairs, and I today tabled another question to Mr Heseltine, asking him to explain, in detail, what he meant by that particular answer."

Explaining the reasons for his question, Roland continued: "I think the level of opposition to Cruise is likely to increase in the next few weeks as the missiles are brought in and I just wondered how far this par-

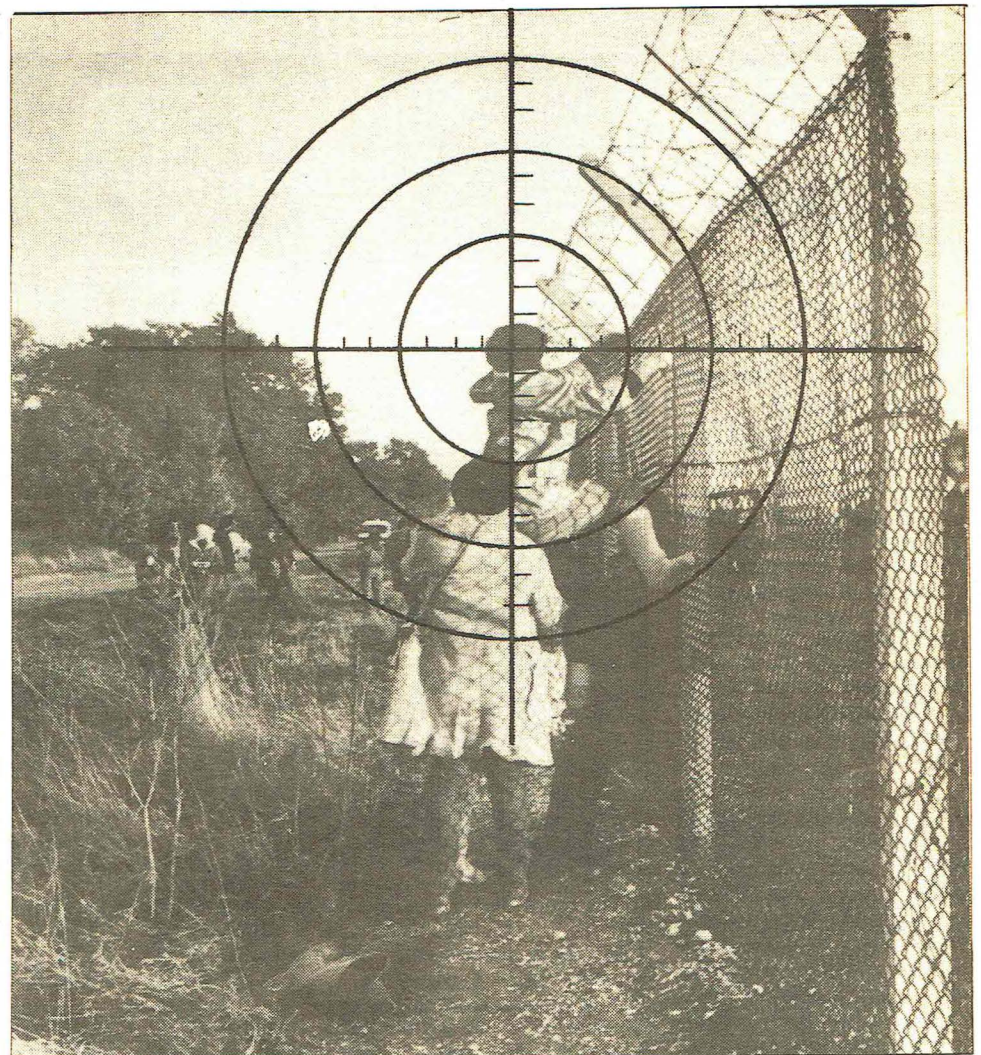
ticular minister in this reactionary government was prepared to go on this issue.

"I'd spoken in the debate on Cruise Missiles on Monday night when I asked the minister to answer a particular question—whether or not he'd be prepared to shoot—he ignored it. That made me a little suspicious, that he'd ignored a direct question to him.

"I therefore had another opportunity on Tuesday afternoon, but this time he couldn't ignore it because it was a one-to-one relationship, whereas before it was just part of an overall debate, and of course when people have been speaking for hours they can pick out the bits they want to reply to.

"The reason I'm taking it very, very seriously was the excitement with which Heseltine addressed himself to this answer. It was a vicious, straight-off-the-top-of-his-head answer, which seems to me that it means it reflects what he actually feels about this particular issue.

"I am wondering how far the British government would go to stop the demonstrators and it seems to me that there is no limit. The limit is death. Execution. I've never known in my political career any minister in a government in Britain, say they would execute un-



A protest at Greenham Common 30 October. A capital offence for the Tories?

armed women demonstrating for peace."

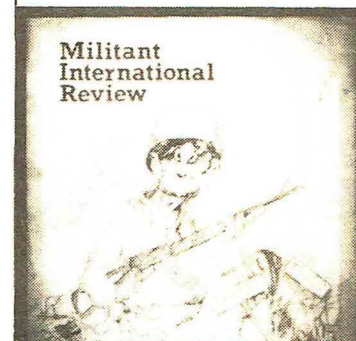
Heseltine's vicious statement will only add to the growing anger over the Tories' deployment of Cruise Missiles, an issue on which the Tories are now clearly in a minority in the country.

It should increase also the resolve of Labour supporters to fight hard for an end to this rotten government and to demand the full im-

plementation by a Labour government of the policy agreed by four successive Labour Party conferences—

for unequivocal unilateral disarmament and the scrapping of all Cruise Missile bases.

### OUT SHORTLY



Latest issue of **Militant International Review**.

Special feature on **Latin America**

## Health workers fighting back

"EVERYONE uses the National Health Service—from the minute we are born until we die. If we don't take decisive action, by this time next year there won't be the NHS we know and expect."

These words by Norwich NUPE convener Robin Dyball sum up the fears and anger of workers throughout the country over the Tories' slashing of the NHS.

All areas are facing attack—whether from massive cuts in finance or through creeping privatisation of hospital services.

Tory Health Minister Fowler has declared he wants 5,000 job cuts by next March. Already he has brought in Ray Griffiths, managing director of

Sainsburys, who has produced a report outlining his 'efficiency' plans for the NHS. Running the Health Service like a supermarket will only worsen the situation. On Monday, six-year old Ann Marie died after being refused a bone marrow operation because of lack of funds at a London hospital—how many more victims will the Tories claim with their new drive for more and yet more cuts?

But health workers are fighting back: **Norwich**. A demonstration has been called for Thursday, November 10, by health unions against proposed cuts that will mainly be achieved through bringing in private contractors. Robin Dyball said, "Great

Yarmouth Health Authority are considering putting their laundry out to contract. One tender we can't possibly compete with is HM Prison Blundeston—prisoners receive £1.50 per week, with no union and no strikes!"

There will be a cut next year of £359,000 on top of which the Tories want another £350,000 'efficiency' saving.

The Tories boast how they are taking on staff. But these 'increases' are basically robbing Paul to pay Peter. In the Norwich area for example they are taking on 40 medical staff for a new unit, yet at the same time are cutting 132 clerical and ancillary staff.

● **Halifax** Last week there was a half day strike by ancillary workers. Union reps attended a health authority meeting where privatisation was being put forward.

It was pointed out that bringing in private contractors would mean a deteriorating service, job losses and wage levels driven down from their already pitiful level.

It would not be cheaper or more efficient—at the High Royds Hospital the contract had been changed several times because it was sub-standard.

And Glyn Robinson, for

COHSE, reminded the health authority just who would gain; one of the firms benefitting from privatisation was Hospital Hygiene Services—amongst their directors is Tory MP Marcus Fox.

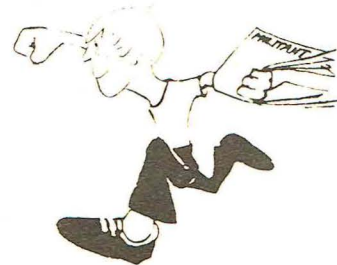
● **Medway Kent** health workers called a public meeting on November 8 against the privatisation of clinics and hospitals. NUPE domestic shop steward Helen Manning told *Militant*, "Private contractors are only interested in profits. They're not interested in training. You'll be worse off in hospital than at home."

She added that one of the firms hoping for the contract is Crosshalls, owned by the notorious Pritchards firm of Wandsworth.

The Tories are attacking the health service from all sides. They have unleashed the money-grabbing profiteers who will dissect the NHS to find profit-making morsels, and to hell with the rest of us.

They are playing with our lives, they must be stopped. As Robin Dyball put it, "Last year NHS workers got enormous support over pay—that support can be multiplied a hundred times if we campaign amongst workers to save their health service."

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