

# TORY NIGHTMARE

By Brent Kennedy

A glimpse of the nightmare that a Tory government would mean was given at the Conservative Party Conference this week. The most ruthless attacks on the working class lie in store if the Labour government is defeated.

The Tories correctly point out that under a Labour government living standards have fallen and unemployment has increased. But if the Tories were in office workers' living standards would be pushed down even further and unemployment would be sent well over the 2 million mark.

"We have to be in the business of cutting off some heads", demanded one Tory backwoodsman, after another had fulminated about privileged public workers being "overpaid, under-employed people". That would be the result of the Tories' bright idea of axeing £6 billion of public spending to solve capitalism's crisis—massive dole queues.

They might as well literally cut workers' heads off if they are going to cut off their source of income, because the screws will also be turned on those unfortunate enough to be dependent on state benefits. These are to be the scapegoats of "free enterprise".

These agents of big business, financed by donations of hundreds of thousands of pounds from the powerful monopolies, will try to tempt workers into voting for them by offering gifts. They promise workers a cut in income tax so they can cut the rate of tax paid by their rich backers. But this tax burden will simply be shifted onto purchase tax—sending housewives shopping bills soaring.

They also hope to be able to cut taxes by reducing government spending, but this will be in such fields as food and housing subsidies—sending prices and rents even higher. Hospitals, schools, old people's homes and welfare will be starved of cash. But wasteful spending on defence will be increased!

The Tories offer nothing but misery for the millions suffering housing problems. As rent, interest and profit is to be increased, the Tories would not "go on building endless subsidised council houses". Council housing would come under the hammer, while Rachmanite

landlords would be let loose against unprotected tenants.

The Bow group—the 'liberal' wing of the Tory Party—demands the complete abolition of rent controls and, in the case of furnished accommodation, an end to security of tenure. If this is the "left wing", God help us from the right wing!

## Closed Shop

A Thatcher government would be even worse than the hated Heath government which was kicked out by the trade unions amid the economic chaos of the 3 day week. They would make even more vicious assaults on the workers than last time—otherwise, why are they proposing to weaken the workers' only weapon of defence, the trade unions?

The Tories want the state to interfere with the unions—outlawing 'flying pickets', breaking the unity of closed shops and imposing

their own rules on union elections as a condition of unions being "certified" by the government, similar to the "registration" under the notorious Industrial Relations Act.

It is the responsibility of the leaders of the labour movement to see that such a brutal, reactionary government never comes to power, under the name 'Conservative' or 'National'.

But the experience of the 1970 General Election tells us that unless the Labour government substantially improves the living standards of the workers now, implements its 1974 Manifesto and fights for a clear socialist alternative to the Tory, capitalist system, millions of Labour voters may not see the difference between the parties. They will become demoralised and abstain in the next election.

- ★ No return to the Tories!
- ★ End the chaos of the profit system!
- ★ Implement Labour's Manifesto with a Socialist plan of production!



The Lady of the Night.

# LEYLAND BLACKMAIL

Either double your work rate immediately or you lose your job! That is the vicious new piece of blackmail that the Managing Director of British Leyland Derek Whittaker has presented to the workforce at the two largest car plants in the company, Longbridge and Cowley.

In order to survive British Leyland must produce a new version of the Mini. This is called ADO 88. They need £40 million new investment to start production. To get the money they have applied to the National Enterprise Board.

The head of the NEB, Sir Don Ryder, has said that unless the workers agree to meet the productivity levels of European car workers immediately, he will not cough up the money.

Whittaker has said this must be agreed to by today or the money will not be provided. No new mini will mean the stoppage of Marina and Allegro production and closure of Longbridge and Cowley. That means the loss of 100,000 jobs.

The Leyland management told this last month to the National Car Council, the workers' 'participation' committee that has been newly set

up. They agreed to a nine point plan to raise productivity. This includes less manning, more mobility between jobs and an end to mutual agreements on the speed of the line etc.

As one Senior Steward at Longbridge angrily commented on hearing the news "What they effectively want is the withdrawal of all the trade union rights won here over the last twenty years."

The staff unions have agreed to these terms. But the manual unions have only agreed to raise productivity on the basis of the existing agreements. But Ryder and Whittaker have made it clear acceptance of the nine point plan is essential. In the words of Ryder "no commitment—no ADO 88". This is blatant blackmail.

The workers have a gun to their head. And it has been put there partly by the help of this bogus 'participation' committee, the National Car Council. The workers' representatives on the Council have been committed to a plan on which workers in the plants have no consultation. Even the national officials were by-passed by the management.

Now workers leaders, like Longbridge Convenor Derek Robinson, who sits on the Car Council, are being used by the management to persuade their members to agree to the removal of their basic rights.

At Longbridge many sections have been forced to accept the deal while having no idea what it means for manning and workload, although the toolroom sections have rejected it.

## Workers Control

It demonstrates that Leyland workers should reject these "participation committees" as tools of the management and fight for real workers control in the company. As one Longbridge toolmaker put it: "Who the hell is Whittaker? There are more brains on the shop floor than up there. We should clear them out and take over ourselves".

There should be no agreement that reduces the rights of existing agreements. All gains from increased productivity should be returned to workers either by less hours, more jobs or more wages.

British Leyland is in crisis

because of the failure of the capitalist owners to invest and expand. Now the nationalised company and its workers are expected to pay the price.

That would not be necessary if there was real economic planning throughout British industry. We need a fully publicly owned motor vehicle industry, developed as part of an overall socialist plan of production for the transport needs of the people.

We need real workers control with the unions in the industry having one third of the seats on the management board. With the TUC having another third that would give workers as a whole a majority. The final third would be elected by the government. That would give a majority to society as a whole to plan the industry.

This is the way to fight the blackmail of the financiers who are behind this scheme.

By Bob McKee

## THIS WEEK

INTERVIEW WITH  
MINERS' LEADER  
ON EARLY  
RETIREMENT

CENTRE PAGES  
POLAND

## NEXT WEEK



Sam Maddox, the new  
Bakers Union leader  
talks to Militant.

Every bakery worker should  
get this issue.



# Militant

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## WILL THERE BE MORE CUTS?

A terrible panic ensued when the pound sunk by 9% in value during the first few days of the Labour Party Conference.

Now the dust has settled we can look more soberly at what is going to happen. The Chancellor and Prime Minister have applied for a £2,300 million loan from the International Monetary Fund to restore confidence in sterling. This time conditions will be attached by the IMF to providing the loan.

The question is what conditions? And how much will they affect living standards?

Healey and Callaghan have said that they can get the loan without having to agree to further cuts in public spending. Callaghan supported a motion which was adopted by the NEC of the Labour Party and approved by Conference to that effect. But are these leaders misleading themselves and the labour movement?

The 'Daily Express' thought so. They said "The loan will mean massive cutbacks in public spending. Social services will have to trim drastically on everything from school building to the national health service, unemployment and social security payments".

Whatever terms the IMF imposes it will mean a further reduction in the living standards of the working class.

The alternative measures would be increased taxation which will mean higher prices and a cut in sales and investment. Restricted money supply and higher interest rates mean less investment and more borrowing to cover increased debt charges. Debt charges will absorb £7,000 million of the £9,000 million budget deficit next year. Higher interest charges will raise that burden.

Import controls as such will never be accepted by the IMF. An import deposit scheme has been proposed. This would force importers to deposit their revenue for a specified period. In this way payments abroad would be temporarily restricted.

The 'Financial Times' commented "the trouble with this scheme is not only that in the end it has to be unwound and the money returned; it is also that the funds come from industry and commerce and squeeze working capital rather than tapping savings. Then there is bound to be an effect on investment and prices".

All the alternatives would cut into industry's profits and investment. Investment is still falling by 5% this year but is forecast to rise by 15-20% next year. Profit rates are around 4.5% according to the latest estimates, less than half the level of the early seventies.

Measures that are an alternative to public spending cuts could damage any prospect of growth in next year.

So these measures are unlikely to restore confidence in sterling. It has now been revealed that over the last three months Britain lost £1,500 million in foreign currency reserves. If confidence is not restored how long would £2,300 million last? Maybe not even three months.

## COALITION DANGER

Under capitalism where growth only takes place with the extraction of profit, cuts in public spending will become inevitable.

The danger for a Labour government, hell bent on meeting the demands of the international financiers, is obvious. They must make cuts and yet they are pledged to make no more. That is why there is further talk in the Tory press of a coalition.

Over the next few weeks the clamour for a National government will mount. The idea of the Tories coming to power on their own frightens the financiers just as much as a Labour government unable to control its left wing. They know that a Tory government trying to implement cuts would provoke a massive movement from the trade unions that could sweep it away and install a militant Labour government.

But they realise that the right wing leadership cannot hold the line much longer, so they are preparing a scheme to split the Labour leadership away to form a coalition which can take the necessary stiff measures.

Only firm action by the trade union leaders and the NEC of the Party can avoid this disaster. A campaign must be mounted up and down the country to oppose spending cuts and unemployment. Above all we must explain the socialist alternative to capitalist chaos. That would be real loyalty to the aims of the labour movement. Loyalty to Clause four not the international bankers!

# "AN UNBRIDLED BETWEEN



'Auld Lang Syne' at Party Conference hides the growing divide between the government and the party rank and file.

The 1976 Conference must be seen as one of the most important for decades. It marks a watershed in the development of the labour movement and in the life expectancy of the Labour government itself. An atmosphere of crisis permeated the Winter Gardens and the ghost of Ramsay MacDonald haunted the corridors of the Imperial Hotel.

At the TUC conference opposition to government policy was expressed in muted terms, and the social contract was endorsed by a massive majority. In the eyes of the government the scheme must have seemed to be set fair for the party conference. In advance resolutions concerning mandatory reselection of parliamentary candidates and resolutions on nationalisation of the big monopolies had been removed from the agenda using the guise of the archaic 'three year rule'. With this example of blatant political censorship and with careful stage management, the leadership hoped that government policy would be endorsed by conference establishing firmly the party leader.

After they had successfully defeated a number of attempts to get the excluded resolutions back on the agenda, their hopes appeared to be confirmed. They could not have been more wrong. The bitterness, anger and frustration which has been building up in the ranks of the movement could not be contained. It burst through time after time in the course of the debates.

The decision to nationalise the top banks and insurance companies cannot be overestimated. The National Executive document, despite the abstention of the TGWU, GMWU and ASTMS, was carried by 3,314,000 to 526,000—a six to one majority.

Bill Mullins [Solihull] moved a resolution which called for the whole of

the banking and insurance industry to be brought into public ownership. Referring to the NEC document, he pointed out that this was the first time that the party proposed to nationalise a profitable sector of the economy. "The frothing at the mouth that had followed the announcement of the nationalisation plans showed that Labour had touched a raw nerve. For the monopolies have played about in the currency markets and have made hundreds of millions of pounds."

The conference made their decisions despite enormous pressure. The hysterical ranting of the City of London, the withdrawal of support for the pound by the Bank of England, the blackmail by its international counterparts, and the dire warnings of the Tory press were all to no avail.

Tumultuous applause greeted he closing sentence of Mikardo's speech when he said "the Prime Minister said he will oppose the proposals, I myself will support them, and that makes it one all. Now I want Conference to score the winning goal".

## Prentice

When the results was announced, the sombre face of Callaghan contrasted starkly with the joyous feeling of comradeship that spread through the conference floor. An enormous unbridgeable gap has opened up between the ranks of the movement and the right wing Cabinet led by Callaghan.

This was also demonstrated by the attempt to get Prentice reinstated as the Parliamentary candidate for Newham North East led by Frank Chapple from the EETPU. This move was rejected with a derisory handful of votes in favour. Throughout conference differences were openly expressed in a way not seen since the period 1929-31.

On the first day there is no question

that the opponents of the social contract won the argument. But the platform won the vote. Ted Mooney [Liverpool, Walton] said inflation was running at a yearly rate of 21% based on last month's figures. This was despite two years of wage restraint, which had led to a fall in living standards of 8%. This showed that wage increases were not the cause of inflation.

Mike Levene [Coventry South West] challenged Denis Healey's forecast of 6% growth. "This is completely utopian", he said. "And so was his forecast that unemployment would fall to 700,000 by 1978."

Pat Wall [Shipley] complained that successive incomes policies and wage freezes since 1961 had done nothing to help the low paid or strengthen the economy.

## Social Contract

Neither Bryan Stanley who replied for the National Executive nor anybody from the rostrum denied these arguments. Instead the platform invoked a theme they were to use again and again during the conference—'Opposition to wage restraint or the social contract would bring down the Labour government and let in the Tories'.

But it is precisely these policies which are a sure recipe for the defeat of a Labour government. Socialist policies would strengthen that government. Nevertheless the burning anger about unemployment mounted as delegate after delegate complained to the government for allowing unemployment to rise to one and a half million. Delegates demanded that the government take immediate action. As one pointed out, determined action was supposed to have been taken to halt unemployment under the terms of the social contract. But all the contribution of Albert Booth

# IMPORT CONTROLS— NO ANSWER

Many delegates looking for an alternative economic strategy to the government latched on to the idea of import controls. To advocate import controls as a solution is a cruel deception of the working class. If they are introduced, they will certainly fail, and the blame will be put of the 'left' of the party.

Callaghan could not have put it better when he said in his speech to conference: "As regards selective import controls whether they are introduced or not they have little to do with socialist philosophy. It is a matter of calculating where we get the biggest advantage. Action will be taken to our advantage." It is only necessary to add that when Callaghan says "we," he means the capitalists.

'Militant' has consistently pointed out import controls would mean an immediate increase in prices for working class families. Workers with falling living standards would have to cut down on

purchases and the resultant fall in demand would add to unemployment. Inevitable retaliation would also lead to unemployment in export led industries.

Its advocates claim import controls would provide a breathing space for reinvestment and modernisation. The very opposite process would take place. British manufacturing has failed to reinvest in the past. It would be even less inclined to do so if it was protected, as it would be, from competition by controls.

Import controls would mean further hardship for working people. Neither free trade nor protection can be put forward as a solution to the problems of working people. Only a democratically planned economy based on the public ownership of the means of production offers any way out of the blind alley into which capitalism has led us.



# GEABLE GAP

# GOVERNMENT AND PARTY

the Employment Minister, amounted to was that "we are as worried as you are" there are no easy answers but we must stick to the social contract!

## Hostility

The press deliberately distorted the mood at Conference. In the main the reception given to Healey after his speech on the IMF loan on Thursday was one of hostility, and the TV cameras must have had a difficult job finding groups of delegates who could be viewed as 'enthusiastic supporters' of his speech. The attempt by some of his Cabinet colleagues to stage a standing ovation fell flat. Delegates were furious when Healey tried to save face and stood up and waved his hands in the air like a victorious prize fighter for the benefit of the TV cameras.

So too with Callaghan's speech on Tuesday morning. The reception could best be described as cool. It was a speech which was a throwback to the days of Gaitskell. His pugnacious bully-boy arguments could have been made by any Tory Prime Minister. The speech amounted to a vigorous defence of the profit motive and a call for sweat, toil and tears by the working class in order to save capitalism from collapse.

Eric Heffer put it at the Tribune Meeting "What are members of the National Executive to say to a speech which the 'Daily Mail' can represent as a speech that would have sounded well



Reg Prentice MP

enough from a Tory Prime Minister with his back to the economic wall"

The mood of delegates in itself was a reflection of the mood in the CLPs and trade union branches. It built up to a crescendo in the debate on cuts in public expenditure. The motion from the National Union of Public Employees backed local councils which refused to cut public expenditure and called for a campaign by the labour and trade union movement against the cuts. It was carried by a large majority. It was of enormous diplomatic importance, showing the contradictions inherent in the present situation. On the one hand conference voted for the maintenance of the social contract and on the other hand they voted against one of its most important aspects in the eyes of the government.

Whatever the confusion it must be without precedent in the history of the Labour Party that the party conference has called on Labour councillors to refuse to implement the policies of their own government!

## Revolt

This is another graphic illustration of the rising revolt of the rank and file against the policies of the right wing Cabinet. Their sole basis of support now resides in the Parliamentary Party.

This conference showed in outline many uncannily a parallel with the period before the formation of the National government in 1931. There were open clashes between left and

right and violent altercations between members of the NEC which were leaked to the press. There was great disenchantment within the trade unions. There were heated discussions in trade union delegations sometimes boiling over into angry shouting matches. Rumour and counter rumour circulated the hall. This was commented on by the Chairman in his closing remarks and also in the press.

Conference is no more than a reflection of the processes developing in the labour movement itself. It signposts the general direction in which the labour movement is heading. The sign of this year's conference is unmistakable! "Warning coalition ahead!"

## Spending Cuts

Referring to the conditions required for the new £2,300 million loan from the IMF, the 'Guardian' on Friday said "there is much apprehension at Blackpool this week, as much amongst the 'social democrats' as on the left. A further round of heavy spending cuts coming on previous cuts which all too clearly have failed to deliver dividends in retaining confidence will make it impossible for Mr Jones and Mr Foot to hold the line....

...today they have all gone home from Blackpool leaving behind a party more at war with itself than any time since the days of Gaitskell....the Prime

Minister and the great majority of his colleagues in the Cabinet and the Parliamentary Party are not in business to proclaim the breakdown of capitalism and engineer the arrival of a fully fledged socialist society. If that means civil war, the government against the party, then so be it".

## Conspiracy

All this is a terrible warning to the ranks of the movement which they will ignore at their peril. There is a substantial number of Labour members of Parliament who would cross the floor of the House and join the Tories without looking out of place. The conspiracies against the labour movement that are taking place behind the scenes will not be defeated by making concessions to the right wing. It is only by the NEC alerting the party to these dangers and boldly mobilising the ranks of the movement behind a socialist programme to transform society, that the conspiracy to split the labour movement can be defeated.

By Ray Apps

## YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT CAMPAIGN

## GROWING LIST OF SPONSORS



Andy Bevan, YS Chairman, and Nick Bradley, YS representative on the NEC.



Almost 200 people attended the Labour Party Young Socialists eve-of-Conference meeting in Blackpool on Sunday September 26th. Eric Heffer MP and Ray Buckton [General Secretary, ASLEF] both spoke strongly of the need for a vigorous campaigning youth organisation in the labour movement.

Andy Bevan (LPYS Chairman) concentrated his remarks on the scandal of unemployment and urged every young socialist to see to it that every branch of the Labour Party Young Socialists now gears its campaigning and recruiting activity to the unemployment issue. "We have to prove ourselves to be the champions of working class youth by taking a lead in the fight for a programme capable of solving the crisis which threatens mass unemployment for the next decade," he said.

From the chair, Nick Bradley (LPYS representative on the Labour Party NEC) took the opportunity of launching the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment whose declaration of policy was reported in last week's 'Militant'.

During Labour Party Conference several delegates argued for the socialist policies and fighting slogans of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, such as the call for a 35 hour week now, with no loss of pay, for a £50 minimum basic wage and Work or Full

works as part of an overall plan of production. These were fully endorsed by dozens of prominent labour and trade union leaders.

The full list of sponsors of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment and its policy declaration to date is listed below. Now that this initial list of individual sponsors has been compiled, the YCAU plans to print the declaration and list of sponsors in a large number of copies suitable for approaching shop steward's committees, union District Committees and branches, Constituency Labour Parties and LPYS branches. In this way, a vital contribution can be made to raising the socialist policies and fighting demands needed to combat unemployment on the widest possible basis throughout the labour and trade union movement.

A very attractively-produced two-colour leaflet has also been published by the YCAU. 12,500 of these were sold at Labour Party Conference, mostly in bulk orders of 500 to 2,000 to LPYS members. These leaflets are available at only £2 per thousand (plus 70p postage and packing for 500, £1.20 per 1,000) from Nick Bradley at 22 Frankham House, Deptford Church Street, London SE 8)

A massive response is expected from LPYS branches and other sections of the movement which will use this new leaflet for dole queues distribution, at

- Nick Bradley [Labour Party NEC]
- Eric Heffer MP [Labour Party NEC]
- Joan Maynard MP [Labour Party NEC]
- Dennis Skinner MP
- Martin Flannery MP
- Ron Thomas MP
- Syd Bidwell MP
- Stan Newens MP
- Eddie Loyden MP
- Neil Kinnock MP
- John Blackley [Works convenor, Rolls Royce Bristol]
- C E Packer [Chairman, Production Shop Stewards, Rolls Royce, Bristol]
- Frank Taylor [President No.10 District AUEW-TASS]
- Danny Purton [Chairman, Harlow Trades Council]
- Peter Doyle [President, Gateshead Trades Council]
- Pat Wall [President, Bradford Trades Council]
- Tim O'Sullivan [Convenor, P B Cow Industrial Polymers, South London]
- Derek Gregory [NUPE ADO Derbyshire]
- Emlyn Williams [President, South Wales NUM]
- Ernie Roberts [Asst. General Secretary AUEW]
- Bernard Dix [Asst. General Secretary NUPE]
- Ray Buckton [General Secretary ASLEF]
- Dick Pickering [GMWU NEC]
- Stan Sheridan [ISTC National Negotiating Committee]
- Joe Marino [Bakers' Union EC]
- Gary Armitage [President, Woollsorters Society]
- Andy Bevan [National Chairman, Labour Party Young Socialists]
- Jimmy Symes [Chairman, Mersey Port Shop Stewards Committee]
- Peter Heathfield [Secretary, NE Derbyshire NUM]
- R S Virdee [Secretary, Bradford Indian Workers Association]
- Mick Rogers [Secretary, JSSC Bowaters, Wandsworth]
- M Graham [Convenor, Ever-Ready Batteries, Stanley, Newcastle]
- Ian Burge [Secretary, JSSC, The London Hospital, Whitechapel]
- Mike Rodda [Convenor, United Glass, New Cross, S London]
- Frank Smyth [ISTC; Chairman, Joint TU Committee, Corby Steelworks]
- Vernon Gerner [AUEW-TASS District Organiser]

## NO WITCH HUNTS SAY LABOUR LEFT

Prime Minister Callaghan's Tuesday speech was also marked by a vicious assault on the Marxists in the movement and supporters of 'Militant' in particular. Callaghan's assault on Marxism was taken up with red baiting lies in the Tory press. Readers of the 'Militant' should ponder why Callaghan should use the occasion of Labour Party Conference with a television audience of millions to attack the supporters of this paper. Why does Callaghan and the Tory press with a daily circulation of millions fear the ideas and influence of a small weekly paper like ours? Callaghan used the platform and the media not to seriously deal with the ideas of Marxism but to distort them.

The reason for this is to be found in the catastrophic economic and social situation. It is only the Marxists that have an explanation for this and the solutions. Marxism has always been an essential part of the labour movement since its foundation. Attempts to begin a new witch-hunt will not succeed. It is impossible to deal with the ideas of Marxism by organisational methods.

But it is clear that the Labour Party ranks would not be prepared to stand for any witch-hunt. There was a storm of protest by delegates to Callaghan's attack on the Labour Party Young Socialists who he described as 'sectarians'.



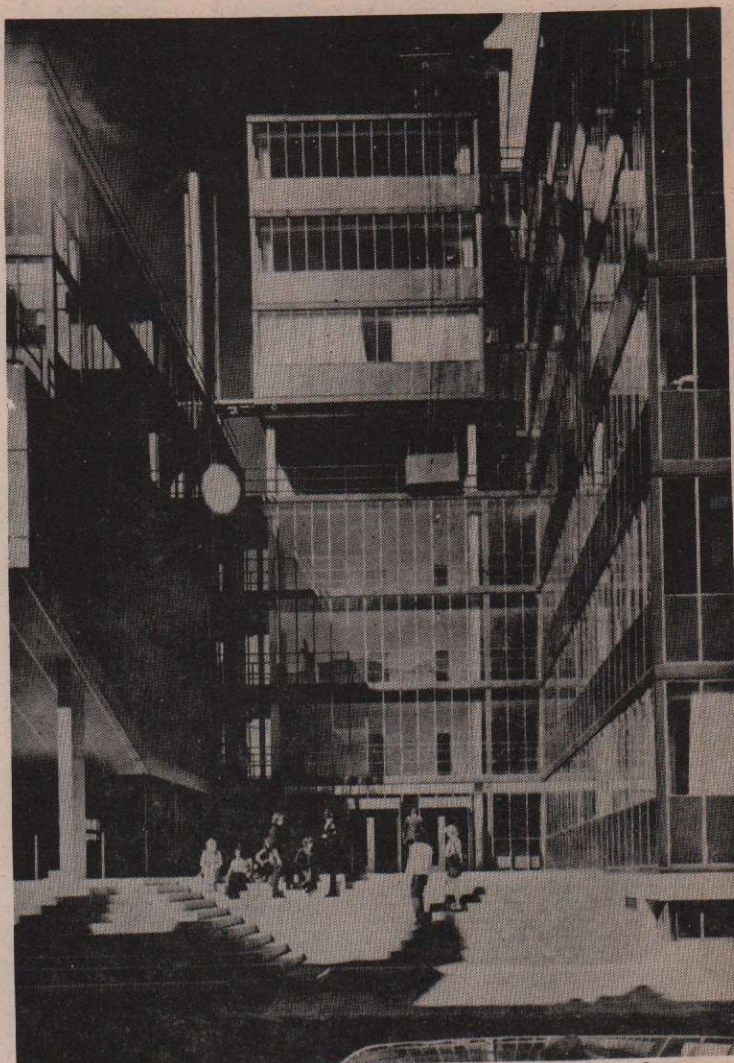
Premier Callaghan speaks

Michael Foot made it clear that he would not support a witch-hunt. "There is room in our party for many different shades of opinion." At the 'Tribune' meeting that night, Eric Heffer directly countered Callaghan by saying that this was no time to return to the witch-hunts of the past.



# ACCOMMODATION CRISIS

# STUDENTS DESPERATE FOR HOUSING



The shiny facade of this Polytechnic hides the hardship of many students

*In the last ten years students have found themselves increasingly among the victims of capitalism's housing market. A university student arriving at college for the first time can reasonably expect to spend the first year in a hall of residence, though this isn't the case for students at non-university colleges. However for the full range of services hall accommodation in London can cost anything up to £15 a week, a sizeable chunk out of a student grant, and often proves too expensive for more than the first term.*

breakfast two years ago, for a breakfast that consisted of tea and toast, and where she was never allowed in until late evening.

The real problem with this type of accommodation is that it offers no security. One row with the landlady and you could be homeless yet again! In preference to this some students find themselves commuting long distances to college. As my own college is in an expensive part of North London it is not unusual to find students who spend 2-3 hours a day travelling to and from college.

## 30 week grant

For most students flat-sharing is the most general form of accommodation. However, demand in the furnished private rented sector has for a long time exceeded supply. Students are transitory. Most of them seek accommodation for three years at the most. They are usually single and therefore willing to share residences and accept sub-standard and overcrowded flats for the sake of economy.

One particular difficulty is the summer vacation. As the grant only covers thirty weeks of the year most

students find it an absolute necessity to go home and take a job during the vacation to save money and eke out the grant. However most flats available to students become available at the end of the academic year, i.e. June, and so students face the problem of taking on flats in areas where finding a temporary job may be an impossibility, or paying out high retainers until October.

## Homeless

The acute lack of accommodation for students is, however, only one aspect of the terrible housing shortage that exists everywhere. The number of people registered as homeless today is four times greater than ten years ago. There are over one million households registered on council waiting lists.

It is not surprising students have difficulty finding accommodation—it is difficult for any working person. The latest cuts announced by Denis Healey on the 22nd of July are not going to improve the situation. At the present time all new housebuilding by local authorities has been frozen. Peter Short has estimated that in 1976, 114,000 houses will be started by local authorities but by 1977 that will have fallen to 85,000.

Students will find it practically impossible to find accommodation this year yet the Greater London Council reckon they have 70,000 empty properties. There are some 200,000 empty properties throughout London—a tragic waste.

There is only one way for students to fight this chronic situation and that is by joining the Labour Party and fighting as part of the wider labour movement. Join us in fighting to take over all empty property as emergency accommodation, and for a crash

building programme of one million homes in a year. To achieve that we need to have control and ownership of land, finance and the building industry. Such a policy campaign should also be taken up by the NUS executive who would find enormous support in the trade unions and Labour Party for such measures.

**By Julie Bradley**

(Bedford College Labour Club)

The rapid increase in student numbers has not been met by the same expansion in hall accommodation. In London there are at least 100,000 full-time students and somewhere in the region of 20-25,000 hall places. For every one student who arrives in London knowing they have a place to go as many as four may arrive having nowhere to go.

Many will spend several weeks dossing on floors before the accommodation bureau finds them 'suitable' digs often at exorbitant rates. One girl at college paid £13 a week for bed and

## Receptionist in private medical practice told

# 'We're like a cottage industry'

To most people the Doctor's receptionist conjures up an image of a hard bitten woman who tells you in no uncertain terms that you can't see the Doctor till next week and no, he won't come out for your particular complaint and yes, if you insist on seeing him today, you can wait till the end of surgery, but the Doctor's not going to be very pleased.

For the record, I try not to be like this and my particular surgery has a rule that people must be offered an appointment on the day that they phone.

However, how many people stop to consider the pay and conditions of a receptionist—some of the lucky ones may work for an Area Health Authority with proper scales of pay, holidays etc. Not so for the majority, we are paid by the practice and they dictate the terms, the practice only pays 30% of their employees' wages, the Area Health Authority paying 70% but they have no say in how much we are paid or when we should receive rises or even how much holiday we have. Even though we are due to move into a Health Centre next month and we hoped that the Area Health Authority would be our employing body, the Senior partner in our practice will not allow this.

In my own case I started this job two years ago at 50p per hour, that was 20 hours per week doing reception work only, now I work full time doing reception and some secretarial work in the afternoons and my pay is 90p per hour. Last September when I changed from part-time to full-time (35 hours)

Towards the end of that time the Practice Manager was negotiating how much we should receive of the £6.00 a week pay limit—she compared comparative scales from a local hospital and for the work I was doing my wage would have been in the region of £41.50, I ended up with £32.05, a total rise of £4.55 that was both the promised rise after three months' full-time and my share of the £6.00 pay limit. I know of no other case where it was scaled down so much. The part-timers working 15-20 hours a week received about 50p-70p.

Our Practice Manager has in the past tried to bring the surgery into line regarding pay and holidays, but she doesn't have much success. The Senior partner has a habit of selecting the legislation that suits him and disregards the rest, he is known on one occasion to have said, "That doesn't apply to us, we're like a cottage industry."

I have asked for a copy of my contract of employment more times than I can remember but have been refused, even as late as last week I was told "No, you don't take one home, we keep it here in the office."

We are allowed only two weeks paid holiday a year, we can have three weeks when we have worked there for three full years, we have no extra days at Christmas or Easter, again like the wages, under the Area Health Authority we would benefit by not being employed directly by the Practice.

During my time at the surgery, we have operated with four Doctors from a

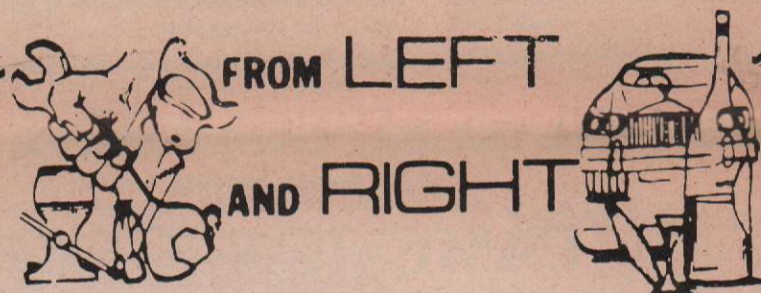
Visitors attached to us who also work from the surgery, this means we have no proper tea break as we are always in the sight of the patients, because of this we are not allowed to eat rolls, cakes etc. and of course no smoking. Thankfully the new Health Centre is nearly ready and a common room will be available to us.

I have been on the Community Health Council for several months but have only managed to attend one meeting, time off is made extremely difficult, as I am on my own for part of the afternoon I have to ask someone to come in and cover for me [no overtime is paid, only time in lieu]. When I told the Senior Partner about the Community Health Council he muttered, "Oh how very embarrassing," then he said "Of course, you can't expect me to give you time off for your political activities."

I am aiming now to involve as many girls as possible in ASTMS and to make them aware of the shortcomings of the practice as an employer. Armed this week with literature from the Department of Employment and ASTMS Legal Department, I intend to make my voice heard whether or not the others are behind me, because it must be realised that girls in this sort of job are uneasy at the thought of trouble and fear they may be made to leave.

If any other readers know of anyone who works in a Doctor's surgery or who does this job themselves I should be very interested to hear from you.

**By Sue Jones**



## STABLE LADS SWEAT

Many young people during the long hot Summer must have felt rather frustrated by the lack of public swimming baths in their area or, if they were fortunate enough to be near one, by the high prices.

Two ingenious men however, looking for a new profitable market, also realised that there is a lack of swimming pools—not for human beings but for race horses! £50,000 is being spent on building a pool in the salubrious grounds of Newmarket race course. They claim that it will give the horse a 'psychological' change from normal training.

Nothing but the best for the select racehorse owners who were somewhat embarrassed when the stable lads recently fought against their pay and terrible living conditions. The racehorse gets well cared for because it brings in a lot of profit for the owner. But its stable lads who work 60 hours a week or more to bring the horse up to tip top condition. There obviously isn't much money to be made from building swimming pools for humans these days. Perhaps air-conditioned stables is next on the cards.

## DON'T ENJOY YOURSELF!

At a time when the Tory Party is screaming for massive public spending cuts, why has it made no mention of the £200,000 wasted five weeks ago in an attempt to prevent a pop festival going ahead? A thousand policemen were drafted into Broad Oak, Kent, to stop the 'People's Free

Festival'. The festival would have offended the establishment, so the forces of law and order were brought in. But at a cost of a fifth of a million pounds? Next time you hear there isn't enough government money to subsidise the arts and entertainment for young people, you know the reason why.

## PAPAL BULL

Faced with similar economic problems to those of Britain, the Italian government has now also worked out a 'social contract'. But this one isn't between the government and the unions, it's between the big business Christian Democrat government and the Pope!

As part of the latest austerity measures to bolster the Lira, Prime Minister Andreotti announced sacrifices for the workers, including a plan to abolish midweek religious holidays. The Vatican, rushing to the aid of Italian capitalism, has agreed to the abolition of the holidays in the interests of production.

The Catholic Church has given way on 'matters spiritual' for the benefit of 'matters temporal'. This materialistic outlook was backed by



# NORTH EAST— It's back to the 1930's

By Jen Pickard  
(Gateshead West Labour Party)

October 4th marked the 40th anniversary of the great Jarrow Crusade against unemployment—a 26 day, 300 mile trek of men desperate for jobs. They queued up to be picked but only the fittest, led by Ellen Wilkinson, Jarrow's Labour MP, were allowed to go and witness the solidarity expressed by workers throughout the country as they stopped en route for meetings, food and accomodation.

But a recent North of England Development Council (Chairman Ted Short MP) publication 'A Statement of Claim' indicates that the figures of 24% male unemployment in 1936 in the Northern Region which prompted the march, are very much on the cards again.



It says "By the end of 1978 the regional male unemployment rate could be in excess of 20%, in certain areas this rate will almost certainly be in excess of 25%. There is a pattern of sharply deteriorating demand in certain key employment industries in the North, such as steel, shipbuilding and heavy engineering while a whole range of new but vulnerable industries such as textiles and telecommunications, are experiencing contracting employment opportunities. A combination of the two may take this region back to the situation that persisted in the 1930s."

The September unemployment figures confirm that the North is the most depressed region with 8.2% of working people without jobs. 110,079 adults are chasing approximately 9,500 job vacancies. Even if the economy picks up this will not mean an end to this situation because of the North's reliance for 60% of total employment on four basic industries—shipbuilding, coalmining, mechanical and electrical engineering and chemicals.

The NEDC report shows that within three years there could be 66,000-93,000 jobs at risk in three of these industries which would mean male unemployment of 20-25% in some areas. The basic fact remains that the creation of new jobs has not kept pace with the accelerating rundown of the older industries.

Shipbuilding on Tyneside accounts for 20% of manufacturing employment as well as providing employment in allied industries, e.g. engineering. New orders in 1975 were one quarter of 1974 with no signs of any improvement. An EEC report on 'Co-ordinating Community Shipbuilding' (July 1976) concludes that "...20% of the workforce (worldwide) is surplus to the current needs of the industry overall and about 60% in the big tanker yards." It estimates that for every four shipyard workers there are ten dependent on shipbuilding in the supply industries. These figures are used by the NEDC to estimate that between 33,000-50,400 jobs are at risk in these industries over the next 2-3 years, as present orders are completed.

### Redundancies

Massive redundancies in heavy engineering, steel and other industries are predicted using similar figures. The White Paper on Public Expenditure to 1979/80 indicates a reduction in electricity demand to the end of the decade so that firms such as Clarke Chapmans and Reyrolle Parsons cannot expect any big orders for power plant. C A Parsons



have admitted there could be 300-400 jobs lost this year and up to 900 next year if they do not get any major orders this year.

The jobs lost as a result of public expenditure cuts in the North will add 5,000 and the cutbacks in the British Steel Corporation a further 6,000 to this heartbreaking figure. This could mean a permanent loss of skills to industry in the region which will not be compensated for in the number of new jobs created.

### School Leavers

For school leavers the situation is even more depressing, with the North coming out worst once again with 13,700 school leavers still looking for their first job. In Gateshead 50-16-19 year-olds are chasing every vacancy and in the Jarrow/South Shields area it is 80 for every one job. An apprenticeship is now only a dream for most, with major employers cutting down on apprentices, e.g. C A Parsons down from 80 in 1975 to 46 this year, and Lucas actually laying off some apprentices.

As in other regions, 50% of the unemployed are under 25. In the 1930s young lads were going to sea for two year stretches at only two hours notice so as not to turn up the chance of a job. Others emigrated or went to the Midlands to find their fortune in the car industry. Young people now are faced with the same sort of pressures to uproot themselves from family and friends but many of these avenues for jobs, e.g. in the Midlands, are also closed to them.

The figures indicate the size of the problem but they cannot disclose the individual misery and humiliation of signing on each week, nor do they show the psychological effects on young

people which can lead to blind rebellious destruction as in North Shields in 1969. Lads with no prospect of a job went on the rampage hitting out at property and police who to them represented the Establishment. Even the Tory mayor admitted the root cause of the hooliganism was a lack of facilities: 'They are frustrated by lack of opportunity and low-paid, dead-end, repetitive jobs' (Sunday Times, 21/9/69). The situation is worse now, with similar tensions existing particularly in areas of high unemployment amongst young blacks.

Successive governments, Tory and Labour, have tried to solve the problem of the Special Development areas such as Tyneside with all kinds of grants including Regional Development grants for new buildings, removal grants, tax concessions, regional employment premiums to bring industry to these areas. The Northern Region had £87.4 million in 1973/74 (without counting special direct government support to e.g. shipbuilding). Yet the problem got worse, not better!

The NEDC sees the solution as a scramble for handouts to attract industry to the area. But experience has shown no matter how big the incentives, if a firm isn't going to make a profit then it will not move to these areas. In fact, it has been left to the workers themselves to show the way when threatened with redundancies through occupations, sit-ins, work-ins etc. In 1971 when redundancy faced 11,000 at Palmers Dry Dock they demanded nationalisation. Time and time again the working class see the only solution to these problems in socialist planning.

Workers in the North East who consistently send Labour MPs to Parliament—there is not a single Tory in County Durham and only two on the whole of Tyneside—have had this loyalty thrown back in their faces with unemployment increasing under their own Labour government. This blind loyalty will be followed by strenuous demands from the workers of the region for a socialist alternative. Shipyard workers pinned their hopes on nationalisation of the yards to end the intimidation of the employers who threatened redundancies whenever disputes took place.

### Action

As in 1936 the working class must rely on its own strength, unity and organisation to fight against redundancies and for a cut in the working week without loss of pay. As a start, the National Union of Public Employees, with support from other sections, are organising a day of action and demonstration in Newcastle on October 16th against unemployment and the cuts in public expenditure.

The Labour Party Young Socialists, by recruiting at dole queues, job centres etc. can channel the energies of young people on the dole in a constructive manner to fight for a socialist change and real socialist planning not only in the North but nationally. The labour movement must demand nationalisation not only of the rundown shipyards and allied industries but also of the super profit companies such as ICI, Procter and Gamble and Vickers in this region. Along with the nationalisation of the banks and insurance companies under workers' control and management, this would release the resources to be able to start investing in and planning industry and so guarantee jobs for all.

# Miners' leader calls for retirement at 55

An interview with Terry Thomas, Executive Member of S Wales National Union of Mineworkers, (personal capacity) by Meirion Evans, Swansea LPYS and Brynlliw Lodge.

"This Conference instructs the NEC to implement Resolution 14 carried at Annual Conference 1974 as amended:-

By January, 1977, retirement age should be 60 years.

By June 1977, retirement should be 59 years.

By January, 1978, retirement should be 58 years.

By June 1978, retirement should be 57 years.

By January, 1979, retirement should be 56 years.

By June 1980, retirement should be 55 years.

with make-up pay ensuring no loss of income or concessionary fuel entitlement up to State retirement age. In the event of this resolution not being conceded by the National Coal Board or the Government, then the NEC shall consult the membership by way of a ballot vote in order to determine which course of industrial action shall be taken to bring this matter to a successful conclusion."

**Meirion Evans:** Although the resolution was carried unanimously by the NUM conference do you feel it will be acted upon, or left without life as in other years?

**Terry Thomas:** Yes, I believe that this time it will be acted upon and an approach made to the board on the demands of the resolution. But I cannot see the NCB conceding to these demands, therefore at the end of the day it will all depend upon the NCB offer, they will have the final say.

**ME:** At pit level I have no knowledge of any recruitment campaign other than the normal. Are the Board preparing now at National or Area level for the prospect of over 22,000 men retiring?

**TT:** As yet I know of no intensified recruitment campaign at any level but earlier retirement in the industry will create a serious manpower problem and I mean a serious one. It will be our duty to ensure that the conditions and wages are such to attract the manpower into the industry from the 1½ million

ment regarding the high level of unemployment we still have large numbers of vacancies in areas where unemployment is high; which can only mean that the conditions and wages of the mineworkers are not attractive enough to encourage the young men to the industry from the dole.

**ME:** So what you are saying is that early retirement and a vast improvement in wages go hand in hand.

**TT:** Oh yes, of course. When we talk about improved conditions we are talking about retirement, a greatly improved non-contributory pension scheme, increased wages etc., they all go together to make up what is termed 'conditions' to make the job more attractive.

You see, mineworkers have never been given anything. All we have gained has had to be fought for. In my opinion we will not get a substantial lowering of the retirement age without a struggle on the part of the membership.

**TT:** I do not know at this stage what kind of campaign will be embarked upon, if any, by the leadership. But I think we should be embarking upon a campaign to ensure the membership are sufficiently informed in preparation for the inevitable attacks that will be made on us by the Tory media and press.

One thing I would like to say in conclusion is that the conditions in which mineworkers spend a large part of their life in themselves justify the demand for earlier retirement. When we consider that the average life expectancy of a mineworker is 68 years, a miner, working until he is 65 in the conditions we do have underground, is given too short a number of years of relaxation and leisure.

I am sure we have the support of the whole movement for early retirement to allow our members who have worked hard in atrocious conditions for over half their lives to enjoy at least a relative period of time in the fresh air and the opportunity to pursue, if they

**ME:** Will there be a campaign by the

Next week:  
'The Jarrow March 1936'



**"A political revolution is on the order of the day in Poland"**

# Polish

socialism in Russia alone on the basis of economic self-sufficiency. The history of Russia and of Poland since the war clearly demonstrates how false this theory is.

As a representative of the bureaucracy in Russia, Stalin fought also on an international level for the national interests of this layer. Already in 1944 Stalin and Churchill had divided Europe into spheres of influence. After the Red Army had occupied the whole of Eastern Europe the communist Parties of these states took power under the strict control of Moscow. This was not on the basis of their support amongst the masses but by means of police-terror and coup d'état.

Because of the economic backwardness of Poland the indigenous Capitalist class was weak from the start. Through the destruction of the war it was weakened even further. The Red Army came supposedly as an army of "liberation". However after the war, 45% of Polish territory was annexed by Russia. As "compensation" Poland received large areas of the former German empire including Silesia with its enormous deposits of coal and a part of East Prussia. At the same time 25-30% of the industry of the annexed German territory was removed to Russia. This policy of "reparations" was carried out in all the Eastern European countries in Russia's "sphere of influence". Apparently it was necessary for the workers of these countries to pay for the crimes of their former capitalist and imperialist oppressors for a second time!



Edward Gierek

The Communist Party in Poland was by no means a strong organisation. The most important party of the working class was the "Polish Socialist Party" (PPS) which had gained much experience in the underground during the occupation. After the war the majority of industrial workers supported this party. In order to bring this party under the control of the Stalinists an unrepresentative congress had been called in Lublin in September 1944 when most of Poland was still under German control. Here, a new leadership had been forced upon the PPS. When the real leaders emerged from the underground and from prison they were arrested by the police and the Russian security forces. The new "official" leadership then attempted to carry through a unification of the PPS with the Communist Party. The Party Congress in December 1947 rejected unification but only three months later Cyrankiewicz, a member of the leadership, declared that the unification would nevertheless be carried through. 82,000 members were in the process expelled. In this way the Stalinists constructed in Poland, as in the other countries of Eastern Europe, a totalitarian dictatorship which, as in Russia since the thirties, excluded all elements of workers' democracy.

In 1948 came Tito's break with Stalin. This resulted in a series of persecutions and purges throughout Eastern Europe. In Poland Gomulka, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, and the deputy Prime Minister were arrested along with others and thrown into prison. Between September and December 1948 30,000 members of the Communist Party were expelled.

In the next period heavy industry was developed at the expense of living standards: between 1949 and 1953

The death of Stalin and Krushchev's anti-Stalinist speech at the 20th Congress of the CPSU in 1956 opened up a split in the ruling bureaucracy between the old guard of the state apparatus and those who hoped to avoid an explosion from below by reforms from above. Discontent amongst the workers followed. Strikes and demonstrations took place. On 28th June 1956 the workers of Poznan moved into action as the workers of Berlin had done 3 years before. The demand of one group of workers for better working conditions developed into a strike. This was joined by tens of thousands of other workers as the movement turned into a general insurrection. Prisoners were released from the jails and weapons seized. A meeting of about a third of the population of Poznan took place in front of the Town Hall.

Strikes took place in Gdynia, Gdansk and Silesia. In this situation the government was forced to look for other ways of containing the movement. A new economic programme was announced, promising higher production of food and consumer goods. At the same time the leadership began discussions with Gomulka, whose earlier imprisonment seemed now a positive advantage. The aim was to reintegrate him into the government and use his popularity to hold the movement of the masses within acceptable bounds.

In October, against the opposition of the old guard, the so-called "Natolin" group, which was supported by the Russian leadership, Gomulka was invited to become General Secretary of the Party and remove the 'conservatives' from the government. Polish and Russian troops began marching in the direction of Warsaw and Russian warships appeared off the coast. In order to defend itself the government distributed weapons to the factories and Party committees. When the Russian leadership flew to Warsaw Gomulka threatened to mobilise the population in a general insurrection. The Russians gave way and the troops were withdrawn.

Why could the Russian leadership give way in Poland in 1956 whilst they found it necessary to invade Hungary to crush the movement there in the same year? The answer is to be found in the character of the Gomulka regime and in the limited nature of the movement of the workers. In Hungary the workers created in Budapest and elsewhere soviets or workers' councils which would have formed the basis of a genuine workers' democracy. A real workers' government on these lines could not have tolerated a privileged and parasitic bureaucracy for a moment longer.

On the other hand in Poland the government was able to suppress and contain the movement before the workers were able to create organs of workers' democracy. A workers' government in Hungary would have also appealed to the Russian workers to overthrow the tyrannical rule of the bureaucracy. But Gomulka represented the interests not of the workers but of a section of the Polish bureaucracy which sought independence from Moscow. In their own interests they wanted to take their own "Polish Road to Socialism".

That this was the case was shown by subsequent developments. The Polish masses saw Gomulka's coming to power and his triumph over the Russian bureaucracy and its quislings in Poland as a great victory. The resulting enthusiasm acted as a catalyst for further independent actions on the part of the masses: a continuous three day long meeting took place at the Warsaw College of Technology. On 22nd October there were riots in Warsaw and on the following day demonstrations in Gdansk. The workers of the giant "Zeran" motor works in Warsaw went on strike.

In this situation the only solution left to the Russian bureaucracy was to recognise Gomulka. On 23rd October—the day which the revolution broke out in Hungary—Gomulka's rule over Poland was guaranteed. The following day he announced to a rally of 250,000 people that the Russians had agreed to the new leadership and its programme. To the Polish masses it seemed as though Gomulka had crushed and defeated Stalinism once and for all.

In fact however Gomulka was faced

million) and steal goods worth 30 million zloty (about £800,000) without the "great majority", who agreed with the "suggestions" of the government, so much as lifting a finger to try and stop them!

In reality this new victory of the Polish workers is a measure of their strength and of the weakness of the Stalinist bureaucracy that rules over them. Three times since 1945, in 1956, in 1970-1, and now again in 1976 the workers of Poland have shown that they cannot be indefinitely oppressed by the leadership that claims to rule in their name.

The history of Poland since the end of the Second World War is one of almost constant political and economic crisis, in spite of the undoubted benefits of the nationalised planned economy. Every socialist defends state ownership of the means of production which represents a higher historical stage of development than capitalism with its constant crises of profitability and overproduction.

Every Polish worker would agree that the achievements of the nationalised economy have benefited them. None would give them up for the anarchy of capitalism with its misery for millions. The Polish workers have been saved by the national plan of production from the horrors of unemployment, homelessness and cuts in welfare and in living standards suffered by workers in the West due to the capitalist world economic crises.

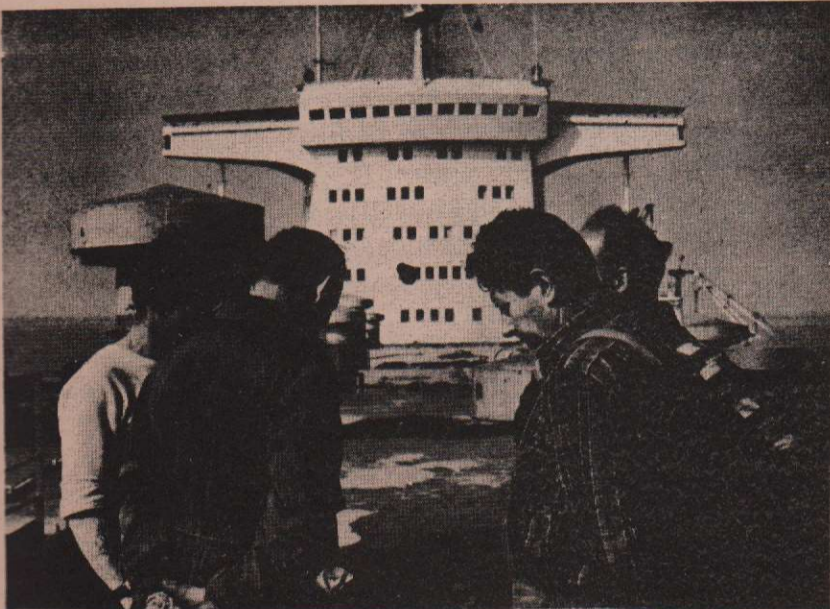
The nationalised economy, however, is only one economic condition for the transition to socialism, not socialism itself. Socialism also has political conditions: the democratic control and management of industry and the state by the working class itself; freedom for all tendencies and parties that accept the state ownership of the means of production; and Internationalism on the part of the working class leadership which strives after the victory of the workers in every country and the final abolition of the economic and political limitations of the national state.

## Bolsheviks

This was the programme of the Bolsheviks in Russia after the October Revolution of 1917. Under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky all of these conditions existed even in the darkest days of the Civil War, when the very existence of the Soviet Republic was threatened by 22 invading imperialist armies. For Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks the socialist revolution in Russia was merely the beginning of the world revolution that was breaking out everywhere.

For them, the impossibility of building socialism in one country went without saying. Capitalism had created the world market and the international division of labour: only when the workers of several advanced countries had successfully carried through the socialist revolution would it be possible to start speaking of Socialism. Only then would it be possible to create a system that stood on a higher technical and productive level than capitalism.

After the war in Germany and elsewhere one revolution after another was defeated, this led to a long isolation of the Soviet Union. With the backwardness of Russia, the bureaucracy, a left-over from Czarism without which the workers' state simply could not function, was gradually able to assert itself as a privileged social layer. Stalin, the representative of this layer, announced in 1924, after the death of Lenin,



Polish bulk carrier in Gdansk, where dockers recently stopped the loading of sugar beet for export.

Two weeks ago fourteen Polish intellectuals publicly announced the setting up of a defence committee to provide financial, legal and medical aid to workers arrested for taking part in strikes and demonstrations against price rises in June.

The intellectuals accused the government of "lawless repression" and the use of "physical terror" during police interrogation "for the first time for many years." They have demanded an end to repression and the release of the Radom factory workers jailed for striking.

In a recent trial of workers who joined in the price protests the defence lawyers pointed out that "all those convicted had unblemished work records, and that they were not hooligans but class conscious workers who had acted in defence of their interests." (Financial Times, 28/9/76).

The government has attempted to cow the workers into submission by publicly reprimanding the leading activists in the strikes as a warning to others. But the confident, militant reaction of the workers to this is likely to force the regime to back down in fear, reduce sentences and cancel the trial of others.

This self-confidence on the part of the workers, aware of their own class power and the weakness of the corrupt, parasitic élite of bureaucrats who rule over the Polish workers' state, goes back to June 25th when the workers of Poland succeeded for the second time in six years in forcing the government by means of strike action and protests throughout the country to withdraw drastic price rises for food. The day before Prime Minister Jaroszewicz had announced average price rises of 70%. Only 24 hours later he appeared on television to announce that the increases had been cancelled!

All over Poland there were demonstrations and downing of tools as the official Polish press itself reported. Workers at a tractor factory in Ursus near Warsaw stopped the Paris to Warsaw express train, tore up the rails and blockaded the line for several hours. In the town of Radom, 100 kilometres south of Warsaw, demonstrations turned to bloody clashes with the police. According to official reports two demonstrators were killed and 75 police injured. The local "Communist" Party office was also burnt down.

A workers' leader in Ursus said: "All Poland is on strike today. The

In Polish newspaper editorials on 28th June it was confirmed that strikes had taken place. "Zycie Warszawy" wrote that in "a few cases" the course of the discussion about price increases had been accompanied by "a temporary withdrawal from work"(!)

During the next few days the government tried to create the impression that the troubles had all been the work of a tiny minority of criminal elements. Thus the mayor of Radom, Karwicki, claimed that the protest march of the workers had been joined by parasitic, rowdy and criminal elements and hysterical women(!) They had "terrorised" workers in several other factories. The government also organised "mass meetings" throughout the country, which supposedly showed that the overwhelming majority of the population stood behind the main points of the government's programme.

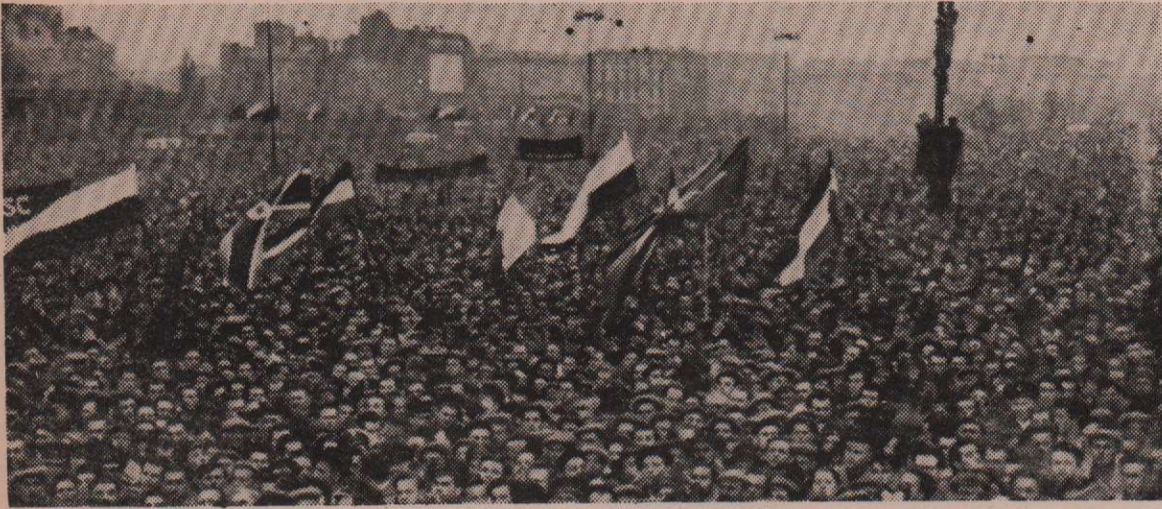
## 'Criminal Minority'?

If the protests really were purely the work of a tiny and criminal minority the question arises as to why the government felt compelled to cancel the price rises. And how did it happen as Karwicki himself reported, that this "tiny minority" could set fire to 24 cars, lorries, tractors and buses, dam-



# Workers defy police state

By Charles Whitham



In the course of the next two years he attempted, without an immediate and direct conflict, to re-establish the control of the bureaucracy over the workers. The "workers' councils", which the bureaucracy itself had fostered in October as a point of support against Moscow and the "Natolin" wing of the bureaucracy, were gradually relegated to the status of "advisory" bodies. In April 1958 they were finally subordinated to the control of the Party and the "Trade Unions". In February 1958 strikes were once again officially banned. In October 1957 publication of the radical journal "Po Prostu", whose intellectual writers and adherents had supported the demands of the workers for independent trade unions and an end to the privileges of the bureaucracy, was forbidden. In this way Gomulka eliminated all elements of workers' democracy that had arisen in the period of "liberalisation".

## Zig Zags

Yet the new leadership was still no more able to solve the economic and political problems of Poland than the old had been. Without the democratic participation of the workers themselves in all decision-making processes bureaucratic inefficiency and corruption will rule unchecked in a nationalised economy. Without finding in this way the most favourable tempo for the development of industry and the living standards of the working class, it will be impossible to overcome these problems.

The result will be the continual return of the well-known difficulties and crises of these deformed workers' states: low productivity of labour, badly produced goods, a lack of consumer goods and spare parts for industry. The constant zigzags between the centralised planning of the economy and the development of heavy industry would be at the expense of living standards. Centralisation was in the interests of one section of the bureaucracy and decentralisation in the interests of another.

In the sixties Poland's economy was marked by increasing stagnation. Without the democratic participation of the workers themselves in the administration of industry and the state, without the gradual and systematic raising of living standards, there was simply no incentive for workers to produce more and to increase their productivity. In addition the workers saw in the one-sided development of heavy industry and the neglect of consumer goods no gain for themselves—in whose name all of this supposedly takes place!

Having finally strangled the movement of the masses after 1956 Gomulka became one of the most conservative bureaucrats. With the stagnation of industry, however, the question was raised as to how the further development of industry was to be carried out. On the one hand there was the necessity

pay for them. Because of the inefficiency and backwardness of Polish agriculture it was simply impossible for the bureaucracy to increase the production of the peasantry at all considerably within a short space of time. Thus, in order to release more agricultural products for export, the government announced on Saturday 12th December 1970 average increases in the prices of food of 20%.

This announcement sparked off the biggest movement of the Polish workers since 1956. In the towns of Gdansk, Gdynia, Sopot and Szczecin on the Baltic coast the workers immediately went on strike. The workers elected committees, armed themselves and organised demonstrations. They marched through the streets not with the slogan of a return to capitalism but carrying the Red Flag and singing the "Internationale". The police were sent in. Bloody clashes took place and hundreds of workers were killed. By the following weekend the workers of other industrial towns in Poland had shown their solidarity with their brothers in the coastal towns. The same process which in 1956 had brought Gomulka to power was now turned against him!

In this situation there remained no other way out for the bureaucracy than to sacrifice Gomulka. On Sunday evening Edward Gierek, a representative of the technocrats, announced that Gomulka had been removed from the government and that he, Gierek, was now in charge. The "mistakes" of the previous decade were to be explained as simply the fault of Gomulka! However although Gierek declared that there would be a two-year price freeze and certain economic reforms, he was not prepared to cancel the original price rises. The workers of Gdansk ended their strike but in the first three weeks of January further strikes took place. The workers involved demanded the same everywhere: free and independent trade unions, abolition of the new production norms, freedom of the press.

On the 22nd January 1971 Gierek flew to Szczecin where a strike of tens of thousands of shipyard workers had broken out and spoke for several hours with 500 or so delegates elected by the workers to represent them. Gierek explained that everything was the fault of Gomulka but that it was impossible to cancel the price rises. The delegates presented their demands to Gierek in no uncertain terms but in the end voted to go back to work. A month later, however, a strike of textile workers in Lodz took place and Gierek was finally forced to withdraw the increases. A five year price freeze was announced.

Gierek now embarked on a new economic course, or rather, lurch, on the basis of enormous foreign credits and the incentive of higher wages for the workers, in order to increase productivity. Within five years a million new jobs had been created and a quarter of all existing factories built! Between 1971 and 1976 wages rose by 40%.

The persistent problem of the Polish economy, however, remained agricul-

ture. "Road to Socialism" the industrial development of Poland since the war and especially of the last five years clearly shows that there can be no way forward for the countries of Eastern Europe and for Russia on the basis of the national state and economic self-sufficiency. In order to develop industry further the import of capital goods and technology from the West is an absolute necessity. For this reason the deficits of these countries with the West have in the last few years reached enormous proportions. At the end of 1975 Poland's debts with the West amounted to 6.4 billion dollars (1972: 2.5 billion)—2.4 billion with West Germany alone!



Kruschev and Brezhnev at 20th CPSU Party Congress.

This new lurch, which set itself the goal of fulfilling the production and investment targets originally set for the period 1971-75 in four instead of five years, took place without regard for the backward and inefficient condition of Polish agriculture. In order to obtain the necessary foreign currency to finance the imports and credits Poland has to export a considerable proportion of its agricultural production. These exports of food to capitalist countries account for 17% of Poland's total export proceeds. In addition, because of the wage rises of the last five years the demand of the Polish population for food, especially for meat, has risen considerably. In spite of the high demand and the shortage of meat for internal consumption, however, Poland continues to export 13% of its meat production.

The bureaucracy is therefore faced with the problem of how to raise the productivity of Polish agriculture. Although it is of such vital importance to the economy, however, agriculture in Poland remains extremely backward. With a total population of 31.7 million there are still 3.5 million individual peasants who till 80% of the arable land. For these 3.5 million peasants, there are only 319,000 tractors. In addition, 65% of farms are smaller than five hectares. 1.3 million farms are of five hectares or more but possess between them only 123,000 tractors. The extent of Polish agriculture's backwardness is to be seen in the fact that, because of this low level of mechanisation, there are still some 2.5

Under such conditions it is hardly surprising that agriculture is very unproductive. In contrast to the other countries of Eastern Europe the peasantry was never collectivised. However the state buys 85% of their produce at prices determined by the state itself. Until now these prices have been too low to give the peasantry an incentive to produce more and to increase productivity. Productivity is also a question of technique and mechanisation. It is true that the state has in the last few years raised the prices which it pays for agricultural products—but this in itself is no real incentive if at the same time the supply of industrial goods (tractors, fertilisers and feedstuffs) which the peasants can buy is too low.

In order to be able to supply these goods to the peasantry, however, it is necessary first of all to produce them in greater quantities! This in turn is dependent upon the tempo of industrial development. Nothing could refute the theory of "Socialism in One Country" better than the fact that in order to do this Poland must import more capital goods and technology from the West. In addition, Poland has to import large quantities of feedstuff. The Party newspaper "Trybuna Ludu" recently admitted: "Last year's import of feedstuffs devoured 70% of the currency earnings from our coal exports"!

Collectivisation of the peasantry is the only way to increase the output and productivity of agriculture to such an extent as to create the conditions necessary for socialism. Collectivisation, however, is a question of the cultural and technical level of the peasantry. In addition, it must take

place. This time they achieved an even greater victory—they needed only 24 hours to force the cancellation of the increases! Since June there have been further strikes in Poland. In mid-August the militant dockworkers of Gdansk and Szczecin came out on strike to prevent the export of sugar-beet.

Since 1956 the workers of Poland have built up an heroic tradition of struggle against the bureaucracy. In Poland today there exists what is almost a situation of dual power, where the bureaucracy still holds the state apparatus in its hands but whose power is effectively limited by the working class. Such a situation cannot exist for much longer. The situation must be resolved one way or the other in the next period, either in favour of the working class or the bureaucracy.

The latter is in a desperate position. On the one hand the bureaucracy cannot introduce a programme of "democratic reforms": that would only release an enormous wave of enthusiasm and the positions and privileges of the bureaucracy would simply be thrown aside. On the other hand, a return to the repression and terror of the Stalin era is equally ruled out because of the strength and consciousness of the working class, which has been enormously strengthened by the rapid industrial development of the last few years.

The bureaucracy cannot solve a single one of the economic problems that face Poland. The same crises will reappear again and again as long as Poland is ruled not by a democracy of the working class but by a parasitic caste, interested only in syphoning off the surplus of the workers for its own selfish requirements.

In 1956 Gomulka was hailed as a national hero. In 1970 Gierek announced that all difficulties and problems were the fault of Gomulka. Now Gierek faces the same situation as his predecessor—with one difference: that the problems are even more catastrophic and the workers even more conscious and ready for action than ever before!

In such a desperate situation as an invasion by the Russian bureaucracy, the Polish workers would immediately arm themselves and put up an even greater resistance than their brothers in Hungary in 1956. Such a situation, moreover, especially if it lasted for any length of time, would probably spark off movements of the workers in the other deformed workers' states of Eastern Europe including Russia itself.

Stalinism, therefore, faces an enormous crisis. A political revolution is on the order of the day in Poland. The Polish workers will inevitably be forced to rise up and overthrow the power and privileges of the bureaucracy. Only in this way will it be possible to solve the problems of society and economy in Poland: through the democratic control and management of the state and of industry by the working class itself; through constant and honest discussion of all problems in the tradition of Lenin, Trotsky and the Bolsheviks and by casting aside the rotten policy of a "National Road to Socialism" for a real internationalist stand. Explaining that the problems of Poland cannot be

## Beacon

A political revolution establishing a workers' democracy in Poland would be an enormous beacon to the world working class. It will clean off the layer of filth that has been attached to the name of Socialism and Communism by the Stalinists and which allows the capitalists and their representatives to use their crimes as propaganda against the ideas of Marxism and Socialism. It will return to the tradition of Lenin and Trotsky and the Bolsheviks, to the traditions of October and show the way forward to all workers, East and West, to a free and democratic World Federation of Socialist States.



# Caribbean in Turmoil

By Bob McKee

Behind the recent round of elections in the sunny climes of the Caribbean lies a sinister new development. There is clear evidence that American imperialism, by corruption, the use of right wing Cuban exiles and the Central Intelligence Agency, is seeking to subvert and overthrow many of the governments in that area.

The reason behind this policy is the growing fear of the American multinationals (who have dominated and exploited the region as though it were their own backyard for nearly 70 years), that now their power is to be ended.

When American imperialism had got over the shock of the Cuban revolution by the mid-sixties, they sought to isolate Castro's regime and prevent any spread of "the cancer of Communism" to the rest of the Caribbean. But the example of the relative success of the planned economy in Cuba has not been lost on many governments in the West Indies.

Most recently has been the development in Guyana. The Prime Minister Forbes Burnham had been brought to power by a 'coup' organised by British and American imperialism. The previous government under Cheddi Jagan was considering measures of nationalisation when independence was granted from Britain.



Michael Manley

By fomenting divisions between the majority Indian population and the minority Negroes through strikes and riots, British imperialism was able to send in troops to "restore order" and have the constitution gerry-mandered so that a more pliant Burnham, based on the Negroes, could come to power over Jagan's Indian based party.

But the very crisis of the Guyanese economy has forced Burnham in the direction of state intervention to bring about industrialisation and an expansion of the economy. In fact Burnham has now taken over 70% of all industry including the main multinationals. He and Jagan are now considering a fusion of their parties and the formation of a militia to protect the regime from foreign intervention, possibly from an American-supported invasion by the Brazilian military.

But this move is seen by the American government as the beginning of a general process which they must stop.

So they were no doubt pleased with the electoral success of Tom Adams in Barbados. This 44 year old British trained barrister said after his victory in September that he was going to rely on American support and would continue their base that the US Navy had on the island. Adams ousted Errol Barrow who had been making strong attacks on American influence in the area in recent years and was considering more action against the multinationals. There was a wave of financial scandals revealed in the big business press about the Barrow regime, as well as attacks on its economic policy just before the election.

Even more worrying for American imperialism has been the scene in Jamaica, the biggest island, where elections are due after November 22nd when the new electoral boundaries are to be drawn up. There the People's National Party of Michael Manley has been taking the same direction as Guyana.

The serious economic situation compounded with an acute deterioration of the terms of trade in exports, (it now takes twice the sugar output to buy the same number of tractors as in 1956), has forced the government to consider some land reforms and more restrictive terms for the bauxite multinationals who dominate the economy.

Manley has also attempted to provide education for 150,000 adults who are illiterate and free 50,000 acres for cultivation by small farmers from the hands of the big plantation owners.

The reaction has been a wave of violence and riots throughout the island. These have not been indiscriminate. The victims have been PNP supporters, mostly youth organisers. On May 19th fifty armed men blocked off a road through petrol bombs into houses, opened fire at police and firemen, and then withdrew in military fashion leaving eleven children dead.

The Guyanese embassy was blown up by Cuban exiles based in Miami. It was revealed that a Jamaican Labour Party

candidate, the opposition party which backs the multinationals in Jamaica, had material explaining how to set bombs and lists of men trained for armed attacks. The deputy leader of the JLP had two tapes in his house describing how to organise raids and attacks.

As a recent defector from the JLP executive said "what is being organised is the violence of a deliberate well planned and phased programme to ensure that the energies of the security forces will be spent in trying to cope with it in election year." Clearly sections of the JLP, along with American multinationals and the CIA, are trying to create a climate where the Manley government can be overthrown or defeated in the election. Manley had declared a state of emergency and so far has not backed down on his programme of reforms.

But the Americans will be more worried about the results of the election in Trinidad and Tobago. This oil and sugar producing island is the wealthiest in the Caribbean. It has been ruled by the Peoples National Movement under Eric Williams since independence fourteen years ago.

The PNM has monopolised rule. In the last election in 1971 because Williams imposed emergency regulations following 'black power' riots among students and unemployed youth, the opposition parties boycotted the election and the PNM gained all 36 seats but with only 28% of the electorate voting for it.

This time there was a 56% poll and the PNM only took 24 seats. The main opposition emerged from the United Labour Front which is the first genuinely trade union based organisation, demanding action against the multinationals and for an end to poverty and inequality.

Williams held onto power because there is a general boom in the economy due to recent natural gas and oil discoveries. Nevertheless the vast majority of the population remains "in want". There is an official unemployment figure of 17% with many observers putting it at double that figure in reality.

The United Labour Front was formed by the trade unions who had engaged in major wage struggle in 1975 and now saw need for political action. They did not put up for all seats so they could have done even better. They emphasised the corruption of the PNM and its close relations with the multinationals. Only promises from Williams of more public works to relieve unemployment and future benefit from the oil revenue stemmed the tide this time.

## Revolution

All the signs are that the Caribbean is in for a period of social revolution and counter revolution. In order to industrialise, make land reform to improve the lot of the peasants, and to end the strangling grip of imperialism, the Caribbean governments are being forced to expropriate capitalism and landlordism, as happened in Cuba.

American imperialism is now too weak to intervene directly as they tried in Cuba and Dominica. They hope to provide support to the native capitalist elements to block any steps towards a planned economy. This battle will be decided well before the next round of elections in the Caribbean.



## SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa, where much of British capitalism's funds are invested, this week sentenced British journalist David Rabkin to 10 years in jail and his 8-months pregnant wife to one year, 11 months suspended. Their crime? Giving out leaflets supporting the African National Congress.

This is yet another example of the stamping out of political opposition to the racist regime which rules South Africa in the interests of big business, including British big business. By preventing Africans, Asians, coloureds and even whites from expressing their opposition to the regime

through such means the South African ruling class is preparing the way for a bloody explosion.

## SPAIN

Continued police repression of Spanish workers fighting for their rights is being met by firmer solidarity action from wider layers of the working class. In a country which is supposed to be moving towards democracy, right wing terrorists and police detachments freely roam about attacking workers.

In the last 18 months over 150 shootings and bombings have been carried out by fascists. Not one arrest of known fascists has taken place. They are present on many labour demonstrations, openly colluding with the police. Last Monday they intervened in such a demonstration in Madrid and murdered a young student.

Immediately a number of demonstrations of protest took place and workers voiced their anger at the shooting. In several large factories in Madrid work was stopped in protest and shop floor meetings discussed the attack.

Each lash of the whip across the workers' backs only increases their burning hatred of the regime and makes them more determined to overthrow it.

A general strike in the Basque country last Monday involved every section of society and cost the bosses £35m in lost production. Despite its reliance on police terrorism the regime is really incapable of holding back the workers' movement. Last week it declined to militarise the striking postal workers for fear they would ignore the call-up, refuse orders, and 'mutiny', in which case what is left of the government's authority would have dissolved.

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Workers picketing the Rouge Ford plant

# CAR WORKERS TAKE ON FORD

By Betty Traun,  
in America

In the United States 170,000 auto workers in 103 plants in 23 states are out on Strike against the Ford company. They expect to have to put up the same fight which the rubber workers had to do over a 4½ month period, and are prepared to do so. Morale is high.

When the United Auto Workers Union came to the negotiating table to present its demands for a new contract, the Ford Co. presented counter-proposals which caused great anger among the workers for they contained "takeaways"—that is, Ford proposed taking away certain gains which the workers had made in the past.

For example, the Ford Company wants workers to pay one-half of their health insurance costs, where the company wants to reduce pay increases for productivity to a 2½ annual improvement factor instead of the 3% provided for in the present contract. When the unions rejected these and other "takeaways", Ford called off negotiations arrogantly, and the workers called it a "lockout".

UAW feels that the Ford counter-proposals were collusively concocted in the offices of the Big Three combine of General Motors, Ford and Chrysler. The Ford Company reaped \$770 million in profits for the first six months of this

year, and expects to go well over a billion for the year. They will spend \$3.2 billion this year and next year for automation which will cost thousands of jobs and result in plasticized automobiles.

The Ford Company feels safe in forcing this strike. It will continue to make profits from its plants abroad such as in Spain and Argentina where Ford strikers are being imprisoned and their strike broken by a military junta.

## 94% for Strike

There had been a 94% favourable strike vote cast by 87% of the workers. The speedup in the shops had been growing by 25% on every model. Workers had been laid off with a loss of 15 weeks' work during the year. Workers want steady jobs with fewer hours of work. The union's demands are as follows:

1. Reduction in working time as a device to preserve existing jobs and open new ones. They want the 30-hour week, six hours a day.

2. An increase in company contributions to the Supplemental Unemployment Benefit Fund. From this Fund the worker receives enough money, added to regular unemployment insurance, to make up 95% of his regular wage when he is laid off. These funds ran dry at other auto companies in the 1974-5 recession, but did not run out at Ford. The company offers an increase in the fund, but not enough to satisfy the union.

3. Benefits to ease the plight of retired workers of the union whose real incomes are reduced by inflation. Officers of 100 locals (branches) demand a cost of living increase on pensions. On health benefits the company proposed, over union objections, that these be reduced.

Skilled workers, who vote as a group on contracts, seek an increase in premium pay beyond that of production workers. The company offers to provide such an increase, but no figure has been advanced. Union members feel that this differential will split the unity of production between the skilled and production workers, and slogans at the Ford plant read: "Skilled and production workers, united we can win."

The US national bargaining team of the union met with its Canadian counterpart and pledged to see to it that the Ford Motor Company of Canada will match the settlement reached with Ford in the US despite the Canadian government's wage ceilings aimed at supposedly curbing inflation.

Union strike benefits are: for a worker with children, \$50 a week; without children, \$45 a week; single worker, \$40 a week. And that's the way it stands as of September 21, 1976.



# LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS... LETTERS

## "NEW FACES" = NEW PROFITS

Dear Comrades,

We all of us watch the television at some time or other, and I suppose most of us have heard of the ITV talent programme "New Faces," in which ordinary folk get their chance to break into the big time.

I watched it last Saturday and was sickened by the criteria with which the panel of judges awarded their marks.

One duo sang a particularly beautiful folk ballad, with no stink of commercial beat about it. One of the judges was Tony Hatch, prolific writer of pop garbage and the 'Crossroads' theme. His only comment was that the song was not commercial enough. It had no "zip". If they were to "make it" in the business they had to move away from "pure folk" and get into the "folk-rock" scene.

He accordingly gave low marks. In other words, "I don't care how good you are. Will it sell?" It is people like this who decide what we like, and who we get to hear. They are not concerned with real artistic ability, only in lining their own pockets.

It is argued with seeming plausibility that the pop business must give what the public want. But every youth's experience belies this position. My adolescence coincided with the skin-head era. Everyone had to like Reggae. But how is it that suddenly working class youth were demanding Reggae music when before then we "wanted" "Rock steady"?

I know several young people who religiously bought every new Bay City Rollers album. These are now collecting dust since they soon become bored with this trite junk. And yet the pop world has told them "this is what you like." What greater proof is there than the exploitation of youth by the monopolies that production is for profit and not need.

It is a terrible indictment of capitalism that, not content with squeezing the adult workforce, they have to trample over "teenyboppers" and now, "weenyboppers."

Under socialism, culture will genuinely reflect the aspirations of the working class, and will not be alien to us as is now the case.

Yours fraternally,  
Dermott Mills,  
(Wolverhampton S W LPYS)

## RHODESIAN DEAL

Dear Comrades,

Western imperialism must be breathing a sigh of relief. Dr Kissinger and Johannes Vorster have given white supremacy in Rhodesia the hard word. The intention is to head off the guerrillas and stop a repeat of Mozambique and Angola where capitalism and landlordism has been eradicated.

Acting as a friend of the black African and believer in democracy (the Chilean people know better) Dr Kissinger, on behalf of imperialism, intends now to set up an interim government which they say will lead to majority rule in two years. He hopes this interim government and eventually the one which will succeed it will be composed of black African nationalists who will be puppets of imperialism.

However the Vice President of Mozambique has already stated that they are not in the least interested in Dr Kissinger's manoeuvres. The Russian Bureaucracy for its own selfish reasons would like to see the overthrow of capitalism and landlordism in Southern Africa. In the last few weeks it has been frantically lobbying the Presidents of the rest of Africa with some success. Telling them that the USA is only protecting its own investments in Southern Africa (which is true).

So it looks very likely that the Russians will finance the guerrillas based in Mozambique who are opposed to capitalism and landlordism. However the Russians will make sure the future state of Rhodesia will be in their own image, not a workers' democracy.

The interim government which will be set up, will quicken up the process of the downfall of capitalism and landlordism. The black African hungry for land and freedom, starvation wages his lot, will quickly see nothing has changed. Gradually more and more will begin to look towards the guerrillas for an answer. The white settlers will take the compensation. Eventually as happened in the Portuguese colonies economic chaos and ruin will bring the

## 'OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD' — BEING WORKING CLASS

Dear Comrades,

A report in the 'Sunday Times Magazine' recently showed that there are startling class inequalities in health. It showed that the chance of dying from non-infectious diseases are 67% greater for an unskilled worker than for someone belonging to the 'professional class'. For some diseases the differences are even more startling, 145% for Tuberculosis (TB) and 166% for Bronchitis.

Even with the diseases which are supposedly part of the 'hazard' of belonging to the upper classes the report demonstrates that unskilled workers are still more likely to contract them. For example with coronary disease a 14% greater chance and for Duodenal ulcers a staggering 155% greater chance exists.

Yet, as the report points out, it is not the nature of work which is to blame, for with the wives of the men of the different classes we find similar differences. Diet and 'lifestyle' are apparently the main factors.

So with the cuts in the NHS it is obviously the workers who are being affected most. Capitalism, which causes the worker's bad health in the first place, now prevents him from being cured.

Yours fraternally,  
Mick Slater,  
[Edge Hill LPYS]

## CAPITALISM FOULS OUR NEST

Dear Comrades,

I would like to take up Comrade Cohen's letter about the water shortage. Any shortage is due to either insufficient supply, excessive demand or a combination of both. This is true of the water shortage. For years there has been inadequate planning for water needs. The building of new reservoirs is put off as long as possible in a short-sighted attempt to save money. Even if there had not been two years of reduced rainfall we would have eventually been faced with water shortage.

It is also true as Comrade Cohen points out, that much of the water available is wasted, especially by industry, a situation not mentioned much in the present appeals for conservation—almost all aimed at households.

An interesting comparison is Western North America where Southern California is short of water. Proposals are put forward seriously to build a canal from British Columbia to carry water. Already a scheme to divert water from Northern to Southern California is in operation but most of the benefit goes to big business which is making millions out of it at the taxpayers' expense. Profit for some rather than use water properly.

The main point of the water shortage is that capitalism, by neither ensuring adequate supply nor proper use of it, has made the shortage of rainfall a serious problem and now they will try and turn this to a profit.

Comrade Cohen mentions that socialists have unfairly dismissed conservationists as middle class cranks. This is not true, socialists have always been aware of the

wastage of natural resources by capitalism.

Engels in 'The Part Played by Labour in the Transition from Ape to Man', deals in detail with the relation of man with nature and how capitalism is short-sighted about natural resources:

"Let us not however flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our victories over nature. For each such victory nature takes its revenge on us. Each victory it is true, in the first place brings about the results we expected but in the second and third places it has quite different, unforeseen effects which only too often cancel the first."

Engels later goes on to show how logging destroys a regular water supply and results in floods occasionally and the rest of the time drought.

Socialists argue that conservationists who believe the problems of the environment and resources can be solved under capitalism are utopian. Pollution and waste are caused by capitalism and a lack of a democratically planned economy. I feel that the attitude of today's Marxists towards these problems is clearly expressed in a review from 'Militant' (no. 135) of an excellent book 'Murderous Providence' by Harry Rothman: "Pollution is not the trendy 'safe' non-political issue that the middle class liberals would like it to be."

It is true that we cannot prevent shortage of rainfall just as we cannot prevent other 'Acts of God' but only socialism can enable mankind to face up to the fact that we "belong to nature and exist in its midst."

Yours Fraternally  
Bill Hopwood  
(Newcastle North Labour Party)

## £3 FOR BABY'S DRESS

Dear Comrades,

After pricing dresses for my young daughter (6 months old) at over £2 and £3 I felt there had to be an alternative. I decided to do some sewing myself, only to find that the pattern cost 60p, thread 13p and the material £1.45p per metre! The finished product cost me 3 hours labour (after work)

How can working families manage when even ways of economising are closed to them?

Yes mass produced goods should work out cheaper but it's not the housewife's purse which benefits but the capitalists' coffers!

Yours Fraternally  
Louise Birch  
(Nottingham North Labour Party)

## POLICEMEN DEMAND RIGHT TO STRIKE

Dear Comrades,

"More than 300 police officers called for an immediate referendum on the right to strike at a Police Federation conference at Cwmbran, South Wales." This small statement, tucked away on page 2 of the Times newspaper (23/9/76) is positively revolutionary in its implications!

The Police Federation is a narrow, hidebound, "company union". It includes all ranks of the police force, and has few links to the organised labour movement. Its leaders not only oppose any idea of strike action but claim that it is "tantamount to treason" and "illegal". (This is a bit laughable—if the police went on strike, who would imprison them?) Nevertheless, in the wake of the seamen's settlement, these "leaders" have been compelled to reflect—however weakly—the dissatisfaction of the rank and file. The £6 pay award has been withheld from the police—many constables conclude that this is due to their being denied the right to strike.

Marxists understand that in a capitalist society the police stand guard over the power and privileges of the ruling class. The protection of private property, the assistance of strikebreakers and attacks on workers' organisations, are all part of "a policeman's lot". But it would be entirely wrong to conclude that the police force is a homogenous mass to be labelled as "Fascist Pigs" and treated accordingly.

Few young workers join the constabulary with the conscious intention of betraying their class. Some are even deluded into thinking they are serving the community by defending working class people from criminal elements. Their main motive is to avoid the living death on the dole queue which they would otherwise have to face. The upper ranks of the service—Sir Robert Mark is a good example—clearly see

themselves as agents of the ruling class. Given the role played by the police it is small wonder that the police force is a reservoir for the most backward and reactionary prejudices, many supporters of the National Front find a "natural home" for themselves in the ranks. (Witness Notting Hill!)

However, there clearly exists a small element with some semblance of class consciousness. Their isolation can only be broken with the aid of the power of the mass working class organisations—primarily the trade unions. Individual militants can easily be victimised without such support.

Labour Parties, Trade Union branches and Co-op Parties, by supporting the right to strike and the right to freedom of speech in the police force, can show these people that they are not alone, and oppose any victimisation. However, these elements will only be attracted by a show of strength on the part of the working class organisations. A show of weakness, such as the acceptance of wage restraint in order to prop up capitalism, will reinforce their backward tendencies.

A programme of socialist action, the taking over of the commanding heights of the economy, would show that the labour movement means business. Even the notorious Parisian police were compelled to go on strike in face of a mass movement of the working class in 1968. It is even possible that some of the "boys in blue" would wish to participate in dealing with the real criminals—the spivs and speculators—in the struggles which lie ahead.

If the Russian Revolution took its first steps to victory 'under the belly of a cossack's horse', then it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that the events at Cwmbran mark the beginning of a turn in the tide of British politics.

Derek McMillan



Letters to: Editor, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

## CATERING WORKERS EXPLOITED

## 50 IN A CLASS!

Dear Comrades,

As the new school and college year gets under way, the cuts in educational expenditure not only stare the 20,000 unemployed teachers squarely in the face, but means for thousands of school pupils and young adults in technical colleges another year of overcrowded classrooms, poor facilities and sub-standard teaching.

As one of the "lucky ones" who has just started a job in a College of Further Education what the cuts really mean was made crystal clear on the very first day. Due to take a class at 2.15, I turned up at the room in question to find my group of 28 students sitting in neat rows down one side of the room, another group of students due to be taken by another lecturer down the other side of the room, and dividing us were groups of photography students and technical illustrators engaged on supervised project work!

Two days later I was confronted with 50 students in a room with a seating capacity of half that number, and was expected to conduct a class with students perched on window sills, desk tops and sitting on the floor. The significance of my complaints to other members of the staff were not realised—I was merely offered a larger classroom!

The Labour government in its manifesto pledged itself to the expansion of the educational system to cater for "present and future needs." Apparently the needs of our students are out the window when big business with begging bowl in hand comes knocking at the door.

Yours fraternally

Dear Comrades,  
I read with interest the article by Stuart Masters contained in 'Militant' No 323 [24th September] As I work in the Hotel and Catering industry, I know from my own observations that the workers are exploited.

One case in particular was a "pay rise" given to the chambermaids. They were given a "pay rise" and a shorter working day, which sounds fine, although the shorter day meant the loss of six hours a week which cancelled the rise in wages.

On top of this they were expected to do the same amount of work in less time. Couple with this the rise in prices of goods, shopping, clothes etc., that the workers must buy and you get a drop in wages.

Comrades, we must urge all workers in this and all other industries to join their unions, to fight for their rights, and ultimately for a socialist society.

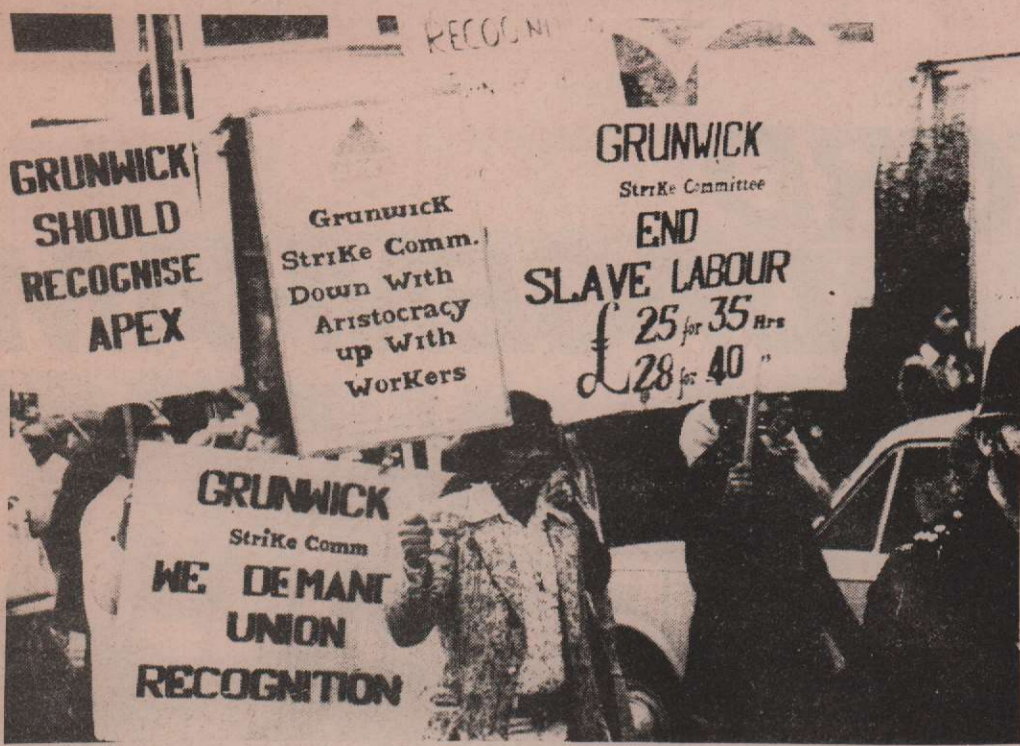
Yours fraternally,  
A Labour Party member,  
Eastern Region.







# GRUNWICKS



## The will to win

Last Friday lunchtime 200 workers from Grunwick's marched through Willesden, between the Cobbold Road and Chapter Road plants of the company, to publicise their fight for the right to join a union. The march was lively, it won a lot of support from the workers of the factories, bus depot and shops en route and demonstrated the militant mood of the workers as they enter their tenth week on strike.

But the issue of this official APEX strike was best summed up by a placard that showed a 'bully boy' employer sitting on the back of a worker, whipping him along. And that is no exaggeration whatsoever of the conditions of work at Grunwick's and the employers' attitudes! (See 'Life at Grunwick's', Militant 234). As the march went past the Chapter Road plant the managers appeared at an upstairs window filming the strikers with a cine-camera.

Other forms of intimidation—from threats of blacklisting to running down pickets—have clearly exposed what hard-bitten profiteers the employers are. With creatures like these to deal with the only way the workers can go back into the factory safely and without victimisation is if the strike ends in total victory. The workers realise this and they have the will to win.

At the meeting in the Brent Trades Hall following the march Jack Dromey and T Durkin of the Trades Council and APEX official Len Gristey all emphasised that Grunwick had the

**By Cathy Sandler**

(St Marylebone LPYS)

worst conditions they had ever come across, ruled over by the most hard-faced of bosses.

Trade union blacking of the firm has tightened the stranglehold around the bosses' necks, now its time to make the final squeeze and bring a speedy end to their resistance. **The key to that is the Post Office.** The much needed overseas orders, upon which the firm depends, have been successfully blacked not only at Heathrow but also at other airports around London. Now the bosses are getting their blacked orders delivered by the state through the post.

The promise which Tom Jackson, General Secretary of the Union of Post Office Workers, made to Roy Grant-ham of APEX in front of 2,000 delegates at the recent TUC conference to stop postal deliveries to Grunwick's must now be translated into action. The local Post Office workers support their fellow trade unionists at Grunwick's but need the go-ahead and protection of the union nationally before they can stop sorting and handling mail. **It's now up to the UPW leaders to give the word. This action would bring the company to its knees in a matter of days!**

The strikers are looking for other means of support. Deputations will be

sent to a meeting of London Trades Councils and the South East Regional TUC conference. In addition, they ask all trade unionists not to give their firms for developing at any Chemist dealing with: GRUNWICK, COOPER-PEARSON, BONUSPOOL or TRUECOLOUR.

The strikers' morale is as high as ever and an example of their initiative was a successful meeting held on Sunday for the strikers to bring their families and friends to discuss the strike, explain the role of trade unions and answer questions. As union officials and other supporters said, "We've taught them a lot, but they've taught us a hell of a lot too."

Members of the Labour Party Young Socialists were invited and several turned out to support the meeting. It is essential that Young Socialists and Labour Party members support this strike by making donations (St Marylebone LP gave £5 this week) taking collections and coming on the picket line or to the fund-raising socials. A victory for these low paid workers, many of whom are Asian and women and more prone to exploitation by the bosses, would give hope to thousands of other workers slaving away in non-union sweatshops. As every worker who has joined a union or the Labour Party knows 'a victory for one is a victory for all!'

Messages of support and donations to: The Secretary, Grunwick Strike Committee, Brent Trades Hall, Willesden High Road.

Ford—Southampton

# BOSSSES BACK DOWN

**By John Kelly**

(TGWU Shop Steward, Fords, Southampton)

A week long stoppage has just taken place at Fords Southampton plant. The dispute was started by the aggressive and abusive attitude of a foreman in the paint shop. He criticised a sprayer for the quality of his work. He had a long record of such conduct and this was "the last straw that broke the camel's back". The paint shop employees demanded that the foreman be taken out of the department. This was not done and they walked out for the rest of the day and received the support of the night shift who also walked out.

Next day there was a return to work on the understanding that, while discussions went on, the foreman would not work in the paint shop. This was agreed for a week while discussions took place. The union suggested a period of re-training for the foreman concerned but at the end of this week the management insisted that the foreman be re-instated to his position. On the 28th September the Foreman returned to work and this led to an immediate walk out of the day shift paint shop. This very rapidly led to the laying off of the whole of the day shift in the plant.

That night, the night shift paint shop surprisingly refused to come out in support of their day shift colleagues. By the following night working conditions in the spray booths had become dangerous through lack of cleaning by the day shift cleaners. Thirty sprayers walked out and then the paint shop followed by the whole night shift were laid off. By Thursday morning the whole plant was shut except for the press shop.

There is a long history of the press shop working when the rest of the plant is laid off. This causes bitterness among the men themselves. This time many of those laid off decided that the

company should not be making money while they received no pay. To bring the whole dispute to a speedy conclusion, it was felt that the whole plant must be shut down. To this end, some of the laid off shop stewards and workers set up a picket line. This was a spontaneous move from below. It met with great success. Hardly anything got in or out of the plant. As soon as lorry drivers heard the case they turned back. Steel, tyres, batteries, even canteen supplies were stopped.

On the Thursday and Friday, talks took place between management and the union, and on Saturday 2nd October an agreement was reached. This said that the troublesome foreman would be removed from his shift for two weeks and would then return under union and management supervision [he would have to be accompanied by a general foreman]. The management have been forced to back down but the situation has not been fully resolved.

We feel there are some important lessons to be drawn from this dispute. It is no use accepting lay-off on the company's terms. In this dispute it would have been easy for those laid off to have accepted this. By starting a picket line they forced the company into a weaker position by threatening to close down the entire plant, including that section which the company would still want working. This should be taken up and extended throughout the motor industry. This tactic also cuts across the company's trying to build up a privileged section of workers who are never laid off.

Secondly, this dispute showed the strength of the workers' solidarity. A small picket line [sometimes only one or two] easily persuaded lorries to stop and not enter the plant. Working class solidarity was not just a good idea it was a living reality, an example to defeat the pessimists in the labour movement who have no faith in the ability of working people to organise and change conditions for themselves.

## STUDENT HOMELESS OCCUPY

**By Rob Walsh**

(Brunel University Labour club)

At least 300 students at Brunel University, Uxbridge, about 100 of which are first year students, began term this week and found themselves homeless. Between 20 and 40 are sleeping in the main refectory building as part of a protest action to draw attention to the lack of homes and make the University authorities accept responsibility.

Last year the Students Union negotiated with the local council short life accommodation, but now the council has claimed them back. In any case the university has 7 lodgings officers so the Students Union should not have to deal with student housing problems. The university is trying to shirk its responsibilities. "Last year we all had terrible flu from living in that short life accommodation" said one Labour Club member.

The authorities can always hide the problem over the term. Students resort to sleeping in hallways or find some other unsatisfactory place because you'll take anything if you're homeless. At the moment at least 50 students are 'doubling up' in single rooms. This means two students without any study space in each room.

This situation illustrates all the injustices built into the "freedom" of "private enterprise" in housing. To get loans to finance new residences the college has to prove to the bank that there is a desperate housing shortage so that it can be confident that more homes will yield a profit.

To get loans for an extra 100 homes they have to prove that there are 1,000 homeless. Under "private enterprise" housing will only be profitable so long as a terrible shortage exists. On top of this loan-financed residences mean that students have to pay "economic rent", that means they are paying for a university home to be built out of their grant.

The university vice-Chancellor has stated that academic considerations should be the only criteria for selecting students. But in practice the staff find it impossible to select a student who they know will be homeless, so students get selected partly according to how much they can afford to pay for housing.

Every student without a proper place to live in will find it impossible to study properly. The Students Union is publicising the action with leaflets and to the local press and trying to get more students involved "we are going to stay in the Refectory until the university does something" is the attitude of the students.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Labour Club members have been at the forefront of this Student Union activity. The Labour Club has got off to a good start this term with 400 students attending a packed meeting to hear Tony Benn MP speak about the Labour Party conference. Another meeting is to be held today, Friday 8th, with Ernie Roberts, Assistant General Secretary AUEW, as the main speaker. A programme of meetings and activities is being planned out for the coming term and undoubtedly

## Rolls Royce — FIGHT FOR JOBS CONTINUES

**By Pat Craven**

(Blantyre Labour Party)

workers have refused to be bought off, and remain confident that they can win. On the one hand they must now be causing serious problems in the factories which use the components made in Blantyre, losing the company millions of pounds a day.

On the other hand the government is coming under more and more pressure to intervene and force the management of this 100% government owned firm to meet the workers' demands. When a deputation from the occupation lobbied the Labour Party conference last week, they were able to meet government Ministers Gregor MacKenzie and Leslie Huckfield, together with local MPs and trade union officials. They expressed anger at the

At the Rolls Royce factory in Blantyre, Lanarkshire, millions of pounds worth of machinery is still lying idle. Manufactured components for aircraft engines, worth millions more, are beginning to suffer from corrosion which will soon render them worthless. This is the price for the Rolls Royce management's stubborn refusal to give a pledge to the workers that the factory has a future as a part of the Rolls Royce group.

For 12 weeks, the 470 workers have been occupying the factory in defiance of the management's plan to close it down and transfer the jobs to Hillington, 13 miles away, leaving the already depressed Blantyre area with a loss of 470 skilled jobs.

The workers have seen this move as part of a continuous process of whittling down the whole labour force of the company. That is why they have

were being offered in the form of special allowances. Now they have been offered an even bigger carrot, in a new move by the management which in fact proves that the workers were right all along. Management have announced that there are to be 400 redundancies "by natural wastage and a voluntary severance payments scheme". They are quite clearly looking to the Blantyre workers to form the bulk of those applying for the severance payments.

Rolls Royce are thus cynically trying to bribe workers who have been on strike pay for 12 weeks in order to split the workforce, end the occupation and achieve the redundancies which they probably expected to get anyway by closing down the factory and transferring the jobs to an area beyond the reach of many of the workers.

Yet at last Friday's mass meeting, a mere 11 votes were cast for ending the



# SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HANG ON



Schmidt, in thoughtful mood after his narrow victory.

The coalition government of the West German Social Democrats (SPD) and the small Liberal party (FDP) was returned to office last weekend in the General elections. But the majority for the coalition was drastically reduced to only eight seats.

The vote of the Social Democrats declined from 45.8% in the last election to 42.6%. There was also a decline in the Liberal vote from 8.4% to 7.9%.

## Reactionary

The main opposition party the Christian Democrats achieved their second best result since 1945, gaining 2.8% in the share of votes. The other big business party the Christian Social Union, which is based in the province of Bavaria, also increased its vote. The CDU-CSU alliance now has the greatest number of seats in the Bundestag (parliament).

Socialists will be glad that the CDU-CSU alliance failed to get a majority. Their programme contained a string of reactionary measures. They wanted to clamp down on "subversives and radical organisations." As one of their chief spokesmen said, "We want to see a strong law to prevent members of radical organisations getting civil service or teachers jobs. It is not really a question of witch hunting, but we cannot have left wing teachers poison-

ing the minds of immature young people."

The CDU leader in Baden Wurttemberg advocated a solution to the problem of foreign migrant workers in Germany in a period of high unemployment. He suggested that "they are packed off home with 8,000 Marks each." Shades of Enoch Powell!

The CDU would change foreign investment policy by aiding regimes like the Chilean dictatorship. Behind such policies the hand of the right wing reactionary CSU leader Franz Josef Strauss is to be found.

## Stability

But the SPD leadership did little or nothing to counter these reactionary policies with any socialist answers. They campaigned 'on their record' and the need to maintain "stability". Voters were asked to vote for Schmidt, the leader, on a personal basis.

But the West German economy has been going through a difficult period. The slump of 1974-5 led to over one million unemployed. The boom this year has seen no reduction in that figure, particularly among the youth. This led to a considerable loss of votes from that age group, particularly in the heavy industry region of the Ruhr, which was hit by the slump.

It is clear that although production and profits are going forward this year, the days of the sustained growth of the 'German miracle' are over.

The prospects for survival of the coalition have been substantially reduced. The coalition under Willi Brandt had a twelve seat majority but lost it with defections by Liberal MPs to the CDU. Now it is only eight seats. Six of the ten Federal states are in the hands of the CDU-CSU. With the capture of one more the opposition would have a two-thirds majority in the Upper House (the Bundesrat) and could veto Bills put through by the coalition.

## By Les Smith

(Deptford LPYS)

# MILITANT

## FORD DAGENHAM

### BOSSSES PROVOKE STRIKES

Production of the new Cortina at Fords Dagenham continues to be interrupted by different stoppages by sections of workers.

The latest is a strike by four welders who are demanding extra staff to cover the new work load or increased payments by raising their grading to recognise their new responsibilities.

The other disputes that broke out over the last fortnight include a stoppage by twelve night shift door setters who refused to work on equipment they consider unsafe. Also there is the strike by 1,000 night shift workers who want full pay for the night they were laid off because of the door setters walk out, and guarantees against future lay offs.

The last dispute led to the occupation of the factory and the burning of vehicles and offices. Twenty-two men have been called before disciplinary boards over the incidents.

Below we include a report by P Waker and P Foster of Dagenham Young Socialists on the dispute and the reaction of the Tory press.



The Tory press greeted the Ford dispute with a typical anti-working class sensationalism. "Ignore the rights or wrongs of their case" said the Barking and Dagenham Advertiser headlines in block capitals on October 1st. The paper went on to refer to Ford's workers as "criminally irresponsible" and portrayed the whole dispute as "a few trouble



makers whipping up a stupid majority." Declaring the car workers as "stupid," "bully boys," and "dissidents", the Advertiser was living up to the usual standards of a Tory paper. It avoided stating the causes of the dispute and what the workers are asking for.

It was at 11.20 one Tuesday night that the Ford management curtly announced to the 'B' shift that there was to be no work that night. This was because of a dispute with the door setters over the safety of a new tool and manning levels in which they walked out. The lay off came on top of reduced pay and a night's work in trying to get home. Anybody who has tried to get about late at night in Dagenham will know, particularly those who have to get some distance, that it is no easy matter. It's bad enough during the day.

## Lay-offs

The Ford management have been very slow in trying to settle the door-setters dispute, avoiding acceptance of a plan recently put forward to settle it. There was a threatened strike by outside transporter drivers. In such a situation laid-off workers would have to be paid 80% of their money. This gives rise to the view that the provocative actions of the management have been deliberately carried out to see how far they can push the workers and induce a strike to save themselves money, in the event of an outside strike.

Bob Faulkes also spoke to J Clonmore, a TGWU night shift worker as he came out of the gates.

"This sending us home has been

going on for years. They never send us home before dinner. It is always about 11.30-12.00 at night. Many of the men are stranded. I work with men that live in Pittsea, Basildon, Canvey Island—miles away. And of course if you can get home what can you do? We've been asleep most of the day. It's bad enough being on nights anyway.



This has been deliberate action by Fords to create bad feeling against another; this is how it's been going on. It's about time we had some guarantees. Ford has offered us four hours fall back pay. To me this is acceptable, but we should get eight hours when we come in.

I'm against vandalism. We should go through the union, but the men are getting frustrated. You used to have an unwritten agreement that they wouldn't bring any changes through on nights, but management have changed that.

The door hangers want an official agreement. With these Cortinas they're using a big jig and you have to lean through the windows. They're trying to make the men work by almost nailing your bloody boots to the floor!

The union officials should get their fingers out and sort this out. We had a meeting and voted to stay out for eight hours pay. We voted against a picket, but we've set up a strike committee."

## FORD STRIKE SOUTHAMPTON

See page eleven

## PIT STRIKE

Miners at Bedling pit have gone on strike. They are demanding the removal of an overseer from the pit. This overseer attacked a miner last May with a six foot wooden stick which put the man out of action for four days.

Management kept the man in work until union officials threatened action. He was then transferred to another pit. Now he has been brought back to the pit.

His total punishment was three days pay when if a miner had committed the same offence he would have been sacked immediately.

Now the Beling miners have struck until the overseer is removed.

## STOCKPORT CLOSURE

EM Bray is a workshop on Meadow Mill industrial estate, stockport, making switchgear. We organised ourselves into the EETPU at the beginning of August this year. On September 10th we were told that the panel shop would close on the 8th October. The management refused work sharing or short time working so we called a meeting and

decided to occupy the works from the following Monday onwards. We have been in occupation since.

We want our jobs back. We are not getting any strike pay so the financial situation is grim. Please send donations to: Phil Kelly, 26 Ludlow Tower, Brinnington.

## £250

## DONATION

At our Students Union Meeting (Middlesex Polytechnic, Enfield) on Thursday 30th September, it was agreed to donate the sum of £250 to the Trico strike committee.

Prior to the union meeting I met four of the strike committee who came to a discussion with my course group. We are doing Industrial Relations and Trade Union Studies.

The Committee were so surprised at the figure we eventually settled for. I think this is an excellent show of how students really are understanding the problems the workers face when they strike—i.e. their HP, mortgages, etc. and often the family stress that's involved.

By John Pickles (Middlesex Poly Labour Club)

## TRICO— Blacking still not nationwide

The Trico equal pay strike, now entering its 21st week, is at a crucial stage. The management have recently made another offer to the strikers which was rejected as being nowhere near the equal pay they are demanding. But at the same time as the company has been running around trying to get the union to accept a deal, a number of disquieting things have begun to emerge around the running of the dispute.

At a special meeting of the Greater London Association of Trades Councils which discussed the strike, the President of the Southall AUEW admitted that no call had been sent to the AUEW Executive Council for them to impose a nationwide ban on the use of all Trico products. The

fact that after countless mass meetings where calls have been made for not only the complete blacking of Trico products but of all windscreen wipers, the local AUEW District Committee has not officially asked the Executive Council to implement blacking is an absolute scandal.

The key to winning this battle is national solidarity action. The AUEW EC must act immediately to back these workers. All AUEW branches and Districts must now demand that the EC takes action to bring this strike to a quick and victorious end.

## By Tim Higgins

(Shepherd's Bush AUEW)

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