

Militant

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The Marxist Paper for Labour and Youth

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Fight workers' enemies

SDP - Liberals

THIS WEEK'S SDP conference has clearly exposed the Social Democrats for what they are—second rate Tories, a safe reserve team for the bosses, now that Thatcher is doing badly at the polls.

By Roger Shives

The Tories have made some of their backers very rich through privatisation of public assets and services. The SDP plan to keep it that way.

A very timid resolution to allow selective nationalisation when the privatised company had become a private monopoly and hurt consumer interests, was defeated.

The harsh anti-union laws which the Tories introduced to try to stop effective opposition would stay. After all, who could have supported Thatcher and MacGregor in the miners' strike more than David Owen.

On nuclear disarmament, their radical proposal is a European nuclear deterrent jointly with reac-

tionaries like West German Chancellor Kohl and French Prime Minister Chirac. On nuclear energy they want to carry on building nuclear power stations.

The Liberals get the TV spotlight on their conference next week. They appear more radical than their SDP Alliance partners. But David Steel has been cooing at SDP leaders all week, and Liberals too are aggressively pro-capitalist, pro-privatisation etc.

Their record in Liverpool speaks for itself. When they were in office with Tory support, they built no municipal housing from 1980-1983, while doubling rates and rents and slashing 4,400 jobs.

But the Tory press hope most of all to use the electoral threat of the Alliance, to frighten Labour's leaders into moving further to the right.

Labour must not fill the vacuum left by the SDP's slide rightwards. No deals with these light blue Tories! A Labour Party fighting for socialism will gain real support and counter any glossy but insubstantial public image the Alliance are polishing up.

Tories



Is this what new Health Minister Edwina Currie intends for NHS strikers?

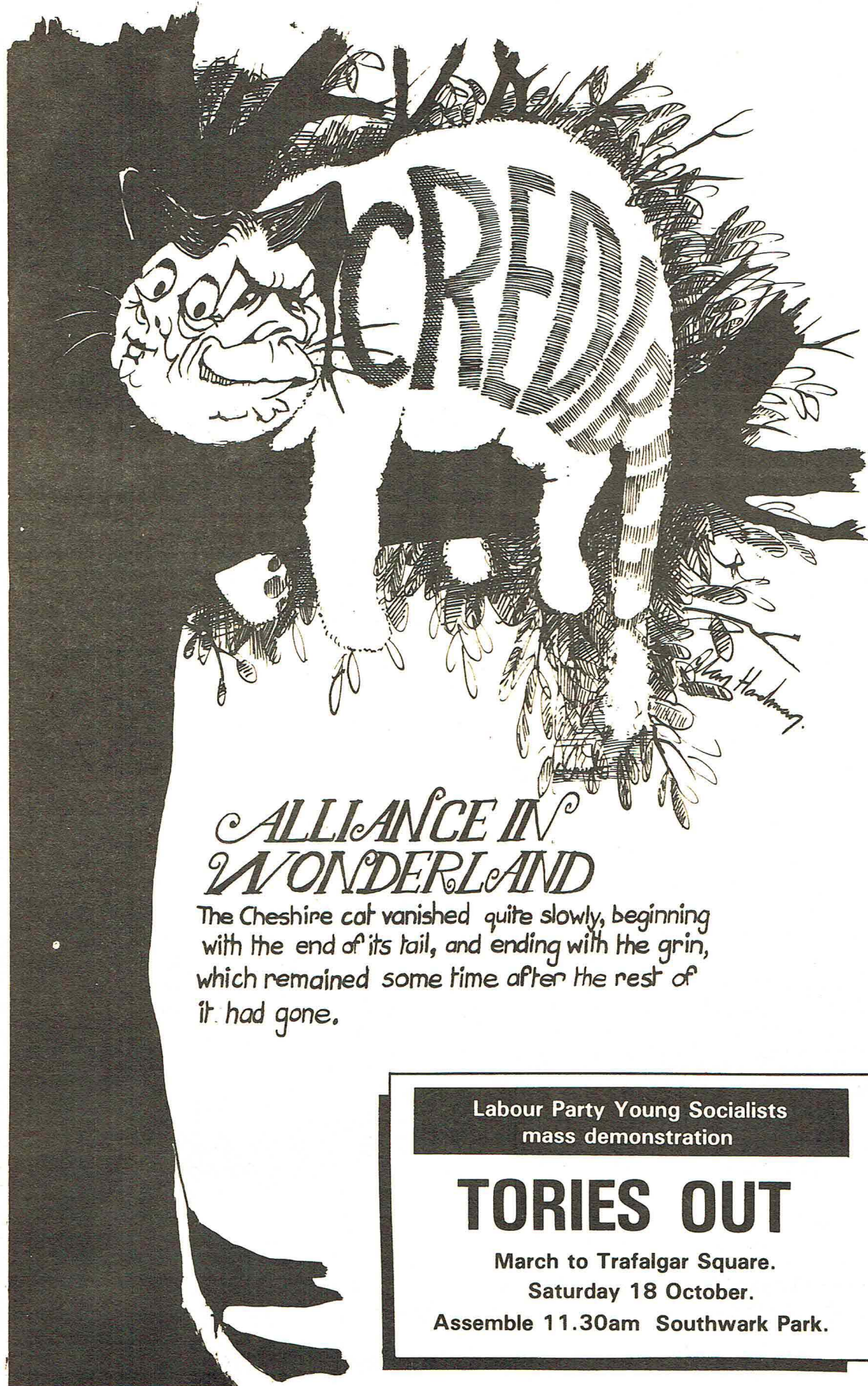
THATCHER'S LATEST annual 'reshuffle' brought some of the most un-savoury Tories to the fore.

Edwina Currie is described by the *Telegraph* as the Tory MP most hated by Tory backbenchers. She is now responsible for health(!) There are 1,000 on hospital waiting lists in her constituency.

The equally reactionary Angela Rumbold has a job in Education. The Tory borough of her constituency, Merton, has one of the worst pupil-teacher ratios in Britain, and spends one of the lowest amounts on school books.

Also promoted is Christopher Chope, to deal with local government. He made his name 'privatising' Wandsworth, making it a contractors' paradise.

The only good news about this rightward shift is that it will probably be the last Tory reshuffle before the whole lot are shuffled off to oblivion.



ALLIANCE IN WONDERLAND

The Cheshire cat vanished quite slowly, beginning with the end of its tail, and ending with the grin, which remained some time after the rest of it had gone.

Labour Party Young Socialists mass demonstration

TORIES OUT

March to Trafalgar Square.

Saturday 18 October.

Assemble 11.30am Southwark Park.

Militant

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CP's retreat from socialism

OVER 60 years ago, following the adoption by Stalin and the bureaucratic elite in the Soviet Union of the false and un-Marxist theory of "socialism in one country," Leon Trotsky predicted the reformist and nationalist degeneration of the Communist Parties internationally. His remarkable foresight was graphically confirmed in the debate between Monty Johnstone of the *euro-Communist* Party and Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant*.

In itself the Communist Party no longer has a significant influence. There is now no CP member on the TUC General Council. Its collapse into not even 'left' reformism, has left it riven with splits and facing a dramatic decline in membership. Even in 1964 the membership stood at 34,000; today it is on paper 10,998.

But the ideas put forward by the CP are part of a sizeable trend within the labour movement, of the soft-left, the Labour Co-ordinating Committee and even the party leadership.

Johnstone complained of *Militant* linking the CP and Neil Kinnock in a political amalgam, but then brought forth the classical maximum and minimum approach of reformism. Full socialism was postponed well into the future.

If it has played any role, the CP provided an 'intellectual' back up to the Kinnockites, as they began their rapid shift to the right. Kinnock himself chaired a Labour conference fringe meeting addressed by Eric Hobsbawm of the CP. Professor Hobsbawm had spoken of the fundamental weakening of the working class, as evidenced by the 1983 electoral defeat, the need for Labour to appeal to other classes and even to look towards a possible coalition with the SDP, as a new Labour majority seemed ruled out. Labour had lost because its programme was too radical, when Thatcher's populism had really taken root.

No doubt Neil Kinnock would concur with Monty Johnstone's statement in the debate that Labour should "contest the next election on the most left wing programme that we believe to be capable of winning majority support." Even if they disagree over some of the details of this partial programme, that is apparently the most that can be offered.

According to Johnstone a Labour government is needed "which will make inroads into capitalism but which does not go so far ahead of the level of consciousness... that it is unable to carry the people with it." "It would not yet be socialist." It would open the way "to gradually develop more advanced demands."

But it is the responsibility of Marxism to explain what is necessary, to campaign to raise the level of understanding within the labour movement to an appreciation of this necessity, not to be diverted by an empirical estimation of mass opinion, which with the workers' own experience is changing all the time.

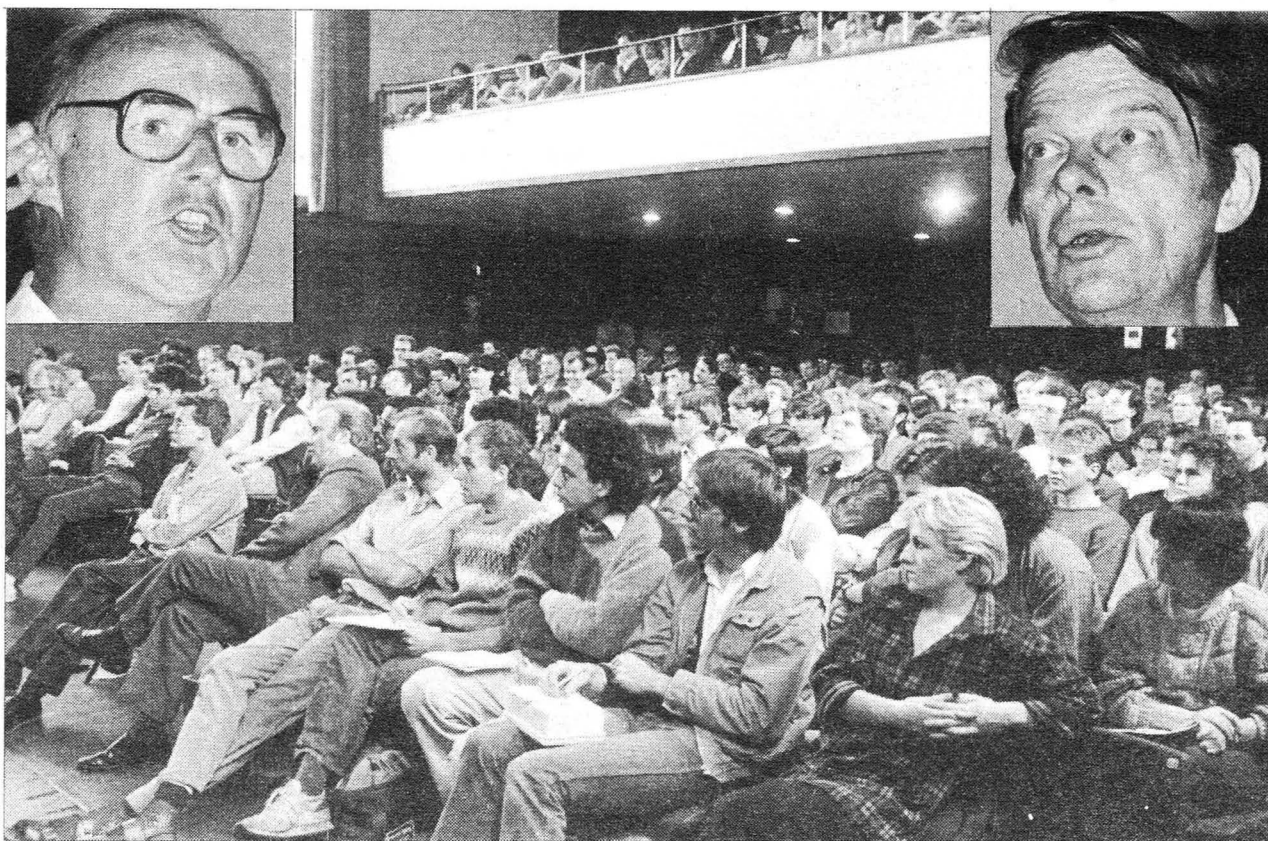
What is required by the labour movement amidst the most serious economic crisis for a half century, when up to five million are unemployed? How could a half hearted programme of nationalisation of just the banks and a few industries, and reflation of the economy meet workers' needs?

That was exactly the programme of the socialist government in France, a country a third wealthier than Britain. With such limited public ownership, the laws of capitalism in crisis continued to operate. So reflation meant inflation. Reforms had to give way to counter reforms. With the government's failures, disillusion set in, especially among those from the middle class and small farmers who had voted for 'change'. Far from partial measures preparing the way for more far reaching policies, disillusion allowed back the French Tories, and even led to growth in the racist National Front.

Kinnock's proposals to control the economy are even more puny than those of President Mitterand. Out of the seminar room and into the real world of irreversible economic decline and intensified class struggle, the policies of Kinnock, or those of the CP, are pitifully inadequate to defend the interests of the majority.

Militant has confidence that working people would respond enthusiastically if the Labour leaders were to launch a campaign to explain the need for a complete socialist transformation. Backed up by the organised power of the labour movement outside parliament, the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies would allow for a socialist plan of production, under which democratically, rational decisions could be made about what was produced, in what quantity and quality, how much would be invested in industry, how much into welfare etc. Only on this basis could the burning problems of mass unemployment and poverty be tackled by the next Labour government.

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The debate between Peter Taaffe, editor of *Militant* (left), and Monty Johnstone of the Communist Party (right) was the climax to this year's Marxist Weekend School, in which 500 took part. The audience was amazed to hear Monty Johnstone attack the Liverpool City Council for trying to build "socialism in one city," and alleging it had lost the support of local workers. Peter Taaffe retorted that Liverpool's isolation was not the fault of the Labour councillors and that the Communist Party had played a pernicious role in trying to undermine the council's stand. £650 was raised for the fighting fund. By Chas Berry.

Shares tumble on Wall Street

ON 11 September the value of stocks and shares on the Wall Street Stock Exchange in New York fell by 4.6 per cent.

This reflects the rising panic among capitalists about the state of Reagan's American economy. The recovery since the depth of recession in the winter of 1982 has been founded not on the expansion of industrial investment and production, but on military spending and a flood of imports. It is artificially induced, preparing the way for a disastrous crash in US prosperity with serious repercussions for the world economy.

Borrowing

Massive arms spending has run up a federal budget deficit of over \$170bn and the deficit on trade will reach \$175bn in 1986. This has been financed by high interest rates attracting Japanese and European investors. This massive borrowing has to be paid for in the end by increased production from US capitalists or by severe cuts in the living standards of American workers or both. But there has been no boom for American industry. High interest rates have stifled investment and by forcing up the value of the dollar have allowed cheap (in dollar terms) Japanese and Euro-

pean imports to destroy home markets.

The stagnation in manufacturing production and investment eventually began to affect the whole economy. The rise in production fell from over 4 per cent in 1984 to 2.3 per cent in 1985, and by the end of the first half of 1986 growth was just 0.6 per cent at an annual rate.

A meeting of US state governors in August estimated that 31 of the 50 states were now officially in recession, with investment and production still heading downwards. In the industrial heartland of the mid-West, hundreds of manufacturing firms have been driven into bankruptcy, and for the first time in 27 years, the USA is importing more farm products than it exports.

It had been hoped that low commodity and oil prices would reduce costs for industry and stimulate a boom. But the slump in prices has only damaged the mining sectors and the oil rich states of Texas and Louisiana.

Bank after bank in the USA has been closed by a avalanche of defaulters from farming, industry and oil. The First Bank of Oklahoma was taken over by the government for \$130 million to save it from collapse. Next could be the Bank of America, formerly the

world's largest, weighed down by unpaid debts from Californian farmers and Latin American governments. Bastions of finance capital have had to be nationalised by the Reagan government to maintain the channels of credit of US capitalism.

The Reagan government hoped the 30 per cent devaluation of the dollar would help home industry to compete with imports, while he demanded at this year's Group of Five meeting that Japan and West Germany cut their interest rates and spend more so that markets would be opened up for US goods.

Imports

But to close the US trade deficit, would mean West German and Japanese capitalists and consumers having to raise their purchases of US goods at the twice the rate they spent on them in the last two years. They see no reason why they should expand their economies and risk new inflation to buy US goods. The slowing of the US economy has already affected Japan's industrial growth rate which is actually falling at 3.5 per cent a year.

Yet imports are still beating US manufacturing—in July the annual rate of imported cars reached a record

3.3 million, while US car manufacturers continue to slash production and prepare to move out of the USA.

Interest rates remain high and are expected to rise rather than fall any further. So investment will remain stagnant. Reagan is preparing for government spending cuts and new taxes totalling over \$30 billion which must further hit the markets and profits of US industry. US industrialists are clamouring for tariff barriers and other measures against Japanese and European competition.

A prolonged stagnation or even fall in world trade has been forecast by the world trade body GATT in its recent report which predicts only a 3.5 per cent growth in world trade this year, the same as 1985. If in addition protectionism really gets a hold in the world's largest economy, the USA, the world economy would spiral into a recession.

The fall in Wall Street is the first sign that speculators no longer believe Reagan's fairy stories of permanent growth. The wild share price rises of the past disguised the prospect of the world's most important economy crashing down into a severe recession that will spread throughout the world.

By Bob McKee

Autumn sales campaign

MILITANT IS planning a major circulation campaign to coincide with the Labour Party conference, when the paper will again be in the public eye.

Plans should be drawn up now to take advantage of the publicity to drive up the sales in your area. There should be estate sales as often as possible during the week, especially just after the 6 o'clock news. In the morning too, schools, colleges and workplaces should be covered.

Try and make this a regular activity for sellers in your area. A special sales poster has been produced to use in the area you plan to have regular sales.

An article about their town has led to a massive increase in sales in Livingston where *Militant* supporters interviewed local people and used the article to sell from door to door and build up towards a public meeting. 297 papers were sold, 103 on one sale alone! In one street, a paper was sold at every house.

Write about your area and see how many new buyers you can get.

60p including postage. Cheques payable to World Socialist Books. Write to World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

NUCLEAR TIME BOMB
OR A SOCIALIST ENERGY PLAN?
A Militant PAMPHLET 50p

High Court backs expulsions

THREE APPEAL court judges decided at the High Court on 16 September to allow the attempted expulsion of Roger and Theresa McKay of Ipswich Labour Party to go ahead at a General Committee meeting on 17 September. Upholding a decision to discharge an earlier injunction which had been granted against Ipswich Labour Party, the judges (including Lord Justice Donaldson—The Master of the Rolls) felt that the procedure initiated by the officers of Ipswich constituency Labour Party (CLP) was fair and accorded with the rules of the Labour Party.

The appeal hearing, which had been brought at incredibly short notice at the insistence of the Master of the Rolls, has allowed the CLP officers to avoid having to attempt to expel Roger and Theresa McKay under new rules which will be put before Labour Party conference. If expelled Theresa McKay will be debarred from standing for election to the National Women's Committee at the Regional Labour Party women's conference this weekend. She stood a fair chance of winning as she had been elected to the Party's regional executive from the women's sections at

the regional conference held earlier this year. The speed with which the hearing was brought on only add to the suspicion that a deliberate attempt has been made to prevent Theresa McKay from standing for election. The vigour with which the officers of Ipswich CLP have pursued the McKay's and the thousands of pounds of party members' money which they spent can only be explained by their wish to circumvent the new rules to be established at Party conference.

By Ken Smith



ACTRESS PAT Phoenix tragically died today (Wednesday) from lung cancer. Liverpool Broadgreen MP Terry Fields, on hearing the news said: "Pat Phoenix was a warm hearted socialist and an active member of Arts for Labour. She will be sadly missed by Labour Party members as well as the millions of working class people who knew her as Coronation Street's Elsie Tanner. I would like to send my deepest sympathy to her family

and friends, especially Tony Booth." Pat and her partner Tony Booth helped in the Broadgreen election campaign in 1983 and spoke at a public meeting with Terry Fields and Tony Benn (above). Pat and Tony were so impressed with the campaign that they asked if any other Militant supporters were standing for Labour in Liverpool and if they could go and canvass for them. Photo: Tommy Carroll

Anti-deportation campaign raises local support

THE CAMPAIGN to stop the deportation of two year old Khuram Azad has been getting tremendous support from the local community in Bradford.

Right at the start of the campaign 100 people turned up to a meeting at only two hours' notice and 400 demonstrated outside Khuram's house the following Sunday. Khuram Azad was born in Pakistan, but was adopted by his uncle and aunt in Bradford, Mr and Mrs Kaliq, who have no children of their own. The Home Office do not recognise the adoption and claim that Khuram did not receive entry documents. Tory minister David Waddington alleges that the family led him up the garden path and were trying to deceive him. The family deny these allegations.

Support

The campaign organiser, Mrs Zeenat Iqbal, told *Militant*: "Mr and Mrs Kaliq have been trying to have children for the past 17 years. Now they have a chance to have a child and the child's parents don't want the child. I feel that on

compassionate grounds Mr and Mrs Kaliq have a right to this child. We have very high hopes and we believe that Khuram will be allowed to stay simply because there is so much support for him." Tahir Mohammed, a member of the Bangladeshi Youth Organisation said: "We want equal rights for the black people of this country. They must have the right to live reasonably and in peace without harassment from the Home Office. It's easy for the Home Office to treat this as just another case, but the future and welfare of the child and the family is at stake." Messages of support and donations can be sent to the Khuram Azad Defence Campaign, c/o Bangladeshi Youth Organisation, 40 Cornwall Road, Bradford 8. Letters of protest to David Waddington, Home Office, quoting reference R256846/2(S). For further information phone 0274-727318 and ask for Zeenat Iqbal.

Public meeting: Sunday 21 September at 3pm, Interlink Community Centre, Summerville Rd, off Great Horton Rd, Bradford 7.

By Hamid Khayam (Bradford North LPYS)

Militant supporter arrested after meeting cancelled

MILITANT SUPPORTER Bob Edwards was arrested outside the hall where a *Militant* public meeting had been due to take place on 11 September. The committee which runs Loughton Hall, in the Debden estate, Essex, had cancelled a booking for the meeting, but the letter was only received the morning it was to be held. Bob Edwards takes up the story: "Two of us stood outside the door to explain the situation to *Militant* sympathisers arriving. Within seconds, when we refused to move on, a van load of police arrived. The police gave a final warning. Nothing to be gained, I urged the comrades to move away from the hall. A final exchange on how police time can be wasted in such a way while the elderly on the estate get little protection

was the final straw for the 'flat foot'—'you're arrested,' he ordered, as we were walking away. "I was taken to a distant police station and bundled into a cell, but luckily you are never alone in this movement. Within an hour a friendly solicitor was giving advice, the phone never stopped ringing as sympathisers registered their concern and in front of the building 15 or more well-wishers expressed their anger. "By 10 o'clock the police had had enough. I was released on bail of £50 and charged with 'action liable to cause a breach of the peace.' If they mean by that a challenge to change society, I plead guilty. The battle in court will be on 3 November; the battle in the movement begins now."

Police raid provokes riots

THE HUGE police operation in the St Paul's area of Bristol, on the pretext of clamping down on drugs, provoked two nights of rioting. On Friday, 12 September police hit the area in unmarked furniture removal vans. 60 arrests were made and suspects taken away. 500 police in full riot gear were drafted and many underaged youth were detained without adults being present. One 15 year old, on his way home from school was detained and strip searched. The area was cordoned off by police and many residents found difficulty in getting home. Police refused to let one woman drive through a

road block to her house where her children were being looked after. They told her to leave her car and walk, but when she refused and tried to drive through the barrier she was threatened with arrest. The raids in Brixton and Bristol have set the pattern for military-style police action to intimidate communities with large numbers of unemployed black youth—in St Pauls four out of five black youth are unemployed. A widespread desire to stamp out drug pushing and drug addiction is exploited by police to cow inner city communities with heavy handed interventions. By Nina Westlake



Local press play on fears over 'law and order' to legitimise excessive police action.

"ON THURSDAY afternoon I went shopping in town to find the whole area sealed off by police. A girl told me that she saw an oldish bloke who had been sitting in his car minding his own business dragged out of his car and arrested. When I was visiting some friends on Ashley Road, there were some more outbursts of violence. Both sides of the road were sealed off by police in riot formation and I was afraid that I wouldn't be able to get home. A friend eventually saw me home. It was calm but the police were dotted around in groups of about 50 in full riot gear. The at-

mosphere was very tense and menacing. By the time I got to my flat my knees were like jelly. My next door neighbour, who is deaf, was bewildered and in tears. I spoke to some older people who said that they had always supported the police up till now. But not after what they had seen that day.

Searchlights

On Friday I was in bed around midnight when I heard some more disturbances. Some petrol bombs were being thrown on Grosvenor Road. Later, when things had quietened down police were still milling about in the adjacent

maisonettes where I live, in military style formation. They were shining mobile searchlights onto balconies and into people's windows all that night. The whole operation was an attempt to intimidate the people of St Paul's and not an attempt to crack down on crime as the police claim. No one condones burglaries, mugging or drug dealing; they only hurt working class people more than anyone else. As a single mother I am vulnerable to these crimes myself. But when I was burgled a couple of months ago the police never even bothered to take any fingerprints. Some months ago I was being harassed by a

drunken, potentially violent ex-boyfriend, they did absolutely nothing. I didn't get the feeling that on Thursday and Friday nights I was in any way being protected, far from it. It was more like a military occupation. If this is what the Tories mean by law and order then God help us."

Forty meet

FORTY PEOPLE, including young blacks attended a *Militant* public meeting in the aftermath of the events in St Paul's, addressed by Beverley Woodburn from the LPYS national committee and Colin De Freitas.

Left slate for Labour NEC

MILITANT IS urging support for the following candidates for Labour's National Executive Committee. to be elected at Party conference.

- | | |
|--|--|
| Treasurer:
Gavin Strang. | Barbara Switzer, Doug Hoyle, Terry O'Neill, Phil Holt. |
| Constituency party section
Tony Benn, Michael Meacher, Eric Heffer, Dennis Skinner, Jo Richardson, Audrey Wise, Tam Dalyell. | Socialist societies:
Les Huckfield. |
| Womens' section:
Joan Maynard, Margaret Beckett, Clare Short, Diane Abbot, Pat Olley. | Conference Arrangements Committee:
Ken Homer, Larry Smith, Dennis Canavan, John Jones, David Shaw, Peter Willsman. |
| Trades union section:
Eric Clarke, Alan Sapper, | Auditors:
Ron Todd, David Hopper. |

Labour's witch-hunt procedures

MIKE WADDINGTON examines the new disciplinary procedures to be presented by Labour's National Executive Committee to the coming party conference.

AFTER IT has allowed 40 party members to be expelled it is somewhat hollow for the NEC to now claim that "...The Party needs the moral and political credibility of its proceedings being seen to be fair, impartial between factions and groups within the Party and in line with Natural Justice..."

Does this amount to a confession that the recent 'Star Chamber' style proceedings have been unfair, partial and against natural justice, and that the 'victims' will be rehabilitated? Conference must as a minimum demand that all the expelled have their cases reviewed under the new procedure.

But without the challenges and protests made against the old procedures, no revision would have been made. The new proposals before the conference will establish a National Constitutional Committee to be elected by the Conference itself. This will be responsible for hearing all cases against individuals referred to it by the NEC or by local parties. This has to be supported because it will end the abuses—so far uncorrected by the NEC—of right wing parties being judge and jury in their own cases. From now on they will have to prove before this

party tribunal their cases against individuals. Charges will have to be openly made and agreed on by the party before any action is taken—no more expulsions by stealth.

This committee is to be composed of party members of at least five years standing and they must not be MPs, MEPs, NEC members or employees of the party. They are to be elected in the divisions of the NEC. Five from the trade unions, three from CLPs, two from the women's sections and one from the socialist societies. There is no youth section, for which there is no explanation, even though most of the expelled have been members of the Labour Party Young Socialists.

Annual report

The NCC will present a report to the Annual Conference. But no more than four NCC members can come up for re-election in one year. This offends the overriding question of accountability to the party for the actions of all of its sections, particularly the one body that has to enjoy the maximum confidence of all members. Like all other party offices, the NCC should

be liable to annual election.

A far more worrying proposition included within this generally welcome reform is to add a new condition of membership: "No member of the party shall engage in a sustained course of conduct prejudicial to the party..."

A previous paper from General Secretary Larry Whitty (GS 114/6/86), warned of the dangers of this approach:

"...If powers existed at CLP level to take action on charges of disrepute, this could lead to a dangerous escalation of the use of disciplinary action for factional purposes. There may be a somewhat stronger argument for the NEC to have the responsibilities and powers to deal with issues arising when it considers that the party has been brought into disrepute, but even this has its difficulties (my emphasis MW)..."

The introduction to this new NEC document itself explains that a basic requirement of natural justice is "that the charges be adequately specified..."

As if this ambiguous catch-all method was not enough, the NEC recommend two cases where the NCC should consider action to be prejudicial. There is the traditional offence of standing against official Labour Party Candidates in elections, with which no one



Labour's NEC wants to get out of the expulsion limelight, and avoid the protests like these outside its meetings.

could disagree. The other is that "...Where appropriate, the NCC shall have regard to involvement in financial support for and/or the organisation of and/or the activities of any organisation declared ineligible for affiliation to the party under clauses II (3) and II (4) (b) of the Constitution..."

The previous procedure was that you could only be expelled if you could be proved to be a member of an organisation ineligible for affiliation to the party and the NEC could consider the above test to support the general evidence. This new

rule makes the test the actual offence! The NEC make the political decision to declare groupings ineligible for affiliation. The NEC will be able to push their decisions through and then get the NCC to police the purge.

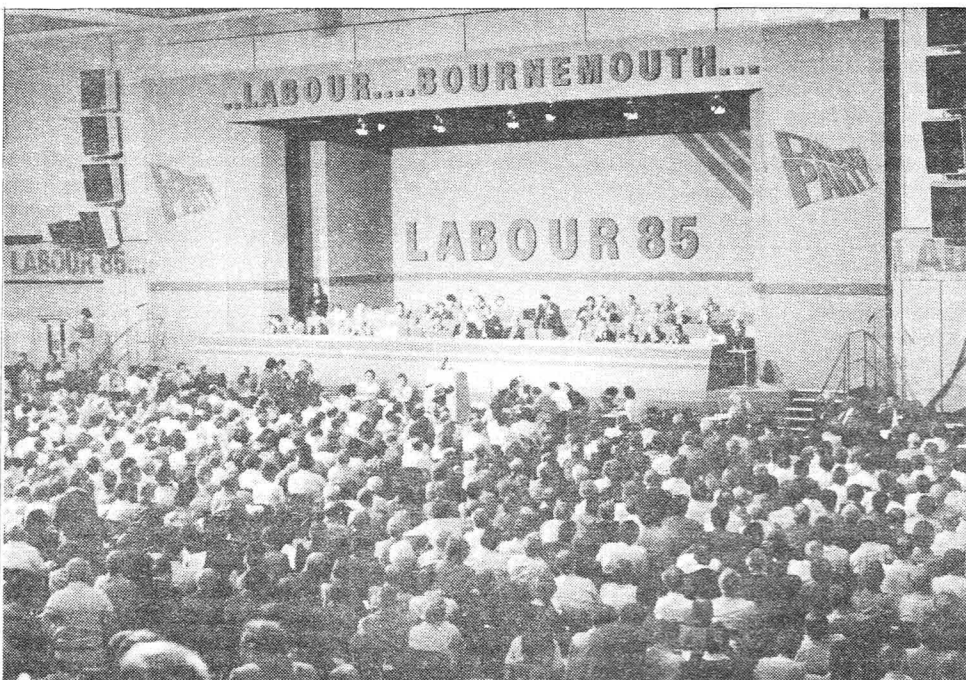
Device

This represents nothing but a device to ease through the expulsion of *Militant* supporters. Does it now mean that giving money to the *Militant* Fighting Fund has become an expellable offence? If you organise a meeting are you to be expell-

ed? If you attend such an event are you thereby running the risk of expulsion? This amounts to 'enabling legislation' for a purge.

The final sentence of the new clause "...but the NCC shall not have regard to the mere holding or expression of beliefs and opinions..." is merely window dressing.

Every affiliated organisation must be made aware of these sweeping changes which will be used against the whole of the left in the near future, and whilst supporting the NCC we must make sure that this new clause is defeated.



Emergency resolutions

THE LABOUR Steering Committee against the Witch-hunt is asking for CLPs and affiliated organisations to submit the following as an emergency resolution to the Labour Party conference:

"This conference notes the major changes proposed by the NEC for the creation of a new National Constitutional Committee and of a new disciplinary procedure, including the new 'offence' of a 'sustained

course of conduct prejudicial to the party." These changes represent the biggest constitutional change since 1918 in that they affect individual rights within the party in an unprecedented way.

"Bearing this in mind and the need to proceed with care, this conference postpones the debate on this issue pending a full discussion and consultation throughout the Labour Party, culminating in a full report with options and debate on all the

necessary changes at the 1987 party conference. Such a consultation and investigation should look at all the proposals and in particular at the National Constitutional Committee and its powers, its composition, its methods of election and the frequency of the elections, the right of appeal to party conference.

"Conference believes that this is the way to proceed on this issue in a democratic party."

THE LABOUR and Trade Union Group in Northern Ireland urges constituency Labour Parties to move the following the emergency motion for annual conference:

"This conference salutes the 4,000 strong strike by NIPSA members in the DHSS in Northern Ireland in August against sectarian intimidation, following threats to workers in the DHSS in Lisburn. We also support the action taken by council workers in Derry against sectarian killing and the statement by fire brigade workers in Newry that they will

take action if they are endangered by sectarian attacks.

"Conference condemns recent sectarian killings and the recent threats issued to workers by both the Provisional IRA and the Protestant paramilitaries. We support the right of workers in Northern Ireland to take whatever action is necessary to defend the unity of the trade union movement and to protect themselves from sectarian attacks."

"Conference believes that the signing of the Anglo-Irish Agreement has only heightened

sectarian tension. This agreement is a bosses' solution, unable to meet the aspirations of Catholic and Protestant workers and should be rejected by the labour movement. Recent threats of a week long stoppage by loyalists and their general campaign against the agreement can only help to further inflame sectarian tensions, unless the labour movement leads a campaign for independent working class action to defeat sectarian threats and attacks."

Teachers won't cover for cuts

AS THE teaching unions debate the latest proposals on their duties, Hackney NUT member Louise Cuffaro, describes the pressures teachers are under.

Eighteen months ago the teachers' action started in the primary school where I teach. We all experienced a massive improvement in our working conditions, as we stopped all the unpaid overtime we had been doing for years.

As primary teachers we do not get non-contact time out of the classroom during the school day to prepare work and resources, or to discuss and plan the curriculum with colleagues. All this has to be done in our own time, before and after school and during play and dinner time. Before the action started, even this was difficult because of all the other claims made on our time.

One dinner time a week was used up for a staff meeting which lasted until it was time to go back into class, and at least one other dinner time we had to do a dinner duty, which meant no break from supervising the children between the morning and afternoon session. With the action we not only got back the right to have a proper break, but showed up how the authority (ILEA) was not employing enough auxiliary dinner helpers.

On a weekly basis many hours were taken up after the school day with meetings to discuss and develop different aspects of the curriculum, and with attending courses to keep up with the latest ideas and increase our own expertise.

We had a parents' evening once a term which required hours of preparation and took place straight after a

stressful day in class. In the summer term, each evening after school hours were spent writing five page reports on each child's progress.

After everything, we still had to go home and prepare for the next day's activities.

Rising rolls

The pressures of the school day itself are mounting rapidly as rolls rise again. By 1990 there will be a 32 per cent increase in the number of children entering ILEA primary schools. But authorities implementing Tory cuts are increasing class sizes instead of taking on more teachers.

In our school this year we refused to have more than 24 children in our mixed age classes (the limit for classes of children of the same age group is 30) and we had to

create a new junior class to accommodate the number of children coming up from the infants. The authority refused to give us another teacher so we have to use one of our two special needs teachers to take the extra class.

In primary schools the lack of supply teachers to cover for absent colleagues further aggravates the class size problem. If staff are absent their class is split and the other teachers have to find space for and supervise extra children in their class. Where a class already has 35 children this brings the class size to over 40. In these circumstances proper education is not possible. Before the action this situation could have gone on for weeks.

With more teachers, smaller classes, teachers allowed cover to go on courses, more staff to cover for special needs then children could really get the time and attention they so deserve.

HEAR MILITANT answer back at Labour Party conference. *Militant* Readers Meeting. Tuesday 30 September 7.00pm at Assembly Hall, Devonshire Junior School, Blackpool. Speakers: Derek Hatton, Tony Mulhearn, Peter Taaffe and Ted Grant.

Royal Albert Hall
Militant RALLY '86
 Tickets £4
 Sunday 16 November
 Speakers: Ted Grant, Peter Taaffe, Tony Mulhearn, Derek Hatton, Nimrod Sejake
 ★ Videos ★ Exhibitions
 Order your ticket now! From *Militant* Rally, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.

Build for 18 October

Watch out Thatcher here come the LPYS

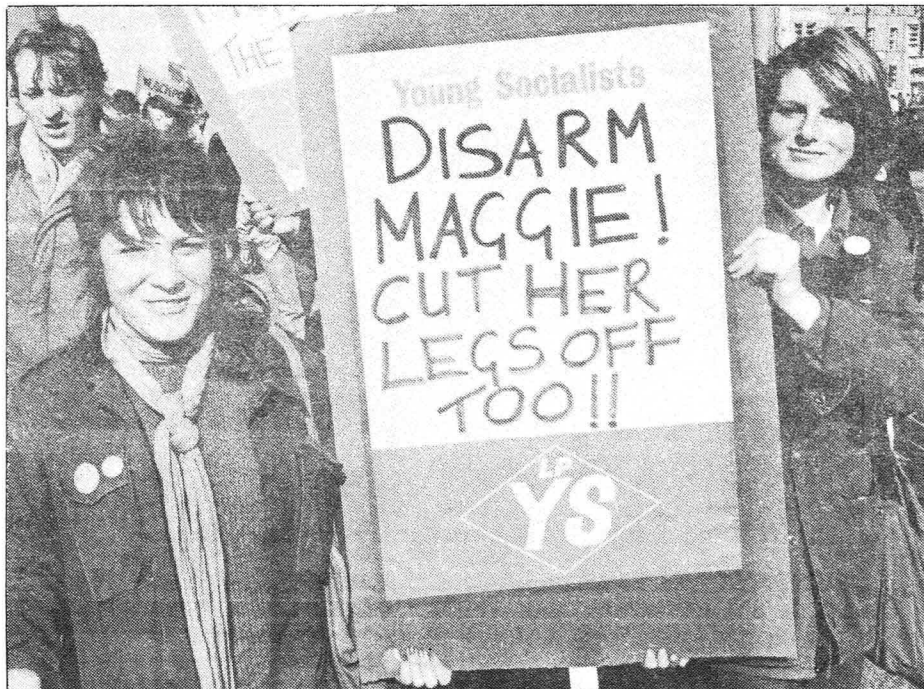
ON 6 September East Leeds LPYS held a morning of action in the Harehills Parade shopping centre.

11 LPYS members gave out leaflets and spoke to local young people about the 18 October demonstration.

Most young people saw no future for themselves under the Tories except unemployment or YTS cheap labour. So they want a Labour government, not one that would leave them on the dole queue but one that would change society.

Despite the rain, everyone enjoyed the morning's work, including three year old Darren, the son of an LPYS member, who had a great time. You're never too young for socialism.

It was well worth while too. 12 young people signed up for the national demo and £11 was raised towards the cost. Watch out Thatcher. Here comes the LPYS!



LPYS members on a CND march. Now march to get rid of Thatcher.

Bristol Labour promises YTS reforms

THE 'SOCIALIST Manifesto for Bristol' for the next local elections is probably the most radical programme Bristol District Party has put forward.

The document realises that the Youth Training Scheme (YTS) is a "means of creating cheap unorganised labour to prop up a decaying capitalist system."

The manifesto proposes that the council tops up the YTS allowance to trade union rates for council trainees as well as guaranteeing a job at the end of training. They support a campaign of unionisation of MSC schemes, which would bring Bristol in line with Liverpool city council.

Vital role

Militant supporters will be demanding that this programme is rapidly implemented, though not at the expense of other policy aspirations. Labour's policies must not be determined by Tory budget limitations.

Socialists in the Labour Party and LPYS can have an influence in getting important policy advances for young workers and unemployed.

They also have a vital role in building a campaign of mass support to back the councillors against Tory opposition when these policies are implemented.

By Wayne Coombes
(Bristol South Labour Party)

FE students for Labour

THE NEW term is under way in most Further Education colleges (FE). Many thousands of working class youth attend FE colleges, looking for an alternative to the dole. Yet the Tories' proposals to effectively privatise the FE sector will even block this avenue of escape.

The FE sector is an integral part of Tory plans to drive down youth wages. A quarter of work related courses in the FE colleges have already been handed over to the MSC. Many places will be filled with trainees on the two year YTS.

The Tories' plans to cut social security benefits for the under 25's will drive unemployed youth onto these MSC schemes.

Young people in the FE

colleges are angry at these poverty schemes, as shown in the response LPYS and Labour club members got when campaigning for the 18 October demonstration.

In Cardonald Tech, Glasgow 74 names were collected for the Labour club in just over half an hour. Motherwell college got 40 names and Langside 30. In Sheffield, 55 Socialist Youths were sold and 15 names collected of students interested in joining the

Labour club.

Dave Richards, LPYS member on NUS Wales Executive spoke to 600 students in Cross Keys college. In Wirral college, Merseyside 35 students wanted to book tickets for transport to the 18 October demonstration.

Go to the FE colleges to campaign for the demonstration, link up with the Labour clubs if they exist and approach the student unions to discuss mobilising for 18 October.

NUPE branch back youth

THE NUPE Barnsley branch (health), the branch to which Joyce Winsett, the union's member on the TUC general council belongs, has passed a resolution condemn-

ing Tom Sawyer's proposals to curb the activities of the LPYS. They have also agreed to give £20 for the LPYS national demonstration in Bermondsey.

Support Sarmcol strikers



LPYS members on the anti-apartheid demonstration in June.

FIFE LABOUR Party Young Socialists have recently had a campaign in support of the heroic 16 month strike by Metal and Allied Workers Union (MAWU) members in a BTR Sarmcol plant in South Africa.

BTR is a British multinational which sacked workers for organising a union and

striking against poverty conditions. Two public meetings in Kely and Glenrothes were addressed by a TGWU shop steward working for a BTR subsidiary in Fife and also by LPYS speakers.

These meetings raised nearly £100 in collections. The highlight of the campaign was a ten mile sponsored walk and street collec-

tion in Glenrothes on 6 September. A banner specially made for the campaign drew lots of attention and over £30 was raised on the streets. Altogether over £300 has been raised.

By Alistair Black
(Fife LPYS)

London on the march

BEFORE THE national demonstration on 18 October, the Youth Trades Union Rights Campaign (YTURC) in Greater London will be marching around the capital.

The 150 mile route will pass through 22 of the 32 London boroughs. A look at the support in West London shows how much interest this march is stirring already.

On Friday 10 October, the marchers will be organising social events with the printworkers' support group in Harrow. The next day they will be put up in the largest Sikh temple in Southall. On the 12th, on to Heathrow airport where union members will meet them.

On Tuesday 14 October, there will be a reception at

Charing Cross Hospital in Hammersmith when they will meet trade union members from the BBC at White City.

The marchers have also been promised a reception at Fords' Dagenham and will be visiting the huge Mount Pleasant sorting office on 16 October.

Get organised

Make sure your LPYS branch is involved. Organise days of action, street and door-to-door collections for support and cash, either for the round London march if you are in London or for the national demo.

Build the LPYS and give the Thatcher gang their marching orders.

Keep up with the Joneses

THE SECRETARY of East Lewisham LPYS, Howard Jones has already raised £157 for the national and London demonstrations. £25 of this came from Howard's workmates. The rest came through drawing up a list of local Labour Party members, and asking them to contribute to a youth campaign against the Tories.

If every LPYS member keeps up with the Joneses this will be the most successful campaign the YS have ever run.

Workers' backing in Bermondsey

LAST WEEK Bermondsey LPYS took part in a meeting during Southwark Trade Union Week which discussed trade union laws, the next Labour government and privatisation.

NUPE Guys Hospital branch said they got little satisfaction from the answers of the panel which included Tom Sawyer, the NUPE official on Labour's NEC and Labour's general secretary Larry Whitty. The panel seemed prepared for the next Labour government to allow the bosses' judges to interfere in union affairs.

The rank and file were angry. And this was reflected in the collection of over £40 for the national LPYS march.

On 11 September we took part in a meeting in the Peoples' Armada a demonstration along the Thames of working class people from Docklands calling for the abolition of the London Docklands Development Corporation. The local Liberal MP Simon Hughes greeted us as we disembarked at Rotherhithe.

Although Mr Hughes did not support our march, a Liberal councillor from Southwark gave £1. Hughes did agree to debate with the LPYS on the future for Bermondsey's youth. That's a debate we're all looking forward to!

By Sharon Gunning

Labour Party Young Socialists

Cable Street
50th anniversary
RALLY
against racism

Tony Benn .MP
Linda Douglas
Abbas Uddin

Monday 22 Sept. 7.30pm
The Crypt, St. George in the East, Cannon St Road E1

22 September
Cable Street Rally,
7.30pm, The Crypt, St George in the East, Cannon Street Road, E1.

Labour Party Young Socialists

JOIN THE MASS

TORIES OUT

SATURDAY OCTOBER 18th

ASSEMBLE 11.30am SOUTHWARK PARK, FOR MARCH TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE - RALLY & BANDS

FOR A SOCIALIST LABOUR GOVERNMENT

FOR DETAILS CONTACT

LPYS Campaign Diary

LONDON Y.T.U.R.C.
YOUTH TRADE UNION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

MARCH

FOR JOBS, OCT 4-18th
DEMAND A DECENT FUTURE JOIN US

4 October
Round London YTURC march starts: Rally Guys Hospital, 10.30am.

18 October
National youth demo. 11.30am, Southwark Park.

Mutiny before the bloodbath

PHIL FRAMPTON reviews the BBC TV serial and the book of "The Monocled Mutineer."

VERY LITTLE stood between the working class and the overthrow of capitalism in the fragile fabric of the First World War.

The Monocled Mutineer centres on the mutiny of 10,000 British, Australian and New Zealand troops at Etaples training camp in Northern France in September 1917.

The screenplay writer, Alan Bleasdale, based the story on the book by William Allison and John Fairley. This investigates the life of mutiny leader Percy Toplis and the British authorities' frenzied moves to hide what happened from the rest of the troops.

Even the 'establishment' were left in the dark. 10,000 troops were immobilised on the eve of the Passchendaele offensive, but the War Cabinet did not even discuss the incident.

Etaples training camp took in 20,000 troops at any one time and the horrific conditions finally provoked the mutiny. But as Trotsky had commented, the war had affected the forces: "The great guns are hammering into their heads the idea that if it is impossible to go around an obstacle, it is possible to destroy it."

Revolution in the air

War was preparing the working class for revolution. Toplis himself had volunteered for the army, but had soon seen the futility of workers suffering for British imperialism.

The February revolution in Russia which set up soviets and overthrew the Czar had given inspiration to revolts throughout Europe.

In the spring, 78 French regiments mutinied and some marched on Paris singing the Internationale. The Socialist Party leaders, loyal to French big business took no advantage of this situation.

On 9 September when the Etaples mutiny began, 10,000 Russian troops in France were in revolt, having established their own soviet. The same day sailors on four German warships threw their



Private Percy Toplis

officers overboard.

The February revolution inspired British workers too. Miners and engineering workers began a strike wave. Even Ramsay MacDonald and the left Labour leaders were moved to call for British soviets of workers, soldiers and sailors.

When one of the hated military police shot dead a squaddie in a argument the Etaples mutiny started. Surprisingly Bleasdale uses the camp commandant version that the soldier's death was secondary in causing mutiny to the troops' wish to enjoy themselves in the local town. The book suggest the killing was the major spark. It quotes participants:

"The commandant (of the training camp—PF) was regarded as the lowest form of human existence, a craven coward... seldom sober."

"We had all got tired of being treated with less consideration than the horses."

"What a sight it was to see the commanding officer there with tears in his eyes begging us to let this trouble subside. The hated Military Police (MPs) were hounded down." "... there were lorries rattling through the town with machine guns mounted in the back hunting for officers and police."

Scores of MPs were killed. "I remember 6 MPs shot during the riots being buried in one grave just outside Etaples. Mutineers flocked to the graveside to sing bawdy, comical songs." "... the soldiers



Brigadier-General Thomson—capitulated to the mutineers.

sent back from the Front to restore order refused to fire on the mutineers..."

After five days, the camp commandant, General Thomson capitulated. The troops won abolition of the hated Bull Ring training schedule, removal of the MPs, better food, higher pay and access to the local town.

Just a likely lad?

The mutiny spread to Boulogne but the Chinese and Egyptian troops involved were massacred. Otherwise it was contained mainly because most of the mutineers within ten days lay dead with 200,000 of their comrades in the fields around Passchendaele.

One month later Leon Trotsky and Lenin led the Russian workers and troops in the greatest revolt in human history—which effectively put an end not only to Russian capitalism and landlordism but also to the war itself.

As for Toplis, we are left by the book and the series with intriguing questions as to his motives. When the mutiny broke out, he was found living in the woods in a band of deserters. Bleasdale says of Toplis that, "he didn't give a monkeys." This is contradicted by Allison and Fairley. Toplis' best friend Ernest Leah describes him as "in today's terms an intellectual socialist."

Allison and Fairley do not however pursue this. Even if he



Troops at bayonet practice at the Bull Ring training camp.

was, as Leah says, "a bit of a lad" and an undoubted rogue, we are still left to consider how Toplis became a leader of the deserters, and then of 10,000 mutinous troops. For if as Bleasdale suggests he was so adept at impersonation, in the chaos of the war, he could have easily found himself a more comfortable existence. More importantly, the question remains of how a known 'rake' could suddenly win allegiance from thousands of

troops.

The TV series offers us a motiveless 'likely lad' who life trips up with a series of adventures. It makes good television but puts Bleasdale and company in danger of drawing the teeth from an important episode in working class history.

The Monocled Mutineer by William Allison and John Fairley, £2.50 Quartet paperbacks.

Left and Right

Slimming down

THE *GRIMSBY Evening Telegraph* recently carried two items about old age pensioners. The Queen Mother had to brave the cold on Clydeside to launch a ship in a yard facing what management called a "slimdown" of the workforce.

The other report was sadly a more typical OAP than a lady with a couple of palaces to spare. A 67 year old man from Grimsby pleaded guilty in court to a charge of begging outside a local supermarket. He was given a conditional discharge for 12 months after saying that his last meal had been a tin of sardines three days earlier.

There's only one class that suffers from "slimdowns" of any kind and it does not include royalty or the supermarket owners.

Insult to injury

A FORMER electrician Dion Sellers had to have his right arm amputated after a motorbike accident near Preston last January. His 21 year old sister, a pillion passenger was killed outright.

Dion Sellers will never work again and he is in constant pain. The accident was just that, an accident. But he was not covered for third party insurance.

So the local Tory controlled South Ribblesdale council have sent Dion, who is living on £46 a week invalidity pension a bill for over £800 to replace a street lamp which was knocked down when the bike went out of control.

Good living

UNDER THE heading "How the other half eat" a recent edition of the Presto Supermarket chain magazine let slip "that the average American chicken eats better than three fifths of the people in the world."

Presto is owned by the Argyll Group who also trade as Lo Cost, Liptons, Hintons, Galbraith, Cordon Bleu, Liquorsave and Winterschluden. In the year to March 1985, Argyll had sales of £1,755.6 million—pre-tax profits of £53.1 million.

The title of the Presto Mag? "Good Living." The question is for who?

Thanks to Steve Draper and Norman Hall.

Fifty years after Cable Street

A DEMONSTRATION has been called for 4 October to commemorate "The Battle of Cable Street" in 1936 and to oppose racism today. In 1936 the working class of London turned out in their tens of thousands to prevent an East End march by Mosley's fascist blackshirts.

Black and Asian people in many parts of the country suffer today from racist attacks. This demonstration is an oppor-

tunity to take a step forward in the fight against the racists. It has the support of the Greater London Labour Party, South East Region TUC and the Campaign Group of Labour MPs among others.

The march is being organised by a local committee comprising the LPYS, Labour Parties, Bengali organisations, trades council, Anti-Fascist Action and others.

Labour Party Young Socialists East London Rally.

1936-1986 50th anniversary—"The battle of Cable Street". Monday 22 September, 7.30pm. Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Linda Douglas (LPYS), Abbas Uddin (Labour councillor). Venue: The Crypt, St George in the East, Cannon Street Road, London E1 (Junction with the Highway, down the Highway from the Wapping picket line). **Demonstration: 50th anniversary of 'The Battle of Cable Street' Saturday 4 October. Assemble 12 noon, Altab Ali Park (opposite Aldgate East tube).**

Fascism then and now

1986: "COUSINS Hanif and Imtiaz Patel were taken to hospital with head injuries after a vicious assault by a six-man gang outside their clothing firm in Bethnal Green Road. Their attackers punched and kicked the two men before running off." (*East London Advertiser* 4 April 1986).

1936: "Descending like a storm upon the quiet of a Sunday afternoon in the Mile End Road, some 200 youthful hooligans threw stones and bricks through

some 25 shop widows... a man and a little girl were both thrown through a tailors' window by the mob... We heard shouts of "Hail Mosley" and "Down with the Yids." (*East London Advertiser* 17 October 1936).

1986: "Jead Ali was slashed by a knife on his hand when a gang of white youth set upon him as he walked along Brick Lane in London's East End." (*East London Advertiser* 4 April 1986).

1911: Llanelli's railway riots

"THE TROOPS then opened fire on unarmed civilian onlookers on the embankment, killing two people"

LLANELLI IN South Wales was rocked 75 years ago by a rail strike which ended with six dead and many injured. Three days in August 1911 had a profound effect on the town and the entire labour movement.

The year 1911 was one of the most turbulent ever in Britain. British rule in Ireland was in question and the suffragette movement was developing momentum. Above all there was a huge upsurge of working class militancy; there were more strikes, and they were larger, longer and more bitter.

The government were petrified. Would this unrest find a political outlet? They were also horrified that workers were ignoring the advice of the old leaderships and taking unofficial action.

By July 1911 the government were worried enough to set up a cabinet commission to look into the 'menacing developments of industrial unrest.' Everyone anticipated more big clashes and the forces of the state waited in the wings to crush any strikes for the bosses.

The first ever national railway strike was called from 17 August, provoked by the railway owners' refusal to concede even modest improvements in wages and conditions. They had consistently reneged on past promises and were almost universally hated as bad employers by the whole trade union movement.

The main unions involved were the drivers' and footplate workers' union (ASLEF) and the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants (ASRS) the forerunner of the NUR. The ASRS was almost a company union, formed with the open help of

Michael Bass MP, a member of the brewing family and director of Midland Railway Company. Its first rule, dating from 1871, included the objective 'to prevent strikes.'

By 1911 railway workers knew better than to trust the employers and the state that backed them. The Taff Vale case in 1901 awarded £23,000 damages against the rail unions and the Osborne judgment decided it was illegal for rail unions to use their funds for political purposes.

Workers had reached the limits of their tolerance and 50,000 took action even before 17 August. The papers remarked that "leaders had to race to get level with their men" such was the militancy.

A panicking prime minister Asquith predicted that a rail strike would cause "general paralysis." Lloyd George said the government would protect the railways whatever the cost. They were worried about the economic importance of the rail network, but even more they feared the strike spilling over to other workers, threatening the government and even the state itself.

Llanelli was then a sprawling dirty town based on a tinsplate works, coal mines, docks and rail depots. The *Llanelli Guardian* said "the great mass of people are desperately poor and they strike for a share of the prosperity of the country."

The days just before the strike were very quiet. 40 local policemen could even be spared to help quell disturbances in Cardiff and Tonypany leaving just 18 officers in Llanelli on 16 August.

The strike call got a 100 per cent response. The Great

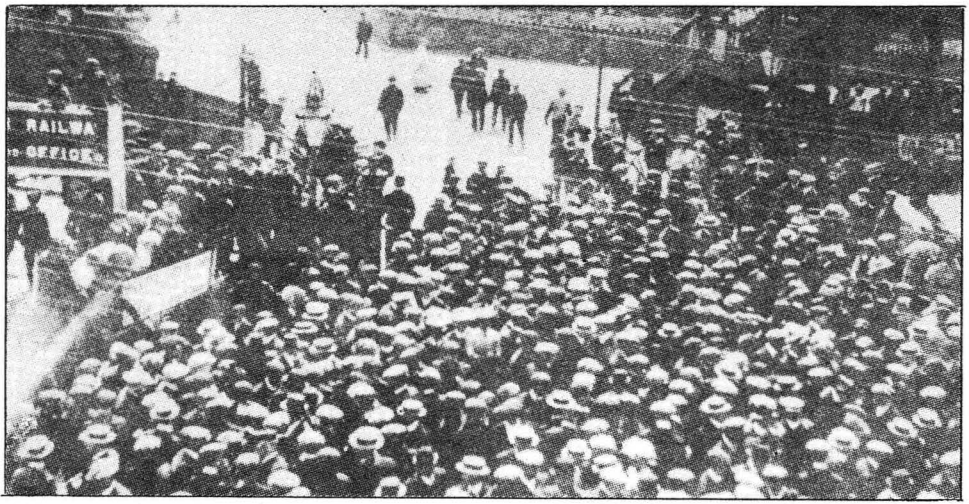
Western Railway (GWR) clerks, not previously militant, passed a unanimous resolution "not to perform the duties of any other grade or work the signal boxes."

Picketing was effective from the start particularly as the railway line was cut by roads both sides of the station.

There were then 500 railworkers in Llanelli; just over half were in the union. Yet picket numbers rose at one stage to over 5000 with great support from local tinsplate workers and miners. On the first night not one train could pass between Fishguard and London.

Troops

The mood then was good humoured with a 'mock election' into the early hours of the morning. It changed dramatically next morning as 120 troops of the North Lancs regiment arrived. (In keeping with the British bosses' divide and rule in-



Railwaymen on strike in Llanelli in 1911.

stincts local Welsh troops had been sent to Liverpool).

After scuffling and pushing on the picket line, troops secured the crossings and trains ran normally for the rest of the day. By Saturday the 19th there were 500 troops in the town. In the afternoon a train that had, by agreement of the pickets, stayed in the station area suddenly tried to break through.

Within a few hundred yards the pickets had stopped and immobilised the train and taken off the scab driver. Troops rushed to the scene but the pickets were already up on the embankments. A few stones were thrown.

Within minutes, a local JP had arrived and read the riot act. The troops then opened fire on unarmed innocent onlookers on the embankment, killing two.

In the inquest which followed, troops claimed that these were 'warning shots'. But the two killed

were both shot through the heart, an unbelievable coincidence. Secondly, one soldier Richard Spiers refused to fire and was arrested. Spiers said he could not obey the order to shoot at a man on the embankment.

The crowd who had witnessed the killings forced the soldiers back to the station. As word spread through the town, the situation escalated. Rioters ransacked all 96 trucks in the sidings around the station. Many were set on fire. One wagon carrying munitions exploded and four more people were killed.

This only made the crowd angrier. Disturbances spread throughout Llanelli, with homes and shops of magistrates a prime target for looting and destruction. For a while the main police station was besieged.

Troops kept on bayonet charging the crowds. Scores were admitted to hospital and a local hotel was used as a field dressing station.

Rioting went on until news came through that the strike had ended.

Those few hot August days not only made workers angry, they changed Llanelli's political face. Previously a Liberal town, within two elections, Labour had won the parliamentary seat and the council. And 60 years before Saltley Gates they had forged a model of picketing and solidarity.

This year's commemorations took place in a Llanelli which has had 13,000 jobs ripped out of its heart in the last decade. The railway depot is earmarked for closure early next year. We are fighting to revitalise the rich traditions that 1911 and other battles have bequeathed to us. We need more than ever.

By Keith Edwards
(President Llanelli Trades Council, in personal capacity)



Railwaymen on strike in Llanelli in 1985 guards dispute, 74 years to the day after the shootings.

Photo: John Harris (IFL).

We need your help

THE FIGHTING fund quarter is already over the half way mark, so gigantic efforts must be made in every area if we are to get back on target.

Not one penny of *Militant's* funds comes from big business or rich individuals but is made up of pennies and pounds from ordinary working people. So *Militant* is free to criticise the bosses and their system.

We urge all our readers to send in donations. Ask your friends and relatives to match your own donation. What about going around your Labour Party ward meeting, trade union branch, Young Socialists or Labour club. Move a resolution for financial support to *Militant*, follow the example of Coventry South East Labour Party who sent £12.

In some areas supporters have promised a weekend of activity on 20 and 21 September. Sell the paper, rattle the tins, ask for the solidarity price (£16 was collected last week in Ipswich and Colchester just asking for £1 per copy!) Collect money with a Maggie Thatcher "Guy Fawkes". Organise a party.

Jean and Ingrid from Dunfermline

Fighting Fund

This week
£2,130

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target
1 London South East	456		2250
2 Eastern	569		3450
3 Southern	488		3100
4 Wales West	518		3350
5 London North West	377		2900
6 London North East	415		3550
7 London South West	184		1500
8 Yorkshire	694		5600
9 East Midlands	321		3050
10 Merseyside	630		7000
11 Northern	409		4550
12 South East	213		2400
13 Humberside	202		2300
14 Manchester/Lancs	259		4150
15 Scotland East	199		3200
16 Scotland West	237		3850
17 Wales East	107		2150
18 West Midlands	209		4500
19 South West	68		2150
National	1368		5000
Total	7923		70000

held a toy party and raised £17.50. You can always have a hunt the witch-hunter halloween party.

Send your cash in now. Help us get back on target.

THANKS to: TUC conference delegates who gave £902; Sue Kilsby, P Lowe, P Kenny all from Leicester who each gave £1; Noel from Wellingborough £1; Charlie Allom, Ryde 70p;

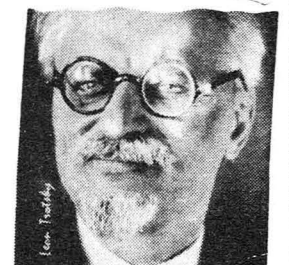
Catherine, Glenrothes £5; Pauline Enfield, Walthamstow £1.20; Jackie McCanness, Sudbury £20; Chris Grace, £7; Jane Spiers £2, both CPSA members from Norwich; Iain Campbell sent £10 in memory of Daisy Rawling; Alan Buxton, Cotgrave NUM £2.90; M Abrahams, Notts £13.80; Ivan Mellish, Borrowash Labour Party £5; Bracknell Militant Readers' Meeting £27 after expenses; Ian Jackson, Hull £5; Peter McCulloch £5 East London.

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Frolich's biography "Rosa Luxemburg" £5.95 (£6.50 including postage and packing).

Add 25 per cent to all orders under £5. 10 per cent to all orders under £10 for postage. Orders over £10 post free. Cheques payable to World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoot Road, London E9 5HB.



IN DEFENCE OF MARXISM



Dave Nellist speaking at a miners' rally during the miners' strike.

In the general election of 1983 two Marxist MP's were elected. Dave Nellist (Coventry SE) and Terry Fields (Liverpool Broadgreen) describe their work and attitudes to parliament.

Dave **... talks to Militant** Nellist MP



Photos: Dave Sinclair.

Terry Fields canvassing in Broadgreen in the 1983 general election.

OUR WEEK'S work begins on the preceding Thursday when we are told the arrangements for the whip.

The term 'whip' is derived from the whipping of foxhounds by the master of hounds. (Any similarity between dogs and MPs is not intended to be 'animalist').

The whip is the official notification of the daily programme of business underlined once, twice or three times in heavy lines to denote the importance of the subject, and signifying whether attendance is 'essential' or 'requested'.

My preparations culminate with a social evening with my family in my local club, rather like a soldier home on leave having a good bye drink with his loved ones and friends. The

club clientele are ordinary working people. The therapeutic value of decent discussion and debate, always about politics and real issues facing workers, is in sharp contrast to the sterility and formal approach adopted in parliament to these same issues.

Wasted

Half of each day except Friday is wasted, as parliamentary sessions commence at 2.30pm. This allows MPs to follow the many varied pursuits they engage in as solicitors, barristers, company directors or advisors. The business starts with the speaker's procession from his chamber to the house when prayers are said by the chaplain for five minutes. The prayers usually request

divine intervention in the proceedings to guide the politicians, after which the chaplain leaves and the government gets on with the job of cutting back on the health service, cutting education, selling off the nation's wealth at knock down prices etc. The Lord works in mysterious ways...

As Marxist MPs our working day, depending on the lateness of the previous night's business, commences at about 10am, when the mail is sifted to 'bin' inconsequential circulars from big business pressure groups, and to deal with correspondence from people with real problems. Case work puts tremendous pressure on secretarial comrades and those in the constituency. The letters are additional to telephoned enquiries and personal visits and the regular

Terry **describes his week** Fields MP

Dave, why do you consider it necessary to report back locally about your activities in parliament?

This is one of the most important aspects of my work. Because my socialist principles are so distorted by the press, it is vital that I reach workers in the factories and offices and make available to them a true record of what I'm doing in parliament.

Each month in which parliament is sitting I produce a written report in which I comment on topical issues such as Chernobyl and Libya. I also copy recent speeches I've made in the Commons, and correspondence taking up matters raised by constituents, for example the DHSS on prescription charges. I also comment on current issues inside the labour movement and occasionally reflect on issues which highlight the unique atmosphere of parliament—like whether MPs really need to have frogs' legs and turtle soup on the restaurant menus!

Who gets to see your reports?

As many workers as possible. In the first place they are distributed at my Labour Party general management committee, and to constituency activists. I regard it as a duty to keep the trade union activists informed, by distributing my reports to as many trade union branches as possible. I try to show that I am not a one-off merchant, who turns up once every five years looking for reelection to a cushy number, but an MP who is always available to assist workers in struggle.

An AEU convenor, when asked if my reports were useful, said: "they are circulated amongst the convenors, filed for reference, and also put up on noticeboards. You're the on-

ly MP around here who tells us what's going on." The conversation concluded by him offering to arrange a visit for me to meet the other convenors at the plant during the summer.

In your experience, has the press succeeded in frightening off working class people from seeking your help and advice?

On the contrary, it seems to encourage a positive response! A member of the Royal College of Midwives, an organisation not exactly noted for militancy, wrote to me recently: "Unfortunately I am not one of your constituents. . . I know you are an articulate and outspoken member of the Labour Party and I, on behalf of all other members of the midwifery profession, would be grateful if you could put forward our point of view (on the current pay award) in the House of Commons."

How do experiences relate to the frequent accusations that you are an extremist who is not really representative of your constituents?

Two recent letters from workers in Coventry should answer this lie.

"Dear Dave, the joint shop stewards committee have asked me to send their thanks and appreciation to you for the gift of £25 to the anti-privatisation campaign. Your letter will be published in my next works bulletin." JSSC Rolls Royce, Coventry.

"Dear Dave, I received your letter and cheque, and have passed them on to the strike committee. I would, however, like to give you my personal thanks for your moral and financial support over the last eight weeks." Alvis AEU convenor.

For my part, I would see the priority as organising and agitating amongst workers in struggle on picket lines and others faced with the many problems inflicted upon them by the Tory government. The 'escape committee,' understanding my abhorrence of the time consuming ritual and role play, provide for as many outside visits as possible.

The effect in the last period of the Tories' hell-bent programme to get their legislation through, has meant many late sittings till 2 or 3 in the morning. So for an MP to do the job properly, a long working day is often necessary. This puts an enormous strain on comrades who seek to represent the class to the best of their abilities.

The end of the week is a relief to me and my mood changes with the anticipation of getting home amongst real people despite the fact that I will be engaged in surgeries, ward activities or meetings in Liverpool or elsewhere.

And so the process starts again. Some people ask, isn't it all a waste of time? It is true that socialism can only be achieved through the struggles and will of working people themselves, but for the majority of workers, parliament is the forum for them to resolve their problems. That is why, in the course of a year, many hundreds of thousands of workers attend parliament to lobby for their demands.

We need representatives to use the parliamentary platform to espouse socialist ideas and a programme that can resolve the difficulties faced by our class. It is a job that has to be done and we are privileged to have the confidence of the workers to represent them.

Keir Hardie tradition

KEIR HARDIE once said that Labour MPs should wear their working clothes in parliament to set themselves apart from the landowners and capitalists. Dave Nellist and Terry Fields don't turn up in a cloth cap and overalls but they have shunned the MPs' perks—and a salary of £17,702 plus allowances—and accept only a 'workers' wage'. The rest they have donated back into the movement.

Each year, both MPs present accounts to their constituency Labour Parties detailing how much they have earned, including radio and TV fees and where the excess has gone. In 1985 Terry Fields donated over £1,000 to the local labour movement, £500 to the national Labour Party funds and £500 to the LPYS. And during the year of the miners' strike, he donated £500 to the NUM.

Meanwhile deserters like Kilroy-Silk leave their constituencies in the lurch when something better comes along—he is about to pursue a career with the BBC.

The actions of MPs like Dave Nellist, Terry Fields and Dennis Skinner do not go down too well amongst some in the Party. National Agent, David Hughes wrote to Dave Nellist last year claiming that he was breaking "the Hastings Agreement" by donating more than

£200 a year to his constituency Labour Party.

This "Hastings Agreement" was drawn up in 1933 to prevent rich MPs buying favours from local parties and set a maximum donation of £250 per year out of the then MPs' salary of £360. In today's values, that figure of £250 would be equivalent to nearly £12,000 a year. But to avoid any suggestion of impropriety, the money is donated into a special campaign fund run by the constituency that can be used to pay for leaflets, meetings or other public activities.

Donations

Whilst a handful of MPs are prepared to donate a large proportion of money back to the movement, many are not. Some Labour MPs did not even pay the annual £80 donation to the Party to cover the costs of literature etc. A minor step forward has however been made in the Parliamentary Labour Party after left wing MPs started a debate on the subject of such donations. Eventually, the PLP agreed "that from the 1 January 1986, the annual contribution to the Labour Party by members shall be fixed at one per cent of annual salary," but even this modest change met considerable resistance.

Exposing apartheid

DAVE NELLIST has actively highlighted the struggle of the black workers in South Africa, and has exposed the Tories' support for Apartheid.

He has been speaking at meetings up and down the country to explain the real situation inside South Africa and what solidarity action the labour movement in Britain should be taking.

On the imposition of the state of emergency, he put forward 17 motions in parliament naming dozens of the trade union leaders and activists detained, and since the Tories are prepared to do nothing that will harm their profits, calling for

workers' sanctions in Britain.

For workers fighting in other countries, the fact that an MP in the British parliament is raising their struggle can be an inspiration. Cyril Ramaphosa, General Secretary of the NUM in South Africa, wrote to Dave Nellist thanking him for the moral support he gives the union: "The position you continue to take in parliament regarding the struggle of the working class and particularly the situation in South Africa reaches our attention from time to time. We are most impressed with the way you are giving support for our struggles in this country."

Champion for youth

DAVE NELLIST is also one of the youngest Labour MPs. He has been a champion of youth rights in his three years in the House of Commons.

In his maiden speech on youth training he warned the Tories that they were creating a "new youthful army of trade unionists and socialists who will fight to transform society along socialist lines, who will fight for a future that will give them dignity and hope and allow them to develop their talents to the full."

As one of the MP's who sits on the Wages Bill Standing Committee he used the chance to grill Tory ministers on their policies for youth and has raised questions of the proposed Sunday Trading Bill on the wages and conditions of young shop workers.

Dave Nellist was proud to support last year's school students' strike, and has tabled a motion demanding a living grant for all students based on two thirds of average earnings linked to the cost of living.

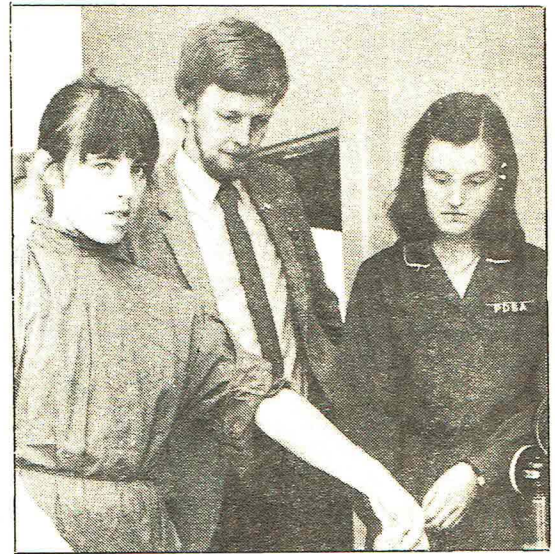
He introduced a private

members' bill to give full legal protection in terms of pay, working conditions, health and safety and a guaranteed job on completion of a YTS scheme. A second bill would implement a national minimum wage of £115 per week to be negotiated with the trade unions with the proportional rate for YTS trainees, part timers and 16 to 17 year olds.

No illusions

Dave Nellist has no illusions that moving bills in parliament will have any effect on the Tories' large inbuilt majority. But the bills themselves have met a tremendous response from youth groups and the labour movement. The *Just 17* magazine has carried three articles on Dave's work and has asked readers to comment on their own experiences. Dozens of young workers wrote in supporting his proposals.

The Coventry MP is now seen as the spokesman for youth in parliament with the press asking him for comment whenever youth issues are discussed.



Dave Nellist visiting young workers.

Everyday life problems in 30,000 letters

EVERYDAY LIFE for working people is full of problems and often the only solution can be to contact your MP for help and advice.

Dave Nellist and Terry Fields have received around 30,000 letters between them asking for help with DHSS and housing problems, from families with immigration problems or letters wanting comments or support on a particular issue.

As Marxists they see it as their responsibility to do all that they can to take up the individual cases, while always bearing in mind that it will not be possible to solve all the problems of capitalist society until we return a Labour government that is prepared to carry out the socialist transformation of society.

Here are some excerpts from letters to Dave Nellist and Terry Fields, showing the support from working people.

Dear Comrade,

May I express appreciation and thanks for your continued contacts and reports on current affairs, something that other MPs seem reluctant to carry out. I believe this is so-called militancy, let's have more of it.

Yours fraternally

A TGWU branch secretary

Dear Mr Nellist,

... May I have the honour and pleasure as a senior citizen (aged 67) and as a world war two front line and disabled veteran of giving you a hearty handshake and thanking you very sincerely for your humane and public spirited action...

Yours sincerely, an Australian ex-serviceman

Dear colleague,

I am a 74 year old pensioner and fully support your action in the House of Commons... Please keep up your protest, for which we will always be grateful.

Secretary, Towyn branch, National Federation of Old Age Pensioners.

Dear Mr Nellist,

I would like to thank you for looking into my claim. The cheque arrived on the 18th.

Thank you PB.

Dear Terry Fields,

Thank you for your letter of support to the Walerton and Elgin Action Group. It has been included in our latest leaflet to show people the sort of assistance we should be getting from MPs.

Yours in comradeship, WEAG co-ordinator.

Dear Terry Fields,

... I would like to thank you for all the really good work you are doing on behalf of our constituency, and, although I don't support *Militant*, I will certainly be voting for you at the next election and would be prepared to canvass.

Best wishes, JS

Dear Mr Fields,

Thank you for the letters of support you have written, both on behalf of myself and that of our campaign for the voluntary sector...

Yours sincerely, GM Voluntary Training Officer.

Dear Terry,

I am writing to thank you for the adjournment debate held at 10.12 on 22 May 1986. I have only just received a copy of Hansard for that day and I was glad to see that your contribution covered the problems of the CPSA as well as those of the claimants.

Yours sincerely, CPSA branch secretary

Italy

Italy back on the road to crisis

THE RECENT Italian government crisis broke, ironically, just as commentators were marvelling over the longest-lasting government since 1945.

It had survived nearly three years. Before 1983, with over 40 governments since the war, the average life of a cabinet had been less than a year.

During this period the economy, as in other countries, has gone through a partial recovery. The bosses have been gloating over the lowest strike figures since the war.

What is the explanation for this lull in the political and industrial turbulence that has characterised Italy since the late 1960s in particular?

The fall-off in strike action has come after many years of magnificent struggle. From 1969, for a decade, enormous industrial battles were fought and workers made significant gains.

The turning point came in September 1980 when the Fiat bosses demanded 5,000 lay-offs. The workers responded with demonstrations, strikes and occupations.

Back to work

But the struggle ended after 35 days when the leaders of the CGIL-CISL-UIL (the three main trade union federations) persuaded the workers to go back to work.

This marked the beginning of a decline in working-class militancy for a period.

But it has been an ebb punctuated by new waves of struggle. In 1982 the *Confindustria* (bosses' federation) felt strong enough to demand a reduction in the *scala mobile* (sliding scale of wages).

The workers responded with massive demonstrations in all the major cities. But again, in January 1983, the trade union leaders cut the movement short when they signed an agreement for a certain reduction in the *scala mobile*.

Against this background general elections were held in 1983, returning a parliament in which (with the mass-based Communist Party in opposition) no government could have a working majority without the support of the Socialist Party (PSI).

In return for this support, PSI leader Craxi became Prime Minister in a five-party coalition government of Socialists, Republicans, Liberals, Social Democrats and Christian Democrats.

The bourgeois nature of this coalition was soon made clear by its attacks. In the name of "stability" and "competitiveness" it carried out more vicious attacks on the working class than a purely Christian-Democratic government would have been able to get away with—for example, freezing the *scala mobile* for six months.

Encouraged by the passivity of the workers' leaders, the bosses went on the offensive again. In February 1984 Craxi tried to



(Above) Revolutionary banner of the Communist Party—but no policies to match. (Below) Socialist leader Craxi: on a collision course with the workers' movement.

enforce further reductions in the *scala mobile* by law. Again, the union leaders were making various proposals for a compromise.

But the rank and file had had enough. All over the country there sprang up the "self-convened" movement of shop stewards. A demonstration of over a million was organised in Rome on 24 March.

This was one of the most significant movements of the workers since the war. But the Communist trade union leaders refused to take the logical next step of calling a general strike action—according to them, the movement was "not united". In reality only the leadership was disunited. A strike call by the Communist leaders would have left the right wing totally isolated.

The result was a tremendous let down among the workers, and a sense of reluctance to embark on similar action without any clear perspective that the leadership will be willing to fight through to victory.

Although the movement was defeated, it was on the basis of this struggle that in the 1984 Euro-elections the PCI overtook the Christian Democrats (DC) for the first time ever.

These events demonstrate the basis on which the Craxi government managed to balance in power for three years—not by winning support or even tolerance among the working class, but because the workers' leaders systematically prevented them from turning their frustration into effective struggle.

Limited horizon

The workers' leaders could not contemplate the radical step of breaking with the DC and forming a government of the workers' parties on a programme of social transformation—a step with revolutionary implications. Their horizons are limited by the narrow perspectives of government in coalition with the bourgeois parties.

The lack of alternatives facing the working class is made most clear by the policies of the Communist Party (PCI), traditionally the party of the workers.

The PCI reached an electoral peak in 1976 when it gained 34 per cent of the vote, reflecting the search by new layers of workers and youth for an alternative to bourgeois rule. *The response of the PCI leaders was to put*

forward their infamous appeal for a "Historic Compromise" with the Christian Democrats.

On this basis they supported the DC government, appealing to the workers in the name of "national unity" to make sacrifices. In 1980 the PCI officially retreated from this position—but as subsequent events showed, their fundamental policy of class compromise was unchanged.

The fresh turn to the PCI in the 1984 Euro-elections was short-lived. The leadership soon managed to turn enthusiasm into discouragement with their absence of fighting policies. In May 1985 the PCI lost votes in the local elections, particularly in the Northern and industrial areas, its traditional base of support.

These defeats seriously shook the faith of the party rank and file in their leadership, who were forced to bring forward the date of their Congress from 1987 to April 1986.

The theses presented to Congress by the Central Committee were the most right-wing in the history of the party. They rejected nationalisation, accepted NATO, presented no facts or analysis of the economic

crisis, and made only the vague proposal of a "Programme Government"—without mentioning the programme.

This was clearly a label for the leaders' continuing search for a coalition with the bourgeois parties. Nevertheless, their 'historic' shift to the right was met with an equally significant response: for the first time, amendments to the theses were openly presented by Central Committee members, and the idea of democracy was established within a party previously controlled very rigidly from the top.

(This has not, however, prevented the expulsion of some Young Communists and PCI members on a charge of being....Marxists!)

School strikes

On the other hand, while antagonising the workers, the programme of the Craxi government by no means satisfied the bosses.

In November 1985 it presented a budget including big cuts in education spending and increases in school and university fees. This sparked off strikes by school students all over Italy.

Nevertheless, the *Confindustria* complained that these measures were not enough to reduce the budget deficit, and thus to reduce inflation.

It was the feeling among the bourgeoisie that the Craxi government had outlived its purpose—of inflicting cuts and curbing the workers' movement—which led to its fall on 27 June 1986 at the hands of "snipers" (members of the coalition parties voting against their government).

The Craxi government Mark II was finally formed in August, after over a month of attempts to form a DC-headed coalition. In reality it is a reshuffle of the old one. Craxi is supposed to continue in office until

March 1987, and then allow the DC to head the coalition until the next elections, due in 1988.

This shows the impasse of Italian capitalism—the inability of the ruling class to find a vehicle of government that is satisfactory either to themselves or to the working class. It is the political expression of a period of deep instability and tension, which will inevitably come to new eruptions in the economic recession ahead.

The new government is already in difficulties. The school students' movement has forced it to retreat from cuts in education. Only the present frustration and ebb in the workers' movement has allowed it to survive.

But with repeated attacks in store on all the workers' hard-won gains, no lasting peace is possible. The youth movement will be followed by new struggles of the working class, and then the government's days will be numbered.

This will open up the prospect of the PCI being brought into the government, to play the strike-breaking role which the PSI is less and less capable of playing.

In spite of its lack of programme, workers will look to the PCI for change. But in coalition with the bosses' parties, the PCI leaders will be used to force new 'sacrifices' down the workers' throats.

Under these conditions, workers and youth will begin to move into the party and the unions in big numbers to fight for a change in the leadership. This will open a new chapter in the history of the Italian workers' movement, and the growth of support for genuine Marxist ideas on the greatest scale since the revolutionary years of the early 1920s.

From an Italian correspondent

New slaughter looms in Gulf War

WITH THE Iran-Iraq war about to enter its seventh year, indications are that the Iranian regime is preparing a new and bloody offensive. Over 650,000 troops are massed for an attack on Iraq.

On battlefields reminiscent of the First World War, with trenches, heavy guns and mustard gas, the war has already claimed 650,000 lives.

Iraq, with a smaller population, has superior high-tech weaponry. But the Iraqi regime has been unable to break the grim determination of the Iranian masses to defend their national independence.

After six terrible years, the troops on neither side have any enthusiasm for invading the other's territory. There have been limited anti-war protests on both sides, including some strikes and demonstrations in Iran.

The morale of the Iraqi troops is crumbling. The Saddam regime is even trying to prevent soldiers from wearing white underwear, for fear they will use it as white flags!

But the prospect of an Iranian victory is fraught with problems. It would put imperialism in an impossible position, giving Khomeini control of 20 per cent of the

By Dave Campbell

world's oil supply, and threatening the uncertain stability of the pro-imperialist Arab states of the Middle East.

Stalemate?

It appears that, if the Iranian offensive threatens to smash through the Iraqi lines, imperialism might be forced to concede at least the downfall of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein in the hope of reaching a 'stalemate' settlement with Khomeini.

But, in the longer run, the accumulated tensions of the Iranian revolution will also find expression in new struggles against the repressive fundamentalist regime.

What can be said with certainty is that, whatever the final settlement between the dictators, the real losers will be the working people of both Iran and Iraq. They have paid the price for this brutal war with plummeting



Death and destruction in the trenches. Iranian army on parade. (below).

living standards and massive loss of life. In neither country will the people benefit from the continuation of the existing regimes.

The experience of the war has underlined more starkly that capitalist diplomacy cannot eliminate the horrors now faced by the workers and peasants in both countries. Only the workers of Iran and Iraq, building links with each other in joint struggle to overthrow their oppressors and exploiters on both sides of the Shatt al Arab divide, can do that.



Chilean regime lashes out

THE ASSASSINATION attempt on Pinochet, on the eve of the 13th anniversary of his dictatorship, has had a serious effect on the build-up of the massive anti-government demonstrations planned for 11 September.

It has eagerly been exploited by the regime to proclaim a State of Siege (which it could not agree on before), impose stricter censorship, swoop on the shantytowns and arrest dozens more anti-government activists.

Death squads have been emboldened to strike again, murdering more government opponents. The judges chose this moment to set free 44 officers and civilians charged with the murder of political prisoners in the 1970s.

This clampdown has resulted in a temporary retreat by the mass movement, and encouraged Pinochet's dwindling supporters to emerge from their boltholes onto the streets.

From the interior it was at first insinuated that the assassination attempt must have been the work of provocateurs. Though the Communist Party's military wing, FPRM, has claimed responsibility, it demonstrates again the pernicious consequences of individual terrorism in cutting across and confusing the mass movement.

However, the euphoria of

the extreme right wing will be short-lived. The regime remains as isolated as before. Its survival continues to depend on the absence of effective revolutionary leadership in the movement of the working class and youth.

A clearer indication of the course of events was the unprecedented statement by an army public relations officer, condemning the killings by the death squads and calling for action against the murderers.

Not only the US ruling class and Chilean capitalists, but more and more sections of the regime itself are beginning to see that Pinochet is heading for a revolutionary confrontation with the masses. By inducing softer policies and a change to civilian government, they hope to head off an explosion from below.

Pinochet's present rightward lurch will multiply these divisions at the top, and add fuel to the hatred among the masses that has smouldered through the protest movement of the past three years. It is only a matter of time before new struggles erupt, with the activists further sharpened by their understanding by the experience they are now going through.

By Alejandro Rojas

US strikers call for support

MILITANT HAS reported on the "P-9 strike" by 1,500 workers at the Hormel meat plant in Austin, Minnesota (see issues 791, 797) so-called after the workers' union branch, Local P-9 of the United Food and Commercial Workers. This letter describes the experience of workers at another Hormel plant who came out in their support

Fremont Support Group,
PO Box 86,
Fremont, NE 68025

Dear brothers and sisters,
We are writing this letter to give you an update on our situation and also to ask for your HELP!

Twenty-six UFCW Local 22 members from Fremont NE Hormel plant honored P-9's picket line and stayed out of Fremont plant for the duration. As I'm sure you already know, each of us has been permanently replaced at this time, not fired.

The UFCW International has put an end to strike activities in Austin, and forced P-9 to pull out their pickets at our plant. We, in turn, were told to sign a preferential hiring list and wait until the company

decides when they will take us back.

We have been getting by financially on unemployment benefits of \$126 a week. Those benefits expired in August.

According to federal law, we must be called back in order of seniority before the company can hire anyone else off the street. We don't know how long the Hormel company will try to keep us out. The contract at the Fremont plant expired on 1 September. It is the general feeling of our people that the company does not want us back into the plant before a new contract is signed.

The UFCW International doesn't seem concerned with our fate. In these circumstances, we come to you for

help. It is not easy, as laboring people are a proud breed and we are no exception. Work is scarce, as we have found in our job searches, and more so when a potential employer realizes we are part of the Hormel struggle.

We must not be forced to seek employment in low-paying non-union jobs to fight for a bare existence. We must have the means to stand up to the greedy corporations who continue to exploit people. We must be able to show the International union that the small numbers do count.

Please ask yourself if you can give up one cup of coffee or a beer a month to help us out financially. Your contributions to our families will be greatly appreciated. Please help us! We need you!

Send any contributions to our address above.

**In solidarity,
The proud 26 families
who stood up for their
beliefs.**



Hormel strikers.

Thatcher "at home" in Norway

"MAGGIE MAGGIE Maggie, out out out!"

This chant echoed last Thursday in the streets of Oslo, where 2,000 young demonstrators waited for Thatcher to arrive at the banquet that Gro Harlem Brundtland, Norway's Social-Democratic prime minister, had laid on in her honour.

That same night in Bristol, youth were battling against police, as the tensions created by seven years of Tory policies exploded to the surface.

The *Telegraph* has tried to dismiss the Oslo demonstration as a "pro-IRA riot". In fact, the protesters were also denouncing Thatcher's anti-union laws, her support for the South African regime and the pollution of the atmosphere that British industrialists are allowed to get away with.

Clearly, Thatcher was seen as a symbol of ruling-class arrogance, monetarism and reaction.

Even in peaceful Tromsø, Thatcher's presence drew crowds of demonstrators onto the streets. She tried to mock them, but only mocked herself: "So at home you made me feel that you have even got demonstrations outside... You know, it is as if I was in any city in my own country!"

Trapped

In Oslo, Thatcher was trapped in the British Embassy for an hour until it was safe to venture out. Armed soldiers and police had to be called out before the dinner party could go ahead.

But there was a warning in the night's events for the Norwegian leader also, who did a U-turn on her election promises and unleashed austerity policies on the working class when she took office in May.

On Thursday night the Oslo police chief said he was "unprepared" for the intensity of the protest. The Norwegian authorities will no doubt be "unprepared" also for future explosions of anger against Mrs Brundtland's own version of Thatcherism.

But the last word in analysing the significance of the night's events should be left to Denis Thatcher. Asked what he thought about the incident, his answer was a true reflection of the vision of his class:

"What incident?"

By George Collins

Correction

IN THE article on the Moscow Trials, part two, in last week's issue (814) there was an error. It read: "The fact, known to all, that Trotsky had severed all links with the Zinovievists after his capitulation to Stalin in 1929..." It should of course have stated that it was "their (the Zinovievists) capitulation".

Why this privilege?

Dear Comrades,
When Maggie Thatcher went to have her finger straightened in hospital it made me sick why she should make news headlines on TV and radio.
My father has exactly the same problem and the doctor said not to have it done as it's only a 50/50 chance it would work.
Why should she get all the privileges of a private hospital and her own doctors when my father just gets put off?
Yours fraternally
D Stubbins

Give him a break

This letter was recently printed in the *Liverpool Echo*.
"In defence of Derek Hatton, why don't you ever get off the man's back?
He is only a young man and could make a good politician. He came down to the Fred Robinson Laundry and met the women and men who were protesting to keep it open. He had a broken leg but he still met the women and the laundry won a reprieve.
We've got a new estate over the road and everywhere you look there are new houses going up.
What did Sir Trevor do? You didn't see him fighting for the council workers, like Derek. He has kept his promise with us and we are still all in work.
We've got Everton Park now, instead of derelict land at the back of our flat. Give the man a break; he was born and bred here and cares about the place."
Yours fraternally
E Rees
Everton



Derek Hatton at Durham miners' gala

Photo: Stefano Cagnoni (Report)

Sign on the bottom line

Dear Comrades,
I happened to get in conversation with a security guard in charge of one of the gatehouses where I worked.
We talked about how capitalists try to escape all the physical risks of life by employing workers to do their living for them.
Just then, up pops a suave, sophisticated management type in a flash car. He informed the guard that he had the honour of addressing a Chief-in-Chief of a something-or-other and would he kindly make a note of it for future reference.
As he got out of his car, he turned to see if the guard was following his instructions. The guard, noticing his concern, picked up his notepad and wrote with careful precision the word 'arsehole'.
The other man smiled and turned away, happy in the knowledge that his status had been preserved for posterity.
Name address withheld for obvious reasons.

Letters

Send us your views, comments or criticism.

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

TUC trying to beat the bankers at their own game

Dear Comrades,
At TUC conference last week, a number of people were espousing the virtues of Unity Trust, the trade union bank.
One in particular explained that in order to trade, the bank needs a licence from one of the main clearing banks or the Co-op. As the lesser of two evils it was decided to go via the Co-op.
He went on to say that although they only had £6m up to now, more and more trade unions were banking with Unity Trust as a way of undermining the main banks. Not only this, but with this £6m they could effectively generate £50bn. There was no need to nationalise the banks etc! Unity Trust could play them at their own game.

It would appear the secret of new realism is now out. You don't change society, you just tell the bosses the best way to run their factories, invest their money etc.
If capitalism is overthrown, then who needs a bank to run. We can run the world instead.
Yours fraternally
Ian Parker

Dear Comrades,
Last week I decided to change my bank account from Barclays because of its investments in South Africa. I decided to go to the "listening bank"—the Midland.
The manager asked me why I wanted to change my bank so I told him. He said they needed a record of my statements over the last six months. That didn't worry me; being on the dole has taught me to be careful

with money. Then he gave me a form to fill in asking details of my personal life, occupation etc.
He took the form and vanished for five minutes. When he came back he told me that I didn't have the right criteria. I just walked out—he wouldn't have listened anyway.
Yours fraternally
Alex Moore

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.

○ Brilliant social: Battle of Cable Street. 4 October. Free food, free wine, free beer, free crèche, all night. Very late bar disco, lounge. £3.50 (UB40) £5.50 (waged minimum) Donation to Fighting Fund. Contact Tommy Carroll or Phil Cooper, Broadgreen, Liverpool. Crash accommodation available

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

□ **Militant Public Meeting.** Tuesday 30 September 7.30pm. Wakefield Labour Club. Tories Out! Labour to power on a socialist programme! Speakers: Keith Narey, Kevin Mullins (COHSE), Gary Ironmonger (LPYS National Committee).

□ **Out now!** Lenin and Trotsky on Rosa Luxemburg. 4 articles 25p (40p including post) 5 copies-£1.50. Read it before you see the film! Order from World Socialist Books, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB.

○ **Militant Rally in the Albert Hall:** Can all parents who will require crèche facilities during the rally on 16 November please contact the Rally crèche, 3/13 Hepscoth Road, London E9 5HB for a crèche booking form.

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

□ **Shettleston LPYS** "Youth against Apartheid" concert and rally. Dolphin Arts Centre, Bridgeton Glasgow Friday 19 September 7pm-11pm.

Militant Meetings

□ **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.

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

Youth in Tory Britain

Dear Comrades,
Our Young Socialists' campaigns have put us in touch with youth who already have rich experience of the Tories' disastrous policies.

One school student said his headmaster had told the school in the morning that they were to have a campaign to remove chewing gum from the buildings. By the afternoon he had changed his mind. It had been pointed out to him that the gum was the only thing holding the place up!

Another spoke of her experience on a YTS scheme. Almost the first thing they made her do was pay for her own identity card!

Poor facilities for education and exploitation—this generation will draw its conclusions earlier than I did.
Yours fraternally
P Sharry
Coventry SE LPYS

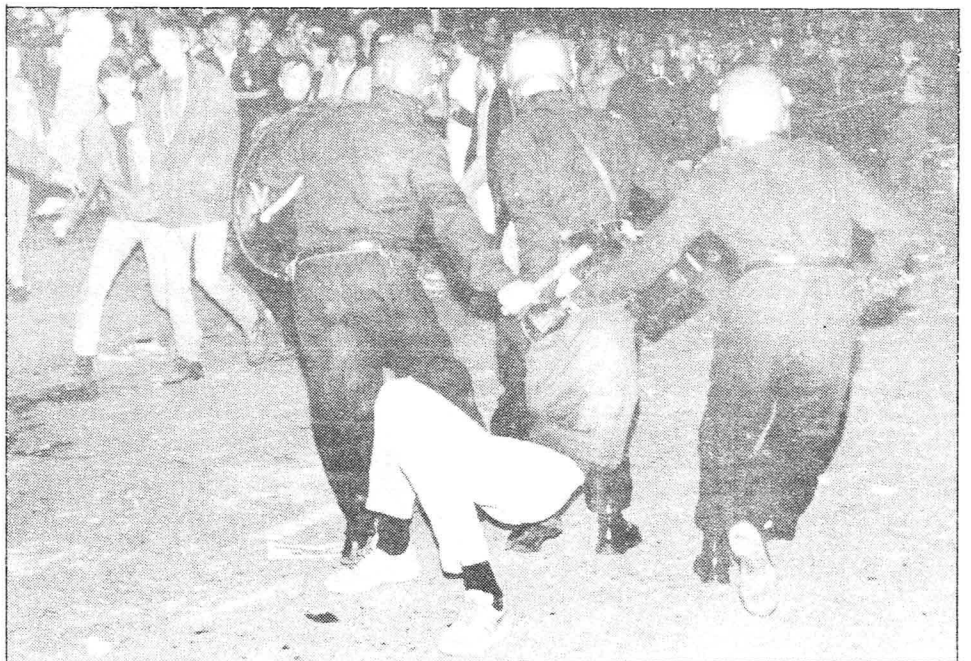
Knowsley's poverty generation

Dear Comrades,
I was told recently by a teacher working in Cantril Farm (part of Kilroy-Silk's constituency) that out of about 20 children in a class, all but 2 had free school meals. This just shows how a whole generation of

children are being brought up in what even the government calls poverty.
How can Robert Kilroy-Silk, who will shortly be earning over £30,000 a year and who lives in leafy Buckinghamshire, have any conception of life for the people

on estates like Cantril Farm, Page Moss, Kirkby or Croxteth? He should have stood as MP for Buckingham.
Yours fraternally
Andy Ford
Liverpool

Violence under the Tories



Riot police in action at Wapping.

Photo: Howard Jones

Dear Comrades,
While I was waiting (for two hours) in the dole office, a bloke of about 20 was hauled out from the office by the police.
The DHSS had refused him some rent money and consequently he was to be evicted that night. Not surprisingly he was upset and had threatened the clerk do-

ing his claim. In the end he would not leave and said he'd sleep in the offices if he had to, so the police were called.
Everyone felt sorry for clerk but there was a good deal of disgust expressed by other claimants at the low level of staff and the withholding of money. At the same time there was a lot

of anger at the use of the police.
These attitudes came more from the young people waiting. They are completely disillusioned with Thatcher and the Tories and are looking for a way out. The youth vote may be decisive in the next election.
Yours fraternally
Mara Dale

Dear Comrades,
As far as I can see the media only portrays the violence that occurs in riots, football matches and pop festivals and which of course is never the fault of the police.
Yet there is violence which exists all the time. Under the present system we have the violence of the dole queue, which brings despair, suicide, drug abuse, an increase in petty crime and many other desperate acts of escapism.
We have the violence of health cuts which

leads to long waits for serious operations and people dying because they can't go into hospital in time.
At the same time the media still attempts to fool us we're living under a wonderful system, with democracy and freedom. The only freedom is for Maggie to kick us all in the teeth and keep everything for herself and her class.
Yours fraternally
Lloyd Marden
Kent

Oil fall hits Scottish jobs

BRITOIL HAS made over a thousand workers redundant since June. Bill Blackstock, Apex senior staff rep in the Glasgow office, has just been sacked. In the interview he explains how the sackings took place and below he looks at the general crisis in the oil industry.

ON WEDNESDAY 3 September Britoil (formerly the state-owned BNOC) announced a further 750 compulsory redundancies, on top of 270 previously announced made in June.

The vast majority of the cuts took place in Glasgow, with a 50 per cent reduction in staff. Bill Blackstock, senior staff representative of white collar union Apex talked to Ronnie Stevenson. *It was widely reported that staff were escorted from the premises. What exactly happened?*

While we were in the process

of attending union/management talks we were told of cuts which were non-negotiable—550 to take place by 30 September, with 200 staff not to be allowed on company premises after 3 September.

In fact this applies to 235 staff including 30 Apex members. Employees arrived at their desks to find letters telling them of their fate, apart from union reps attending negotiations.

Some union members were immediately escorted from the premises, One Apex member, a systems

programmer with six years' service, reported that on arriving at her desk she was given her letter, her security pass was taken off her and torn up.

Then she was escorted from the building by 9.30am. Others were physically sick after such treatment. Supposedly these employees worked in commercially sensitive areas.

What were management's explanations for the cuts?

A two-page statement from Walker, the chief executive, was issued to all staff blaming the cuts on the collapse

in the oil price and also as rationalisation and re-organisation.

This is despite making £500m profits after tax since privatisation (1982-85) and £35m profit in the first six months of 1986.

What is the mood of the workers?

Because of the constant rumours of job cuts morale amongst staff has been very low for almost five months. On the other hand there is a lot of frustration about lack of consultation and anger at the way colleagues have been treated almost like criminals.

The company is also still very profitable and while jobs are being cut works of art are being commissioned for the new office building. Vast amounts of money have been spent on expensive plants and trees for an executive garden.

However, only 20 per cent of the staff are organised in Apex (the only recognised trade union). Given management's intransigence it will be very difficult to influence their intentions.

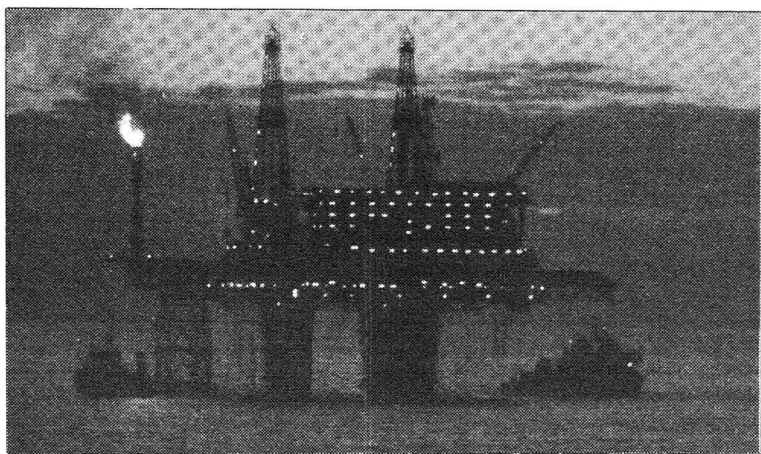
Given the problems what do you see as the solution?

Our committee is quite clear that the only solution is a political one. As a first step the remaining workers will need to join Apex. This will be difficult to organise given five out of nine staff

representatives have been made redundant.

Simultaneously the oil industry trade unions must launch a full recruitment campaign in what has been a notoriously difficult area to build given the reasonably good conditions which existed but where the mood is changing. There must be renationalisation of Britoil under democratic workers' control by the next Labour government.

We are campaigning for this in the labour movement and ask all socialists to support our demands given Labour's previous commitment on renationalisation of Britoil.



Economy's slippery slope

THE FALLING price of oil is having a devastating effect on the already ravaged economy of the West of Scotland. At least 15,000 redundancies are expected in 1986.

A thousand redundancies have been announced at UIE Engineering in Clydebank which makes oil rigs and 750 workers, myself included, have just been sacked at Britoil.

The government, out of ideological conviction does not seem perturbed at the devastating effect of the oil price fall.

Even worse, the leaders of the labour movement do not appear to have any strategy or willingness to lead a fight for jobs.

A fall in demand for oil has led to the collapse in price from \$30 a barrel in December 1985 to under \$10 a barrel by July 1986.

It stems from two causes. There has been an international policy of energy saving and moves away from oil dependency by all the major oil importers following the increase in prices in 1974 by the oil cartel OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries).

More fundamentally there has been a fall in world industrial production as part of the general decline of world capitalism. The fall in demand has led to a feverish struggle for oil markets and ended up in a crisis of over-production of oil resources.

The main force in the oil market is OPEC, based around Saudi Arabia. Its member countries are forecast to have 70 per cent of world oil reserves by the 1990s.

By then the production of non-OPEC countries is expected to peak. This particularly applies to Norway and Britain. This is important for these national economies and for the future role of OPEC.

Although an agreement on a production ceiling has been reached between OPEC members which has helped bring the price back up to \$14 a barrel the future is extremely difficult to predict given the variety of factors involved. There is a general expectation,

however, that it will remain under \$18 into the early 1990s.

All sectors of the oil industry have been affected. Privatised Britoil (formerly British National Oil Company), despite record profits of £188m in 1985 and £35m to date in 1986 made 270 staff redundant in June and have just announced a further 750.

It could be that they are priming Britoil for a take-over by a major company.

This would depend on the government disposing its 'Golden Share'. Coincidentally British Gas (soon to be privatised) has stated that it wishes to re-acquire oil interests.

North Sea

Other oil companies have made cutbacks but information is difficult to obtain due to the low level of trade union membership.

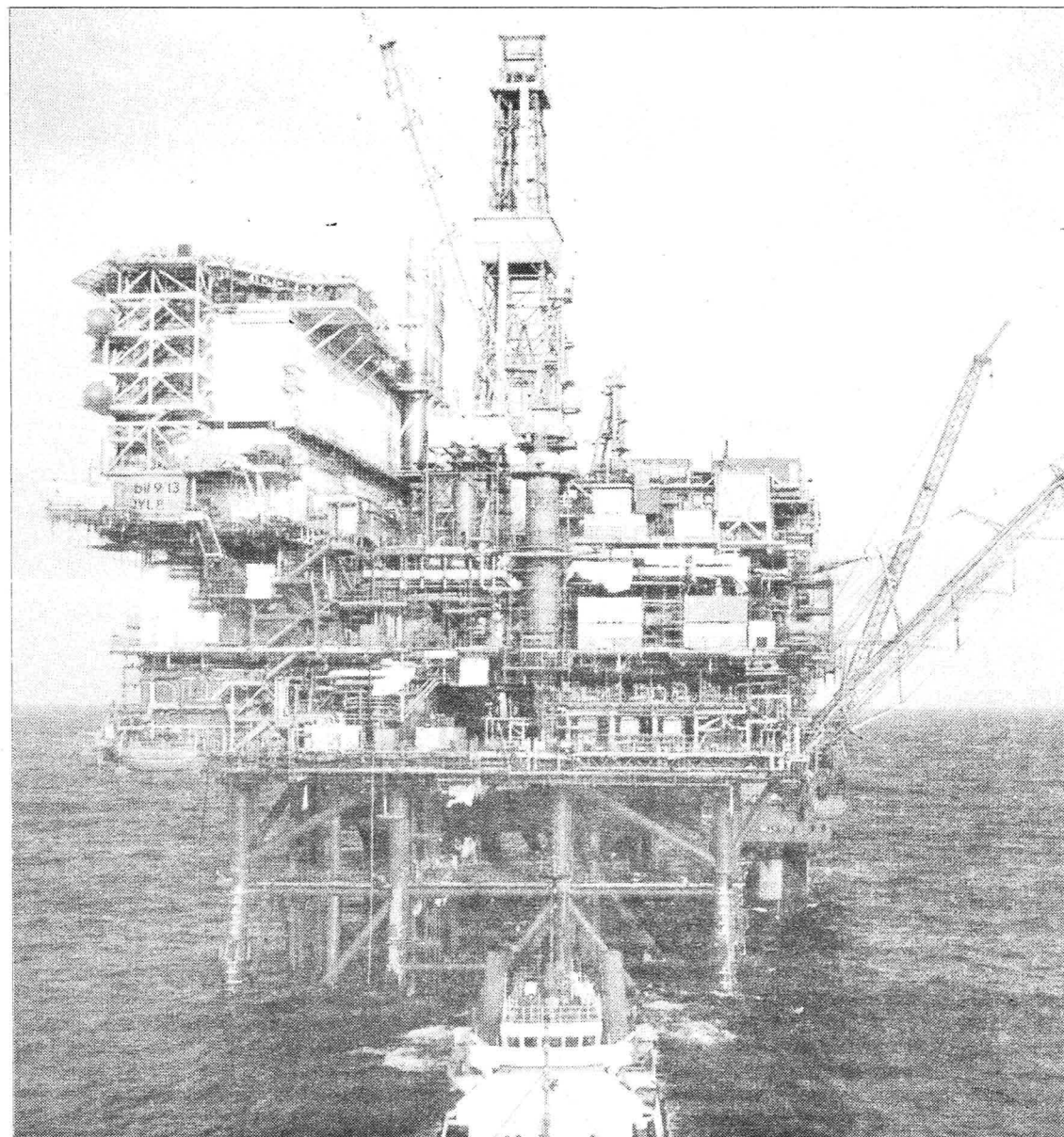
The cutback in exploration in the North Sea has been most drastic. This is despite the fact that it is vital to discover more oil as UK output will peak in 1990/91. Ironically the cutback comes at a time when it is cheaper than ever to explore.

Oil rigs which previously could command rates of up to \$100,000 per day now only make around \$15,000 a day. Currently only 33 rigs are operating in the UK North Sea sector compared to 50 in 1985. As the main drilling season peak is passed further cuts are imminent.

The Mr Mac rig recently completed at UIE and the Britoil rig almost completed at Scott Lithgow are unlikely to be used. Both are advanced rigs designed for deep water exploration, which has suffered most in the cutbacks.

Drilling rigs are being operated with skeleton crews by most contractors—amounting to 600 job losses. Houlder Offshore, the largest drilling rig company, are rumoured to be considering 300 redundancies on top of 170 in May.

The 26 rigs currently laid up in Scottish waters at the expense of 4,000 jobs seems certain to increase. A similar situation exists in



Norway where to date 300 redundancies have been made with up to 2,500 likely in the autumn.

The exploration cutbacks knock on to other areas. Since October 1985 140 seamen in rig supply vessels have been laid off.

Unemployment amongst divers has doubled in 1986. Helicopters are mothballed in airport hangars.

In these sectors, but most noticeably in offshore catering, wage freezes and wage cuts have been negotiated.

The area most drastically affected, however, is rig and platform construction, such as UIE. The exploration cutback reduces future oil field development and ultimately platform orders.

This has been compounded by the postponement of the development plans for smaller oil fields where the 'rate of profit return' is deemed too small by the bosses.

Only six out of the sixteen offshore construction yards have orders which will see them through 1987. This has a knock-on effect on the wider economy, with the steel industry being particularly hit.

The Tories' response is that the drop in investment and job losses

are the price which has to be paid for the boost to the rest of the economy from lower oil prices.

In reality the manufacturing base of Britain has been so ravaged that it will be unable to respond to any upswing in the economy—and recession is on the horizon anyway.

The most likely result is that the bosses will line their pockets with any extra profit generated. They certainly didn't pass on the fall in oil prices to petrol consumers. But they were quick enough to put them up for the small recovery in price.

Strategy

If 15,000 jobs losses had been announced in any other industry there would have been uproar from the TUC and Labour Party. So far they have been pretty quiet.

The labour movement must respond to this crisis:

★ Call a conference of rank and file stewards from the industry to plan defence of jobs and a strategy for nationalisation of the oil industry

★ A campaign by the unions to recruit quickly in the industry.

Where previously good conditions helped low unionisation workers are now under attack

★ Campaign for a socialist Labour government

★ Labour must renationalise Britoil as agreed by past Labour Party conference

★ Wider powers must be granted to a newly nationalised Britoil than under the old BNOC. They should include control over crude oil supply, petroleum pricing, production levels, oil reserve depletion, integrated exploration plans and a full research and development programme

★ Nationalisation of all sectors including the major oil companies such as BP, Esso and Shell

★ An integrated energy plan involving coal, gas and other energy sources based on the social needs of the working class not private profit

★ Workers control at all levels of the industry with a management board comprised equally of representatives elected by workers in the industry, elected by the TUC, appointed by a socialist government.

Industrial Reports

General Motor truck jobs to go

THE ANNOUNCEMENT of 1,450 redundancies at Bedford Trucks plants in Luton and Dunstable follows a call in June by the same company for 1,700 voluntary redundancies and 560 by Vauxhall in Luton.

From traditionally being one of the most prosperous areas, with unemployment of just 2 per cent in the '30s it has now reached 13 per cent. There will be a knock-on effect for other firms of 1.5 to 3 jobs (according to your 'expert') for every one announced. Already Leys Castings of Derby which supplies Bedford and Vauxhall has said it will sack 270 workers.

It shows the cynicism of US giant General Motors, parent company of both Bedford and Vauxhall, which months ago was trying to buy Leyland with profitable Land Rover thrown in and giving promises of increasing the British content of its cars. But the basic problem is the anarchy of capitalist production, shown up sharply in the vehicle sector which has long suffered from overproduction—estimated at 40 per cent in trucks. General Motors' failure to invest in the British truck operation has destroyed any chance Bedford might have had of maintaining competitiveness.

The many unacceptable names of capitalism

COMPANY BUSES picked up Valebrim workers at the usual time on 28 August and took them to the North Dock Trading Estate in Llanelli.

But the gates to the clothing factory had been padlocked and the business closed. Sixty-five workers, mainly women, had lost their jobs.

Their 'entrepreneur' boss has in the past made full use of company law which allows him to declare a business bankrupt, transfer all assets to another company under another name without even moving premises.

On one occasion the women only found out the company had changed its name when the owner came round with new contracts for them to change.

He closed two companies called Steepglade and Poisegrage after receiving grants worth £242,430 from Dyfed county council and formed two new ones under the name of Valebrim and Quad. Dyfed county council have

written the money off.

While this individual was wheeling and dealing, conditions in the factory were atrocious. There was no accident book, first aid kit, sick room or nurse. Workers had to pay 10 pence per week for soap and toilet paper which the boss would not provide.

The canteen was not a separate room. There was no cooked food available and the women had to supply their own tea-bags, milk, sugar, etc. The canteen was infested with ants. And during the winter it was not uncommon for the women to work at their machines in their coats, hats and scarves.

About half the workers were in the National Union of Tailors and Garment Workers (NUTGW). But the owner refused to recognise the union. It all came to a head after the summer holidays when twenty pay cheques for three weeks bounced.

The women downed tools and refus-

ed to work any more until the boss explained what was going on. Instead, he threatened to evict them and call the police.

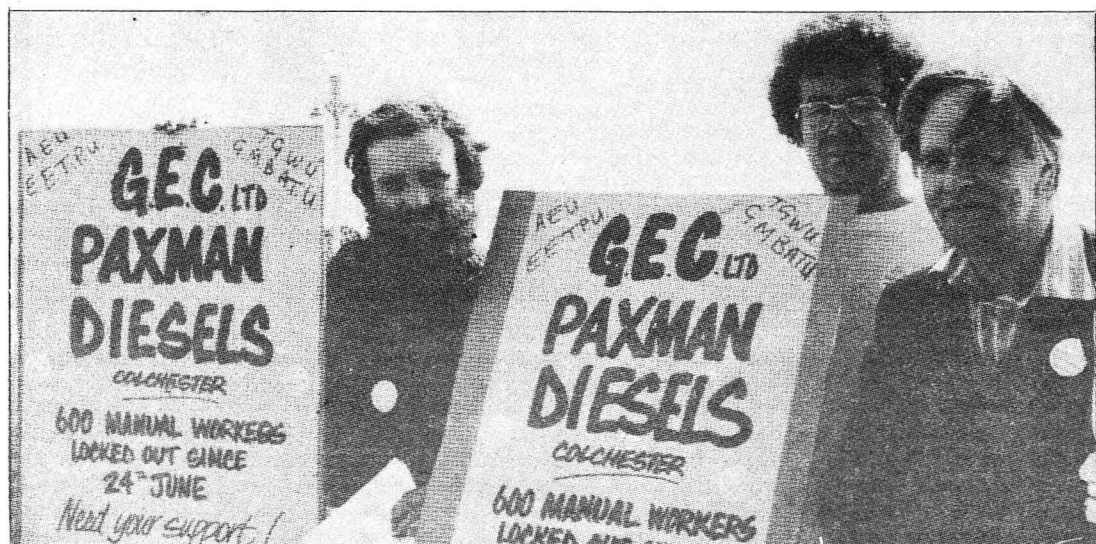
The workers are bitter about the lack of foresight by the union official who had earlier advised them not to take any industrial action despite threats of closure if production didn't improve. He had said they should raise productivity so that even if the place did shut they would get redundancy money.

They have learned many lessons through their experiences—to be active in the union, to have regular meetings and, above all, to elect shop stewards prepared to lead a fight against such employers.

By Mark Evans

(Llanelli Labour Party, personal capacity)

Paxman diesels 12 week



600 manual workers at GEC Paxman Diesels in Colchester have been on strike for twelve weeks for a decent pay offer after refusing to work compulsory overtime or accept a three per cent pay offer.

Stevenage bus drivers protest against assaults

STEVENAGE BUS drivers have been operating a ban on late-night buses on Friday and Saturday nights for over two months now, following continued assaults and threats of attacks on both drivers and passengers.

Ben Farrow of the bus drivers T&GWU branch explained their case at a recent meeting of the Stevenage Trades Council:

"Because we're going private the bus company is changing over management. We asked for a meeting with the new management and they told us to speak to the old management.

"The old management said the same thing so we're getting nowhere at the moment.

"One of management's suggestions concerning violent passengers was to let the odd one or two on the bus for free!

"But if we're going to let people like that on for nothing we might as well let all the decent members of the public on without paying!"

"A few of the drivers wanted to go down to Walthamstow to look at their screens (won recently by strike action following assaults on drivers—ed) but management said no. We asked for two people on the bus but again they said no.

"We feel it's wrong to let youngsters spend a few pounds on a Friday or Satur-

day night getting 'blind drunk' in the pub and then when they try to get on the bus for 15p we're put in a catch-22 situation.

"Radios are not the answer but there have been situations where even a radio would have helped.

"On one occasion I looked through my mirror and saw one lad stabbing another. After he had stabbed him he came up to me. If I had had a radio then I could have at least summoned help straight away.

"There's a number of 'trouble spots' in Stevenage, mainly three pubs around the town. When this dispute started the police said they would stand by these 'trouble spots' for four weeks. They did so for just one week and then called it off.

"The response from the general public over all has been very good. Nearly all the people we've spoken to in the town are backing us because they know that they would feel safer travelling late at night.

"Anything that the other trade unions can do in the town to put pressure on management will be very welcomed, as it will obviously help to strengthen our case."

By Jackie Walsh
(Nalco, Herts County Council branch)

Journalists Broad Left conference

DENNIS SKINNER MP has agreed to be keynote speaker at the first annual conference of the NUJ Broad Left to be held at the University of London Union on Saturday October 11.

The conference will be considering a number of motions submitted by the over 100 activists who have formed the BL in the last six months.

The motions include a strategy for the News International dispute, a call for the Executive to speed up the implementation of ADM decisions to have a political fund ballot and to approach other unions for amalgamation.

The conference will also consider whom to support in next year's NEC elections. All NUJ members are welcome to attend although only BL members can vote.

There will be a cabaret entertainment in the evening at the Albany Pub on Gt Portland Street with Ragged Trousered Cabaret, to which Wapping strikers are invited free.

For further details contact: Bob McKee, Secretary NUJ Broad Left, 91 Mina Road, London SE17 2QS. Tel: 01 703 2166.

Not cosy

IT WAS reported at my last trade union branch (Cohse 126) that a resolution had been submitted to the regional committee by Gateshead branch calling for an investigation into Group 81 (Cohse Broad Left) and its finances.

The resolution went on to call for the expulsion of Group 81 supporters who were found to have links with any extremist group.

Although no specific groups were mentioned they weren't referring to fascists.

Fortunately the resolution was defeated and will not go forward to the national executive for discussion.

However, Cohse members cannot be complacent. The resolution is probably part of an organised campaign by the right wing using the witch-hunting methods seen in the Labour Party.

The resolution reflects the pressure of Group 81 and rank and file members on Cohse's national leadership.

With an election for general secretary coming up in the near future it is vital that the Broad Left mobilises for the election of a leader determined to fight back against low pay and privatisation.

By John Malcom
(Cohse shop steward)



Cohse general secretary

GROUP '81, the Broad Left in health service union Cohse is standing Kevin Mullins for the general secretary of the union.

He has worked in the health service for fifteen years at High Royds hospital in Yorkshire where he is a now a charge nurse.

He became a shop steward when a third year student nurse during the 1974 campaign of industrial action leading up to the Halsbury commission.

He first became branch chair and regional delegate in 1976 and was a member of the NEC from 1982 to 1985.

His uncompromising support for Cohse members in struggles around the country made him many friends amongst the rank and file but less popular with the union bureaucracy.

The union leadership have already unsuccessfully tried to rule his candidature out of order.

Kevin Mullins already has a number of nominations including that of Addenbrookes hospital branch where the biggest dispute since Barking was abandoned by the Cohse leadership.

By our health service correspondent

UDM collects subs on false pretences

AFTER RECENTLY consulting his branch official at Hem Heath colliery Stoke-On-Trent, NUM Power Group member John Grice was surprised to discover he was no longer on the NUM's books. He was advised to consult the finance officer at the pit who informed him he was in the UDM!

Apparently his signature had been forged and his union contributions transferred to the UDM. This is not the first time at Hem Heath and certainly not the first time nationally this has happened.

John Grice has now had his subscriptions transferred back to the NUM and is fighting to retrieve the money already paid into UDM funds.

When he asked to see the document with his signature he was informed that it had "disappeared."

John Grice urges all NUM members to check that their weekly contributions are going to the NUM and not to the UDM.

By Paul Statham
(Stoke-On-Trent)

Industrial Reports

More legal attacks on print unions

ALTHOUGH THE struggle against Murdoch is far from resolved the NGA now faces another legal challenge by an employer trying to break the unions' closed shop.

The *Kent Free Press*, which like Eddie Shah produces free-distribution newspapers, has obtained injunctions against two local union officials banning 'unlawful' secondary action.

NGA members at two type-setting firms boycotted work going to the company after 18 members had been dismissed when they refused to work with non-union, untrained workers for safety reasons. If further legal action is taken sequestration could follow.

The NGA's tactics since the defeat during the Warrington dispute has been to avoid sequestration at all costs.

The result has been a certain reluctance to take the appropriate measures to secure a speedy victory.

There is a growing prospect of more and more bosses resorting to legal moves to smash the unions in

their factories. It will be fatal if the bosses are allowed to pick them off one at a time.

What is absolutely necessary is a united militant campaign. The aim of the campaign must be to mobilise the entire NGA and print union membership for action.

It has always been clear that the attacks and the use of the courts threatened the strength of the unions and the only answer has been to fight on a common front.

The launching of such a campaign could help in turning the tide at Wapping. Murdoch at present is again at the negotiating table but not on his knees. His demands have changed little. He wants a cooling-off period then ex-employees will be offered jobs but so will everybody else and the management will decide who to employ.

The initiative needs to be recaptured. A change in tactics is the only way. Only the whole weight of the trade union movement could assert the necessary pressure to gain victory.

By Peter Jarvis
(London Region NGA)



Printers lobby TUC

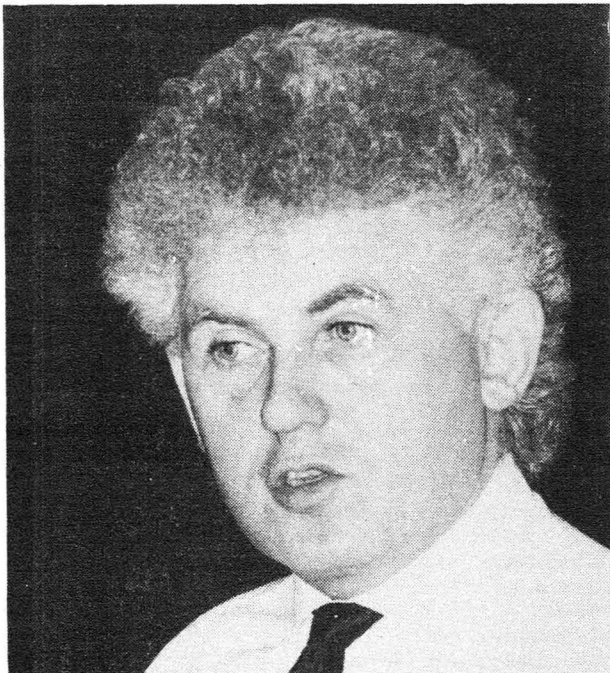
CPSA right wing try own electoral reform

THE ELECTORAL Reform Society who are carrying out the Complaints Procedure into the recent CPSA General Secretary and General Treasurer elections have now completed their visits to the branches from which complaints arose from certain individuals and are preparing their report for the union's Returning Officer. It is expected by the end of September.

The General Secretary elect, John Macreadie, is confident that the ERS report will show that the right wing's plans and systematic campaign in the media with accusations of ballot rigging were nothing but a smokescreen for them to overturn the election result. The CPSA rank and file refused to support the right wing candidate, John Ellis, so the right wing refused to accept the rank and file's decision.

It is increasingly clear that no sooner than the election result had been declared than the right wing went into action to organise an attack on the result by soliciting and planting complaints, they sought to throw doubt on the result and influence the ERS into either switching votes in favour of their candidate or recommending a re-run, either in part or in whole.

CPSA members have, however, seen through the right wing manoeuvres. They have understood the attack on the union's democracy for what it is. They are further incensed that the loser in the General Secretary election, John Ellis, is effectively installed as General Secretary, in charge of the day to day running of the union and representing CPSA members' interests with a programme he has consistently opposed at the union's conference.



John Macreadie

Motions continue to be received from branches demanding a special conference to uphold and restore the members decision. Branches representing well over 20,000 members have so far demanded a special conference. Renewed efforts are required from branches. It is not a waste of time and money, as the Communist Party BL 84 grouping argue, that the sovereign body of the union be recalled to uphold union democracy.

Donations

Funds are also coming from the rank and file to meet the costs of the court action which was forced on John Macreadie and the Broad Left National Committee against the right wing NEC to uphold the members' decision. A further push needs to be made for the collection of money. For workers the protection of their democracy and

organisation are expensive matters. Unlike the right wing, workers and the Broad Left have no outside sources of funds.

In the coming period, CPSA members and civil servants generally are faced with the 1987 pay campaign, the continuing defence of their jobs and services, the need for more staff in areas like DHSS, Department of Employment, Customs and Exise and the expansion of new technology throughout the civil service. That is why the members voted for John Macreadie, a leader who by example, commitment and understanding, can give the CPSA membership and civil servants generally the inspiration and confidence lacking in the past. Neither the right wing nor the Electoral Reform Society will be allowed to rob the CPSA rank and file of their future.

By Frank Bonnar
(Civil Aviation Section,
Personal Capacity)

News in Brief

WORKERS AT A1 Feeds, Streed Limited and Nove Leather, all in Liverpool, have been sacked for joining a trade union.

Their only demands are the right to a living wage, decent and safe working conditions and having the trade union recognised by their employers.

In each workplace the employees were harassed and intimidated by management after joining a union. They were forced to take industrial action in defence of their shop stewards.

The employers than used scab labour to try to maintain production and break the unionised workers.

At each of the picket lines there has been a constant police presence and at A1 Feeds several pickets have been arrested for such petty alleged offences as obstruction and disturbing the peace.

In many instances the pickets have had to endure verbal and physical abuse from scab workers. Also common to each dispute are the attempts by management to inflict severe financial damage on the union concerned using Tory anti-trade union legislation.

Show your support for these workers by joining the mass rally and march on 26 September. Assemble 4pm at A1 Feeds, Lyster Road, Bootle. Rally 6pm at Nove Leather.

THE BROAD Left candidate for the North West seat on the Nalگو national executive, Roger Bannister, was defeated in the recent bye-election, receiving 3,000 votes to the winner's 10,000.

This setback for the left is doubly bitter as the candidate elected, Lynn Evans from Manchester, had failed to obtain Broad Left support against Roger Bannister.

She went on to stand against the Broad Left with the open connivance and support of Communist Party members and other nominal left wingers in the leadership of the large Liverpool and Manchester branches.

Nevertheless the Broad Left's campaign, with 30,000 leaflets distributed, has brought it new supporters throughout the division from Cumbria to Clwydd and has laid a much stronger basis.

By a Liverpool Nalگو member

STRIKERS AT Keetons Engineering in Sheffield got a boost on Monday when 200 workers attended a demonstration in support of their eleven-week struggle for jobs and union recognition.

AEU members from the main local firms, Shardlows, Laycocks and most significantly Forgemasters, who recently won a bitter dispute in similar circumstances, were present. Many other unions were represented along with local MPs Richard Caborn and Martin Thomas.

There was a warm welcome for CPSA members from the local Job Centre who had refused to handle Keetons' request for scabs.

Money is needed. Donations and messages to: AEU House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield.

By Geoff Fieldhead

LONDON Underground Limited is using the threat of privatisation and competitive tendering to force down wage levels and erode working conditions.

Catering workers, already the worst off, face a 30 per cent wage cut to match the poverty wages of private contractors.

Workers have responded with a 24-hour boycott of LUL canteens last Monday. Its success should be a warning to management.

Action must be stepped up. Mistakes over bus route tendering must not be repeated. There, 'protracted negotiations' and the vacillation of TGWU leaders undermined the growing militancy of busworkers.

The next step must be to prepare for industrial action. It's no good union leaders telling us to wait for the cavalry in form of a Labour government or we could end up like Custer.

By Steve Conway (Acton NUR)

THE FIRST meeting of the Merseyside TGWU Youth Section was held last week. A coach is being booked for Labour Party conference and a regional weekend school is being held on 21-23 November with the aim of getting 150 delegates in attendance.

YTS workers are active in the Youth Section and one member represented a workplace with 150 union members.

ROB ABRAHAMS, a member of building workers union Ucat explained the background to the Westwood Joinery strike in Bootle, Liverpool, to a local Militant reporter.

"We held a meeting which demanded better money. We were working eighty hours a week at an hourly rate of £3.39. We found out that agency labour was being employed at £4.75 an hour. We asked for £4.50.

"Management refused our demand. So after a meeting we went on a work to rule for three weeks. During this time the company changed hands from RL Raye to Westwood Joinery.

"The bosses refused to meet our Ucat official. On Tuesday six men were sacked including our steward. We decided to withdraw our labour and the strike is official.

"Our picket line is being respected, even by a freelance crane driver. We are demanding a resumption of negotiations, the reinstatement of our steward and other sacked workers and discussion over pay and conditions."

Donations should be sent to Westwood Joinery Strike Fund, Baird House, Bootle.

WALTON HOSPITAL management have unveiled the full horror of privatisation with the submission of their in-house tender for the cleaning contract.

Their plans would mean a pay cut of £40-£50 for most workers. Nupe's response to management was 'get stuffed'.

These revelations have firmed up the workers' determination to oppose privatisation. The campaign of picketing private firms where contract cleaners are hired goes on.

It is planned to picket a Manchester office of RCO, the main contract cleaner involved in tendering at Walton.

By Steve Soper

VOSPER THORNEYCROFT shipyard strikers in Southampton are still out. All the hourly paid are striking plus about half of the Tass membership. There are about fifty to sixty people upwards constantly on the picket line with each union taking its turn. A mass picket last Friday blocked the main road outside the yard.

The most important next step is to get the strike made official. It would reassure the workers and make it easier to stop scabbing.

Militant

Lobby Labour National Executive Called by Broadgreen Constituency Labour Party, to protest at its threatened suspension. Wednesday 24 September. 8am. 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

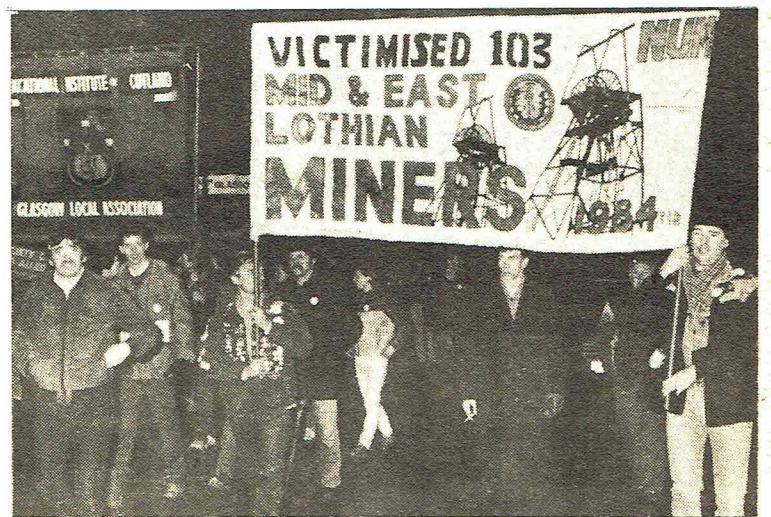
New threat to pit jobs



HUCKNALL PIT in Nottinghamshire is the latest to face the axe because the coal board claim it is 'unprofitable'. 1,300 members of the breakaway Union of Democratic Mineworkers and 200 members of the National Union of Mineworkers face redundancy.

Rather than launch a united campaign to save the pit, UDM leaders began by excluding NUM members from a meeting with management and saying that NUM members will not be accepted at other pits in Notts unless they join the UDM. NUM leader Henry Richardson on the other hand appealed to the UDM to "mount a campaign to save the pit because jobs and communities are now under threat."

In Scotland, the board has just announced the closure of Comrie in Fife and Killoch in Ayrshire. For the last four years the workforce at Monktonhall has been threatened with closure. Now they have been given a plan to drive a road underground to connect it with Bilston Glen. The workforce at Monktonhall would drop to 250. It will take investment of some



Mid and East Lothian miners marching in support of sacked News International workers in Glasgow. Photo: Steve McTaggart (IFL)

£56 million and for four years the pit will not produce coal. The end product will be that all coal mined in Monktonhall will go up Bilston Glen. They say this will be cheaper in the long run, but Monktonhall has the best system in Scotland for getting coal up to the surface. Everybody in the area knows that Monktonhall is the more modern

pit of the two and the one with the long term prospects if managed properly. The opinion of miners in both pits is that the NCB have in mind a very short future for both Monktonhall and Bilston Glen.

By Kenny Summersgill (Monktonhall NUM)

THE HORRIFIC disaster at the Kinross gold mine in South Africa highlights the daily danger faced by mineworkers throughout the world. 200 lives have been sacrificed to the profits of the Gencor shareholders. For every \$50 an ounce rise in gold prices, their profits rise by £15-20 million—in the last few months gold has risen by \$100 an ounce. The workers have paid the price.

South Africa has a notorious record of safety—10,000 dead in 20 years—but in Britain miners have to be vigilant to stop the erosion of safety rules. The Kinross disaster was started by a welding torch accident. At present welding is banned underground in Britain, unless exempted by the mines inspectorate, but the health and safety executive is trying to get this restriction lifted.

Defend Liverpool socialists

Lobby the NEC in support of Felicity Dowling—8am. Tuesday 23 September, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.



Felicity Dowling

FELICITY DOWLING, a Liverpool councillor for three years, and secretary of the now disbanded Liverpool District Labour Party goes before the national executive committee next Tuesday, charged with 'membership' of *Militant*—sentence—possible expulsion.

The following day the NEC will take up more time attacking the left when it investigates Broadgreen Labour Party (see advert for lobby above).

Allegations

As a member of Liverpool council Felicity Dowling has been derided in the press, harangued by the right wing, accused of irregularities as secretary of the district party—

allegations which have since been dropped by the NEC—and now faces expulsion from the Party.

Yet what she has achieved as part of a collective effort, both for the Labour Party and for working people in Liverpool, is the envy of any inner city Labour authority.

As deputy chair of the council's education committee, and chair of the schools' sub-committee her most visible achievements have been in reforming Liverpool's schools. From her initiative, £6 million was spent last year on refurbishing schools, and another £4 million this year. Secondary education has been re-organised, community schools created, and parent participation increased. Children are ensured of access to a full cur-

riculum, with adequate staffing and specialist teachers in all schools.

519 more jobs have been created in education, essential clothing grants and school uniform grants have been increased and school meal prices frozen since 1983.

Disqualification

For that she now faces surcharge and disqualification along with other Liverpool councillors. They are due to make a final appeal to the House of Lords.

But she says that if she is expelled it is because "I was secretary of the District Labour Party not because of my role in education."

Under her stewardship the Liverpool Party made stunning gains in the 1984 council elections because of its promise to build new houses, improve education and provide jobs. She believes that the council's stand last year to defend these gains involved a campaign with a "level of participation never seen before".

But it is her re-election in the May council elections, with 70 per cent of the vote, after the mud-slinging and witch-hunting was well under way, that, as she says, the Labour leaders "will really have to sort out in their heads".

By Ben Eastop

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