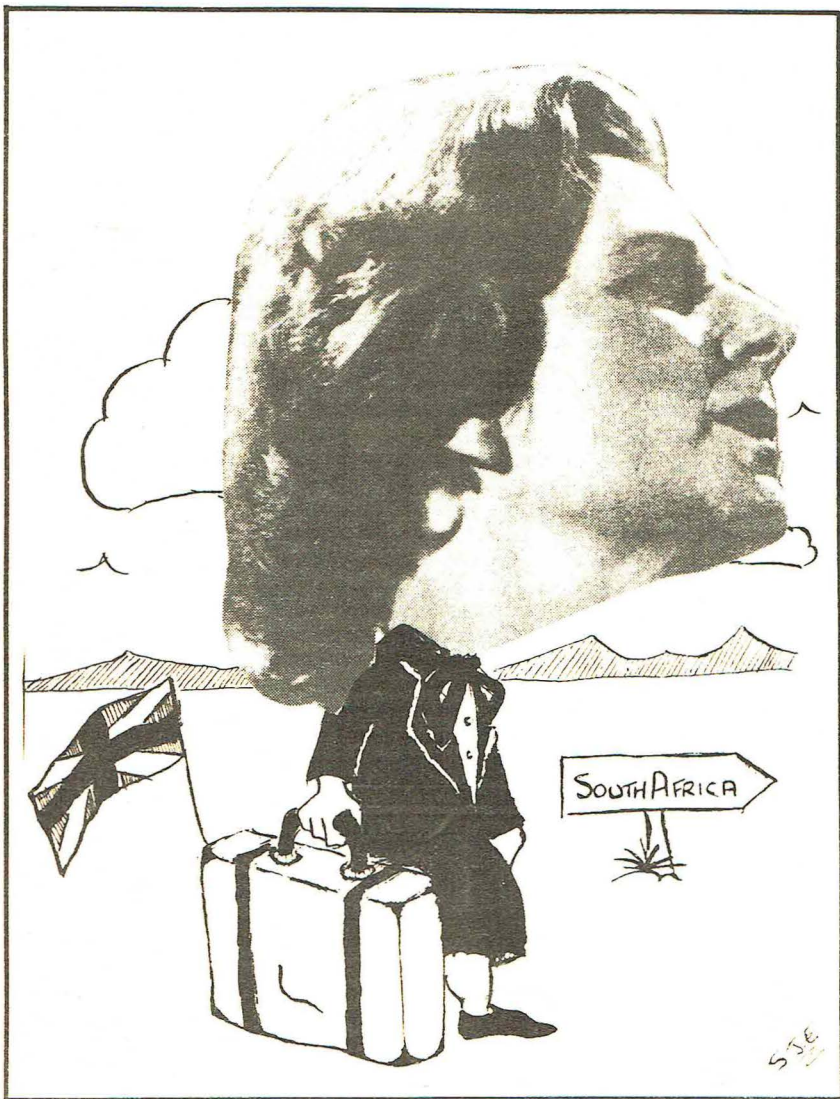


# Send Thatcher packing



ARE YOU like millions of others off on your holidays now? Or are you stuck at home due to lack of money? Either way Thatcher and the Tories are after you. Norman Tebbit has suggested that people in work "should prepare themselves for hard times by stopping having holidays".

The only time that we can relax a bit, is now under attack by the Tories. On 25 July the Wages Act came into force, which means that all young workers below 21 will lose their right to statutory holidays. By next year all workers covered by Wages Councils, 2.5 million in all, will have the same rights removed, making Britain the only country in the EEC without statutory holidays. Danish, French and Swedish workers, for example, take five weeks as a right.

Not that we can afford much on our holiday anyway. While more than 10 million people live in poverty, five company direc-

By Peter Watson

tors now earn more than £1 million a year. According to those who study the holidays of the rich, the average City stockbroker, weighed down with work, prefers "short assaults on Ladakh (Kashmir), visiting monasteries in Sinai (Egypt) or a week in Burma."

While we are watching the rain through the window or checking the waterproofing on the tent, those with the right connections, like Princess Di, can sun it on the £6 million yacht of King Juan Carlos of Spain, free of charge.

Most of us who can afford it, have to make do with an ordinary hotel instead. And there is plenty of money in that for some. Last year Trust House Forte made a profit of £82 million, and Ladbrokes £20 million from their hotel business.

But little finds its way into hotel workers' pockets. The present minimum is £65.79 per week: just loose change to Lord Charles Forte who "earns" £15,000 per week. But even £65 per week is too much for Forte and his friends who are using the Wages Act to impose a £17 per week pay cut on hotel workers.

Yes, there is a lot of money to be made from tourism, but we don't seem to see much of it. The best way to cure that is to put Thatcher and her rich pals on holiday—and let's make it permanent.

## Northern Ireland

# Workers under threat

THE LIVES of workers in Northern Ireland have been put at risk by threats from both loyalist and republican paramilitaries in the last week.

The "security forces", the police and the army, are incapable of defending workers from sectarian attack. But trade unionists in Ireland and Britain can build a movement for a socialist, working class alternative.

The London Postal Engineering branch of the National Communications Union has passed a resolution, without any dissent, calling for action to safeguard workers including members of our own union.

British Telecom have so far made no statement concerning protection of workers from the threats they have received.

We have had reports of BT workers in Northern Ireland being threatened and moved on even if their work



Violence intensifies in the North.

is not connected with the security forces. No NCU members can be expected to carry out work while their lives are put at risk.

The unions in BT must take the initiative. The resolution states:

"The escalation of sectarianism and violence since the establishment of the Anglo-Irish Agreement poses a serious threat to the unity of the labour movement both in Ireland and in

Britain.

"We therefore call upon the NEC as a matter of urgency to put pressure on the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to convene a conference in Northern Ireland in line with policy established at the 1981 Labour Party conference.

"This conference to discuss the defence of non-sectarian trade unionism and the foundation of a party of Labour in Northern Ireland

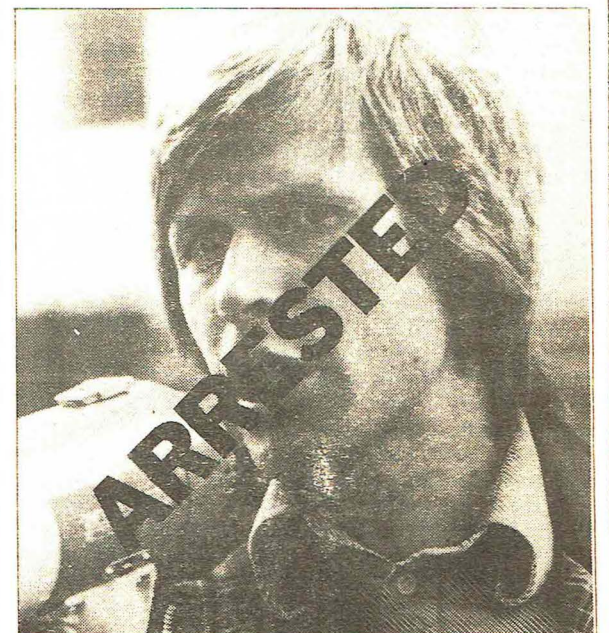
to unite both Catholic and Protestant workers and their communities around a socialist programme in defence of jobs, pay and conditions against their common enemy the Tories and the bigots."

Not only BT workers are affected. This situation puts at risk all workers and threatens the future of the labour movement. Like a number of union branches in Northern Ireland, we must put our strength behind a socialist solution.

Other trade unionists in Britain should, as a matter of urgency ensure their national executives, union leaders and Labour Party leaders are deluged with resolutions demanding action.

By Roy Wenborne  
(NCU London Postal engineering branch, personal capacity)

## Peter Jarvis NGA militant



See back page for full story.

The next issue of *Militant* will appear on 29 August.

# Militant

Editor: Peter Taaffe  
Militant, 3-13 Hepscoot Road London E9 5HB.  
Phone: 01-533 3311.

## Socialists must fight for class unity in N. Ireland

THE FRIGHTENING increase in sectarian hostility in Northern Ireland should be a warning to the labour movement in Ireland and Britain.

1986 has seen the highest number of deaths as a result of the 'troubles', since 1981, the year of the hunger strikes which intensified sectarian feeling. But the current wave of sectarian murders is more reminiscent of the horrific tit for tat killings of the mid seventies.

Protestant assassins have claimed seven victims in the last few months. Among these have been labour movement activist Colum McCallan, Martin Duffy an FBU member and a Catholic building worker employed on a site off the Protestant Shankill Road.

There has been a brutal campaign to drive Catholics from workplaces and homes in Protestant areas. During the week of nightly sectarian fighting and rioting that followed the 12 July Orange Order parades, it was reported that 10 Protestant and 12 Catholic families were forced to leave their homes in Belfast due to attacks.

Most of these events have gone unmentioned in the British press, which seems to be involved in a conspiracy to underplay the depth of sectarian violence engendered by the Tory government's Anglo-Irish Agreement. No British paper reported the ominous, reactionary march of 1,000 Protestants behind the extreme bigot George Seawright, through the Harland and Wolff shipyard.

Behind a press blanket the Anglo-Irish Agreement (despite its failure to produce anything tangible so far) has clearly confirmed the complete antagonism of the Protestant working class to even the idea of a united Ireland, on the basis of capitalism. Without the offer of a socialist perspective they could only foresee reunification as an extension of the regime in the South, to the whole of Ireland.

The deep social and economic problems they see there, the defeat of the divorce referendum, the fear of becoming an oppressed minority, would in the absence of an alternative, push the Protestant population to armed resistance. The chairman of the loyalist Ulster Clubs talks of building "a people's army". The nightmare of civil war could become a reality, with forced evictions and a repartition along rigidly sectarian lines.

Reunification therefore is not part of the plans of British imperialism. The Anglo-Irish Agreement is the furthest the Tories can go along that road. But if the statements of Northern Ireland Minister Nicholas Scott are correct, incredibly Thatcher must still believe she can ride out Protestant opposition. Starting next month, reforms decided upon under the Agreement will gradually start to be introduced. These measures, like the repeal of the Flags and Emblems Act, the right to have street signs in Gaelic etc, will feed Protestant anger, while making little difference to the daily lives of Catholic workers.

The recent threat by the Provisional IRA to all those involved in supplying in any way the security forces, particularly their casual statement that trade unions "should advise their members to seek alternative sites of employment," demonstrates how utterly removed they are from the needs of the working class. There are 130,000 unemployed in the North, "seeking employment."

This was a deliberate added provocation in an already dangerously charged situation, and has already resulted in 30 Catholic building workers being intimidated off a site in Ballymena, in retaliation.

Only the trade union movement can arrest this escalation of sectarian violence, which threatens union activity itself. No other organisation could take on the defence of all workers from whatever quarter.

A decisive lead is urgently required from the union leadership. But Terry Carlin, Northern Officer of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, while condemning the Provisionals' statement, merely said it was a matter for individual workers how they respond to the threat.

Workers' defence, class unity, a common struggle for wages and jobs are the slogans of the hour. The labour movement in Britain must give every assistance to the working class in the North. The Labour Party leaders must break from their bipartisan approach with the Tories backing the Anglo-Irish Agreement, and campaign against it on class and socialist lines.

In the face of the increasing violence even Thatcher may finally be compelled to pull back from the Agreement. But if the unions do not act, a legacy could remain, making more difficult the task of asserting the role of labour and fighting for a socialist united Ireland.

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# Northern Ireland- Unions must defend workers' lives

**MILITANT WARNED** in advance that the Anglo-Irish Agreement, signed last November would lead to an increase in sectarianism in Northern Ireland; with a return of the sectarian killers, massive intimidation and a general upsurge of violence.

Over the last week the Provos and the loyalist paramilitaries have raised the stakes even further. The IRA shot dead a protestant building contractor in County Tyrone and threatened others, leading to contractors rebuilding or supplying RUC stations pulling out.

The IRA then threatened all those whose work puts them in contact with RUC or army installations. The threat was directly aimed at civil servants, British Telecom workers and others who service the police stations.

In response, the Ulster Freedom Fighters (UFF), threatened all Catholics who work in Protestant areas with assassination. In Armagh, loyalist paramilitaries and businessmen decided that if the IRA killed any more Protestant businessmen they would retaliate by shooting two Catholics.

The 1986 Loyalist Workers Committee, the organisers of the stoppage on 3 March added that if anyone suffered due to IRA threats, they would make sure that "Republican sympathisers" (a codeword for Catholics) would also suffer.

The Ulster Volunteer Force already have a standing threat to Catholics living or working in Protestant areas. An ominous warning was also given a few minutes past midnight on 7 August when thousands of loyalists from the Ulster clubs and the Democratic Unionist Party, many of them armed, took over two villages, one north and one south.

The press in Britain

## Labour and Trade Union Group



Photo: Martin Shakeshaft

A local woman protests at an Orange march in Portadown. The so-called 'peacekeeping' forces cannot defend workers.

publicised the invasion of Clontibret, County Monaghan in Southern Ireland by 1,000 loyalists. On the same night 600 loyalists, many armed, and all uniformed and masked occupied the mainly Catholic village of Swatragh in County Derry. 150 cars arrived at the village from different directions at 12.30am.

The main contingent paraded in military formation in the village. The rest mounted illegal road blocks, stopping and searching cars. Eye-witnesses reported that firearms, as well as cudgels were openly carried.

### Sectarian threat

An Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) group arrived in the village and the UDR soldiers cleared the loyalists. The RUC also arrived but later withdrew. The loyalists replaced a small tricolour with the Ulster flag, fired several shots and attacked cars and houses before they

**THE LABOUR** and Trade Union Group (LTUG) has been alone in clearly raising the issues of workers' defence and class unity within the trade union movement in the North.

Founded in 1974 the LTUG are the largest labour grouping in the North with several hundred workers, Catholic and Protestant, organised in branches in the main towns and cities.

The LTUG is completely

left. Over the last weekend there have been several attempted assassinations of Catholics in East Belfast, North Belfast and Armagh.

In North Belfast, a shop steward in the health service, a member of the public service union NIPSA was taken from a taxi, tied up and a gun put to his head. The loyalist gunmen pulled the trigger, but fortunately the gun jammed.

It is the workers who have been put into the front line. The labour movement must intervene urgently to halt sectarianism and take the concrete steps necessary to defend their members both in the workplaces and in the areas. Belfast trades council, the health service Joint Shop Stewards Committee in North and West Belfast and trade union branches in the FBU and NIPSA have called for the convening of a conference of trade unionists and community organisations to discuss the situation and take the practical steps

opposed to the Anglo-Irish Agreement, it believes that this agreement shows the inability of either the Westminster or Dublin Tories to come up with a solution to the problems of the North.

The LTUG's success in committing union organisations to take up the issue of workers' defence, has put its own members at risk. Colum McCallan who was murdered recently, was a

needed to defend workers.

The Labour and Trade Union Group (LTUG) has already supported the Neighbourhood Watch Committee established in Ligoniel and calls on workers in other areas to organise defence.

But this defence must not remain isolated, it needs to be co-ordinated and the labour and trade union movement has a responsibility to provide this co-ordination. Time is not unlimited, these events are already a set-back for the labour movement.

If the labour movement does not cut across the situation, there could be the "Lebanonisation" of the North and ultimately developments towards a civil war with bloody consequences throughout Ireland and Britain.

By a correspondent in Northern Ireland

member of the LTUG. To minimise these risks, and to assist the LTUG in its vital campaigning work, donations are urgently needed. Send cash to 4 Waring Street, Belfast.

Labour movement activists in Britain can also help the LTUG by taking out solidarity membership at £2 per year for individuals or £5 for union or Labour Party branches, by writing to the same address.

## Solidarity against apartheid

THE THATCHER government, as the representatives of British capitalism, have a vested interest in Botha's apartheid regime. British bosses are amongst the biggest exploiters of cheap black labour.

Trade unionists in Britain can help fellow workers and youth in South Africa by following the lead of Skipton Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU) branch.

They have sent a resolution to the AEU district committee protesting at the detention of trade unionists and calling for direct links between the AEU and the

Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) in South Africa, both nationally and locally. They also call on union leaders to impose workers sanctions on South Africa.

Workers have the power to isolate the Botha regime by cutting off links with Britain which is the third largest importer from, and exporter to, South Africa.

Cleansing workers in Glasgow no.40 branch GMBATU have also called for workplace collections to aid the unions and for union branches to adopt detainees and their families.

## Hull LPYS meeting

HULL LABOUR Party Young Socialists attracted 500 young people to a rally and gig against apartheid where four local bands played last weekend.

Speakers included local MP John Prescott and April Ashley from SOLSAY a group formed to build links with student bodies under attack in South Africa.

The event raised £100 to aid BTR Sarmcol strikers and 100 people expressed an interest in joining the LPYS.

## Youth rally in Dulwich

DULWICH LPYS rally "Smash apartheid—for a socialist South Africa". Friday 15 August 7.30pm Dulwich Baths, East Dulwich Road, London SE22. Speakers from Southern African Labour Education Project, LPYS and Maudsley Hospital. Disco by King Tubby. Price £1, 50p. Buses 37, 184, 185, 176.

# Tories pressure Labour to abandon reforms

**THE TORIES** are desperate to distract attention away from their destruction of industry and the economy.

Last week even the rose tinted spectacles of the stock exchange gamblers started to cloud over. The stock market collapsed to nine per cent below its peak last April at the signs from the USA that the world 'boom' was coming to an end.

To divert attention, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury John MacGregor, a former director of merchant bankers Hill Samuel has been feeding an eager press with scare stories about the bill for a future Labour government's spending.

Eventually MacGregor's 'interpretation' of Labour's plans were run through the Treasury computer model of the economy.

If you pass Tory figures through a computer you get a Tory answer. On these estimates, a Labour govern-

ment's borrowing would quadruple over five years to £26 billion.

Unfortunately, rather than using the figures to show the crippling unemployment and poverty in Tory Britain, Labour's deputy leader Roy Hattersley denied that most of the promises had been made.

## Commitments

"There is no such list of manifesto commitments. We will spend more than the Tories—but even a modest assumption of annual growth (two per cent) would yield an extra £3 billion for extra spending". Labour "will work within a firm framework of financial control".

For Hattersley it is a matter of a few priorities, mainly getting the unemployed back to work. That is central to any Labour programme, and the income from extra production would add to the

wealth of society (and to tax revenue). But the prophets of expansion under capitalism would pay for the jobs by wage 'restraint', adding to the poverty of those in work, and by renewed inflation.

A socialist planned economy would give the government the resources to end unemployment and tackle the problems of the 16 million in poverty, who are nowhere near the top of Hattersley's priority list.

MacGregor's campaign is part of the constant pressure to make sure a future Labour government bends the knee to big business and stops making 'impossible' demands, impossible under capitalism that is.

Capitalism and reforms are becoming ever more incompatible. Even the minimal improvements Hattersley puts on offer could be swept away. This crisis ridden system can not guarantee even a two per

cent growth rate.

Other 'left' governments are a warning to Labour activists. A Labour government in Norway has told workers: "austerity is an inadequate word for the vast economic restructuring that must take place". Australia's Labour government has banned a militant trade union (see page 10). The capitalist class will nobble all reforms in Britain as well, unless a Labour government breaks their power.

Capitalism is approaching a new and deeper crisis. Above all else, Labour must fight for a policy of nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy under workers' control and management. That is the only way to ensure the reforms we need are implemented.

By Roger Shives



Roy Hattersley—denied Labour's commitments.



Right wing Labour MPs like Mitchell often look enviously at SDP leaders like Owen and Rodgers (above) who have left the Labour Party.

## Knowsley needs a socialist MP

**AFTER THE** resignation of Kilroy-Silk, Knowsley North Labour Party is inviting affiliated bodies to nominate a candidate for the forthcoming by-election.

Those seeking nomination so far include:

Jim Lloyd: 48, leader of Knowsley council, right-winger. Supporter of privatisation of council housing, responsible for the sale of Cantril Farm council estate to the Stockbridge Civic Trust.

Les Huckfield: 44, European MP for Merseyside East, left-winger, former Nuneaton MP, elected to the European Parliament as an anti-marketeer. Supports the Alternative Economic Strategy and a campaign based on conference policies.

Lesley Holt: 35, left-winger, North West Labour Party Women's Committee, supporter of the Liverpool Council campaign. Campaigning for a 35 hour week without loss of pay; a national minimum wage of two-thirds the average. For real jobs for young people and for public ownership under workers' control of major industry.



Kilroy-Silk: "a constant pain".

Steve Bundred: 33, Inner London Education Authority Finance Chairman, best known for inviting Gerry Adams for Sinn Fein to London in 1983.

Unemployment is the number one problem in this area: no more than two or three school leavers out of every hundred have got genuine jobs in recent years, and the unemployment rate is at least 30 per cent.

Party members will be looking for a campaigning, accountable socialist candidate to represent one of the most deprived areas in Europe.

They will want a different campaign from Kilroy-Silk's. His agent, subsequent

traitor to Labour, Peter Fisher, told canvassers, "Don't get bogged down discussing complaints on the doorstep, move quickly through the area and create a general good impression."

A typical party activist's view is that of left councillor, Rene Rowe, "We're better off without Kilroy-Silk. When I heard the news I felt ten years younger. He was a constant pain."

What sort of Labour MP would she like? "A local person who understands the frustrations of the unemployed, and the fear of the employed of losing their jobs. Only a genuine socialist MP would fulfil these conditions."

## Mitchell's moan

**NEIL KINNOCK** may be furious with Robert Kilroy-Silk for leaving politics, but Austin Mitchell, the *Militant*-hating MP for Grimsby, is more broad minded.

He disagrees with Knowsley party members who believe workers in their area deserve a better representative. No—Austin feels that MPs, especially Labour ones, deserve a better class of constituent.

In an article in *New Society*, Mitchell reveals all the haughty contempt his kind feel for the workers they represent. He depicts working class people's problems as an unwelcome intrusion into the average MP's upward mobility.

Their only useful function seems to be as material for wisecracks. For example, Mitchell speculates that Kilroy-Silk "took up prison reform... because so many of his constituents ended up there."

Constituencies are "inhabited by strange tribes

with neither loyalty nor gratitude (!), just a dedication to making the MP's life a misery by dragging him away from wife, family and cosily appreciating nest in the South-East." Electors, parties and people who treat MPs as "dog's bodies and whipping boys deserve pretty short shrift in return", he says. Ah, that's what true loyalty is all about!

### Lofty ideals

According to the Mitchell career plan, being a Labour MP is definitely not about sacrificing self-interest for the interest of the working class. "It's just a job. And a shitty one at that for MPs are the night-soil shifters of the constitution." He sneers at the "Holy Ghost of socialism" and praises Kilroy-Silk's commitment to a loftier ideal, his career.

"MP's have a higher destiny than swimming around like trout in a restaurant tank to be plucked out at whim. They

deserve a useful job, the money to do it and a sensible career for the class of career politicians with no career we've built up."

Although the exact meaning of these sentences may be difficult to understand, it is possible to detect a rather rueful tone. Mitchell, whose career has travelled in the opposite direction to Kilroy-Silk's, seems to be wishing he hadn't deserted the TV studios for the "tawdry club" of the Commons, even though its restaurant is said to be very good!

Mitchell obviously resents his intrusive constituents; but not half as much as he resents his own party, which is a "draconian duty, an inconsiderate clamour which never ends". He speaks enviously of the traitors who left to form the SDP and "suddenly found life so joyful".

Workers should join the Labour Party, clear out the careerist carpet-baggers, and replace them with socialist fighters.

## Oil monopolies "losing their shirts?"

SHELL HAS raised its petrol prices by an average 7p a gallon with its big competitors expected to follow suit. Things are difficult for Shell: in the first six months of this year its profits were only £1,260 million.

With such a slim profit margin we can sympathise with the spokesman who said that the price fall in the last four months had "gone too far".

These big oil monopolies took weeks to drop petrol prices after crude oil took a tumble a few months ago. Nor can they complain about the reduction of oil production planned by the OPEC countries. This does not take place until 1 September, and already there is a bonanza in hiring

ships to buy oil at the cheap price through August.

No, it's the usual story. Prices are dropped to cut out the small petrol firms and then boosted again to restore the huge profits of the big oil

monopolies.

So next time you are filling your petrol tank, shed a tear for the oil company who said they were "losing their shirts at these prices".

## Obituary: Daisy Rawling

IT IS with the deepest regret that we have to announce the death of Daisy Rawling of Wallsend on Tyne, a *Militant* supporter and a life-long socialist, at the age of 69 years.

Daisy's funeral will be held Friday 15 August, 1.30pm West Road Crematorium, Newcastle. No flowers; donations to *Militant* c/o Jen Pickard, 2 Leeming Gardens, Gateshead, NE9 6RD.

Our condolences to Jack, Christine and Heather. A fuller appreciation of Daisy Rawling's life and political activity will be in the next issue of *Militant*.

## Labour Party news

### Gimmicks lose money

THE LABOUR Party has lost £18,000 in six months on a fund-raising experiment. It was organised by the "Sales and Marketing Unit" supposedly set up to relieve the Party's financial difficulties.

The head of the unit, Councillor Nicola Oakley, who runs her own management consultancy service, produced thousands of badges and tee-shirts which have proved unsaleable. £8,000 worth of unsold stock is left, despite attempts to shift it at a staff jumble sale. It will probably have to be destroyed.

Councillor Oakley, who was sacked and has taken the party to a tribunal for unfair dismissal, is reported to have taken a high-handed attitude to her staff which contributed to the campaign's failure.

Party members will undoubtedly want to know why the leadership had more confidence in gimmicks than political appeals in their efforts to raise cash.

By Jon Driscoll  
(Middlesbrough)

### T&GWU activist threatened

I AM an active member of my union, the TGWU. I attend trades councils, am secretary of Berwick Constituency Labour Party and organise socials, protests, bus trips to events and have stood in two elections for local council and county council. I have helped in support of the miners and health service workers currently taking industrial action against privatisation at Berwick Infirmary.

This seems to count for nothing when people want to attack you for your ideas. I realised recently that my contributions were in arrears. I forwarded a cheque for the outstanding contributions to my branch secretary of TGWU branch 8/118. He returned my cheque and stated I was no longer a T&G member with no explanation.

It is clear to me that this organisational attack is to exclude socialists from this union. Their fear has been demonstrated with numerous telephone calls after I attended Northern Regional Labour Party conference, where I was selling *Militant*.

I have had to apply to Region, at which I will present my case personally. Please give me all the support you can.

Resolutions and letters of protest to:

Geo Davison,  
TGWU 8/118  
5 Mill Street  
Tweedmouth  
Berwick upon Tweed  
TD 15 2BJ.  
Copies to:  
Alex Witt  
9 Albert Road  
Spittal  
Berwick upon Tweed

By Alex Witt

# Black Country backwoodsmen

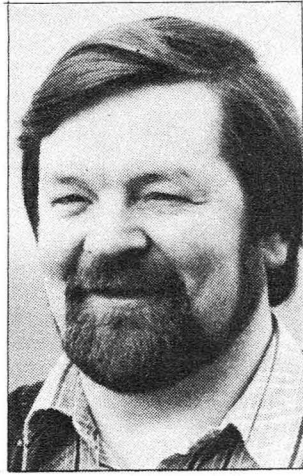
THE LATEST right wing attack in West Bromwich West Labour Party against *Militant* supporters exceeds anything tried before.

A resolution calling for action against people "caught in possession of *Militant* literature or who go to *Militant* meetings" has been put to Tipton Green ward. This resolution follows a series of attacks in this CLP, whose MP is witch-hunter Betty Boothroyd, a leading right wing member of the NEC.

The right wing failed to carry through the suspension of two Young Socialists for supporting the ideas of Marxism. In a fit of spite the right wing suspended the YS branch because "Its chairman and secretary sell *Militant*".

The venom of the right wing in this latest attack would put to shame the vitriol of the late US Senator, Joe McCarthy!

West Bromwich is in Sandwell Borough, one of the most deprived inner city areas in the country, with



By Bill Mullins

massive housing problems and unemployment. Parts of Smethwick have 90 per cent unemployment.

Labour has never had any real difficulty in getting elected to the council in this

working class area. At the moment they have 55 councillors to a handful of Tories and Liberals. Yet Party membership is at an all time low.

### "Commie tenants"

Warley West CLP with a parliamentary majority of 10,000 votes has the lowest membership in the West Midlands. (It was this party that expelled me in 1985). Labour's right wing party within a party, Solidarity, has in effect doled out the perks of council chairmanships and vice-chairmanships for a long time.

The Chairman of the Housing Committee, Vic Wakeman, told the local press that Solidarity "was only a discussion group" and that it was pure coincidence that they met prior to the full Labour group that decided on the Council positions. When I was expelled, he declared I was "a Commie, just like the other Com-

mies that run the Tenants' Association".

This borough has a black and Asian population of 40,000, out of a total population of 310,000, but only two per cent of the Council workforce are from the ethnic populations.

There are those who criticise Liverpool Council for employing a low number of black workers. They conveniently forget that Labour has only held power there since 1983. Labour has had control of Sandwell since 1974 when the Borough was formed, and before that controlled the councils from which it was made up.

I have personally heard racist comments from the leading right wingers in Sandwell when they have been talking about the Council tenants.

It is to these "rotten boroughs" of right wing Labour that Neil Kinnock has turned for allies in his witch-hunt against the *Militant*. But these right-wingers, arrogant through decades of

power, will not be satisfied with the expulsion of *Militant* supporters. They go on to attack all those who threaten their careers.

The Tribunites in Sandwell have felt the wrath of this group in the past. The secretary of the Tribune Group was suspended from party membership at one time.

Now, some ex-Tribune supporters are standing back or even helping the latest witch-hunts.

### Outrage

The lengths the right-wing are going to have outraged many ordinary Party members, particularly younger working class members.

The Young Socialists in West Bromwich have been out on the streets and the estates selling *Militant* with a new vigour. They have been recruiting new party members and in the process winning new adherents to the ideas of Marxism.

## Expulsions condemned



Richard Venton and Cheryl Varley at Labour's NEC (above) while youth lobby against expulsions (below).

## Militant meetings

### Newcastle-under-Lyme

"MODERATION IS an electoral liability" was the message from a *Militant* readers' meeting in Newcastle-under-Lyme. Richard Venton contrasted his expulsion from the Labour Party for supporting Liverpool City Council's policies to the Party leadership's support for John and Llyn Golding, who have reduced a 12,000 Labour majority to 799. £30.99 was collected for the Fighting Fund from the twenty people present.

### Colne

£5.00 FROM the Silentside strike fund went into the collection of £30.00 at the first ever readers' meeting in Colne, Lancashire. Silentside striker Terry Bennet, nurse Duncan Mitchell, and expelled Party member, Tony Ait-



John Golding: witch-hunted while vote collapsed.

man spoke to 40 people. Terry also sang his version of "The Grey Flag". A group of lads present decided to set up a YS and take up the fight against the right-wing witch-hunters in the area.

Reports from Sue Wilkie and Paul Belbin

## Militant Summer Camps

○ **Northern:** 22-25 August in Edale (Peak District, Derbyshire). Leading Marxist speakers, crèche, trips, folkknights. £10 waged, £5 unwaged, £3 children. Cheques to: MSDC, c/o J Hartley, 21 Carrforge Cl, Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

○ **South Wales:** Bank Farm, Horton, Gower. August 23/24/25. £15 per adult, £2.50 per child (under 15) £5 per day. Overnight stay £10. Make cheques payable to *Militant* Summer Camp, send to: MSC c/o 33 Bryn Rd, Brynmill, Swansea.

By Graham Smillie and  
Cathy Wilson

THE INTOLERANCE of Labour's right wing was shown when I was invited to address Bere Alston branch of West Devon Constituency Labour Party on what *Militant* stands for. At least two 'democrats' declared they would file a complaint to the General Committee, reports Robin Clapp.

At the branch's previous meeting, a full-time official from the EETPU had spent his entire contribution ranting and raving about the printers, the *Militant* and anyone who questioned Kinnock's law within the party.

This individual will not, I am assured, be invited back. But it is likely that further invitations will be sent to *Militant* supporters from this and other branches in the area.

Neil Kinnock now has another headache; can he expel the dozen members of Bere Alston, almost all of whom bought our paper eagerly? Or will his time be taken up slugging it out with Concannon, Kilroy-Silk and other moderate friends, who have left his side just when he thought he made the party safe for their sensitive souls?

Devon  
Militant  
welcomed

# The real Eastenders

## Life in the London Borough of Newham

**THE EAST** London Borough of Newham is well known as the place where Asian youth and the labour movement have fought back against racial attacks.

On the surface it seems not such a bad place to live—compared to such places as Liverpool and Glasgow which have a reputation for mass unemployment, poverty and bad housing. Although the borough returns Labour MPs every time with big majorities, has elected a 100 per cent Labour council and is solidly working class in composition, there are some quite nice areas.

### Deprivation

Yet this East London Borough is the second most deprived borough in the country, surpassed only by Hackney just down the road. The real despair that exists in Newham, especially for young people, was revealed in a parliamentary debate on

the plight of Newham youth. Opening the debate, the first of its kind, Tony Banks, Labour MP for Newham North West, revealed that in Newham there are 11,000 households without a bath or inside toilet and the highest percentage of children living in poor housing in the country. The unemployment rate for the borough as a whole is 20 per cent and 65 per cent receive housing benefit.

For the borough's youth the situation is almost hopeless. The figure for youth unemployment is well over 20 per cent, and the borough has one of the lowest rates of entry into higher education in the country with only 8 per cent go-

ing on to colleges of any kind—a reflection of the decaying education system.

The effect of this has been that many young people in the area are totally disillusioned. A section of the white youth in the south of the borough where not many black people live, have fallen prey to fascist groups who have moved into the area. It is this which has given rise to the frightening level of racial violence in the borough. Black people are used by the fascists as scapegoats for poverty and bad housing.

Local youth workers told Tony Banks that for many unemployed youth in the borough begging has become socially acceptable and that teenage prostitution is on the increase. Many young girls deliberately get pregnant as a means of achieving "adult" status in a world that puts young people at the bottom of its priorities and, more importantly to try to improve their chances of

getting a flat (though this is likely to be in a tower block, of which the borough has the largest number in the country and several of which have recently been evacuated due to structural faults).

Consequently, the borough now has over 5,000 single parent households. At a recent meeting with unemployed youth, one of them told Tony that he would be better off in jail. This seems to fit in with the police's view.

### More police

Newham has recently become, for the Metropolitan Police, a "politically sensitive" area and is therefore to get 20 per cent more police officers—20 per cent more officers to harass local black people and 20 per cent more to ignore burglaries, muggings and of course, racial attacks that occur every day in the borough—no thank you!

The response of Sir George Young, for the Tories, in this debate was "dismay" at the low take up of YTS schemes in the borough. Newham youth have seen through these "schemes" like young people in the rest of the country. They are nothing but slave labour schemes designed to take youth off the dole figures.

Although he was pleased that Newham Council have taken on 90 trainees he did not mention that these will be on union rates of pay and conditions.

He also praised the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) for providing employment etc in the borough. The Newham dockland area was a place of employment for tens of thousands of workers in the docks, railways and other associated industries. Now, many parts of it have 50 and 60 per cent unemployment.

The LDDC has brought private investment into the area to build houses that local people could not afford in their wildest dreams and schemes that local people don't want—like a small airport to transport rich city



One of Newham's many tower blocks.

businessmen to the continent, British Telecom "dishes" that local people are worried might affect the health of their children and, of course the leisure industry. Docklands was recently host to the national power boat racing finals—at ticket prices no local person could afford!

### First Labour MP

This dockland area was the birthplace of what is now the General Municipal Boiler and Allied Trades Union, and the early dockers' unions that formed the Transport and General Workers' Union. It had the first Labour council and the first Independent Labour MP in Keir Hardie. The Tories are undoubtedly trying to pay us back for this early militancy.

Newham people have not just sat idly by and watched

this happen; there have been a myriad of anti-Tory campaigns in the borough—ranging from 'Stop the Airport', 'No Home', a local campaign against the new benefit regulations, the well known Newham 7 and Newham 8 campaigns and YTURC and the School Students Union.

The local LPYS and Militant supporters are proud to say that we have actively supported all of these campaigns and when we have explained the need to replace capitalism with a socialist society we have always found a ready ear.

Just a couple of thoughts to finish on:—take it from me, "Eastenders" is nothing like the real thing (for a start you never see Militant being sold); next time someone tells you about how London is the "soft south" where all the jobs are, tell them about Newham.



The Newham 7 campaign—Asian youth fighting back.

## 'Fight racist attacks'

THE POLICE response to attacks on Blacks and Asians has been criticised by the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee in a newly-published report.

The findings will come as no surprise to the Asians in Tower Hamlets and other parts of East London.

The Metropolitan Police has the worst clear up rate for racial attacks in the country. Of the 1,877 racial incidents reported in 1985, including 336 cases of serious assault, only 15 per cent were solved.

A Harris poll of Asians in Tower Hamlets found only two per cent had a 'great deal' of confidence in

the ability of the police to protect them from attack.

The murder of Shamira Kassam and her three children in an arson attack last year at their Ilford home was the most horrific example of racial violence, there have also been razor attacks on Asian school students in Stepney and Bethnal Green in the past year.

### Arson attacks

CAPA, a police monitoring group in Tower Hamlets, recorded 495 cases of racial attacks in 1985. These ranged from arson to general abuse and threats, but only 16 people were arrested in con-

nection with these crimes.

Often the victims are not taken seriously by the police and are told to take out private prosecutions against their assailants, which would obviously lay them open to further intimidation.

On the other hand, when Asian youth in Newham tried in desperation to protect themselves, they had the full force of the law thrown against them.

Socialists should support the demand that the police take racist attacks more seriously, but at the same time point out that only the Labour movement has the power to isolate and undermine the racists.

Most of the serious attacks are



Photo: Dave Sinclair

perpetrated by the tiny remnants of the fascist organisations which briefly flourished under the last Labour government.

The Labour Party and the trade unions must take the lead in organising the defence of threatened communities, but just as impor-

tantly, we must actively campaign in the workplace and on the estates against racism and for socialist policies.

The LPYS in Tower Hamlets has an ongoing campaign against racist attacks. At the moment this is directed into building for the demonstration and festival to mark the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Cable Street on 4 October, when Mosley tried to march in the East End.

The event is also supported by the Labour Party, the local Trades Council, the Federation of Bangladeshi Youth Organisations and AFA. They key to a successful campaign is to mobilise black and white working class youth around socialist policies, because overthrowing capitalism is ultimately the only way to abolish the poverty and despair in which racism flourishes.

# MI5-Who are they spying for?

**BRITISH INTELLIGENCE are passing on information on the movements of leaders such as Oliver Tambo to the South African government. A former MI5 officer Catherine Massiter, has revealed how CND telephones were tapped to provide information for Michael Heseltine to use during the 1983 General Election campaign.**

A blanket ban has been imposed on the publication of information from a former MI5 officer, Peter Wright. This is expected to give evidence of bugging embassies and conferences, plotting against former Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson, planning to assassinate President Nasser of Egypt, and of extensive monitoring of political activists.

The intelligence service, far from being friendly "James Bonds" defending our interests are weapons in the state armoury of the capitalist class to defend themselves from the majority of the population.

The Military Intelligence Services are divided into MI5, dealing with 'the

United Kingdom and colonies' and MI6, for the rest of the world.

In 1924 both services were involved in what became known as the "Zinoviev letter", an elaborate forgery designed to discredit the Labour Party. In the 1930s MI5 investigated the International Brigades, going to fight in Spain to keep an eye on "undesirables".

## Vetting

Since the war, the so-called "Communist threat" has been the excuse for "positive vetting" of civil servants. Their priorities were shown where Philby and Burgess, from an upper class background, managed to hand over secrets unharmed while today trade unionists at GCHQ at Cheltenham are being hounded out of their jobs.

The combined Intelligence Services have an annual budget estimated at £1,000 million and a manpower of about 10,000.

Telephone taps today can range from the primitive "Printometer" which records at the exchange the

numbers dialled and the length of each call, to apparatus where the telephone acts as a microphone to pick up all conversations in a room whether the phone is being used or not.

The contents of letters can either be photographed in the envelope or extracted with a "spinning needle" that can take out a letter through the smallest gap.

Remember the harassment of flying pickets during the miners' strike. Miners from Kent were stopped at Dartford tunnel near London while still 150 miles from their destination. Rotherhithe and Blackwall tunnels were mysteriously closed "for repairs".

New plans are now afoot to make these "roadworks" easier for the police. The Motorway Car Surveillance System, already at an experimental stage, can read the number plates of cars on all three lanes of a motorway. These are then flashed to the police national computer which in turn can pass information to local police cars.

The police national computer, originally called the National Police Computer until someone was reminded that there was supposedly no national police force, stores information on over 5 million people. The MI5 computer has a capacity of up to 900 words on each of six million people. A part of MI6, GCHQ at Cheltenham monitors all radio, telex and telegrams in and out of this country.

Can there really be six million Russian spies in this country? No, "subversives" to MI5 means anyone not satisfied with the present system, anyone who wants to improve society, like socialists.

The capitalist state, the

armed forces, civil service and legal system, is a machine created and fashioned by the ruling class to defend its interests. In crises, such as the miners' strike, the state shows its real face, and is reduced to what Lenin called "special bodies of armed men which have prisons etc. at their command".

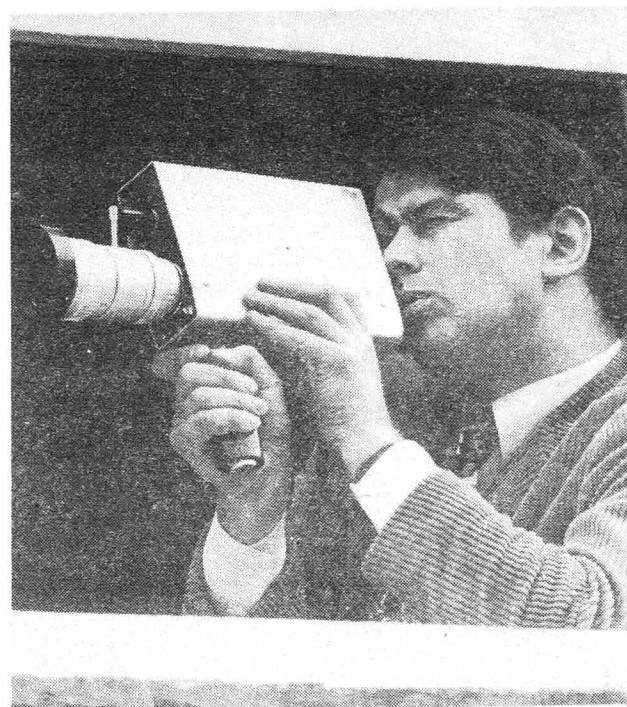
Add to that the snoopers, agent-provocateurs and infiltrators of MI5 and Special Branch. The latter was originally named the Special Irish Branch, Ireland has historically borne the worst of British capitalism's repression. When capitalism can no longer command the support of the mass of the population, the bosses will switch from parliamentary rule to their last line of defence, the "special bodies of armed men".

## Investigation

Lenin explained that the watershed between Marxism and reformism was the state. Those who accept capitalism will also accept the rule of its state. Past Labour governments have proved Lenin correct.

In the early 1960's, a committee of Gaitskell, George Brown and Patrick Gordon Walker was set up by the Labour leadership to investigate "crypto-communists" in the Labour Party. Eventually the names of fifteen Labour MPs were passed to MI5 for investigation including "telephone-tapping, shadowing, the opening of mail, and the examination of bank accounts".

In 1966 Harold Wilson used information gained from the Intelligence Services to try to break a seamen's strike. Ironically, according to the latest information,



Police film a student demonstration in Colchester. Where do the films go?

Wilson was being snooped on at the same time! These revelations also show that the 1974-79 Labour government sanctioned the sale of intelligence equipment to the South African government.

The evidence damns previous Labour leaders but it also proves that these governments have been in office but never in power. To achieve that requires both taking the economy out of the hands of the capitalists, and the replacement of the capitalist state machine by genuine control of our lives by the majority of society.

Recently in Australia the secret files of Intelligence Service were open to public scrutiny, many dossiers were burned. The next Labour government in this country must launch an immediate investigation into the intelligence computers.

Any entries irrelevant to fighting crime should be wiped clean and the MI5 and other intelligence services which are a threat to the labour movement should be abolished.

By Pete Watson

### Suggested reading

*Militant*: The State: A Warning to the labour movement, price 70p plus 20p p&p. Bunyan: The History and Practice of the Political Police in Britain £4.45 + £1 p&p. Marxist Study Guide—The State 30p + 20p p&p. All available from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.



Protestors outside MI5 HQ in 1978.

## ◀ Left and Right ▶

### Royal productivity

PRINCE MICHAEL of Kent (that's Princess Michael's husband) does not get any money from the Civil List, poor chap, so he has to "work" for his living. He has become a £5,000 a year director of the Horse Racing Totalisator Board. He also manages to hold down jobs "directing" Standard Telegraph and Cables, London United Investments and builders John Laing. He is deputy chairman of Walbrook Insurance.

But he's still got to pick a few more plums before he can reach the productivity of another royal, Angus Ogilvy, husband of Princess Alexandra. Angus has nine directorships! Any man who can run firms like Sothebys, Rank Organisation and the property group MEPC in his spare time and balance a tiara on his head must have real blue blood in him.

### Business is business

CAPITALISTS and Tory governments put profit before everything. The 18 July issue of the Department of Trade and Industry magazine *British Business* has a feature on Chile. Half a sentence mentions that Chile has a military government. But this is buried by their enthusiasm for the country.

"The straightforward honest approach of both state and private companies makes Chile one of the easiest Latin American countries with which to do business... The Chilean government is anxious to encourage

foreign investment; since 1975 it has operated a very liberal investment regime. Together with the high quality and low cost of Chilean labour, makes investment in Chile a particularly attractive proposition".

It highlights the chemical sector as particularly promising without mentioning the use to which the Pinochet regime puts chemicals. As we reported in *Militant* recently, police sprayed Rodrigo Rojas, an opponent of the regime with inflammable liquid before setting him on fire.

Thanks to Bill Blackstock

### Beware activists

THE TORIES' attempts to turn London's deserted docklands into a centre for high profits has destroyed local jobs and communities and pushed housing prices up to ridiculous levels. This has led to people becoming active in opposing plans for new office space and accommodation for the rich. A local priest has complained of Docklands being handed over to yuppies.

But Docklands Corporation chairman Christopher Benson has no time for this type of protest. "We cannot democratise what is a quango. We cannot afford to create barriers by allowing mischievous activists to interfere with the pace of progress". Progress—or profit as it is more accurately known. That presumably is why the Docklands Corporation is unelected.

### World Socialist Books: SPECIAL OFFERS

Trotsky-1st 5 Years of the Communist International Vol 1 was £3.95, now £3. Vol 2 was £3.95, now £3.

Trotsky—Whither France?, was £3.50, now £2.50

Platform of the Joint Opposition 1927, was £1.50, now £1

1903—Text of the 2nd Congress RSDLP, was £6 now £4

Rakovsky—Selected Writings, was £4.95, now £1.50

Shlyapnikov—On the eve of 1917, was £4.95, now £1.50

Add 25% to all orders under £5, 10% to all orders under £10 for postage. Orders over £10, post free.

Cheques payable to World Socialist Books, send to: World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Rd, London E9 5HB.

## Out now!

**NEW MILITANT International Review** has articles on the colonial revolution, South Africa, general strike and the Moscow Trials. Available from *Militant*, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

## Boost sales of Militant

DAILY SALES of *Militant* have been organised at this year's Edinburgh festival. Our sellers will be using petitions and rattling fighting fund tins as well to make a big impact.

18 papers were sold in Wellingborough last week and a further 27 on a street sale in Northampton. 16 out of 20 people at Linby branch NUM in Notts bought *Militant*.

Daily lunchtime sales of *Militant* in Cardiff sold a total of 84 papers. Despite holidays and a break in labour movement meetings, our sales have not dropped. But just to make sure they don't, why not take some *Militant*'s on holiday with you.

# After the Brixton Raids

**THE POLICE** raid on a Brixton club on 24 July, (code named "Operation Condor") gave an insight into police methods and the para-military style force being created in Tory Britain.

The operation, carried out on the Afro-Caribbean Cultural Centre in Raiton Road, involved hundreds of police, with over a thousand police officers on stand-by on the edges of Brixton.

65 people were arrested in the operation which police said was to stop the "growth of the illegal sale of drugs".

A great deal of secrecy surrounded the raid. The massive police presence for the Royal Wedding (the day before) was used, and according to the *London Standard*: "... officers were told they were being kept in Central London to police a big demonstration in the West End... Only at the eleventh hour... were they briefed on the nature of the job."

Police had set up their HQ in a house near the club and filmed the comings and go-

ings for 3 weeks before the raid. One bedroom became the observation post, and another a base for D11 Blue Berets (the police squad of trained marksmen). Police took on disguises to scout the area, at one stage an officer: "put on a clergyman's outfit complete with a collecting box to knock on some doors in the road."

The club was raided simultaneously from large British Road Services vans from the front, and from a train stationed on the railway line behind. Police had riot shields and helmets.

## Cordoned off

All the roads around Raiton Road were cordoned off, and all shops were closed down. Many coaches were seen parked nearby.

The police were obviously worried that there would be a backlash from the local community. Because of the long history of police harassment and victimisation, (of the black population, par-

ticularly), any such police operation, whatever the stated reasons for it, could ignite an explosion of anger, and set off rioting throughout the area.

Leaflets from the chief superintendent were distributed by police shortly after, explaining their reasons for the raid. (*Militant* sellers at the local tube station, a quarter of a mile away, were approached by a plainclothes policeman, handed the leaflet, and politely asked to move on!)

The immediate area of the club was still cordoned off, even 3 hours after the raid. Local residents were stopped from getting through to their homes, which annoyed many, especially as the police discriminated between black and white residents, letting some white people through the lines. There has certainly been deep concern in the local community about drug-related violence especially in relation to the pushing of hard drugs.

But the labour movement



Police in action after last year's riot. Harassment will not stop drug abuse, it merely offers further preparation for police methods in future class conflicts.

must understand that these tactics and methods are both harassment of the local black

community and preparation by the police for future conflicts with other working

class communities when they move into political and industrial action.

# The Tories screw you up

**BOY GEORGE** has hit the headlines for his use of heroin. But thousands of working class youth who don't make the news are dying from drug addiction.

They haven't got the money to pay for treatment in private health clinics, they also don't get the chance for one month's reprieve from police questioning while they 'recover'!

The problem has reached horrifying proportions. There are estimated to be 250,000 heroin addicts nationally. In Peckham, where the local LPYS have started a campaign against drug addiction, there have even been cases of pushers standing outside local schools giving out free samples.

Record levels of 'skag' (heroin) are being captured at airports—but this is only a drop in the ocean. It's estimated that only 2 per cent of drugs entering Britain are intercepted. Since 1979 there has been a 500 per cent increase in heroin smuggling, yet the Tories have cut customs staff by 3,500.

The dramatic rise in drug

abuse is closely linked to the rise in mass unemployment. In the days of near full employment in 1960, there was just ONE registered heroin addict. Today, with 4 million on the dole, there are an estimated quarter of a million addicts.

The Tories, and the capitalist system they protect, has created the dead-end life of the inner-city slums, in which drug abuse breeds. They're the direct results of the Tories' profit-first monetarist policies.

## Local campaigns

The problem will not be resolved by police actions like those in Brixton. The current "heroin screws you up" campaign may help warn against the danger of heroin. But more effective will be local campaigns involving local councils, community groups and the labour movement to confront the pushers and the problems directly.

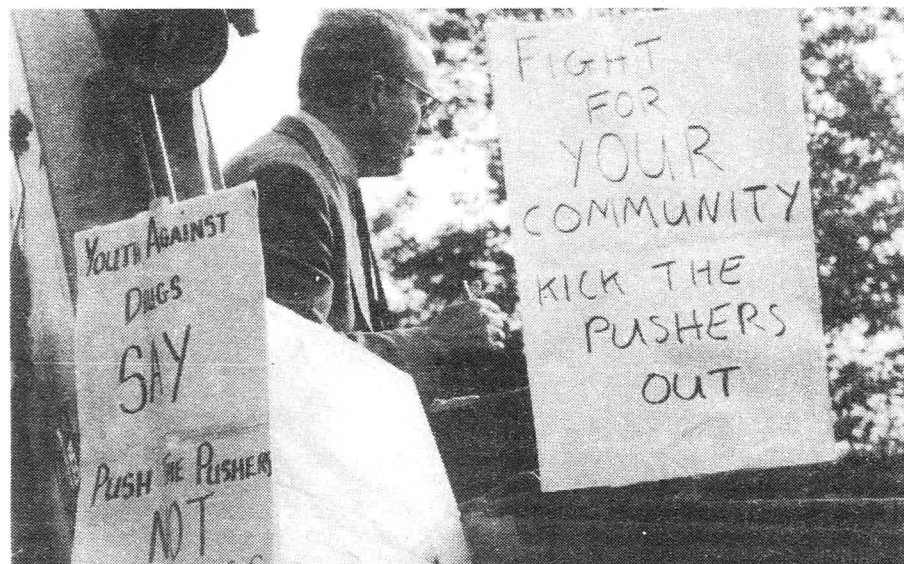
Local youth in Peckham have approached the LPYS branch to start a campaign

against heroin abuse and demand a drug centre that's run by and for local workers and tenants.

The Young Socialists are organising a public meeting, and will be leafletting schools, and youth clubs. They plan a sponsored walk from Southend to London, to draw attention to the problem of drugs.

But drug abuse can only be stamped out when the conditions that lead to addiction are tackled. That will need a Labour government committed to implementing socialist policies. That means not only regenerating the health service, and providing decent countermeasures against heroin, but also creating decent living conditions, and renovating the decaying inner-cities, through jobs, good housing, and leisure facilities, to wipe out the despair and hopelessness on which drug addiction feeds.

By Gill Porter  
(Peckham LPYS)



Terry Fields MP speaking in a campaign against drug pushers in Croxteth, Liverpool.

## Militant Marxist Weekend School

THIS YEAR'S Marxist Weekend School promises to be the biggest yet, surpassing even last years 500-strong event.

Highlight of the weekend will be a debate between Peter Taafe (Editor *Militant*) and Monty Johnstone (for the Communist Party journal *Marxism Today*).

Longer standing *Militant* readers will remember Monty's two previous articles on 'Trotskyism', the replies to

which; "*Lenin and Trotsky* what they really stood for" and "*The Spanish Revolution 1931-37*"; have become Marxist classics.

The *Militant* International Review rally will feature editor Alan Woods speaking on "Hungary 1956 and the tasks of the political revolution today".

In addition to the eight courses (see below), Eisenstein's classic film about the 1905 Russian Revolution

"*Battleship Potemkin*", and a video "*Kemira—Diary of a strike*", about an Australian miners stay-down strike will be shown during the weekend.

Bookings are already coming in—book now and get your free course study guide for advance preparation. Make your transport plans, book minibuses now—be there!

### September 13/14 London

Courses on: Theory of Marxism, Russian Revolution, South Africa and Colonial Revolution, Ireland, Marxism and the trade unions, Women and the struggle for socialism, Black struggles, Marxist Economics.

*Militant International Review* rally: Hungary 1956 and the struggle against Stalinism today.

★ Debate: A representative from *Militant* and Monty Johnstone (Communist Party) on "The socialist way forward".

Film: *Battleship Potemkin*

Video: *Kemira—Diary of a strike* (Australian miners stay-down strike).

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## Fighting Fund New chart next week

**MILITANT SUPPORTERS** in the CPSA are building on the support for a fighting leadership in the vote for Marxist John Macreadie by raising cash for *Militant's* Fighting Fund.

In one day £241 was raised from workers in just a few of the offices around the country; they now intend to collect regularly in as many offices as possible.

Supporters in other industries should follow this example. Workers know *Militant* is fighting back. Give them a chance to join in that fight by asking for a donation. Let us know of your successes.

Over the next three months we need £70,000 to

meet our target. We are relying on you to help us. Take the ideas of Marxism out to the workplaces, the streets and the estates.

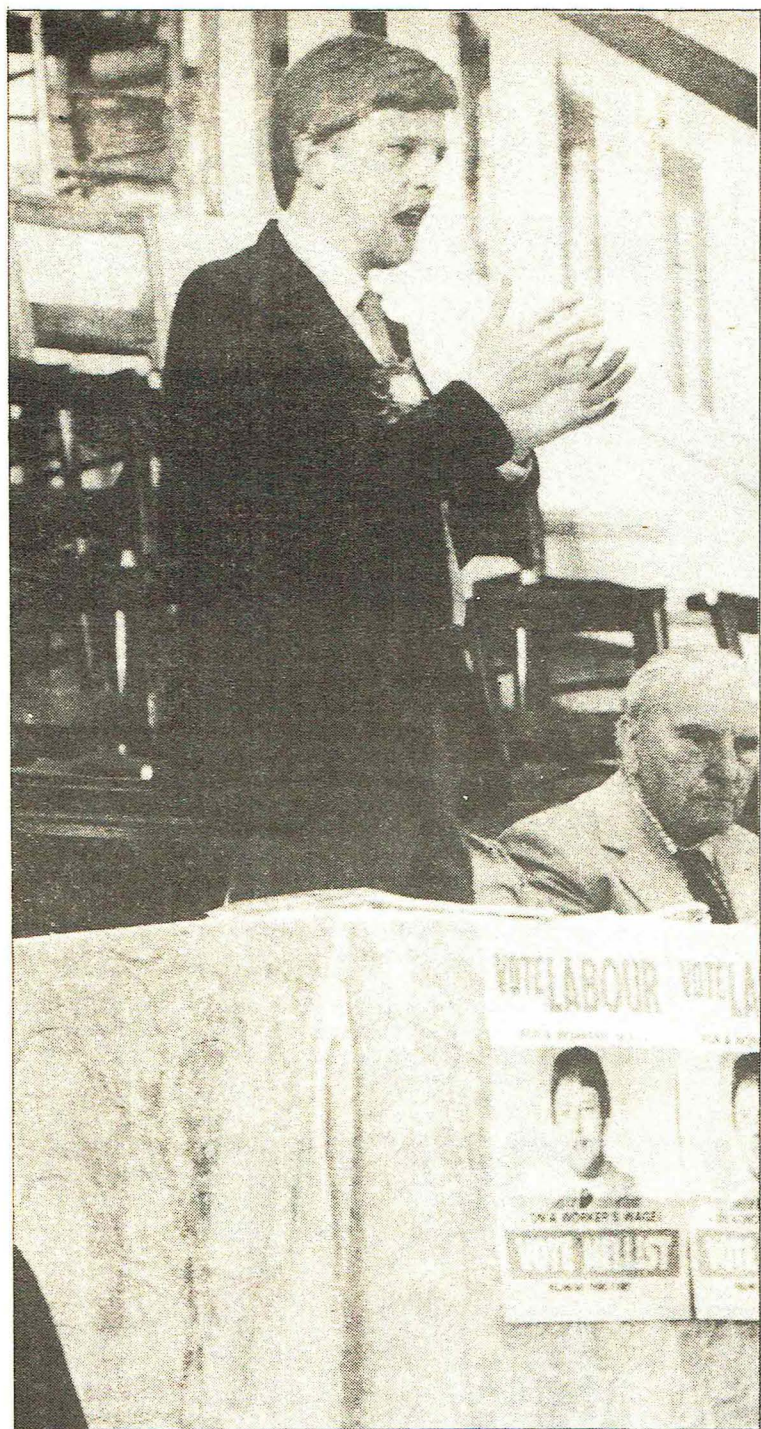
Every area should plan how their share of the target is to be raised. As well as street sales and workplace collections, make sure there are plenty of fundraising events like parties or discos. Why not organise a bank holiday outing to raise money and have a good time. We have received £44.10 from Roz Campbell and Kevin Patterson in Leeds from their Annual Summer Barbeque.

On the streets the stickers 'For a Socialist South Africa' raise hundreds of

pounds for our funds enabling us to produce our posters calling for workers' sanctions. Stickers and posters can still be obtained.

Remember to use your collecting tins at all times. Or go one better and use buckets. Walton sellers raised £14 in buckets in less than two hours on the street. And don't forget to ask for the solidarity price of £1, an easy way of raising money. Most buyers are prepared to contribute when it is explained why we need the money.

There are thousands of ways to raise money for your paper and millions of workers to ask. Let's make sure we raise this quarter's target in full.



Dave Nellist addresses a rally in the 1983 election campaign.

**Soldier**—"This is a good model, Betty, isn't it?—the city better be good too, it's where we are going to live."  
**Commentator**—"Coventry is going to be a place to live where people can believe how pleasant human life can be..."  
 It must be not every man for himself, but every man for the good and the happiness of all people living... Every man must believe in the good and happiness that is to be shared... to be shared equally."  
**Girl**—"... Goodbye darling... don't be long."  
**Soldier**—"... Don't worry, darling... it can't be long now. We'll soon be together in our own little home... with a nice little garage."  
**Girl**—"... and a nice little nursery."

FORTY YEARS after these lines were written for a Ministry of Information film 'A city reborn', its sunny optimism is laughable. Coventry was rebuilt after the devastation of the war years. The centre of the city was completely new, with the first precinct in Britain.

During the boom years Coventry was pushed to the top of the jobs and wages leagues. The Thatcher years have seen it crashing back down. Under the Tories this centre of manufacturing industry has suffered a second and still more destructive blitz, of jobs and industries.

What prospects does Coventry offer young people in 1986? "From my class," says fifth former Alice Manley, "two of twenty eight have got proper jobs. Some have gone on to YTS. They say the pay is rubbish, but anything is better than going back to school. But most have had to stay on, just because there is nothing else to do."

A quarter of Coventry's potential workforce is unemployed. Half the jobs in manufacturing have disappeared. 20,000 'little homes' are reported unfit for human habitation, substandard or requiring major repairs.

What job opportunities there are will be of the low wage variety. Eighteen year old Vince Loxton works in one of the small engineering firms, and takes home £65 per

week: "The Tories don't offer people like me a future at all" he says.

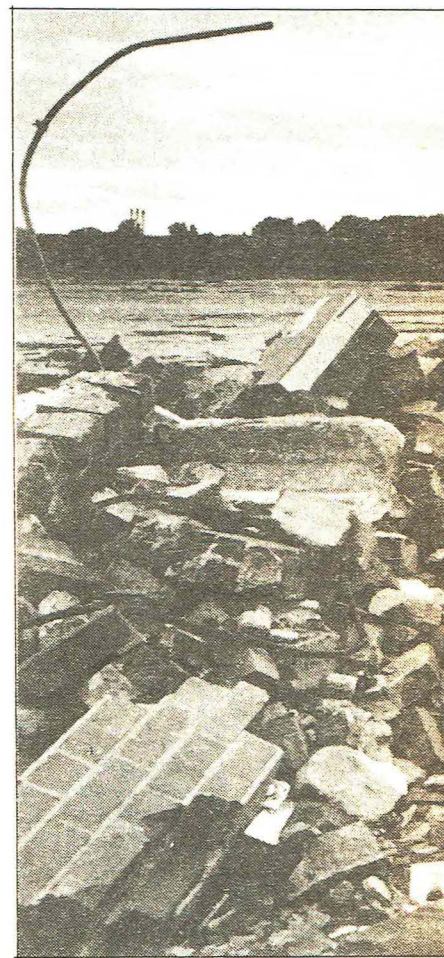
"You spend twelve years of your life being educated and all you have to do at the end is spend your time winding handles and pressing buttons. My future will be the same as the last two years till I'm sixty five, if I'm lucky."

But the experience of Coventry workers is showing them who is responsible for the decline of their city—the capitalist owners who plundered it for dividends, rather than invest in its future.

The employers with grim determination have taken advantage of this recession to grab back many of the concessions they were forced to make in the face of the power of shopfloor organisation built up in the fifties and sixties. Misleadership of the unions at national level, and the despondancy that set in with mass redundancies helped them in this task.

Militant industrial struggle to defend workers' interests is still necessary and possible. But workers also have to fight politically. In Coventry the reclaiming of the Labour Party for the working class and socialism has begun with the election of Marxist Labour MP Dave Nellist. It is up to Coventry workers to complete this job, becoming active in the party and campaigning with Dave for the fighting socialist policies he stands for.

# CO



Industrial desert: the site of the Morris Eng

Coventry SE Labour Party Young Socialists  
 Rally  
**Young workers get organised**  
 Speakers: John Ellen (LPYS National Chair), Dave Nellist MP  
 Central Methodist Hall, Tuesday 12 August 7.30pm

# - fighting th

## The car that never was

ALONG WITH 7,000 workers I was thrown on the dole from BL Canley and Tile Hill. Canley was once the flagship of the British motor industry, the Standard Triumph motor company. It drew in labour from Ireland and Scotland as well as rural parts of England. The money was to be made working in the factory.

Large council estates sprung up in Canley and Tile Hill to accommodate the labour force, needed to build mass produced cars for the masses. These new citizens of Coventry arrived in a city rebuilt after the war, a truly modern city with plenty of work to be had.

The seventies saw Canley starved of the investment needed to keep it as a major car manufacturer. When I started work there in 1979 the workforce were looking forward to the LCIO to be built in collaboration with Honda. Most of the workforce thought it stupid that we could not design and build a car without working with our competitors, but if it meant building Honda's to earn a living, we were all resigned to build Hondas. There was endless talk of how the tracks



Pete Skerrett outside the Canley plant which now houses offices and stores.

would be speeded up and how we would be doing workouts before the shift began, as in Japan. Then on 10 September 1979 Sir Michael Edwardes dropped the bombshell: "The new Honda car will not be produced at Canley, but in Cowley."

### Shell shock

The shell shock never ended. The LCIO was like alcohol to the workers. No matter what was wrong, old machinery etc we said: "the place will be modernised to take the LCIO". It never existed, the ghost car was used to lull the workforce.

The Canley workforce built three completely different models; the TR-7 transferred from Speke (in

Edwardes' plan to be moved again to Solihull), the Dolomite saloon (scrapped), the Spitfire sports car (scrapped). One of my most memorable moments was to fit the exhaust on the last Spitfire down the line.

There was to be no new model for us. We were finished by the Edwardes' plan; the plan which meant the total or partial closure of 13 plants and the loss of 25,000 jobs over two years. The effects were to have a chain reaction in machine tools, light engineering etc. For every job lost in BL three were to be lost in the companies making components for BL.

The shops in Canley and Tile Hill were to be jolted. The neighbouring communities have still not recovered after six years.

True, many council houses were brought by redundant car workers and done up, but after the short spending spree they are now lacking the most basic repairs. A neighbour of mine who bought his house, died of a heart attack within weeks. Half a mile away a similar man took his life well before he'd even spent his redundancy money.

Despair and uncertainty also caused drunkenness, violence and divorce. Six years later Coventry has just been rocked by the news that the crime rate in the city has increased by 25 per cent against 11 per cent for the rest of the West Midlands.

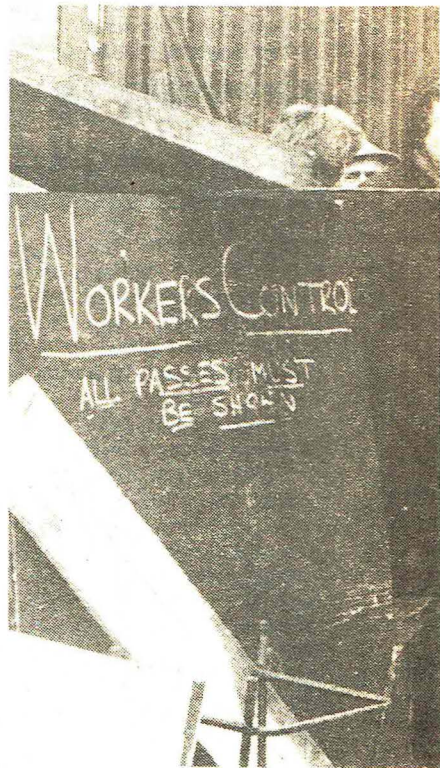
By Pete Skerrett

## Rolls Roy

Militancy at Rolls Royce, Parkside 1978. These workers are now fighting to privatise the company in 1987.

It was the Tories themselves who took public ownership in 1971, after private owners bankrupted it.

Recently, Labour's National Executive resolution calling for the company's ren the next Labour government, if pri





# COVENTRY

## Challenge of new technology



... factory, razed to the ground at its closure.

Photos: Darrall Cozens

GEC IS Coventry's largest employer with five factories in the city. Jimmy Dempsey was ACTTS convenor at GEC in Coventry in 1974.

"In the early '70's Coventry unions were considered the finest in the country. Fords and Vauxhall workers could put in claims for parity with Coventry car factories and the Coventry toolroom agreement set the pace for skilled engineering workers throughout the country. At GEC we organised a Joint Union Consultative Committee of eight unions. Anyone can have parity with Coventry now—if they're prepared to put up with our unemployment figures!

The union organisation that could extract concessions in boom-time couldn't deal with many of the new situations it faces now. The employers' response to the high level of union organisation and better wages was to move away from Coventry. At the time there was enough work to replace what was leaving the city. For example, when radio work was moved from the Spon Street plant to Leicester nothing was done to prevent it because work was brought in from another Coventry plant. But at the same time automation was introduced. The electrical industry changed from highly complex swit-

chgear to solid state stuff which cut out a lot of metalwork. Highly skilled jobs, like the work on relays done at Helen Street vanished. That factory used to employ 3,000 and now employs a few hundred.

There's been a high level of de-skilling. The GPO took away its high level quality control and Plessey, GEC and STC formed the consortium which developed System X, which requires less workers to produce it. Ready-made components are often brought in from abroad and just assembled here.

Activists have often not seen technological change coming in as a package but only the isolated instances which affect them. Management will bring in a machine to do, say, seven functions which will later prove to be able to do forty eight. Shop stewards who see their function as just dealing with wages and hours and so on have been unable to deal with these situations.

The end result is that a smaller number of workers is producing a higher number of goods. 12 years ago GEC employed 16,000. Now it employs half that number.

The company finds it can make more money on short term loans than on production, which is why it has that famous £1.5 billion in the bank.

### "Hands should not be idle"

"BOTH HANDS should not be idle except at rest periods... hands should move in curves... not in sharp movements. Hands should be removed from all work that should be done by other parts of the body..."

(Leyland management manual)

In the car industry today the bosses glue down on manual workers in ways that bring back the thirties. Demarcation lines have disappeared—there's fewer of us doing more work. No tea until official breaks. Discipline for lateness is rapidly becoming a weekly event—must be at work ready, willing and able well before starting time. The company after all must have its pound of flesh. No extra minutes hand washing—hygiene costs production. Home in the evening, tired; glad to be out of that pit at last. This is what it's like to work for BL today. The nationalisation of the company may have stopped it going under, but it hasn't given better conditions to the workers.

By a shop steward

# The jobs blitz

## ...ce going cheap

...see below), in Tory plans to

...Rolls Royce into enterprise" had

...voted down a nationalisation goes

through. Workers must demand that this decision is reversed.

Dave Nellist MP has written to the shop stewards saying, "I have no confidence in the ability of private ownership to guarantee the wages, conditions and secure employment of Rolls Royce workers again in the future. This is particularly the case given the cost of modern research and development of future engines, and the lengthy time-scale involved in such projects."



Chrysler workers meet in 1975 and demand that the firm is nationalised.

## Rootes... Chrysler... Talbot...

"MANAGEMENT BY Abdication" was how Rootes management described their policy in the 1960s.

Now, workers report, the track only stops for two minutes when one of them drops dead.

In the '50s and '60s the unions won the right to elect gang leaders, who effectively ran the job at shop floor level. Hiring was done through the union office and overtime and track speeds were controlled by the shop stewards.

The Ryton and Stoke factories were taken over by Chrysler and later Peugeot-Talbot. Chrysler consciously starved its British factories

of investment. In 1974 they invested only £1 million in the whole UK operation. Volkswagon invested £327 million in the same year!

### Chrysler 'co-operates'

When Chrysler offered to give the company to the then Labour government, the offer was refused! The Labour leaders insisted on giving millions of pounds to Chrysler so that they could continue making profits out of it, supposedly in collaboration with the government's National Enterprise Board. At the time Chrysler employed

nearly 14,000 workers in Coventry. Peugeot-Talbot, to whom Chrysler UK was sold in 1978, now employ just over 4,000. That's how capitalist firms 'co-operate' with Labour governments.

The Stoke plant produces the Peykan, car kits based on the Hillman Hunter designed in the 1950's which is exported to Iran. This has regularly resulted in layoffs when the Iranians haven't paid. The Ryton plant now assembles car-kits imported from France. In a city built on the motor industry, only one company, Jaguar, now makes an entire car in Coventry.

Australia

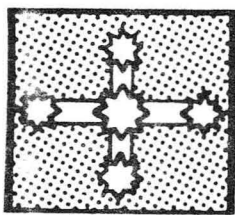
# Labour government bans a union

IT "PROVIDES for seizure of union assets . . . black-bans any building labourer who has been a financial member of the union in the previous twelve months . . . requires anyone seeking work as a builder's labourer to swear a statutory declaration that he or she is not a member of the proscribed union. This is to be supervised by police on building sites . . . rescinds State contracts with corporations and individuals employing BLF members . . . gives immunity of suit to individuals whatever their actions in enforcing these provisions."

Readers may be forgiven for believing this is an extract for Norman Tebbit's latest policy document. In fact it is a part of the "BLF De-registration Act" brought into law by the Cain Labour government in Victoria, to attempt to smash the Building Labourers Federation of Australia.

The Labour leadership in Britain often hold up the Australian "Accord" between trade unions and Big Business as a model. The "National Economic Summit" proposed by last year's TUC Labour Party Liaison Committee has little difference.

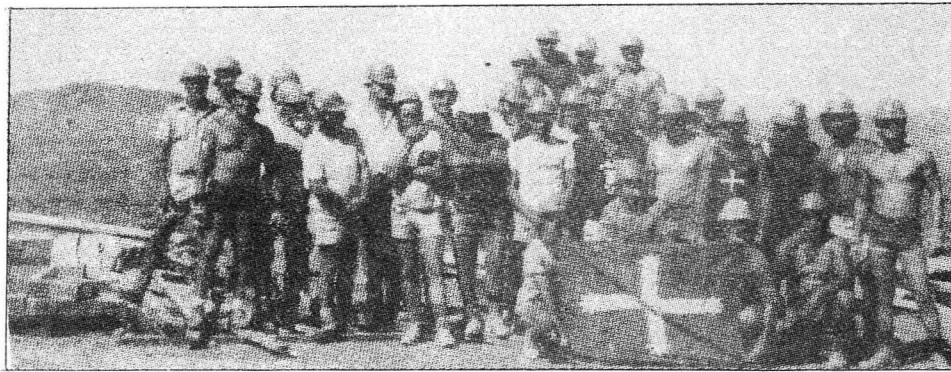
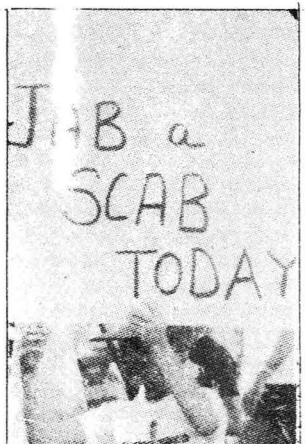
The lesson for activists in this country however, is that this so-called "Accord" has been used to instigate three years of wage restraint and now Hawke and the Australian Labour government have embarked on a savage Thatcherite onslaught on living standards including a \$2.5 billion cut in public spending. They are presiding over the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. But the bosses have a problem.



The powerful organisations of Australian labour which draw the allegiance of over half the workforce and have a tradition of militant struggle stretching back more than a century, represent a towering obstacle to the bosses.

Although they clearly don't relish the prospect, it is evident that the Australian capitalists are beefing up for a showdown with the trade unions. The Liberal Party, which has swung sharply to the right under its new leader Howard, have served notice that once in office, they are determined to 'tough it out' with the unions.

But it is to Hawke and the Labour leaders that they have looked to fire the first



Members of the militant Building Labourers' Federation.

salvo. The darkest chapter in the entire three year history of Hawke's government has been the vicious union-busting assault on the BLF, Australia's most militant union.

This union has, through two decades of struggle, transformed the previously abysmal pay, conditions and rights of building workers and won a degree of workers' control in an industry notoriously difficult to organise, that has no parallel internationally. BLF sites, bedecked with the republican 'Eureka' flag, proclaim: "No ticket (union card), No start!". It represents a barrier to big business. They inspired the campaign to smash the union, but the scandalous truth is that it was planned, organised and executed by the Labour leaders.

Builders' labourers have been sacked and locked out in droves and employers have moved swiftly to snatch back yesterday's concessions. Working in the rain, for example, has been reintroduced for the first time in years.

The full weight of the state has been brought into play to enforce this scabs' charter, the De-registration Act. Police are now a common sight on the construction sites. For the first time in the history of an Australian industrial dispute, Mace (nerve gas), has been used against strikers.

Labour's right wing have attempted to justify their criminal actions by claiming that the drive to outlaw the BLF was a "one off". A deluge of monstrous lies and accusations has poured down upon the union. Hawke and other Labour leaders accused the union of "thuggery" and claim that it has "placed itself outside the labour movement."

But as the Liberal MP Baxter pointed out: "This is a precedent-setting legislation. I am pleased that it has been introduced by a Labour government, because it enables a conservative government when it comes to office in three years in Victoria, to hang its hat on this sort of legislation and

get tough with the unions."

The bosses by their own efforts could never have succeeded in defeating the BLF. The building employers' fragile coalition has been blown apart by the union on more than one occasion. Strike bound bosses have come cap in hand to the union pleading for a resumption of work.

But this time the nature of the attack was fundamentally different. The leadership of the labour movement themselves acted as the cement which held the frail unity of the employers intact. The leadership of both political and industrial wings of the movement emerge from this episode disgraced. The Australian Council of Trade Unions have given full support to the government. The militant campaigning of the BLF—and its major successes—were an embarrassing reminder of ACTU's failings.

But it is not just the right-wing whose role will never be forgotten.



The Stalinist leadership of the other main building union—the Building Workers' Industrial Union—have encouraged and openly collaborated in the hounding of the BLF with the intention of scavenging its members. There seems to be no depths to which they have not been prepared to stoop. BWIU officials have called police onto sites to deal with BLF pickets. They even selected May Day as the deadline by which BLF members must leave and join the BWIU or face dismissal.

Although the struggle on Australia's building sites is not over, it appears that the BLF have suffered a severe defeat. In New South Wales, out of 7,000 BLF members only 70 battle-hardened class fighters remain in the union. In its Victorian



Norm Gallagher

heartland, the union has fared better. Yet, despite magnificent and heroic resistance the BLF has taken a severe battering from the state. But the ramifications will be felt throughout the trade union movement.

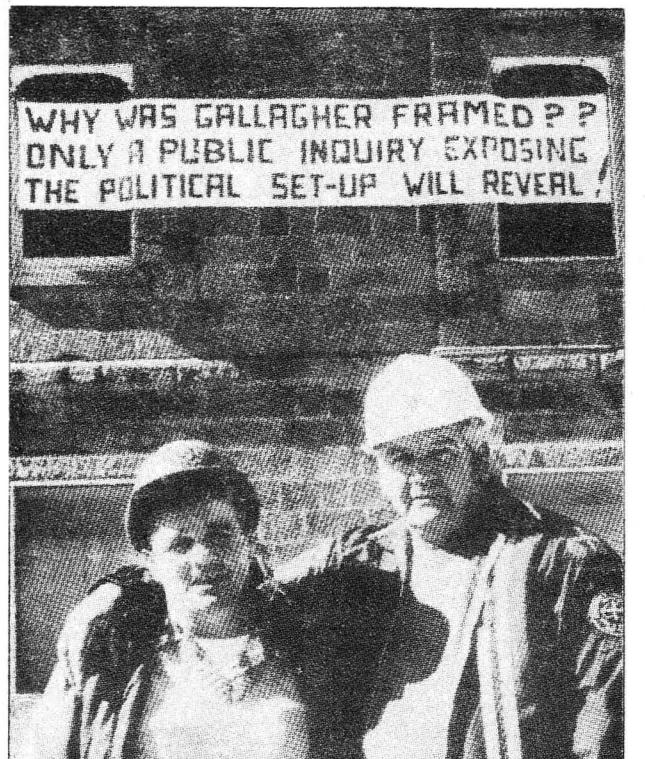
The right-wing have kicked over a hornets' nest of bitter opposition. In one incident 250 angry BLF members surrounded a bus carrying Cain, smashing windows and pounding the bus with their fists and helmets. But far more significantly, the memory of these events will be present, like a spectre haunting the right-wing, at every conference and meeting of the Labour Party in the future. Experience of Labour's disgrace represents the first spark that will begin the process of transformation within the ALP.

A chasm-like split will develop. The latest sharp tilt to the right by the leadership has stretched workers' patience to breaking point. An explosion of strikes has shaken Australia in recent weeks. Transport workers, public servants, storemen, rubber workers, metal workers, waterside workers and oil workers have all taken action.

Radicalised by its own experiences, and weary of repeated calls for 'sacrifice', the working class has begun to move and the trade union tops are being pushed, almost frog-marched, into opposition to the government.

Even ACTU leader, Crean, has warned: "Make no mistake. If the superannuation scheme and the tax cuts are not delivered that is it. It is all off. By definition the Accord will have been smashed."

Labour's base in the mass trade union movement—for so long the ace card of Hawke and the right-wing—is now turning into its opposite. The flames of revolt within the unions are finding their expression inside the ALP. Open splits at the top—within Cabinet—are just a portent of things to come. Even Hayden, the right-wing foreign minister and former Labour leader,

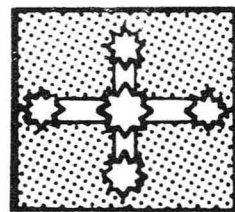


During the campaign against the Building Labourers Federation, General Secretary Norm Gallagher was imprisoned. He was eventually released after the campaign seen here.



has voted against the latest proposals.

Hawke's pyrrhic victory at the recent ALP Conference which voted to accept the austerity programme cannot stem the tide. The Conference, consisting of just 99 delegates elected not at rank and file level, but at the regional conferences, is by no means an accurate gauge of grass-roots opinion. Even at this bureaucratic and top heavy forum, Hawke only won by 60 votes to 39.



Events in the Victorian ALP are a warning to Hawke. Recently the scene of frantic right-wing activity—where veteran left-winger Bill Hartley has just been expelled for his support of the BLF and criticism of the right-wing, and where four right controlled unions were readmitted to bolster the Right's voting strength—the state ALP Conference voted unanimously to throw out the Hawke-Keating proposals. This included Hawke's own misnamed 'Labour Unity' faction.

The seeds are being sown for a huge swing to the left inside the ALP. All that is lacking is a real alternative to the pro-capitalist policies of Hawke.

The Australian workers, confronting a ruling class in-

tent in peeling away all its hard won gains, need such a programme as never before.

They need a leadership and a government prepared to stand up to Big Business blackmail, demanding an immediate across-the-board pay rise to compensate for the ground lost during the last few years, and a steadfast defence of public spending and welfare.

If, explaining these issues, Labour campaigned for the nationalisation of industry and banking, it would meet massive support. Resting on the powerful organisations of the working class, such a movement could sweep aside the opposition of the ruling class. Attempts by foreign banks, the multinationals and imperialists to strangle such a development, would have to contend with the international wave of enthusiasm and solidarity that it would detonate—particularly amongst the working class and rural poor of volatile SE Asia.

Equipped with the genuine ideas of Marxism, the Australian proletariat would be unstoppable. The class that produced the world's first Labour Party and the world's first Labour government could, on the basis of a socialist Labour government and a nationalised planned economy, transform mineral-rich Australia into a paradise. In the battles ahead, such a programme offers the only future for Australian workers.

By Lawrence Coates

## The revolution betrayed

# Leon Trotsky In defence of workers' democracy

**THIS MONTH** is the forty-sixth anniversary of Leon Trotsky's death at the hands of a Stalinist assassin.

Trotsky was fond of quoting: "Ours is neither to laugh, nor to cry, but to understand". His own writings can make us do all these things. They express the anger of a lifelong revolutionary against the oppressors and his sympathy for the oppressed. They deride the pretensions of the opponents of Marxism. But above all, they explain the stormy events of the years that Trotsky lived through.

Along with Lenin, Trotsky co-led the Bolshevik Party, he was the organiser, in fact, of the historic October Revolution. Trotsky built the Red Army that saved the infant workers' state from international reaction in the civil war. But six years after finishing his monumental *History of the Russian Revolution* Trotsky had to publish a book analysing the degeneration of the revolution. *The Revolution Betrayed* was finished fifty years ago this month, and is a fitting monument to Trotsky's defence of Marxism, even under the most unfavourable circumstances.

For Trotsky's most valuable contribution of all to the international working-class movement, a contribution only he could make, was the struggle against Stalinism, the deformation of socialism in the Soviet Union and for the defence of workers democracy.

Although Trotsky's anger at the discarding of the revolution's ideals is obvious in its pages, no more dispassionate, scientific analysis of Stalinism has yet been written, than *Revolution Betrayed*.

In Trotsky's time, as today, there was no shortage of books on the Soviet

By Tony Cross

Union. But they expressed either the naked hatred of the capitalists for a new-born workers' state, or the uncritical complacency of a school which Trotsky dubbed "Socialism for Radical Tourists".

Chief among these radical tourists were the "theoreticians" of the Fabian Society, Sidney and Beatrice Webb. Neil Kinnock and other right-wingers today use the Fabian platform to fulminate against the "dictatorial" Marxists, attempting to associate genuine Marxism with the crimes of Stalinism. They should be reminded that, while Stalin was drowning workers' democracy in the blood of the best fighters in the Bolshevik Party, the Webbs were happily penning a book called *Soviet Communism; a New Civilisation*. Meanwhile, Trotsky and his co-thinkers felt the first blows of Stalin's repression and were for some time alone in exposing it.

Today's reformists would prefer to forget the existence of books like the Webbs', but *Revolution Betrayed* can and should, still be referred to by those who wish to understand the Soviet Union today.

Trotsky explains the tremendous advances resulting from the planned economy, which led to a 250 per cent growth in industrial production in just six years in the 1930s. "Socialism has demonstrated its right to victory... not in the language of dialectics, but in the language of steel, cement

and electricity" he comments. This development of the productive forces, which took Russia's production from that of a semi-colonial country to 70-80 per cent of the USA's today, explains why capitalism has not been and cannot be restored.

But, "a revolution in the forms of property does not solve the problem of socialism, but only raises it". Socialism means the development of production and productivity to a higher stage than capitalism is able to reach. It means the abolition of want, the easing of the struggle for the means of existence by the masses and therefore the withering away of classes and the state. But the Soviet state "has grown into a hitherto unheard of apparatus of compulsion. The bureaucracy not only has not disappeared, yielding its place to the masses, but has turned into an uncontrolled force dominating the masses."

### Revolution isolated

There is no shortage of evidence of the truth of this statement today, even in exposures (after the event, of course!) by the bureaucracy itself. Trotsky alone gives a serious explanation of why the totalitarian regime appeared. The state machine "arose in the beginning as the bourgeois organ of a workers' state".

In backward Russia, administrative skills were the preserve of those who had been privileged under the old order. Had the revolution spread to the industrialised countries, the dependence of the workers' state on their skills would have ended, abundance of wealth could have been created destroying material inequalities.

But the isolation of the revolution meant that the development of the productive forces was "...high enough to awaken increased demands in all, but wholly insufficient to satisfy them". The bureaucracy, who made sure their demands were satisfied first, became a caste with privileges to defend against the majority of the population. The extravagant lifestyle of the bureaucracy today makes its perks of the thirties look meagre. Recent purges have revealed that Brezhnev's son had a fondness for hunting in Africa and night-clubbing in Paris, while his daughter modestly stuck to the Moscow high-life and collecting diamonds. Some of the more lowly placed were prepared to pay a 200,000 rouble bribe to attain the obviously lucrative



Trotsky: In the Russian Civil War (below) and in exile (above).

post of Party district committee secretary in Azerbaijan.

The bureaucracy owes its existence to the national isolation of the revolution. So it had to revise the Bolshevik programme which declared "The era of world proletarian communist revolution has begun".

Stalin replaced it with the view that "the task of creating socialism was national and administrative in its nature." Trotsky exposes the nationalist degeneration of the Communist International, which was at the time of *Revolution Betrayed* strangling the Spanish revolution for the sake of diplomatic agreements with capitalist Britain and France. His prediction of a string of national, reformist 'Communist' Parties, was brilliantly confirmed with the emergence of Eurocommunism.

Stalin's programme of "autarchy", developing the economy in isolation from the rest of the world, proved disastrous for the Soviet Union. Even Brezhnev was forced to write into the constitution that Russia participates on the world market.

"The bureaucratic methods of autocratic leadership are coming into sharper and sharper conflict with the demands of economy and culture..."

The bureaucracy, who made sure their demands were satisfied first, became a caste with privileges to defend against the majority of the population. The extravagant lifestyle of the bureaucracy today makes its perks of the thirties look meagre. Recent purges have revealed that Brezhnev's son had a fondness for hunting in Africa and night-clubbing in Paris, while his daughter modestly stuck to the Moscow high-life and collecting diamonds. Some of the more lowly placed were prepared to pay a 200,000 rouble bribe to attain the obviously lucrative

Today the bureaucracy is

an absolute fetter on progress. Such a small group cannot administer what is now a complex, modern industrial economy. Now, it is estimated, 50 per cent of output is lost through inefficiency, mismanagement or corruption.

In contrast to the astronomical growth rates of the thirties, the current Party programme talks timidly of doubling industrial production by the year 2,000. Gorbachev has revealed that the productivity of labour is 55 per cent of that of the US in industry and 20 to 25 per cent in agriculture.

With economic advance, the working class has grown to a majority of the population. A powerful working class is being pushed into conflict with bureaucrats and capitalists on a world scale. Here is the force that can accomplish social transformation in the West and political revolution in the East.

### Political revolution

The heroic struggles of the Hungarian, Czech and Polish workers are evidence of what is the case. Trotsky warns in advance against the reformist illusions of leaders such as Lech Walesa; "There is no peaceful outcome of this crisis. No devil yet voluntarily cut off his own claws. The Soviet bureaucracy will not give up its positions without a fight. The development leads obviously to the road of revolution".

This revolution will not need to alter the ownership of the means of production, which are already state-owned. It will merely re-establish the working class's control of the economy and the state, by carrying through the tasks Trotsky outlines: the purging of the state apparatus, and the election of all officials, the abolition of privilege and the restoration of the workers' democratic rights.

## Hungary: miners walk-out over closures

Radio Budapest, the voice of the Hungarian Communist Party, has admitted that some 700 coal miners have walked out of two pits in protest over pit closures.

In the finest traditions of Ian MacGregor, the Hungarian government has plans to close 14 collieries for reasons of 'economy'. Indeed, the number of mines has dropped dramatically over the last few years from 156 in 1975 to just 39 in 1985.

Of the 700 who have walked out, 400 have "resigned", according to one UK national daily, while 300 at the Tatabanya mine, which has a history of "bad labour relations" have taken strike action. This is the most serious evidence of unrest and dissatisfaction among workers at Stalinist economic mismanagement since the clampdown on Solidarity by the military rulers of Poland a few years ago. It is a testimony to the willingness of workers in Eastern Bloc countries to stand against attacks on living standards and jobs, despite bureaucracy, press censorship and all the other features of Stalinism.

### Pressure from below

Radio Budapest has said that the miners have reacted too hastily, as the collieries were scheduled to be closed only gradually! This is their defence for robbing workers of a livelihood!

As in the other Stalinist states, trade unions in Hungary are tied to the bureaucratic state machine, and, consequently are rarely in conflict with their officials in the government. Nevertheless, it is clear that pressure from below has forced a confrontation. Indeed, at its last conference the Hungarian miners union raised serious objections to general working conditions, overtime and antiquated mining equipment.

The Tatabanya colliery was visited last year by the Prime Minister Gyorgy Lazar, the Industry Secretary, Laslo Kapolyi and leading Communist Party officials to listen to the workers' grievances. The pit has been plagued with massive job losses and has become one of Hungary's three loss-making mining enterprises. The workforce clearly saw themselves as being on the frontline of the government's closure programme.

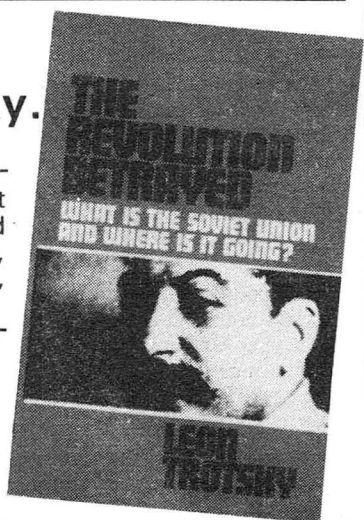
The other colliery in Borsod has seen the workforce dwindle by over 1,000 in the last few years and the general manager has confessed that "we are heading for bankruptcy."

By Hilario Sánchez

## The Revolution Betrayed

by Leon Trotsky.

£5.75 (£6 post free) from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.



# Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

Militant,  
3-13 Hepscoot Road,  
London E9 5HB

## Labour's witch-hunt condemned

Dear Comrades,  
The Labour Party National Executive Committee has passed a resolution to lower the age of the Young Socialists from 25 to 21, talk about 'cutting off your nose to spite your face'!

What are they afraid of? This move has got to be suicidal for Kinnock. At a time when the young people need and want a socialist future, the Party is banning its youth from taking part in its activities.

Is it not about time, that the right-wing dominated NEC stopped these witch-hunts and took on the job of fighting the Tories, preparing for a not too distant election and representing workers' interests.

Yours fraternally  
Anne Ursell  
Sittingbourne  
Labour Party

### Under attack

Dear Comrades,  
I have just got back from the Young Socialists' summer camp in Gloucestershire.

I have not been camping since my teens, it was a tremendous experience with great rallies, speeches and

discussions.

It showed the youth's utter contempt for Thatcher and her class and the desire for a socialist society.

Labour should up the age limit to 61, not reduce it to 21.

Yours fraternally  
Ernie White  
Isle of Wight  
Labour Party

### Waste of time and energy

Dear Comrades,  
I have read with interest your recent articles on the witch-hunt and being in the Labour Party, I am angry and disgusted that the party leadership has wasted so much time and energy ripping the party to pieces when it should hunt that witch out

of number ten. Doesn't Labour want to win the next general election?

Yours fraternally  
Colin Toogood  
Bristol West  
Labour Party

## Kilroy-Silk throws in the towel

Dear Comrades,  
So Robert Kilroy-Silk has decided to throw in the towel after three long years because the *Militant* view did not coincide with his own.

Surely he didn't think it would be nice as pie. Seeing as he gave up, shows he was not the man for the job.

To give up is betraying the people who elected you. During the year long miners strike I knew that Arthur Scargill would never sell the membership down the river.

As Kilroy-Silk said himself "They don't give up do



Kilroy-Silk they?'. Maybe that is the difference.

Yours fraternally  
Bernard Frost  
Stoke South

Dear Comrades,  
I saw Silk on the BBC on Friday's *Wogan*.

Terry was all over Silk and I think Derek Hatton or Tony Mulhearn should ask for a right of reply on the programme.

But I think the BBC will not have Derek or Tony on at that time.

Yours fraternally  
Patrick Westmore  
Isle of Wight

### Return of the empire?

Dear Comrades,  
As the figures for the performance of manufacturing industry and the level of unemployment show, the British economy is in a sickly state.

But there is no need to worry according to an article in the *Daily Telegraph* (29 July).

Although Britain cannot compete with Germany in manufacturing industry, with America in consumer spending, or with Japan in opening up export markets, she can exploit other countries economically very well.

The windfall in North Sea Oil revenues "... has allowed us (?) to build a portfolio overseas which was worth £250 billion... at the end of last year". The net assets "... have risen from a puny £2.7 billion in 1975 to £90 billion by the end of 1984."

As the *Telegraph* says "... cheer up... Those foreigners are working to keep us in the style to which we are accustomed."

Yours fraternally  
Dave Louch  
York

### Conflicting interests



Wendy Savage

Dear Comrades,  
£150,000 was spent in the Wendy Savage case, it seems her 'crime' is to be loyal to the National Health Service and only perform necessary operations on women in childbirth. These consultants were 'concerned' that she was acting irresponsibly.

To me, their 'concern' only extends to providing assembly-line style care for the women so that they can get the birth over and done with. They can then concentrate on their private patients which is good news for them and their bank managers.

The NHS has no money for more staff or pay rises but Tower Hamlets District Health Authority soon found this £150,000. This money should have been used to improve conditions instead of trying to make them worse.

Yours fraternally  
Mara Dale  
Isle of Wight

### Injustice

Dear Comrades,  
The ITV programme *Scales of Justice* examined the working of magistrates courts.

The way magistrates are appointed reflects the lack of accountability in capitalist society. Magistrates are appointed by a special Advisory Committee which meets in secret.

The composition of a town's magistrates is supposed to reflect the social and political composition of the town.

However, in Warrington for example, two labour-represented wards have 12 magistrates, yet three Tory represented wards have 39. The Tory area has half the population of the Labour area yet three times as many magistrates!

The general composition of magistrates reflect the prejudices of the middle and upper classes. If these prejudices don't influence the verdicts, they certainly influence the penalties imposed.

A man fined £455 for a variety of motoring offences, was a single parent living on £47 a week social security.

Yours fraternally  
Clive Walder  
Brighton Kemptown  
Labour Party

## Exploiting the unemployed

### Reducing the figures

Dear Comrades,  
The Enterprise Allowance Scheme really exploits and unfairly raises the hopes of the unemployed.

There is £40 a week to start a business—all the backing, free starter workshops. However, here come the facts:

You forfeit any dole and any supplementary benefits, out of the £40 one has to pay stamp and National Insurance. This brings the sum down to about £28.50.

Nobody has yet been able to tell me how I am supposed to pay rent/mortgage/feed and clothe or pay bills during this time.

There is also the £1,000 that the entrepreneur has to put in—the Job Centre in Cardiff is only too willing to set up a bank overdraft. Repayments come of course

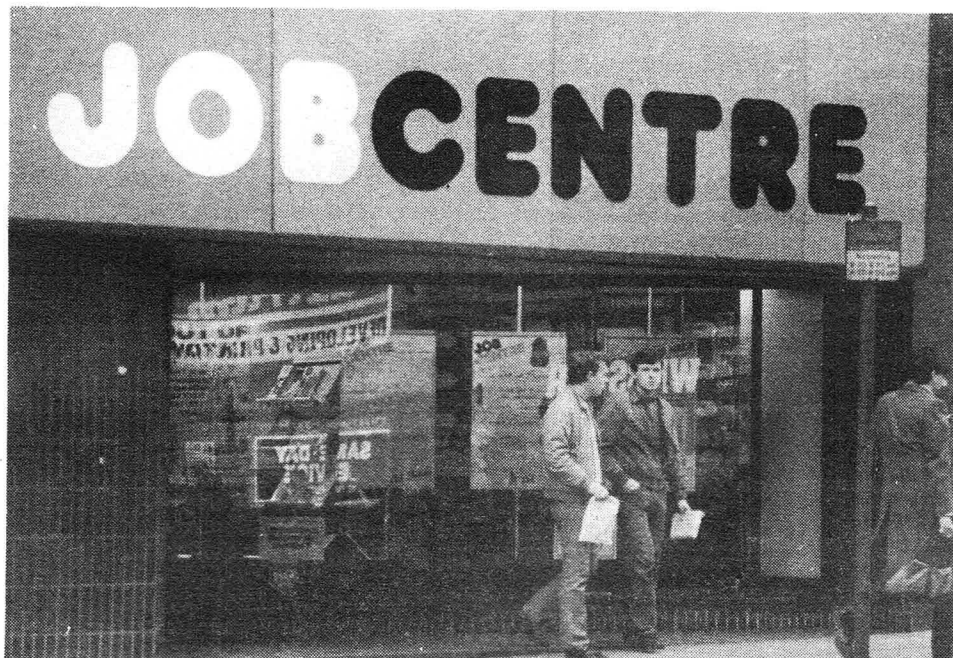


Photo: Dave Sinclair

Job centres with nothing more to offer than schemes to take advantage of the desperate.

of of that £40. No figures to my knowledge have ever been issued on how many have thrived. Sorry, an ex-coalminer was recently

featured as now having a healthy sign-writing business—rewriting the notice boards for British Coal.

The £40 is also taxable as

assets at the end of the first year's trading.

Yours fraternally  
G Evans  
Cardiff

### Instant treatment

Dear Comrades,  
Maggie's regal wave is imperfect. She has to have an operation on her hand to straighten her out.

On the same day Michael Meacher wrote in *The Guardian* that there are officially 661,249 on the waiting lists, including 43,690 "in need of urgent medical treatment". 132,000 people have been waiting over a year. Not so for Maggie.

Meacher pointed out that private medicine wants long NHS waiting lists to encourage people to go to them.

The next Labour government must abolish private medicine. It must not only provide the three per cent real growth in NHS spending that Meacher wishes to see but must reverse all the Tory cuts.

Yours fraternally  
Gary Freeman  
Nottingham

## Secret takeover bid

Dear Comrades,  
On 26 June I wrote to Peter Walker MP to protest at his view on the future of nuclear energy.

I recently had a reply from the department of energy, the biggest surprise of the letter was at the beginning, with the sentence:

"Dear Mr Hardy, Thank you for your letter of 26 June to the Prime

### Minister...

It seems that either Mrs Thatcher is in complete control, or a secret cabinet meeting has got rid of Maggie. At least the Labour Party publicly elects its leader. The people of Britain must be told.

Yours fraternally  
Dave Hardy  
Nottingham South  
Labour Party

## Mopping-up after the Tory cuts



Civil servants elected a fighter by voting for John Macreadie as General Secretary.

Dear Comrades,  
In discussion with a worker at a local DHSS office, I realised they are not only low paid and previously led by a union leadership that was prepared to accept job losses without a fight. In the inner city areas especially, they have to contend with threats on their life and

families threatening to leave their children at the office in a desperate effort to get money.

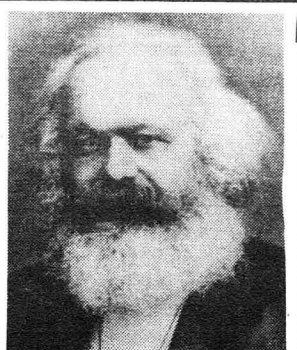
Norman Fowler's proposal to cut single payments has meant DHSS offices have been inundated with last minute claims for cookers, beds etc.

The right-wing have the

audacity to claim that John Macreadie has been elected by vote-rigging. If the right-wing believe this, they must be very out of touch with the feelings of their own members.

Yours fraternally  
Jean Thorpe  
Nottingham East  
Labour Party

Marx in London walk.  
Sunday 17 August, Farm Tube. 11.30am.  
Marx and Engels' houses and boozers, Highgate cemetery and Hampstead Heath. Fully qualified Marxist guide. Cost £1.



# No Labour anti union laws

**THIS TORY** government has conducted an unprecedented campaign against the trade union movement. As part of their campaign to drive down the wages, conditions and living standards of working people they have attempted to undermine and even destroy the basic organisations of the working class.

By Nick Toms

Fundamental rights, won in the past by the struggle of working people, have been attacked. These include the right to picket effectively, the closed shop and even the right to strike itself. The courts have been given powers to interfere in the affairs of the trade union movement resulting in a number of trade unions, such as the NUM and the printers, being fined substantially and having their funds sequestered.

In the face of these brutal attacks, the response of the Labour Party and TUC conferences has been crystal clear. Resolutions have been passed overwhelmingly calling on the next Labour government to repeal, in its entirety, all the Tory government's anti-union legislation. It is therefore with indignation and concern that activists in the labour movement have learned of the Labour Party and TUC leaderships' proposals for employment legislation under the next Labour government.

Undoubtedly many of the positive measures contained in the draft TUC/Labour Party statement *People at work: new rights, new responsibilities* are to be welcomed. Proposals to improve protection against unfair dismissal, restore trade union rights at GCHQ, provide better protection for part-time workers and homeworkers, improve health and safety legislation, strengthen union rights in the workplace along with the establishment of statutory rights for working people (such as the right to strike) will all go a long way towards making good the attacks made by the Tories.

## Legal bias

But these many good points must not be allowed to persuade anyone to accept the policy statement as a whole. They constitute nothing more than spoonfuls of honey in a barrel of tar. None of these positive measures should be sufficient to temper the determination of activists to fight against the Labour leadership's plans to "Lay down statutory principles for inclusion in union rule books based on the right for union members to have a secret ballot on decisions relating to strikes, and for the method of election of union executives to be based on a system of secret ballots".

The statement adds that "a Labour government in consultation with the TUC will establish a new independent tribunal which will have the duty of acting on complaints by union members that the statutory principles have been breached. This will be presided over by a legally qualified person.



David Lea (left) assistant general secretary of TUC, Neil Kinnock and TUC general secretary Norman Willis launch 'A New Partnership for Britain. Workers have some tough questions about just who they are supposed to partner.

The tribunal would adopt a conciliatory and flexible approach but would ultimately after conducting an investigation be empowered to require a union to take the necessary steps to remedy the complaint. The ordinary courts would have no jurisdiction on such matters while the tribunal's procedures were being used.

Marxists have long been to the forefront of championing the cause of union democracy and measures to involve the widest possible participation in union affairs by the membership. Marxists have consistently campaigned for regular election of union officials and for them to be subject to the right of recall. Marxists have also fought for union officials to receive no more than the average wage of the members they represent to ensure that they are kept in touch with the problems faced by ordinary workers.

But these issues should only be resolved through democratic debate and discussion within the trade unions themselves. Questions of union democracy should not be the subject of legislation and the courts. The labour movement must totally oppose any state interference within the trade unions.

Labour's leaders are claiming that their proposals will prevent employers from interfering in unions' affairs and instead provide an "effective right for union members". Nothing could be further from the truth. An employer would need just one stooge or 'plant' in the workforce to plunge the union, yet again, into legal chaos and confusion. Whilst appearing to enhance the democratic rights of union members these proposals are, in reality, using the words of Dennis Skinner a "scabs' charter".

The proposal to establish an 'independent tribunal' to act on complaints by union members will certainly not allay fears amongst union activists. Over 80 per cent of judges come from public school

backgrounds. Given the class nature of the legal profession any 'legally qualified person' would hardly be likely to come down in favour of the unions. In any case, in the class struggle how can anyone or any 'tribunal' be independent. You are either on one side or the other. Especially in this period of capitalist crisis there is no real 'in-between'.

## History repeated

This 'independent tribunal' bears an ominous resemblance to the Industrial Relations Court of the Heath government which was fought against so bitterly by the labour movement in the early 1970s. It would simply create a new tier of legal interference in union affairs causing the maximum possible disruption to workers in struggle with the added disadvantage of having credibility given to it through being ratified by the leadership of the labour movement.

The proposals of the present Labour leaders are in serious danger of repeating the tragic episode of *In place of strife* of the 1960s. This saw a Labour government led by Harold Wilson and Barbara Castle, attempt to introduce a series of anti-trade union measures in an attempt to 'deal' with unofficial strikes. Their proposals included a compulsory 28-day "cooling off" period, the powers for the Secretary of State to both resolve inter-union disputes and order pre-strike ballots and, most disgracefully of all, a proposal to allow stewards and workers to be fined by 'attachment to earnings' for 'unconstitutional' strike action.

The measures outlined in the *In place of strife* White Paper caused uproar in the labour movement. A major campaign was waged against the anti-trade union proposals of the Labour government. On 27 February 1969 many thousands of workers were involved in protest stoppages, a national protest lob-

by and demonstrations in the main industrial areas. The huge movement against *In place of strife* across the country by working people began to be felt in Parliament as well. Amongst those who led the opposition of Labour MPs was none other than James Callaghan!

When the White Paper was debated in Parliament, 53 Labour MPs voted against it with a further 40 abstaining. In spite of this Wilson pressed on and an anti-trade union bill was introduced in April 1969. The bill dropped any reference to ballots or fines but still was totally unacceptable to the

trade unions. Further pressure came from the labour movement and with the prospect of certain defeat in Parliament it was finally abandoned.

Nevertheless much damage had been done. The Labour government suffered an embarrassing defeat of its own making and, more seriously, the actions of the Labour's leaders directly helped pave the way for the anti-trade union legislation carried through by the Heath government of 1970-74. **Labour must never go down that road again.**

Already opposition is beginning to build up within the trade unions to the present Labour leader's anti-trade union proposals. Jim Mortimer (ex-general secretary of the Labour Party) has circulated selected Labour MPs with a confidential document attacking the proposals. The ex-left Tom Sawyer (Deputy General Secretary of NUPE) has warned Neil Kinnock: "if you want trouble this side of an election you will get trouble; there are three million votes already stacked against you at the TUC".

Maybe now they are beginning to realise the witch-hunt against *Militant* supporters, which Mortimer pioneered and which Sawyer has taken up with a vengeance, has been just a prelude to an attempt by a section of Labour's leadership to shift the whole policy and programme of the party to the right.

Labour's leaders must be made to firmly understand that their task is not to undermine the basic organisations of the working class, but instead to fight vigorously to defend them as part of the general struggle for socialist policies and a socialist society.

## Classified ads

15p per word, minimum 10 words. Semi-Display £2 per column centimetre. Three weeks for the price of two. *Militant* meeting ads free. All advertisement copy should reach this office by first post on Friday, the week before publication.

○ **Towards the Political Revolution.** Perspectives for Poland of the Trotskyist workers' tendency of Solidarity. Available at 50p each from "World Socialist Books" 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ **Address books** 60p, bookmarks 40p, plastic sleeves 20p, sew on badge 40p, pens 30p plus post to: *Militant*, 8 Woodside Court, Woodside Rd, Portswood, Southampton.

○ **New video** *The launch of COSATU* available for hire from: PO Box 77, London E8 4TB.

○ **Labour Party Conference Greetings** Closing date for copy: 18 September. Rates: semi-display, 3 coll. centimetres £6, 6 coll. centimetres £12. Display, sixteenth of page £20, eighth of page £30, quarter of page £60. POs/cheques to '*Militant* Publications'. Send copy and money to: *Militant* 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London, E9 5HB.

□ **Merseyside Militant** day out in Southport. Sunday 17 August. 10am central station or 11am Southport station.

□ **Caerphilly** Marxist discussion group. Working Mens Hall, Caerphilly, every Monday 7.30pm.

□ **Sittingbourne** Marxist discussion group. Every second Tuesday at 29 Waterloo Rd, Sittingbourne, Kent. For further details ring Sittingbourne 72632.

○ **Kate Packham and Geoff Jones** are getting married on 15 August. We look forward to seeing comrades at South Wales *Militant* camp.

○ **Militant poster blanks** (A2 size). Order yours now - cash in advance. £20 per 1,000 (inc p&p). Box 5, 3/13 Hepscott Rd, London E9 5HB.

○ **Keighley Trades Council**, Silent-night support social. 22 August 7.30-11pm, at the Kensington club, Goulbourne St, Keighley. £1, 50p unwaged.

○ **"States of undress"** require socialist bass player for musical and political revolution. Experience not essential. (Batley) 443135.

○ **"Fighting for a Future"**. Thursday 14 August, John Marshall Hall, Blackfriars Rd, SE1. 7.30pm. Organised by the Fleet Street Support Unit. Speakers include: Dennis Skinner MP, Linda Bellon (Lambeth council leader) and Ken Bairdwood (retired SOGAT member).

○ **CPSA London BL disco**. Friday 15 August, 7.30pm. Florence Nightingale pub, Westminster Bridge Rd, (by County Hall). £2 on door, proceeds to CPSA election defence fund.

○ **SALEP broadsheet** *Workers and youth direct links campaign 1986*, 20p plus p&p from: PO Box 77, London E8 4TB.

- ★ No to state interference in the trade unions
- ★ No to statutory enforcement of pre-strike ballots or secret postal ballots for trade union governing bodies
- ★ No to any interference by the courts or any other 'legal' body into trade union affairs
- ★ For the next Labour government to repeal *all* the provisions of the 1980 and 1982 Employment Acts and the 1984 Trade Union

- Act passed by the Tories
- ★ For a socialist, democratic trade union movement with trade union officials being subject to regular election by their members with a right of recall and with no trade union official receiving more than the average wage of a skilled worker
- ★ Tories out! General election now! Labour to power on a socialist programme

□ **Merton Militant** public meeting. "Workers sanctions against apartheid". Wednesday 27 August, 8pm. Christchurch Hall, Christchurch Rd, SW19 (Colliers Wood tube). SALEP and LPYS speakers.

□ **Wroxall** Marxist discussion group. 2 Mountfield Rd, Wroxall, Isle of Wight. Every Wednesday. Phone Vic Dale on IOW 854759 for details.

# Industrial Reports

## Plessey workers pressure on bosses' apartheid link

IN RESPONSE to correspondence from Ron Todd on behalf of black trade unionists in South Africa, the TGWU 6/643 branch took a decision to approach management at Plessey factory, Edge Lane, about the company's South African connection.

By Graham Casey  
(TGWU 6/643)

On raising the issue, branch chairman, George Briggs, was told that the company was not prepared to discuss the matter with him, and that it would have to be taken up by a full-time officer of the union.

A letter has now been sent from the office of Alan English, district secretary of the Power and Engineering Trade Group.

It expresses the alarm felt by TGWU members in Edge Lane at the situation in South Africa and calling for pressure on the South African government to release prisoners detained during the 'state of emergency', especially those mentioned in the IMF Press Release, 20 June 1986.

Also included in the letter are the following demands:

- 1) No employer should dismiss any worker detained as a result of the state of emergency;
- 2) Detainees should be paid in full for the period of detention;
- 3) Due to dangers arising from the state of emergency to workers who live in townships no workers should be required to work night shifts or outside normal working hours and that no worker should suffer loss of pay as a result;
- 4) Wage increases delayed because of disruptions to negotiations be backdated to compensate fully for delays caused by the state of emergency;
- 5) Employers should make available to union officials and shop stewards facilities to overcome the disruptions to communications caused by the state of emergency;



Plessey workers in Britain fighting against closure of their factory.

6) Employers should allow union members to come together for two hours each week during working hours to discuss and attend union business;

7) Employers should allow shop stewards to take paid time off to attend union business outside the factory premises;

8) Employers should allow access upon notification to accredited union representatives to discuss union business.

Not only is Plessey known to pay some of its 2,440 workers below the EEC recommended rate (SLL5), but is one of 13 British companies paying 2,233 workers less than the "lowest sum possible" for an average household to live on (MLL5).

A statement from Plessey that: "There are no African male employees blow the SLL figure" makes no mention of women—

who are apparently immune to starvation.

In addition, Plessey (like its competitor GEC) is one of the companies which have failed to state that they recognise trade unions at local level in South Africa.

In the present power struggle of big business Plessey has been fighting off an attempted GEC take-over, and has been portraying itself to British workers as the good boss fighting off the bad boss.

Black workers in South Africa will rightly conclude that one is as bad as the other, and that only mass action of the trade union movement can defend the interests of the workers, hence the need for international direct links to impose trade union sanctions against apartheid.

Strangely, as I write this article I can hear on the radio about a man sentenced to 7½ months imprison-



Photo: Rick Matthews (IFL)

ment for selling computers to Russia which could be used for military purposes.

If he'd sold them to South Africa he would have been as safe as the chairman of Plessey or GEC. The lesson from this is that the Tories do believe in sanctions if it suits them.

With 71 Tory MPs known to be involved in companies with South African links, calling on a Tory

government to impose sanctions is like calling on an employer to give permission for a strike and announce it over the factory tannoy.

Do we need the bosses' permission to impose sanctions against the South African regime? No! Workers have the power to impose their own sanctions, and every reason to do so, based on sound trade union experience that an injury to one is an injury to all.

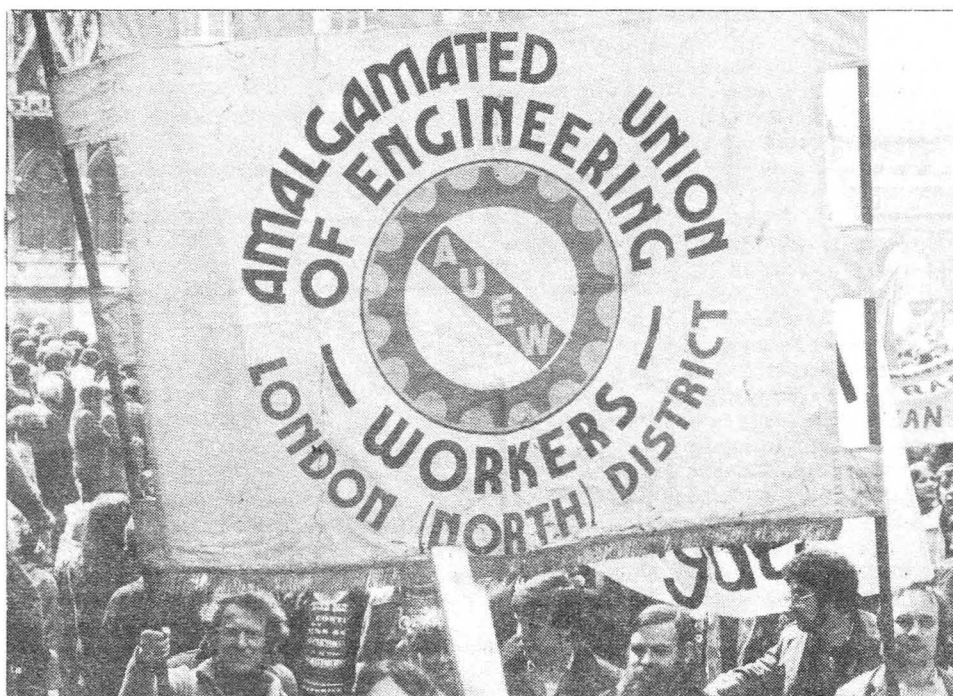
## Left mobilises against engineering deal

"THIS AMOUNTS to their abandonment of organising principles they have held dear since they first gained strength in the 19th century."

So commented the *Financial Times* when reporting on the Confederation of Shipbuilding Engineering Unions' draft national agreement to the Engineering Employers' Federation. And that about sums it up!

The CSEU proposals would give complete flexibility of working: workers "will perform any task within their capabilities regardless of whether the task forms part of their normal work, and regardless of whether or not the task is traditionally performed by members of another union...unions and their members will cooperate with the employer in eliminating unnecessary job demarcations between members of different unions."

As well as this the draft agreement says that: "the employer shall determine the production hours necessary on a weekly, monthly, quarterly or annual basis." In other words if the work in a particular company is of a seasonal character, or



London North District of the AUEW, now AEU, with a strong left tradition, has already come out against the CSEU draft agreement.

geared to Europe where there is a long holiday break in the summer, we could end up working 70 hours a week in one period and perhaps 10 or less in another.

The 10 hour week may seem great, but the 70 hours would be compulsory and at flat rate of pay—no overtime premiums.

This may sound bad

enough, but as the *FT* says, the agreement would: "Give industry the green light for a further round of improvements in working practices," and it is not only engineering they are talking about.

However, the *FT* allows us one little ray of hope. While our union leaders have no problems signing away 140 years of trade union progress in return

for a very minor cut in hours, it seems they may balk at the employers' demand that joint bargaining should replace the many separate units that exist within the industry.

The employers can destroy jobs and conditions as they like, but just let them try and push a trade union bureaucrat out of his position on the gravy train! And all of

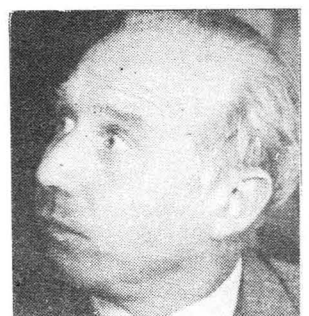
this is for a cut in working hours, that even the unions suggest should not apply to anyone already working less than 39 hours a week.

The right wing leaderships of our unions, particularly the Amalgamated Engineering Union, pride themselves on being in touch with the members as opposed to the "unrepresentative" left. Yet these proposals show just how far away they are from the real feelings and needs of the union membership.

Already the London North and Bradford District Committees of the AEU have decided to campaign against these ideas—which spell out the end of national co-ordinated union bargaining. However, this fight is too important to be left to this or that district of the union. National co-ordination is required.

At a recent meeting, the AEU Broad Left agreed to set up a national steering committee with representation from all of the seven executive committee divisions.

This could not have happened at a better time. This committee should meet as soon as possible to draw up a strategy to



Gavin Laird, AEU general secretary, an architect of 'new realism'.

mobilise the members of the union to overturn these policies and defend our conditions of work.

Everything we have come to accept as normal is under threat. From the guaranteed week, through overtime premiums and safeguards against an un-naturally prolonged working week to the maintenance (indeed preservation) of the various skills of our different trades.

This fight must be taken to the rank and file members, and in doing so it could form the basis for ending right wing misleadership of the AEU.

By John Edwards  
(London North District Committee, AEU)

# Industrial Reports

## Armitage Shanks, Staffs

# Victimised

400 WORKERS walked out of the Armitage Shanks works in Rugeley, Staffs, after senior works representative and union Lodge secretary Rupert O'ner was sacked for alleged "industrial misconduct".

From a mass meeting they demanded that the leadership of their union, the Ceramic and Allied Trades Union (Catu), fight this blatant victimisation and immediately conduct a ballot on a recommendation for industrial action.

Rupert, a *Militant* supporter, was elected into office six months ago and has been to the fore in fighting to improve conditions through better union organisation. Under his leadership a shop stewards' committee was formed for the first time.

By Bill Mullins

This company, part of Blue Circle Cement, has a long record of such victimisations. The workers were determined to fight. It came as a shock when after initially being in favour, the union general secretary Alf Lowes, refused to conduct a ballot.

At an emergency Lodge meeting on Thursday 7 August a resolution of no confidence in the general secretary was carried. It was decided that the Lodge would conduct its own ballot on industrial action.

An understandable, but nevertheless mistaken decision was also made to ballot the members on withdrawing from Catu. The mood of the union's 30,000 membership, mainly concentrated in the

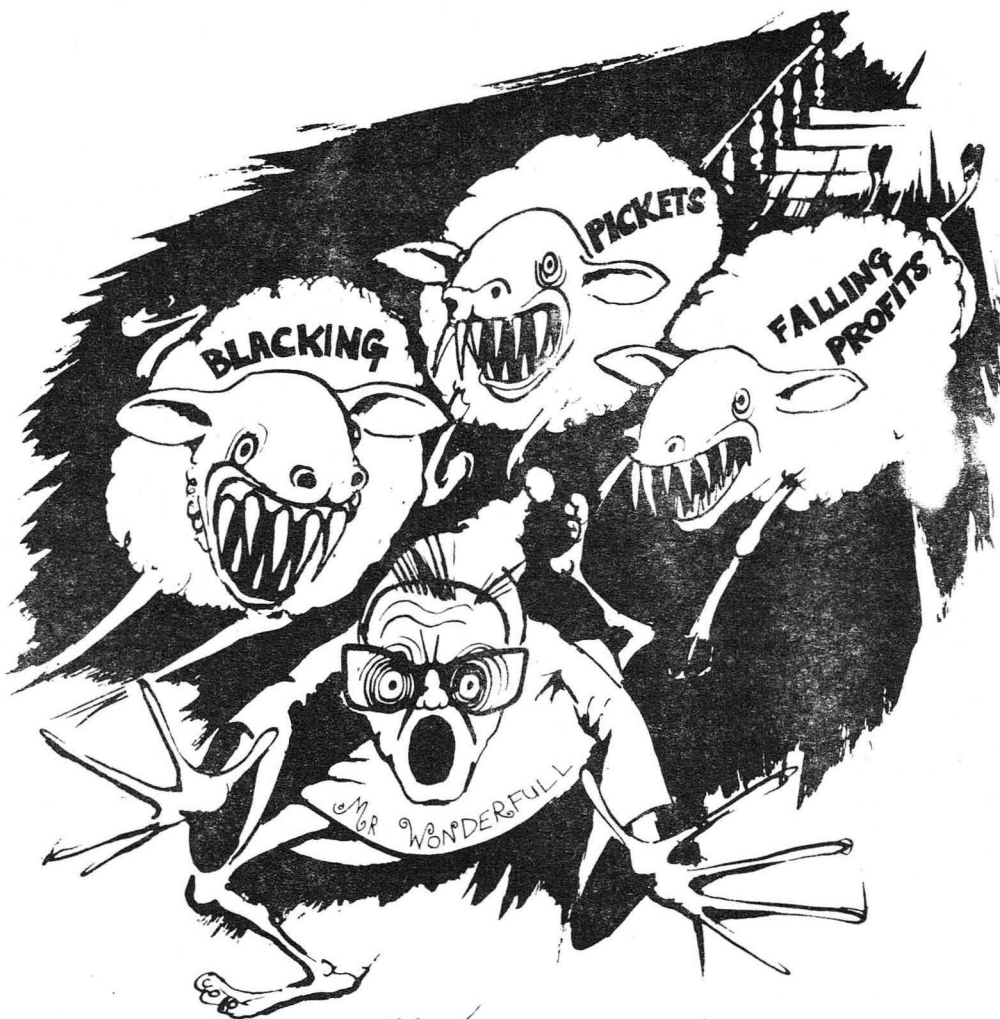
Stoke-on-Trent area, is to reform it from top to bottom.

But withdrawing is no answer. The history of trade unions in Britain is littered with examples of failed attempts to split away from the existing unions.

The best course of action for Armitage Shanks workers is to campaign *inside* the union for increased democracy and a fighting leadership.

The Lodge has issued a leaflet to be given to Catu members throughout the country explaining their case and calling for resolutions to be sent to Catu head office in Stoke demanding that the union support its victimised shop steward.

Messages of support to Rupert O'ner, Catu Lodge secretary, Rugeley, Staffs, WS 15 2EG.



HAVE A SHEEPLESS NIGHT TOM! Alan Hardman.

## Seaham closure threat

THE FIGHT is on to save Seaham colliery in County Durham which is threatened with closure. British Coal wants to shut the pit by March next year and transfer the 400 men to nearby Vane Tempest.

The announcement took the men by surprise and has caused widespread anger. They are to fight the shut-down and want to take their case to the Independent Colliery Review Procedure.

But management say the shutdown does not amount to closure because the same men will get work at the Vane Tempest sister pit which is under the same management. The move, they say, is nothing more than 'rationalisation.'

The mood of the men is one of determination to resist the proposals because they see it as a back-door method of closing the whole Vane Tempest/Seaham combine, which is a threat to jobs and a threat to the community.

By Bob Young

## ICI first strike?

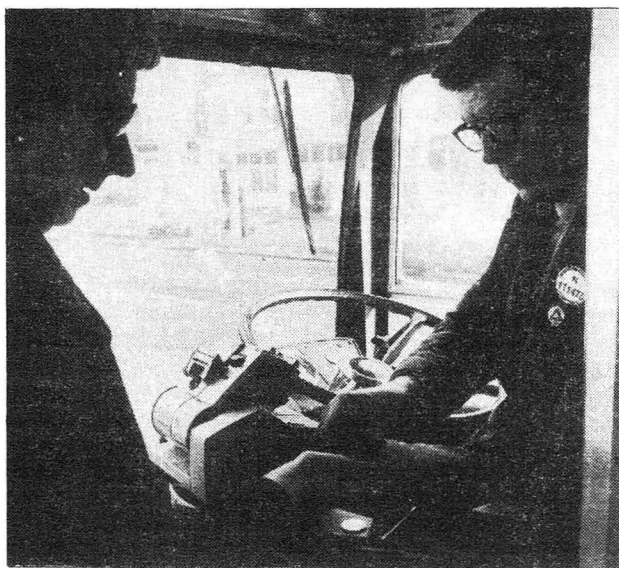
ICI PRODUCTION workers are being balloted for strike action over pay.

Workplace ballots are being held for 30,000 production workers at fifty sites around the country in one of Britain's biggest companies.

ICI's production workers have never staged a national strike, indeed the company is famous for its 'good' industrial relations.

But their offer of 5.3 per cent when they have made £2 billion profits in the last two years has been rejected by the unions.

## Walthamstow buses



WALTHAMSTOW BUS garage TGWU shop steward, Dave Mitchell, and shop member Tommy Taylor, talked to Helen Redwood following last week's one day strike over assaults on bus drivers.

WE WON a guarantee from management that protective screens will be fitted in four weeks' time. If they do not deliver further action will be taken.

In the last two months drivers have suffered five assaults—three with knives. And on one occasion the driver was even shot at. One was stabbed in the chest and arm.

There's four drivers off sick at the moment, and one bloke who just came back after two months off, came in shaking. It's been an on-going thing for three years to get screens fitted to protect the drivers—but up to last week there was still no sign of them.

The majority of assaults are on one-man buses. If we had two on a bus it would certainly alleviate the situation. Most of the trouble is over fare disputes—fare evasion and over-riding. When you're sitting in the bus there's nowhere to go. You'd think management would show more understanding.

We've had to tender for our own routes. More than eight routes have been privatised now. We're in the same position as Fleet Street—people's jobs are threatened.

Last November management wanted a £50 per week cut in wages. We managed to knock them back. Then they wanted a £23 per week wage cut. But we've beaten them down on that as well. Now they've agreed to at least maintain existing wage levels. But even if we do the work cheaper there's no guarantee we won't lose the routes anyway.

Morale is rock bottom and the sickness rate has never been so high. The canteen used to have a good atmosphere—now it's always empty. People just come in, do the job and go home.

We've managed to stop them replacing canteen staff with agency workers for now, but we expect it will be tried on again. If they get away with agency staff in canteens what's to stop them getting agency drivers as well.

There's a lot of tension on the job and a lot of hostility from the public who are having to wait longer because of service cuts. Waiting time used to be around ten minutes, now it's thirty or forty minutes. It's no surprise people get so angry.

When we have a stoppage management never say what it's about. There was a man who came by the picket line who said that he'd been cursing us as he came down the road but when he found out what it was all about he was more than willing to walk the rest of the way!

# Silentnightmare

RECENT developments at Silentnight have shown how badly the 14-month-old dispute is hurting management.

By David Oselton  
(Sutton Silentnight striker)

Share prices are falling week by week and production is at such a low level that production line workers have been seen sweeping the car park outside the Sutton factory.

Sutton strikers are in court on Wednesday on a trespass charge brought by Silentnight management to stop pickets using a piece of waste land we have been on since the beginning of the strike.

With the management stooping to desperate measures (see report from Trevor King), opportunities for winning the strike have never been better, but more pressure is still needed if this is to be done.

With resolutions to the TUC and Labour Party conferences coming up, a great deal of pressure will be put on the Co-op to stop ordering from Silentnight—but this must not be limited to the Co-op management.

Shop workers in the Co-op and other major stores should follow the example set by members of the strikers' local Usdaw union branch and threaten a walk-out if any Silentnight products are bought.

More solidarity action is also needed from other members of FTAT within the Silentnight group. A full meeting of all shop stewards should be held to thrash out a programme of action.

A 24-hour strike by all FTAT members in Silentnight group companies would convince management that this strike is not going to be broken despite all their dirty tricks.



Silentnight is doing so well the scabs are employed sweeping up the car park

Photo: Mick Hodgson (Sutton striker)

## What an exhibition!

AT THE recent furniture exhibition in the G-MEX centre in Manchester, Silentnight were conspicuous by their absence. We found that they were ferrying potential buyers by limousine from there to their own exhibition in Salterforth.

The pick-up point was in the car park under the ex-centre. How low can you get?

Once at Salterforth they were wine and dined to dull their senses into buying.

The message from our

reception committee was: "Welcome to the Silentnightmare" and "Eat all, sup up, buy now".

For the second year the Silentnight float was absent from our local gala procession. Is Mr Wonderful (company owner-Ed) losing his pride. Now folk have more sense than to buy Silentnight crap beds.

By Trevor King  
(ex-Silentnight employee for 26 years, former contributor to the Tom Clarke millionaire fund)

## March on Wapping!

Saturday 16 August  
Assemble: Tower Hill tube 8.30pm.

Sponsored by: Southwark Printworkers' support committee and London Borough of Southwark Labour Group.

# Militant

Leon Trotsky: in defence of workers' democracy —Page 11

## Defend CPSA democracy

**THE ENQUIRY** into John Macreadie's election as CPSA General Secretary started on 15 August.

Ordinary CPSA members are outraged at the undemocratic antics of their right-wing National Executive. Branches throughout the country are demanding a special delegate conference to reverse the NEC's decision to stop John Macreadie taking up the post to which he was elected. By distortion and innuendo, the right-wing have tried to create an atmosphere of distrust in which they hope to re-run the election and get a result more to their liking.

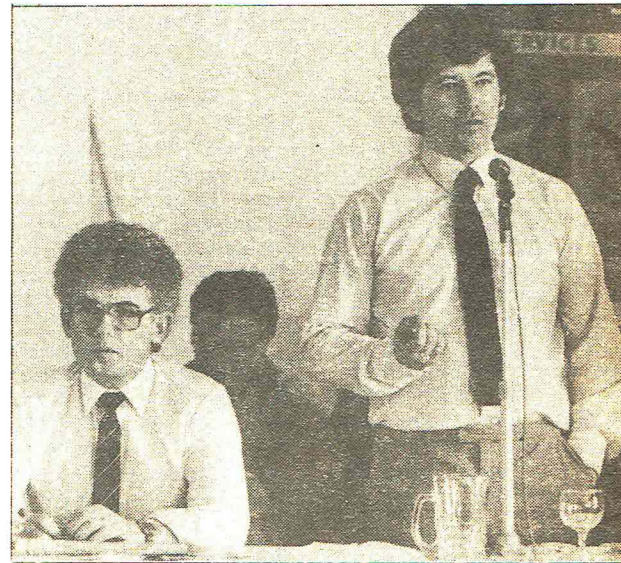
**By Frank Bonner**  
(Civil Aviation Section Executive, personal capacity)

As a smoke screen to conceal the obviously political nature of their attack, the NEC claim they are taking this action because of the narrow majority of 121 votes involved. Yet one NEC member who voted for this manoeuvre was elected by a majority of only fourteen! It is particularly galling that the NEC has effectively

placed the defeated candidate, John Ellis, in the General Secretary's position. In response to the Treasury's proposal to introduce regional pay variations into the civil service, Ellis has told the *Financial Times*, "I shall be recommending to my executive that we cautiously explore this idea". Already we can see the milk-and-water leadership CPSA members will have to suffer as a result of the right-wing's coup. They will "explore" any alternative to the campaign for a decent wage for all civil servants that we so desperately need. Incensed by the NEC's behaviour, a new layer of ac-

tivists is appearing who will fight to ensure that the union gets the General Secretary the members voted for. The right-wing NEC must be swept out of power and replaced by a Broad Left NEC who will work with John Macreadie to tackle the real problems CPSA members face.

Money must flood in to the defence fund set up to pay the legal costs incurred in defending union democracy. Send donations to: John Ship c/o 48, Elsinore Road, Forest Hill, London SE23.



Frank Bonner speaking, along with John Macreadie.

**BL '84 attacks real left**

A DISGRACEFUL leaflet has been issued to CPSA branches by the Communist Party inspired Broad Left '84 (a split-off from the national broad left). The leaflet claims that Macreadie's call for a special delegate conference on the right-wing's challenge to the election is nothing more than a publicity stunt. Unable to deny that the issue is paramount for the union's members, it concludes that the members should have no say in how the matter should be resolved. BL'84 complain about the cost of such a conference. But what's the cost to CPSA members of the current

absence of a properly elected General Secretary? The leaflet also accuses John Macreadie of "political dishonesty" in not saying that he was a *Militant* supporter in his election material. John Macreadie was the candidate of the Broad Left and stood upon its policies. He was elected because of these policies and because the membership wanted a fundamental break with the leadership of the last five years. BL'84's criticism is astonishingly hypocritical! They hardly brag that many of their members, including leading ones, are

members of the Communist Party! Nor do the right-wing, who hide behind the label "moderate", admit to a programme which means continuing the devastating pay decline of civil servants and losing thousands more jobs through the introduction of new technology. John stood firmly on a Broad Left ticket and never denied he was a *Militant* supporter. How could he keep it secret with BL'84, the right wing, the national media and Alistair Graham denouncing him as one from the rooftops during the election campaign? The criticism is pathetic.

## Print worker's arrest is political victimisation

AT LUNCHTIME on 13 August two police officers arrived at the home of Peter Jarvis, London NGA member and *Militant* supporter, and arrested him and his baby daughter, who he was minding at the time. Peter was held in custody for ten hours. This was an act of gross political victimisation. TNT, the firm used by Murdoch for his scabbing operation, have issued a writ demanding an injunction naming Peter and five other print union members, restraining them from "encouraging", "participating in" or in any way "facilitating" any unlawful gathering outside TNT premises. This injunction is being sought in connection with picketing at a TNT depot in Thetford in Norfolk, although Peter has never been in Norfolk. At the time of his arrest, the writ

had not actually been delivered to Peter. The police did not give any details of charges or particulars of their investigation, although they mentioned "criminal damage" done to property in Norfolk and that Peter had been identified by a TNT employee from photographs, supplied by TNT. This firm employs private detectives, who are involved in 'finding evidence' against those with whom it is in dispute.

### Demand release

On hearing of his arrest last Monday, National Graphical Association members, Labour Party members, councillors and MPs were in immediate touch with the police, demanding his release. While supporting to the full his union's campaign over the Wapping dispute, there is not the slightest

shred of evidence that Peter Jarvis has been responsible for actions in any way unlawful. His friends and associates in the movement believe his arrest is due entirely to his political views, well known among print trade union members. Even though the witness had seen the photograph of Peter, the police still tried to hold an identity parade. However, Peter and his solicitor objected strongly when it became clear that all the others on the parade were of a different dress and build. As Peter said, "I was in an old pair of jeans and an old sweater. All the others had neat dark trousers and white shirts. I stood out like a sore thumb". At the objections the police abandoned the line-up and, no doubt as a result of the many protests and phone-calls they were receiving, finally agreed to a release on bail. The issue is not over however,



Lobbying police station for Peter Jarvis' release.

the police want to have further interviews and investigations. Workers will have to be vigilant to ensure that the police and Murdoch

are not able to pin charges on a union activist picked out solely for his political sympathies.

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