

# Militant

**INSIDE:**  
**Labour**  
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**THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR AND YOUTH**

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## TORIES GIVE TAX CUTS TO RICH

'Maggie's great night of victory,' screamed the headlines after the Government's defeat last Monday on the Finance Bill. The standard rate of income tax now comes down from 34p to 33p in the pound.

The unholy alliance of all the 'Tory' forces in the Commons—Nationalists, Ulster Unionists, Liberals and the Conservatives themselves—combined to push the amendment through.

But while no-one is going to object to a little more in their take home pay, the Tories in no way had the plight of ordinary families in mind.

The penny reduction would

bring nothing extra to a family of four on £40 a week, and even if they brought home £80 the saving would be no more than 32p. If they had a mortgage of £10,000 then 16p per week is all they could thank Thatcher for.

The Tories themselves, and anybody else on over £8,000 a year, at least stands to make £62.50 every 12 months out of the deal.

Thatcher's benevolence starts with those at the top. If she gets in then just like Heath before, taxes will be cut 'at a stroke' for the rich, and of course we will have to pay the bill through less government spending on schools, hospitals and social services.



**"It is essential to restore the traditional way of conducting these affairs."**—

Margaret Thatcher speaking to Tory Bow Group on plans to curb union power, 6th May, 1978

# THATCHER ATTACKS UNIONS

Margaret Thatcher's latest hysterical attack on the trade unions is a sharp reminder of what life will be like if the Tories are returned to government.

The coming election, she promised, would be a fundamental clash between two philosophies—socialism and private enterprise—and thus it would be a watershed in history.

The 'Iron Maiden' claims that the 11½ million workers who have organised themselves into trade unions to protect their living standards now have too much power and

are intent on "eroding the law of the land."

Thatcher has a very limited class idea in mind when she speaks of "the law of the land." She means the bosses' law. She wants to preserve and extend the bosses' freedom to push workers around and sack them if they dare to use their basic rights, won through decades of struggle by the labour movement.

She lashed out against the power of the picket line—a basic principle of workers' organisation. Curtailment of picketing rights would be a scabs' charter, it would undermine all the basic democracy of shop floor organisation.

Harking back to the good old days of the Victorian

upstairs-downstairs manner, the Tory leader believes "it is essential to restore the traditional way of conducting these affairs."

Undoubtedly the "traditional" Tory way of dealing with workers would be along the same lines as the savage attacks of the Heath government against the trade union movement from 1970-1974.

### Tin Woman

They tried to bring in the hated Industrial Relations Act, which if implemented would have taken trade unions back to the 19th Century "Master and Servants" Acts.

But the tin woman would find it impossible to implement these plans, they would arouse the hostility of the entire working class. Huge class battles, dwarfing the

1974 struggles, would greet the Tories' proposals.

Preparing ruthlessly for open class confrontation, Thatcher darkly declared that "the state should have a monopoly of power...to defend the population from its enemies both within and without." This is a warning of more police attacks on workers, making even Grunwicks and Lewisham look mild.

"The forces concerned must be adequate to ensure essential services...whether that derives from a breakdown of order which the ordinary police cannot cope with or from a strike." This is a plain statement of intent to use the army as strike breakers, and to smash picket lines.

But this state monopoly would not extend to the social services and education. Our reactionary champion of the



**Anti-Industrial Relations Act march, 1971—if the Tories return, workers will take to the streets again.**

state at the expense of the poor, the sick and the old. In a new period of recession no jobs would be safe with the barbaric approach of the Tory leaders. They represent nothing but the selfish material demands of rent, interest and profit.

For working people, the return of the Tories would be a catastrophe. Labour must ensure that one thing Thatcher said does come true—the next election must really be a clash between socialism and big business.

Put the onus on the capitalists who own Britain to explain why their system cannot provide work for 1½ million, houses for one million homeless and a decent standard of living for millions more!

### Nationalisation

Labour must offer a programme that would guarantee jobs for all through a 35-hour week, and a useful public works scheme, decent housing and education, a reversal of public spending cuts and the abolition of poverty with a £70 minimum wage.

The only way of achieving this is to sweep away the profit system, which the Tories represent and which has miserably failed to meet society's needs, through the nationalisation of the major monopolies, banks and insurance companies, under workers' control and management, with compensation only on the basis of need.

**Ed Bober**

Executive, London  
Region Labour Party

profit system would try to pare back even further on the already decimated welfare



**EDITORIAL:**

# Labour Recovers

All three major parties claimed some consolation from last week's local election results. But most workers will want to know if these polls provide any accurate pointer to a future general election result, and whether a return of Thatcher's Tories has been made less likely.

Certainly there can be no jubilation among the Conservative ranks. A year ago with victories like Ashfield the Tories' popularity rating—according to the opinion polls—was 16% above Labour. Now it's two or three per cent. The local government results clearly confirm a certain drift back to Labour as the possibility of a reactionary Tory government looms nearer.

In England and Wales the Conservatives recorded a net gain of 60 seats. A far cry from the 300 they boasted they would win. After four years of Labour government, mass unemployment and falling living standards have driven some Labour voters to abstention, or even into the arms of the Tories. They are claiming great victories. But in what context?

The Tories took three councils in London but these boroughs last went to the polls in May 1974 when Heath was still leader, and the party's fortunes were at near rock bottom. So, too, with the Tory successes in the major cities, seats previously fought for in 1973, another poor year for the Tories. So some movement back to the Tories from these previous bad results is not so unexpected.

When it comes to the non-metropolitan councils, where the elections were held in 1976, the Labour government had two years of office behind it and had already begun to disillusion its supporters. Since that low point there has been an undoubted increase in Labour's vote.

For most workers, despite their lack of enthusiasm for Callaghan and Healey's policies, with the prospect of a general election, what alternative is there but to return to the Labour fold? Labour's cuts in public spending certainly have not won any extra votes, but "why let Tory councils in to prune back still further?" must be the attitude of many ordinary voters.

After the sacrifices that the working class have been forced to make over the last four years, with Labour in office, workers want to ensure that if any benefits accrue, they come their way. Under the Conservatives at local and national level that is clearly precluded.

These local election results confirm the trend for voters now to polarise between the two major parties. The other

political currents are being squeezed out. The Liberals' recent decline was partially arrested last week but still they lost seats.

However, the most decisive rejection of any third force came in Scotland. The SNP were pushed well back, losing up to 10% of their vote in some areas.

That section of their supporters who were sceptical Tories registering a protest vote have returned to their previous home, while with Labour's promise of some devolution, workers swung back, increasingly seeing the SNP for what they are—another right wing party resting for its finance on big business backers.

As for the National Front, in almost every area they suffered a rout. Buoyed up by their results a year ago, particularly in London, the fascists stood 600 candidates. Not one was returned. . . . .

Undoubtedly the message that the NF are nothing more than neo-Nazis is getting home. In areas where previously they have done relatively well—West Bromwich in Bradford their vote was down a third on twelve months ago. In Leeds it fell from 5% to 1.8%.

Despite all the encouraging signs from last week's polls, the inescapable fact is that the Tories are still ahead, and made sizeable gains. But with the organised working class determined to keep Thatcher out, turning the tide back in Labour's favour, an election this year becomes steadily more likely.

The Labour leaders want to go to the country with the chaos of the capitalist economy apparently under control. The record monthly deficit in the official reserves, and the warning signs that inflation will be mounting by the end of the year are likely to force their hand for an October election. But that is no guarantee that Thatcher can be kept at bay.

Even now at the eleventh hour, if the Labour government has the determination to bring in genuine socialist measures to solve the 'economic crisis' of low pay and high prices that working people and their families face, it can still rekindle the spark of enthusiasm for Labour.

The TUC and Labour Party NEC must insist that the government breaks with Tory policies, returns to the programme of its manifesto and of Labour Party conference and banishes the haunting spectre of a vicious right wing administration coming to power.

# Local Elections

For Liverpool, the local elections were a vital test for Labour. Nominally in control of the City Council, the Labour Party was actually in a minority to the Tories and Liberals combined.

The election was also a test for the appeal of the ideas of Marxism—in nine seats in Merseyside the election was fought on the ideas of 'Militant'.

In general there was a swing to Labour, but nowhere more so than in those wards where a socialist campaign was held. In Liverpool Church Ward, where 'Militant' supporter Mike Smith stood, the Labour vote was doubled.

In Old Swan Ward, where 'Militant' supporter Danny Krumbein stood, a fireman attending Labour's public meeting, who before it began had been extremely bitter about the Labour Party, at the end gave £1 to the collection and applied to join the Party to fight for a socialist programme.

## LIVERPOOL: MARXIST POLICIES WIN VOTES



Young Socialists out on the knocker

In my own ward, Tuebrook, the election was a major test of our programme. The ward had not re-selected the sitting councillor and had adopted instead a Marxist, Derek Hatton.

We appealed to the Communist Party, who had always stood in the ward, and persuaded them instead to support our campaign. We canvassed the whole ward,

not just to find out how people would vote, but also to persuade them to join, and made over 30 applications for membership of the Labour Party.

Over 100 copies of 'Militant' were sold during the campaign, with a number of requests for regular copies and bulk orders for factory sales.

We increased the Labour

vote by 50%, and pushed the Liberals into third place. The message is clear—if our fighting campaign and class policies were mirrored throughout the country, Thatcher would be shaking in her boots!

**Tony Aitman**

(Tuebrook Labour Party)

## NEWHAM: SUCCESS FOR THE LEFT

Newham was the only borough in London where Labour increased its number of seats. Six of the nine Ratepayers' seats were won back to Labour in Newham NE, giving a majority of 19-3 there, and 57-3 in Newham overall.

The workers were not frightened to vote for the new left-dominated Labour Party. Despite the propaganda of the local Tories—"get rid of the left wing dominated Labour, or are they Marxist, Trotskyist or Communist councillors?"

One of the defeated Ratepayer candidates was a pro-Prentice/Julian Lewis supporter who left the Labour Party last year.

In Manor Park Ward, Amarjit Singh became our first Asian councillor, increasing the Labour vote by 35%, and reducing the National Front to 7.8% [the year before it was 12½%].

In my own ward Labour's vote went up by 45%, largely

due to our leaflet which proclaimed that "socialist action is needed" and appealed to electors to "join us in the fight in the Labour Party for real socialist policies," while in Canning Town Labour received 1,500 as opposed to 600 votes last year, and pushed the NF back from 25% to 11% of the poll.

The Tories still greatly increased their support, mainly at the expense of the Ratepayer; but to some degree, in Labour too. But they still didn't come near to winning a single seat.

The possibilities now for Newham North East Labour Party clearly are immense. The immediate need is for the General Management Committee to select a parliamentary candidate who is prepared to stand up and fight for socialism.

**Tom Jenkins**

(Newham North East Labour Party)

## Newcastle—how to crush the NF

The National Front put up candidates in three wards on Tyneside, all Labour ones.

They have a full time organiser living in Forest Hill and after recruiting a few young karate enthusiasts, tried to develop their interest in daggers, guns, nazi uniforms and racial purity. They warned that Britain would be overrun by 'coffee coloured types', and by 'international communism'—which 'dominates the Labour Party.'

Forest Hall is regarded as marginal, but with a candidate who is well known in the area, and another councillor in the ward who is a 'Militant' supporter, it was possible to have an effective campaign. With help from Labour Party members, Young Socialists and Labour students, the whole ward was canvassed. Local leaflets were used, as well as the Labour Weekly

broadsheet against racialism.

The Labour candidate beat the Tory by a majority of 800, and the NF, in what appeared to be their stronghold, were pushed down to 46 votes. New people joined in Labour's campaign (including even an ex-member of the National Front) and it has given a boost to the LPYS branch.

The lesson is clear. If the Labour Party ignores the NF or allows itself to be intimidated, the NF will grow. But as soon as the Labour Party organises itself to put forward a socialist alternative to the young workers and the unemployed who drift towards them, then their movement will be reduced to two men and a dog—and they will start to bite each other.

**Robin Jamieson**

(North Tyneside Councillor)

## GAINS AND LOSSES

Metropolitan and non-metropolitan district councils

Labour 82 gains 107 losses  
 Conservative 141 gains 87 losses  
 Liberal 17 gains 21 losses  
 Independent 12 gains 33 losses  
 Ratepayers 5 gains 12 losses  
 Others 3 gains 0 losses

## SCOTLAND:

# Defeat for nationalism

The Scottish Regional Council elections resulted in a major setback for the SNP. After predicting big gains at the expense of Labour, they ended up with a net loss of eight seats. Several of their leading members were defeated.

Although the Tories achieved a net gain of ten seats, it was definitely Labour's victory, for they were defending seats last contested in 1974 at the peak of their popularity. Yet Labour lost only five seats and gained 16. They now control all the regions in the central, industrial belt.

A glance at the votes cast is enough to illustrate the extent of Labour's triumph:

	votes cast
Labour	595,484
Tory	451,155
SNP	312,063
Liberal	34,140
SLP	6,629

The best explanation of the result, ironically, was provided by an anonymous SNP spokesman quoted in 'The Scotsman': "We are seeing a return to class voting on a massive scale. The Party went

to West Central Scotland as a non-class party, and now it looks as if the whole strategy may have been a mistake."

But it would be wrong to conclude that the SNP is finished, or that the workers have given a vote of confidence to the policies of Labour. All the economic problems which gave rise to the growth of nationalism remain.

Unless Labour changes course and adopts fighting socialist policies, the SNP could still capitalise on the mood of anger that exists.

And it's no coincidence that some of Labour's most spectacular results were achieved by 'Militant' supporters, campaigning on the ideas of this paper. In Slateford/Hailes, John Mulvey unseated one of the leading figures of the SNP. In Linlithgow/Uphall, Donald Stavert cut the nationalist majority from 1,400 to 14!

Labour in Scotland must now take up the socialist policies adopted at this year's regional conference.

**Pat Craven**

(Dundee East LP)



# Colonel B case reveals State threat to Labour

"I know the identity of Colonel B, and claim my £5," would seem quite a fitting response to the recent publicity surrounding this infamous officer.

But perhaps what seems like little more than an amusing diversion for the national press, does contain some significance for the labour movement.

What the case does illustrate is the intricate network of the clandestine operations of the forces of the state, and the lengths to which they are prepared to go to preserve their anonymity.

The saga has its roots in the much publicised case against Philip Agee, the former CIA agent who published his inside information about the 'free world's' foremost espionage agency, and about its record of political assassinations and of overthrowing elected governments. Agee and journalist Mark Hosenball, subsequently deported, lifted the veil of secrecy just one inch from the illicit workings of these bodies. But that was still sufficiently unnerving for the full majesty of the law to be thrown at them.

But an ex-Army Corporal—John Berry—who had been attached to Signals Intelligence (SIGNIT) was particularly disturbed by the gagging of Agee and Hosenball and decided to reveal some of his own knowledge of the hidden powers of the state. Two more journalists also involved in the campaign to prevent the deportations arranged to meet Berry, with the intention of publishing his information, if worthwhile. The meeting had been arranged only by letter and telephone conversation, but the Special Branch, with their highly sophisticated means of surveillance, were conveniently waiting outside the house to arrest Campbell, Aubrey and Berry as they came out.

**Jeremy Birch**  
Selly Oak Labour Party

Events since the arrest should be even more perturbing to the labour movement. The three were charged under the Official Secrets Act with actions "prejudicial to the safety or the interests of the State." Campbell was indicted on a further charge, that information and photographs he had collected on communications and defence could be "of value to the enemy."

## Intelligence

The photographs were of such top secret establishments as the Post Office Tower, and all the information was culled from already published sources. On that basis anyone collecting material on the activities of the police or the Special Branch could be a 'security threat'!

So who is Colonel B? The chief prosecution witness at the first hearings against the three, and unable to reveal his identity as that would pose another threat to national security. He is the head of Electronics Intelligence.

It is this arm of the intelligence machine that

particularly operates within Britain itself, engaging in political surveillance. No wonder Colonel B wanted to maintain his cover and also thought that "any reference to SIGNIT in the media is damaging."

Now to add to the charges and counter charges, contempt proceedings have been started against those journals that dared to name the man behind the mask. But really, identifying Colonel B is of little consequence compared to the main task of identifying all these activities as a direct threat to the organisations of the working class, and the democratic rights they have fought for.

**The state machine is a weapon in the hands of private enterprise, to protect its power and privilege against the inevitable opposition of the majority of the people. The intelligence services exist to pick out those who most consciously fight against the continuation of capitalism, to counteract their efforts and to prepare if necessary to take measures against them in the future. Secrecy is all important, to allow capitalism to still claim it respects the rights of freedom of thought, political expression and organisation.**

MIS and MI6 do not even have an official existence in peace time, and so not even the formal Parliamentary scrutiny of their work and financial provision is allowed. The Official Secrets Act allows the state to move against anyone who transgresses its own rules of confidentiality.

Lord Denning, when presiding over the Hosenball case, was quite open: "When



**national security is involved our cherished freedoms may have to take second place.**" (Where big business is concerned its interests and the nation's are synonymous—JB.)

What should be done? So far the Labour government's record of challenging the forces of the state is hardly decisive. Merlyn Rees signed the deportation orders for Agee and Hosenball, while Labour's Manifesto commitment to "replace the Official Secrets Act" like all too many of those promises, still awaits implementation.

Worse still there actually appears to be direct encouragement by some Labour union leaders must be compelled to make a stand. The last TUC Conference

Ordinary workers will be demanding an answer to the latest apparent revelation.

According to the 'Sunday Express' MI5 and MI6 have been instructed "to combat growing Communist influence within the Labour Party," and to report direct to the Prime Minister. Of course what the forces of the state mean by "Communist influence" is anyone on the left, trying to return the Labour Party to its original socialist aims.

## Future

Socialists will ignore all these developments at their peril. The Labour and trade union leaders must be compelled to make a stand.

The last TUC Conference

unanimously condemned the arrest of Berry, Campbell and Aubrey, but a campaign must be waged for the charges against them to be dropped. The Official Secrets Act and the other artificial barriers to the dissemination of information should be repealed, and those institutions spying, in reality on the working class, should be wound up.

**One thing is definite, however. The construction of socialism—which will triumph despite the reels of microfilm and recording tape—will not only end these activities but will find far more productive uses for the technology and expertise that has gone into snooping on behalf of capital, and employ them on behalf of the whole of society.**



# MAY DAY

## Celebrate Strength

"The British worker, far from being idle and strike-happy, works for lower rates of pay and fewer holidays than anywhere in Europe, except for the Irish Republic. Yet we are expected to pay for the drop in Britain's share of world trade

from 25% 30 years ago to 5% today which has been due to the lack of investment in productive capacity.

"In the TV industry, each shopfloor worker is backed by only £4,000 capital investment, whereas the Japanese

## Labour March Banned

Clear proof that the labour movement cannot rely on the police to protect democratic rights against the fascists was given on May Day in Leeds. On the contrary, police powers to impose bans on marches are a weapon in the hands of the state which can be used against the labour movement.

1,400 police greeted trade unionists in Leeds as they assembled for their traditional May Day march. The march had been banned under the same order used against the National Front.

Police were lined up shoulder to shoulder all around Woodhouse Moor, where the march was to start from, with several squads of a hundred or more marching around, and a helicopter in the sky.

As the march set off the Chief Steward (an AUEW

member) and the Trades Council secretary were arrested and taken to the Town Hall, where the marchers formed a mass picket outside. Police outnumbered us two to one. The Leeds trade unions must get to work, to ensure such massive turnouts for future marches that the police would not dare to prevent the labour movement asserting its democratic right to meet and organise.

These same police protected the National Front at their election meeting on April 22nd. We cannot rely on the police, independent class action is the only way to stop the fascists, mobilising opposition from the trade unions and the immigrant community to carry out our own ban.

**John Ingham**  
(LPYS National Committee)

TV tube worker has £21,000 at his elbow

"Even a renewal in the economic situation, as in 1935-6, would not be in workers' interests, but if capitalism is allowed to continue its existence, it will eventually indulge in vandalism and hooliganism on a world scale again, as it did in the second world war."

This point was made by Andy Bevan (Labour Party Youth Officer) at a LPYS May Day rally against unemployment on Merseyside.

## School Students Against NF

About forty students from Walthamstow Senior High girls' school plus a large contingent of teachers joined a picket outside their school last week, in protest against a National Front Election meeting. Over two hundred people attended the picket which had been organised at three days' notice by the Waltham Forest Anti-racist Committee.

The girls from the school were outraged by the local Labour council letting the school to the fascists. They distributed their own leaflet and chanted "Get out of our

school, fascists!" until they were hoarse. Not only the school students but also many members of the local labour movement were angered by three members of the education committee who signed an agreement to let the fascists use the school free.

## Police

The meeting had only been allowed on the promise that it would be open to the public, but it did not turn out that way.

About three hundred police guarded the school with dog vans in the side streets and a radio control van parked

**Lesley Holt**

to defend their jobs.

In the discussion from the floor comrades spoke of the LPYS's hard work in the local elections, and the impact of the ideas of 'Militant'. Also they stressed the need to support the call for a stoppage on May 9th, called by the local Trades Council.

Andy Bevan put these local struggles into a perspective of regional, national and international unemployment. Merseyside had a proud history of militancy, but now there is confusion. The main task of the LPYS and the movement is how to organise a fight back.

**Kirkdale Labour Party**

Unions have made the call for a 35-hour week, and now the T&GWU for a 4-day, 32-hour week, but this must be linked to massive pay rises, an end to wage restraint, and a living wage.

"May Day is a celebration of workers' strength, originally around the slogan for a shorter week: the movement must take this up again, with a socialist programme as outlined in the LPYS demands. With such a programme to give a lead, particularly to the youth, we could be assured against a future of misery under capitalism."

outside. They would not let anyone through to the school without a National Front membership card or a nod from a National Front steward. One woman came stragglingly throughout the evening. Many of the pickets were told to get off the streets and twenty were arrested on their way home.

Even when the labour movement mobilises on a small scale like this, fascist meetings can be limited to handfuls of madmen and

thugs so that their lies only pollute each others' minds. But the only way to really stamp out these verminous meetings is by a massive mobilisation of the labour movement so that, despite police protection, the fascists are crushed and denied any platform for their anti-democratic activities. Hopefully Waltham Forest is one Labour group that will not fall for the tricks of the NF again and our schools and public halls will be barred from the fascists.

**Janice Dale**

Walthamstow Labour Party



# LEFT & RIGHT

## What price patriotism?

Ever heard of that noble institution the Monarchist League? Upholders of our Royal heritage, patriots to a man and naturally ardent opponents of the socialist movement. Now the Chancellor [whatever he does] of this reactionary bunch, with a lump in his throat and an ache in his heart, has been forced to leave his beloved shores. The tax burden don't you know.

The Marquis of Bristol is joining the ranks of the rich and famous in tax exile, and crying all the way to the bank of Monte Carlo. His 23-year-old son—Earl Jermyn—tells all: "I'm hardly paying any tax at all...the rotten weather has made up my mind."

So Royalty beware, if it's a wet summer those loyal subjects among the idle rich will be off to sunnier [and cheaper] climes, doubtless lambasting the greedy, lazy workers on the way.

## ...or internationalism?

It makes you wonder when the British military top brass have a week away and suggest teaming up with 'Communist' China. The leaders of the two countries surely cannot have very much in common. No? Well apparently keeping afloat the reactionary regimes in Southern Africa is one aim they share.

China buys \$70m of gold a year from South Africa. But worse still it purchases 70,000 tons of chrome annually from, of all places, Smith's Rhodesia. Even imperialist Britain officially at least still maintains trade sanctions with the white controlled regime. No such moral scruples for the Chinese bureaucracy. "Made in the Chinese People's Republic" is a familiar label in Rhodesian stores, according to the 'Johannesburg Financial Gazette'.

While China, and Russia come to that, may have overthrown private enterprise, there's little to distinguish the foreign policy of their privileged upper layers from the ruling class over here. Their first consideration is their own material interests and the separate needs of the nations they dominate. So much for world socialism and the struggles of the exploited of the world. That seems to be as far from their thoughts as it is from Sir Neil Cameron's.

## Home Sweet Home

But if you don't fancy travelling too far, there are one or two places coming up on to the British property market. Charlie Clore, owner of nearly all the High Street shoe shops, is on the move. It's the preservation of the environment that's bothering him. Well his own environment, anyway.

Thoughtlessly, his neighbours, the American Air Force, want to develop their airfield to take supersonic planes. The ones that go bang in the night. So Sir Charles had no alternative but to put the house and the 2,000 acres, herd of 500 prize cows and stud farm up for sale. But as for those of us fed up with the rumbling of the No. 18 bus past the bedroom window, or the rattling of the 7.15 along the railway line at the back, whether we can get out as easily is seriously in doubt. If you fancy bidding for the Clores' residence, the asking price is £4 million.

But if something smaller would do, you might be interested in a one-bedroomed flat in Kensington. It belongs to Black Country Labour MP Colin Phipps, so perhaps it's a little nearer the ordinary family's price range. Well, not quite. It's going for £104,000 to be exact.

The sumptuous life style of the owners of industry is hardly unexpected, with socialist policies the working class will deal with their wealth. But as for workers' representatives who seem to live at a level nearer to the capitalists themselves, a little questioning is not out of place. If they earned the average wage, lived in a council house or an ordinary semi, perhaps the need to fight for a socialist solution to the housing question would seem a little more urgent.



# 'Saturday night fever'

## IN NEW YORK'S DISCOS

'Saturday Night Fever' is not only about John Travolta dancing, it is also about the whole despair and hopes of working class youth in New York.

### Nobody

John Travolta plays an Italian catholic who works in a dead-end job in a handyman's store, and whose only pleasure in life is the disco on Saturday night, which takes all his week's wages.

At work and at home he is a nobody. He is unfavourably compared with his brother who is a priest (which is probably better than having your kid at college).

But on the dance floor he is king. There he really has the chance to break out of the hopelessness of New York life.

Racial antagonism between the Italians, the Puerto Ricans and the negroes provides a background to the struggle for existence in the

city. Toni realises in the film that this hatred is just an excuse to unload their own frustrations.

### Symbol

The real desperation in their lives is shown graphically as one kid throws himself off a bridge into the river. His girlfriend was pregnant, the church condemned abortion, there was no way out.

Toni in many ways is a symbol for youth today—all have talents, yet few have any

outlet for them. Many languish as Toni does in dead-end jobs or on the dole. Small wonder then that their frustrations spill over into violence.

'Saturday Night Fever' neither poses nor answers any class questions but the aspirations of the working class are there to be seen, and the results of those hopes being frustrated are also apparent.

Pete Lee

(Cambridge Labour Party)

# The Surrealist view

By Peter Harris

(Thanet East Labour Party)

With approximately 4,000 people a day visiting the recent Surrealist exhibition in London and the resurgence of interest being shown worldwide in the surrealist movement and on the question of culture and art in general, the book "Andre Breton and the First Principles of Surrealism" by Frank Rosemont is an invaluable text.

Rosemont met Breton (1896-1966) founder, leading theorist and principal spokesman for the surrealist movement in 1966 and later that year organised the first indigenous American surrealist group. He played a major role in organising the 1976 world Surrealist Exhibition in Chicago where he lives and edits "Arsenal/Surrealist Subversion", the English language journal of the international surrealist movement.

### Revolutionary

Starting with a biographical sketch and historical account of the movement Breton led for nearly half a century, Rosemont goes on to dispel the myths that surrealism believed in male dominance, or that it was an intellectual elitist art movement. He also shows that Marxism and surrealism, far from being in opposition, are complementary, for the surrealists maintained that social action has its own method in dialectical materialism and that the liberation of man, the liberation of the mind, can result only from the socialist revolution, with the reorganisation of society under the leadership of the working class as Marx and Lenin explained.

Surrealism began as an integral part of the world revolutionary ferment between the two world wars, of which the October revolution

in Russia and the formation of the 3rd International were the major social repercussions.

Contrary to prevalent mis-definitions, Rosemont explains that surrealism is not an aesthetic doctrine nor a philosophical system nor a mere literary or artistic school. In fact, surrealism aims at nothing less than complete human emancipation, the reconstruction of society.

### Stalinism

Politically, the surrealists consistently defended the perspectives of proletarian revolution and pooled their resources in the cause of the French Communist Party in 1927 when the overthrow of capitalist society seemed possible only through the agency of the Communist Party.

Their earnestness in the communist movement is evidenced by their association almost from the beginning with the Left Opposition, i.e. with authentic Bolshevism as against the perversions which emanated from Stalin's bureaucracy. The surrealist break with the CP came in 1936.

The French general strike of 1936 offers an especially glaring illustration of the CP

the revolutionary watchwords, calling for workers' defence guards and a struggle for power. The Communist Party, however, as typified by one of its leaders, Thorez said, "It is necessary to know how to end a strike!"

In 1947, the French surrealists defined their political position detailing their divergence from Stalinism and re-affirming "their indefectible attachment to the revolutionary tradition of the working class movement from which the Communist Party deviates more and more each day."

The surrealists recognised that capitalist culture aims primarily at drilling the mind in mechanical responses. Consequently people are deprived of the real power of independent thought and creativity and are under enormous pressure to rely on the material served up by big business as in entertainment, education, social values, etc. which naturally tend to reinforce the good and efficient functioning of capitalism, offering escape and consolation and preaching acceptance of

surrealists aimed to free the imagination from psychic and social repression so that the hitherto restricted and exclusive domain of poets and artists would be acknowledged as "the common property of all." To the rationalist, dreams are an unimportant by-product and poetry a harmless diversion, but the surrealists hold that poetry, dreams and the unconscious contain the key to radical new perceptions of the world and human relations. Utilising the discoveries of Freud, for instance, they aimed to overcome the old constraints of traditional logic, aesthetics, reason and morality and probe the deepest recesses of consciousness.

The book contains details of Trotsky and Breton's meetings and their consequent collaboration in producing a document calling for artistic freedom from all outside controls. This was in direct opposition to the prevalent Stalinist conceptions of 'proletarian culture' and socialist realism which attempt to impose on the artist the exclusive duty of describing workers' misery and the struggle for liberation in which the working class is engaged.

Today efforts are being made to convince us that surrealism belongs to the past and now has no practical relevance, but the information contained in the book conclusively disproves this argument, for there are today surrealist groups in over 40 countries collectively publishing their aims and ideas and exhibiting these works all around the world.

On the political plane the 'true' surrealists are still totally committed to fighting against every intent upon oppression and mystification and are wholeheartedly taking up the cause of the international emancipation of the working class as a prerequisite for the liberation of humanity.



André Breton and Diego Rivera discussing with Trotsky

leaders' role. In that mass upheaval, which offered an unprecedented opportunity for revolutionary intervention, the surrealists defended

the system. Consequently art and poetry are deliberately isolated from ordinary human activity.

In opposition to this the



# AUEW WHY DID THE RIGHT WIN ?

The election of Terry Duffy as president of the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers is a bitter set-back to engineers throughout Britain in their struggle to fight off wage restraint and mass unemployment.

The AUEW is the second largest union in Britain: this result therefore is a blow against the whole of the labour and trade union movement.

For the moment the right wing have consolidated their grip on the union machinery. Not only was Bob Wright, the Broad Left candidate for the presidency, defeated, but altogether 24 Broad Left candidates were defeated in these elections, including the sole remaining Communist Party member on the EC, Les Dixon. The right wing now have a majority on the EC of six to one with Maoist Reg Birch being the only left winger.

The press were ecstatic at Duffy's victory. Jubilant banner headlines have been daubed across their pages in celebration. "Anti-strike moderate sweeps into top AUEW job," rejoiced 'The Times'.

At a time of rising militancy in the factories the bosses and their kept press imagine that they have secured a firm ally at the very top of the trade union movement.

Three years of wage restraint have taken their toll. Living standards have fallen at a greater pace than at any time in the whole of this century. **But the mood in industry is changing fast.** The growing incidence of strikes shows that ordinary AUEW members are fighting back. The bosses hope that Duffy will stem this rising tide of the class struggle.

## No Strikes

Duffy has assured them he will try to do just that! "My policy is to project our members' minds beyond the immediate pay packets." Those were his consoling words to the bosses' press. He went on to spell out bluntly that he favours wage restraint.

He wants "continuous production." He is "against strikes." Only when the pressure from the members is unbearable will Duffy support a strike call, and then only as a means of diffusing the situation. His comment that: "Sometimes short, sharp strikes are a good safety valve," was an anticipation of such actions.

Rather than aiding the fight for better wages and conditions, he has already

## By Ted Mooney

advertised his commitment to 24-hour shifts, an extension of hazardous, anti-social night working.

The bosses are hoping for a new era of Carron's Law, when the old right wing clique dominated the engineering union and ruled by victimisations and expulsion of militants and by blatantly trampling over the democratic decisions of the union. On the wave of their euphoria the bosses anticipate not just a consolidation of the right in the AUEW. They are looking to the creation of a massive right wing craft union incorporating the AUEW and the EETPU.

If the terms of a merger of these two unions protected the interests of both memberships, then no-one who stands for the maximum unity of the working class could possibly oppose such a move, even if the merger were to be carried out under right wing leadership. But the merger terms at present circulating in some parts of the AUEW amount to a destruction of all the best traditions of union democracy. Many in the EETPU look to the procedures of the AUEW as an example of the kind of democracy they want in their own union. This applies especially to the election of all full time organisers.

## Democrats

The present proposals being mentioned include: the scrapping of elections of AUEW officials and the introduction of appointments, the dismantling of the district committees and the Final Appeals' Court, and conferences—every three years—of about 800 branch representatives. These proposals come from so-called "democrats"! They are an attempt to create the kind of business trade unionism so beloved by the right wing American trade union leaders. Active workers in the AUEW must fight for a merger which will safeguard these principles. The EETPU workers, too, should fight for a powerful consolidated union on this basis.

It is not so many years ago that the right wing were utterly crushed in the union elections. The questions are thus posed in front of the AUEW left wing: **How has this victory for the right been made possible? And what lessons can we learn for the future?**

Certainly the part played by the press was significant. The right wing have secured postal

balloting for union positions (with the help of the law courts). But, though every member on the electoral list receives a ballot paper, only the branches receive an election address! Most members simply did not know who they were voting for.

The mass media went out of their way to "inform". The Labour correspondent of 'The Times' referred to the "judicious use of sympathetic media."

## Shop Stewards

Added to this, Duffy admitted in a TV interview that around 200,000 eligible members were not on the electoral lists. He blamed the members. But the General Secretary of the union, his fellow right-wing stalwart, John Boyd, prides himself on efficiency!

But it would be wrong for the left in the union to hide behind these factors and ignore the part played in this defeat by the left itself: the leadership given to the union when the left were in control, the way in which they campaigned and the programme they put forward in this election.

The focus of struggle in the AUEW has swung into the factories, particularly with the development of the shop stewards' committees and the lack of co-ordinated national struggles. National struggles for wages and conditions throughout the industry have, for the present, been almost totally replaced by struggles in individual factories and combines.

Consequently, although some of the long time militants still play a part in the branches and the shop stewards' committees, many of the new young fighters in the factories are not yet attending branch meetings regularly, or playing a full part in the activities of the union's left wing.

The Broad Left in many areas of the country is now a shadow of an organisation. It was always only an election machine. Now it does not even do that very well!

## Broad Left

An important factor here is the switch of Hugh Scanlon from a left wing position to one where he now speaks in favour of income controls. As a result many ordinary rank and file members have become sceptical about the union left wing.

The 'Morning Star' suggests that perhaps if more 'Morning Stars' were sold then Bob Wright might have been successful! They miss the point. The fall in the sales of the 'Morning Star' in engineering, and the demise of the CP-dominated Broad Left are part of the same process. They both reflect the growing discontent among established left wingers at the role played by the CP and the Broad Left as a whole in the AUEW.

**It would have been impossible for them to criticise Scanlon's policies because for years while he was union president, his programme was identical to the CP's.**

Both put forward ideas for manipulating the capitalist economy including such measures as import controls.

# WHY DID THE RIGHT WIN ?



Photo: John Sutrook (Report)

AUEW delegation protest as Scanlon casts vote in support of wage restraint at TUC conference 1977

Neither thought it necessary to link a socialist programme to the immediate struggles. That was always left for "later". Both the CP and Scanlon stood by the idea of dissipating the power of the union in small scale guerrilla strikes. This was thought to be more militant than a full national mobilisation!

The rise in living standards which took place in the '50s and '60s has now ended. Even to restore most of the gains of those decades will require an enormous struggle on the part of the workers. This is the result of the world crisis of capitalism and, within that, the organic sickness of British capitalism.

Increasingly the trade union leaders are forced either to link economic struggles to the fight for the socialist transformation of society, or accept the crisis of capitalism and try and help the bosses overcome this crisis at the expense of the workers, merely to have the process repeated again and again.

Scanlon's acceptance of wage restraint arose from his accepting the capitalist system as the perspective for the long-term future. Many on the left were not sure that Bob Wright would act differently. There was not the enthusiasm this time for the kind of campaign which helped Scanlon become president. This could have been changed if the left had held mass meetings all over the country, not only to rally support but also to discuss the lessons of the past and iron out a programme and strategy for the future.

## Carron

For the moment the right wing will be flushed with confidence. They will tighten their grip for a time. But the possibility of a new Lord Carron emerging is highly

unlikely. The situation is fundamentally different now to when Carron was union president. Carron's reign was at a time of economic boom when living standards rose considerably. Nowadays the bosses fight viciously any serious attempt to increase living standards. Capitalism cannot afford it!

The new leaders of the AUEW will thus be riding an angry tiger. The shop stewards' committees are already taking initiatives. If there is no lead from the union hierarchy then the lead will come even more decisively from stewards in the factories.



Terry Duffy

It is not even certain, by any means, that the attempted merger with the EETPU will be successful. The mass of the members of the union could well be roused into action in defence of the democracy of their union when they see the exact proposals of the right wing, and once the nature of this new leadership is brought home as a result of their policies.

But even if this merger is carried through, the right wing will not be able to rest content for long. They will find themselves at the front of an even more massive and volatile union.

A period of turmoil in the AUEW is on the cards. Those who imagine that the right wing will deliver increased living standards by doses of "moderation" will be rapidly disillusioned. A new generation of young militants is being blooded in battle. This future leadership will grow apace in the struggles that loom ahead.

The left wing in the AUEW will be recreated by the youth of the union. The old jaded left leaders will be by-passed by the fresh young class fighters who will emerge. These new militants will not want to repeat the mistakes of the old. They will be eager to discuss and iron out a fighting programme.

This victory for Duffy, though a defeat for the left, will not prove to be a lasting defeat. The confidence of the right will wane under the impact of a movement by the members.

## Marxists

Bob Wright said that the result showed the members wanted right wing policies. That is a thousand miles from the truth. The members want decent conditions, a living wage and a job. They were disappointed by the lead of the left. They will recoil from the lead of the right.

**It is up to the Marxists in the AUEW to re-double their efforts, to work as never before and demonstrate that only the programme of Marxism can protect the interests of the AUEW members and the working class as a whole, both in the day-to-day struggles and the fight for a socialist future.**



Foundry section conference—AUEW amalgamation could well now be shelved.



# LABOUR WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

## A fighting programme to organise working women

By Margaret Creear

(Delegate, Royton and Wardle Women's Section)

**Labour Women's Conference this year meets at a time when the effects of the crisis of capitalism, particularly wage restraint and cuts in public expenditure, are hitting working class women very hard. All the reforms, legislation and budgets of the last few years have done little to soften the blow.**

At work, we've seen the limitations of the Equal Pay Act. In spite of the fact that pay claims under the Act weren't limited to 10%, women's wages this year have risen by only 11.9%. The gap between men and women's hourly earnings actually increased from 50p to 56p.

Social services have been cut back, and particularly the NHS. Since the government published the White Paper in December 1977, on Prevention and Health, all proposals for routine cancer screening for women have been dropped, thus certainly condemning many women to premature death. Women's opportunities to go

out to work or to spend time on their own interests have been further decreased by the cuts in nursery education, the first to go under the cutbacks in education.

### Nurseries

These measures have been received with bitter resentment by working class women. Many have tried to fight back, opposing nursery closures and school meal charges. Many of the most downtrodden workers in sweatshops and now homeworkers are organising themselves.

**It's no accident that the subject which attracts the largest numbers of resolutions is that of nursery education and day care.** Every working class woman understands the restraints which having individual responsibility for child rearing places on her.

Recently we've seen attempts by the government to move away from state provision to private provision with the encouragement of child minding.

But the resolutions correctly put the emphasis on state provision.

In Bellfield, a large working class area of Rochdale, mothers of children from 6 months to 5 years were asked what sort of nursery provision they would like. The replies should leave the Labour government in no doubt. 80% wanted full time nursery provision; 12% wanted part-time nursery places; 2% playgroups and only 1% wanted to leave their children with child-minders.

ment. Only the nationalisation of these firms can ensure a supply of cheap, safe drugs.

### The Law?

As with all conferences of the labour movement, one of the most important subjects discussed this year will be the **the question of racialism.**

While calling for the banning of the NF from public halls, many Women's sections still see the use of the legal system as the way to fight racialism,

solution states that many attempts to deal with the problem, such as the Job Creation scheme, have barely scratched the surface. It calls on the Labour Party to formulate an alternative socialist policy to end unemployment, based on an increase in public works, a 35-hour week without loss of pay, and the nationalisation of the banks and major monopolies (with minimum compensation on the basis of need) under workers' control and management, to enable a planned re-

with capitalists, in spite of raking in record profits, still showing no inclination to invest, the labour movement can look forward to a period of bitter struggle against the attempts of capitalists to make the working class pay for the crisis.

The Women's Section will have to choose between seeing the conditions under which working class women live and work deteriorate further or committing itself to struggle against capitalism and for a socialist society where



Occupation in a Liverpool clothing factory—women, especially young women, are playing an important part in the trade unions  
Photo: John Smith (IFL)



Mass meeting of the South Oxford Nursery Occupation committee, who took over a nursery to fight closure  
Photo: Laurence Sparham (IFL)

The high price being paid by young mothers for the lack of nursery provision was also highlighted in the survey, with 40% of working class mothers suffering from clinical depression and 20% relying on tranquillisers because of depression or 'nerves'. This says nothing of the high price paid eventually by the children themselves, who are isolated in their homes without the variety of experience to develop their abilities.

This section, along with the NHS, shows the concern of Women's sections for the services at present being decimated. **Resolutions on the NHS** call for vast increases in services, the reduction of waiting lists and the expansion of preventative medicine. The resolution from Bleenau-Ffestiniog Women's council calls for a public stake in the pharmaceutical industry to ensure that research is determined by need rather than by profit."

This reflects a growing understanding of the role of private ownership of the drugs industry in the NHS. But the effect isn't confined to research but results in extortionate prices for drugs and equip-

in spite of its ineffectiveness in the past and the obvious class and racial bias shown by Judge McKinnon in his interpretation of law.

Brighton Kempton's resolution points out that attempts to use the law have proved almost useless. It calls instead for Labour Parties to take up the struggle against racialism and for this work to be co-ordinated. But the main emphasis must be to recognise that racialism cannot be done away with by passing laws. As the Brighton resolution pointed out, as long as we maintain the capitalist system with its hardships and shortages of the basics of life, racialism will always be a threat to the unity of the labour movement.

### 35-hour Week

The section on unemployment reflects the deteriorating position of women along with the rest of the working class. More flexible hours, a shorter working week and earlier retirement are demands put forward in several resolutions.

Liverpool, Garston's re-

investment programme into industry and jobs for all.

The vast majority of the resolutions on the agenda are critical of the present situation and the lack of effective government policies to deal with it. Whilst demanding improvements in the standard of living and services for working people, very few resolutions attempt to deal with the question of why, after 16 years of Labour government since 1945, and conference resolutions year after year calling for the same reforms, so little has been achieved.

**Particularly significant in this respect is the resolution from Llanelli Women's Section supporting the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment.**

This reflects the growing influence of the LPYS in the labour movement. But it also points a way forward for the Women's Section. As the Young Socialists has already done, the Women's Section has to recognise that the decrepit capitalist system stands in the way of the programme they want to see implemented. With the continued decline of manufacturing industry and

the commanding heights of the economy, nationalised under workers' control, will be planned to meet the needs of all working people.

If the Women's Section were to adopt the programme and analysis of Marxism put forward by the LPYS, they could go out to working women and offer a way of fighting back against the conditions now being imposed on them in the interests of propping up capitalism.

Where this has been done, instead of a decline in the activity of the Women's Section, there has been an increase in membership. In Rochdale and district, it's meant the formation of two new women's sections in just over a year. The possibility of changing society attracted many young women who hadn't seen any point in being involved in politics before.

If the Women's Section is to play a significant role in the fight for socialism, it must adopt the socialist policies and the campaigning spirit of the youth section and give a lead to the thousands of women now looking for a solution to their problems.



Nurseries—not enough places, not enough resources, yet the Tories want to close this one in South Oxford  
Photo: Laurence Sparham



# The curing is worse than the disease

A review of two studies of health dangers for hospital workers

By Ian Burge

(Secretary, London Hospital  
Joint Shop Stewards Committee)

Hospitals, believe it or not, are among the most dangerous places you can work. There is both a great variety of hazards to which workers and patients are subjected, and generally very low standards of health and safety.

## Poisoning

In recent years there have been a number of well-publicised scandals, ranging from outbreaks of infectious disease and fires, to poisoning and unhygienic conditions in kitchens. Moreover, working conditions in the hospitals, already abysmal, are continually worsening as standards of cleaning and maintenance drop through 'economy' measures.

In the East Essex Health Authority, for example, there is a backlog of maintenance amounting to 2¼ million, and improvement needs of £4.7 million, neither of which 'include major elements but relate to the smaller, very numerous ways in which the estate fails to meet service needs.'

There is obviously a great need for hospital workers and shop stewards to uncover conditions at their hospitals and consider how best to fight for improvements. Shop Stewards' Committees should always be concerned about standards of health and safety, but in some situations it will be in order to form special trade union 'health and safety committees' made up of elected TU health and safety representatives and any shop stewards who wish to participate.

When health authorities were asked to improve fire precautions to fire certificate standards, the Tower Hamlets district made a study of costs. At 1973-4 prices it would have cost about £2 million. Nationally, we might assume the figure to run into hundreds of millions. Except for their offices, hospitals and residential homes are not at present covered by the Fire Precautions Act.

Staff shortages can in many ways create more problems. A couple of years ago, a mental hospital at Bromsgrove was said to lock its fire doors at night because there was not enough staff to supervise the patients. This is normal procedure in many places.

In March last year, a report on hospital hygiene was prepared by the Environmental Health Officers Association (EHOA). The DHSS had been claiming that there had been a gradual increase in standards of hospital kitchen hygiene over the years. The EHOA, however, claimed that standards were actually down by 9%, with conditions so bad in 153 hospitals that they should have been prosecuted. But hospitals cannot be prosecuted because they are crown property.

Between 1969 and 1972 there were twice as many serious cases of food poisoning and salmonella in hospitals than in all the restaurants, hotels and holiday camps in the whole of Britain. A total of 209 compared with 90. Two women died, and 50 out of 300 patients at Leytonstone House Hospital were poisoned at Christmas a few years ago.

## Accidents

A man died and 388 patients were poisoned at Harpsbury Hospital in 1974, and yet only two months previously an Environmental Health Officer had submitted a report of the 'horrific conditions' there. Food had been stored next to soiled linen, smell from a WC was nauseating, drains were defective, dust and plaster were falling from the ceiling into the washing up area. The report was 'confidential'—and only revealed because it was ordered to be read at the inquest.

ASTMS, with 25,000 members in medical laboratories and associated work has been pressing David Ennals, Health and Social Services Secretary, to publish at an early date the report of a working party set up in 1975 to formulate a code of practice for preventing infection in clinical laboratories. The group was appointed after a technician at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine contracted smallpox in the laboratory, and infected two people who subsequently died.

So anxious are ASTMS on the conditions in laboratories, even in newly built ones, that they have themselves been publishing an unofficially obtained draft copy of the report

Staff Category	Incident Reports Nov Dec Jan		The London Hospital   Whitechapel		Incident type	number	%
	% total staff	% incidents					
Medical	6	2			injuries from 'sharps'* and other cuts	30	32
Nursing	41	50			assaults by patients**	22	23
Prof & Tech	11	12			falls	11	12
Admin & Clerical	14	4			lifting	7	7
Ancillary	28	32			others	24	26
	100	100				94	100

On average one incident is reported every day.

\*'sharps' = sharp instruments, needles etc.

\*\*assaults by patients exaggerated by one particularly violent patient.

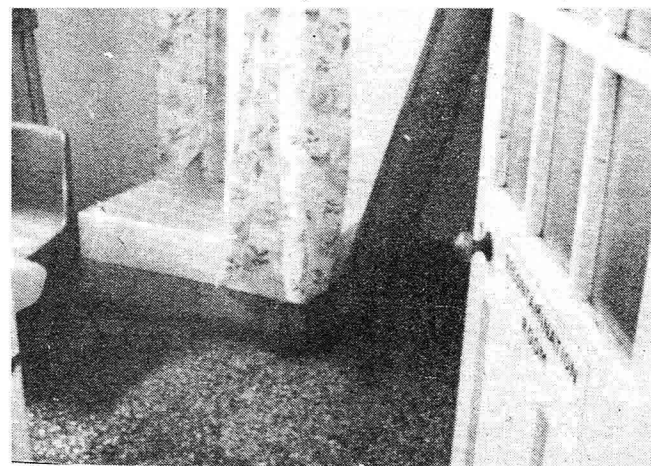
in the pages of their journal 'Medical World' (Dec 1977, Jan and Feb 1978—available from ASTMS, 10/26a Jamestown Road, London W.1.). This journal has also recently published interesting material on dangers from microwaves, allergies and lead pollution (Nov 1977).

Immunity from prosecution leads to a lowering of standards in government departments. The TUC has said that the present position means that about 2 million people employed by Crown bodies have less effective protection under the Health and Safety at Work Act than those in private employment. It obviously falls now on the shoulders of the shop stewards and the unions to ensure that the highest possible standards of hygiene, health and safety are maintained.

To help hospital workers in this task, the BSSRS (British Society for Social Responsibility in Science) Work Hazards Group has published an extremely useful little

pamphlet 'Hospital Hazards' (available from 9 Poland Street, London W.1.). They point out that whilst it is the responsibility of management to provide a safe work place and decent conditions, it is up to us to make sure they live up to this responsibility. They list constant stress, infection, exhausting shift rotas, microwaves, X-rays, bad wiring, chemicals, slippery floors, backache, bad ventilation, as all taking their toll on the hospital workforce. Dust, noise and injuries also receive attention.

The pamphlet provides an ideal starting point for discussion by shop stewards. On chemical and material hazards, for example, the pamphlet recommends that the 'first step is to get as many people as possible together to draw up a list of all chemicals and materials in use: in the laboratories, for housekeeping, in the laundry, on the wards, in the operating theatres, in dental surgeries, in the workshops etc. Look



Dirty, wet floors and walls in the 'decontamination room' at London Hospital

Photo: Julian McKittrick

for solvents, caustic soaps, metals like mercury, asbestos, talcum powder (pure talc causes a lung disease similar to miners' 'black lung', and some commercial grades are contaminated with asbestos).

In one particular warning, they explain that: "In addition to the chemical used to clean ambulances (e.g. formaldehyde, which can cause cancer and allergies), drivers face special risks from chemicals in plants where they have to pick up accident victims."

## Cuts

We are reminded that hospital workers are not magically immune to the diseases and infections in their places of work. During an average year at one university hospital, over one quarter of the housekeeping staff suffer from septic le-

sions. Numerous other factual examples are given in the pamphlet. Several other services from the Work Hazards Group are also offered to hospital workers. The group appreciate the difficulties we face: "There must be enough staff to ensure safe working conditions, acceptable rotas, and sufficient breaks. 'Natural Wastage' policies mean that safety is neglected through pressure of work."

The pamphlet carries the sober warning: "Effective action against hazards in hospitals are blocked by the government's cuts in Health Service spending. Understaffing, poor maintenance of facilities and equipment and inadequate training will contribute to the toll of accident and illness among health care workers."

Get to it!

'Medical World': available from ASTMS, 10/26a Jamestown Road, London W.1.

'Hospital Hazards' published by BSSRS Work Hazards Group, available from 9 Poland Street, London W.1.

## TORY EDUCATION "EXPERTS":

# IGNORANCE AND INACCURACY



BILL NORTH

(Hove Labour Party)

In the last eight years five 'Black Papers' on education have been published, each one claiming that comprehensive education, 'permissiveness', and the abolition of streaming have led to a decline in standards in British schools. The most recent issues have been co-edited by Rhodes Boyson, Tory education spokesman.

The Black Papers have quoted many studies and statistics in support of their view but two recently-published books completely undermine the "facts" that the Tory Party uses to justify its education policy. Mixed ability classes, the Tories allege, hold back the "more gifted" children. But there is little evidence to support this. In 1975, the National Foundation for Educational Research presented a report (now published as "Ability Grouping: the Banbury Inquiry") to the Department of Education. Their study found that:

"There was little direct evidence to suggest that high ability pupils were achieving

markedly differently in the two systems. For low-ability children there was a significant gain in the mixed ability system, compared to the streamed."

In other words, less able pupils learn better when in the same class as more able pupils, while the "brighter" children do well in either system. Mixed ability classes also lead to "better social integration of the bright and not so bright."

In any case, as the report points out, there is no reliable way of streaming children who come straight from primary school. Teachers assessments are inconsistent, and "eleven-plus" type exams are generally recognised as being no better than a lottery. On the subject of streaming in so-called 'comprehensive' schools, the report has this to say:

"The effects of eleven-plus selection may be disappearing from public view with the demise of the bipartite system, but they may be no less important, even if less obvious, when they occur within a single comprehensive school." At least an incorrect estimate of a child's potential will be less

serious in an all-ability class.

Thus the effect of the abolition of streaming is very different from that claimed by the Black Papers. But is it true that there has in fact been a decline in educational standards, for whatever reason?

According to teacher Nigel Wright, in his book 'Progress in Education', the Black Papers contain "a staggering number of errors, inaccuracies and misrepresentations." Boyson's own words comes in for considerable criticism.

Wright points out a typical error. The Black Papers claim that half of Britain's three million functional illiterates are under 25. If this was true, 16% of those leaving school since 1965 would be illiterate. No survey since 1945 has given a figure of more than 6%, even when semi-literate school-leavers are included.

There is no evidence to suggest (as Boyson does) that reading standards were higher before the war. Government reports in 1921, 1931 and 1943 all expressed concern about reading standards.

One report which the 'Black Papers' authors used

to attack comprehensive schooling was based on research carried out before comprehensives became widely established.

Boyson himself claimed that a 1931 government committee report claimed that all but a few "backward" children could read by the age of seven. In fact, the committee made no survey, and said only that all seven year olds ought to have mastered the basic reading skills.

If the Tories get back into government, Rhodes Boyson may well be put in charge of education, yet clearly, he is willing like most Tories to ignore evidence to justify the reactionary policies of the Tory party on education.

In the fourth Black Paper the novelist Iris Murdoch wrote: "We should not tolerate, much less encourage, ignorance and inaccuracy among those who are supposed to be trained."

Perhaps she should have added "Unless they are making propaganda for the Tories."

'Progress in Education' by Nigel Wright is published by Croom Helm [£2.95]



Stinking refuse bins in incineration depot at London Hospital, Whitechapel

Photo: Julian McKittrick



The following article is based on an interview with Adroher Gironella by Tony Saunio of the LPYS National Committee while on a recent visit to Spain.

Adroher Gironella is now 70 years old, a member of the Socialist Party of Catalonia, and its Secretary for International Affairs. In the period of the revolution and civil war, Gironella was a member of the national executive of POUM [Workers' Party of Marxist Unity] and its Organisational Secretary. He also served on the executive committee of Catalan Militias and was Commissar for Communications.

Gironella's recollections are testimony to the tremendous revolutionary energy of the Spanish workers, to their heroic determination to struggle. But his account also underlines the tragic lesson of the Spanish Civil War: that had there been revolutionary leadership to match the determination, initiative, and self-sacrifice of the workers, fascism would have been defeated: there would have been not the long years of Franco's dictatorship, but a socialist Spain...with all that would have meant for the world working class.



Franco and Hitler—the Nazis showed no reluctance to back Spanish fascism.

On 19 July, 1936, the military marched into Barcelona as part of Franco's plan to seize power from the Popular Front government and ruthlessly to crush the working class of Spain under his fascist jackboot. The Popular Front government appealed for calm, denied any fascist rising had taken place, and threatened to execute anyone who attempted to arm the workers. Had it been left to these "leaders", Franco would probably have walked into power with no opposition at all.

While the leaders dithered, however, the workers mobilised and armed themselves to begin a war that could have prevented the butchery of world war two and opened the way to a socialist Europe.

As in Germany, the capitalists turned to the use of fascism as a way of settling accounts with the working class. Workers throughout Spain not only fought to prevent the coming to power of the dictator, Franco, but also to put an end to the system of capitalism, for whom Franco's army was the ultimate weapon.

The plan in Barcelona was to march in from all sides and assemble in the Plaza de Catalunya. "We had a very different plan. It was obvious they were going to move, so we took the necessary action to get what arms we could. The night before we raided a sports shops to get guns. In fact, we literally grabbed anything which we could use as a weapon.

"When the troops marched into the various parts of the city, the workers poured onto the streets.

The CNT (Anarchist) trade unions organised barricades to block every path of the army. Workers from all over the city stood behind them and refused to move.

"Then we went on to the offensive and disarmed the soldiers, most of whom came over to our side. Some just ran away and others ran and locked themselves in their barracks.

"We succeeded in capturing the officer in charge of the operation and made him broadcast over the radio that the military had failed. He also announced that the oath taken by the soldiers to fight to the death was cancelled. Workers and soldiers went from side to side of the city disarming soldiers and appealing to them to join us and not to be used by the Fascists."

While the leaders of the main workers' parties throughout Spain spoke of the need to win the middle classes, reality was being acted out by the workers despite their "leaders".

### Vanished

The Central Committee of Workers' Militias of Catalonia was set up. Delegates were sent from the POUM, PSOE (Spanish Socialist Workers' Party); the CNT (Anarchists) and a few petit-bourgeois parties. In Barcelona heavy bombings by the fascists were taking place.

"The capitalists had in the main vanished or gone over to the fascists. Out of necessity we had to organise everything. The workers in the factories took complete control of them, their running passed into the hands of the trade unions and workers' par-

ties. Many factories were reorganised and big technical steps forward made

"Landlords and farmers were evicted from the big estates which were taken over by the peasants. The whole town was collectivised. I remember that even hairdressers organised themselves into a collective. All houses were municipalised. Money was taken from the banks to pay the wages of the workers.

"We also had a war to deal with, so we turned all engineering over to the production of guns and armaments, such as we could make. We had some pretty ingenious ideas though. For example sausage machines were used to make cartridges for guns. We had to improvise and make the best with what we had got available."

While the capitalist politicians, representing no one but themselves, and echoed by the Socialists and Communists, bleated about relying on the regular army and officers (only a small minority of whom stayed with the Republic) and protecting property rights, the workers organised themselves to fight the fascists.

### In our hands

"The militias we set up in Barcelona were based on the workers' organisations. The CNT, being the largest, had four divisions, the POUM had one division, and the Communists organised one small militia. Officers in our militia were elected by its members, all of whom were volunteers.

"The Central Committee of Militias of Catalonia, of which I was a member, organised most things. At night, we would go to the dance halls and clubs and take the cars from outside for use at the front.

"In fact, it is true to say we had the power. The whole of Barcelona was in the hands of the working class and peasants. To all intents the capitalist class did not exist in our area."

Rather than defending what the workers were doing, the workers' leaders were trying to apply the brakes and return the situation to "normal". The Communist Party was fol-

lowing the line of Stalin. Defending the alliance between the workers' parties and the capitalist republicans, who represented no-one but a few lawyers and doctors, the Stalinists sought at the earliest possible opportunity to take power away from the working class.

In effect, the official government was just suspended in mid air, and the workers' leaders with it. The capitalists had gone over to Franco and the workers were running most of Spain. Stalin desperately tried to return the capitalists to power and went to any lengths to do so.

### Contagious

A successful revolution in Spain would undoubtedly have threatened the privileged position of the bureaucracy in Russia. Likewise, the capitalists of Europe feared that the successful seizure of power by the workers in Spain would set Europe alight.



Workers' militia arresting army officer in Barcelona.

"Non-intervention was the cry of the 'democracies' and 'Defeat the fascists, but no socialism yet' that of the Stalinists. The lengths to which they went, however, were more than just words and could only be described as criminal.

"The POUM and CNT had the Aragon front. We needed an offensive. The fascists were between the Basque country and Catalonia. We could have wiped them out.

"We acted as an army of liberation wherever we went, but could launch no effective attack. We had few arms. The Stalinists kept them from the

POUM and CNT and sent them only to Communist divisions. We had eight bullets a day, if we were lucky, which was hardly enough to defend ourselves with, let alone launch an attack.

### Stifled

"They wanted to ensure the working class didn't take power and so kept the guns from us. They wanted no socialist revolution."

The whole Spanish working class and poor peasantry were looking to the workers' leaders to take power. The army and navy had in many areas mutinied: "A battle ship arrived at the Barcelona Port. I went down from the POUM offices and found the sailors had mutinied and 'disposed' of their officers."

Had the workers' leaders only organised a workers' government instead of looking to the "liberal" capitalists to defeat the fascists, the outcome would have been very differ-

ent. Inch by inch the capitalists moved in to butcher the most militant workers in the POUM and CNT.

"Our militias were disbanded by the Stalinists and their members dissolved into the regular army. Others were sent off on suicide expeditions only to be murdered at the hands of the Stalinists.

"The POUM accepted responsibility for organising the Barcelona uprising and the majority were imprisoned. I myself was sentenced by the Stalinists to 15 years in a camp."

As a gesture of "good will," to assure the capitalist 'democracies' that he had no intention of allowing the Spanish workers to take power, Stalin disbanded the International Brigades in 1938. In effect, the civil war was lost.

"I remember the farewell demonstrations well. They were the flower of the international working class. Many wanted to stay and fight. They were showered with flowers and the Communist Party leaders told them they would never be forgotten.

### Prison Camps

"Then they were sent over the border into France. Tens of thousands were put into concentration camps that had been set up: camps on the beaches with no shelter from the burning sun; camps in the snow with no protection from the cold. People in the snow camps had to dig holes in the ground for shelter: in the morning eight or nine would be found dead. I was lucky."

Released by the Stalinists when the war was lost, Gironella managed to get out of the camp he was in and go into exile in Mexico.

"The Stalinists committed the biggest crime of all. They stifled, strangled and finally killed our revolution.

"Now we have to learn the lessons of the civil war as once more we go into battle..."

Spain Today—  
see pages 10/11





Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report) II

# SQUALID, DANGEROUS, DEBT-RIDDEN: Life on a Crumbling Estate

The working people of Strathclyde, in common with workers all over Britain, have been continually subject to the propaganda of the millionaire press trying to convince them of the need for more austerity—more 'self denial', as one well-fed Tory recently put it.

But convinced or not, they are being forced to suffer the most disgusting conditions of life. Many have nothing left to sacrifice. Male unemployment in Strathclyde stands at 26.6%. Those in work take home wages 10% below the national average. Working and unemployed alike suffer the worst housing conditions in Europe.

Glasgow has the highest percentage of council housing of all the major conurbations in Britain, with 59% of the total housing stock. But the stranglehold of big business, which has cut the funds of the council to the bone, which charges enormous sums in interest on council loans, which demands ever increasing prices for building and repair work, has taken its toll in terms of death and disease, mental illness, despair and sheer human misery.

Lining littered streets the houses look shabby and old. Although some of the housing on the 'schemes' is not that old, it still looks fit for demolition, having been thrown together as quickly and cheaply as possible. The attitude of the youth who are not yet chained by families to the 'schemes' was summed up by the words of one angry young worker:

## Children

"I just can't stay on the scheme. I have to get away. I come in, get something to eat, and go straight out. The schemes are dead. Nothing to do."

Children raised in this environment cannot develop properly. In three- or four-storey flats, they rarely mix with other children. There are no play areas near the home. They grow up in the street. There is a grave shortage of places where people can go and meet others outside of their immediate family.



Post-war housing in Balanark, Glasgow—bad design and cost cutting produce modern slums.

In the Inner East End of Glasgow, there is only one such place for every 386 people, including pubs, cafés, chip shops, laundrettes etc. In the outer area of the East End, the ratio is one for every 13,850! Shops, clinics and surgeries are scarce and difficult to get to. The nearest cinemas and libraries are in the City itself.

In the houses themselves, the shortage of facilities is even more serious. In Strathclyde 32.7% of houses have no bath; 17.8% have no private lavatory. As much as 45.9% consist of three rooms or less. 11.8% of the population live in circumstances of more than 1.5 persons per room.

Small wonder that a Glaswegian has a greater chance of suffering from serious and fatal illnesses than people living elsewhere in Britain. Child mortality is as high as 25 for every 1,000 births, this figure being the highest in Britain. In one street off the Springburn Road three infant deaths occurred over a recent 12-month period.

For people who live in these insufferable conditions, there is no alternative to council housing. Taking out a mortgage is out of the question. They cannot escape from their miserable hovels, their crowded rooms with damp walls so that paint peels off and wallpaper becomes speckled with brown mould.

In fact, the demand for council housing is growing. Thousands of people are on the lists. So severe is the shortage that last year 54% of people given houses were of one kind of 'priority' or another—people needing homes for special reasons of health, slum clearance, etc. Only 46% came from the 'normal' waiting list. Thousands queue for their chance of secure tenancy at 'reasonable' rent charges.

## Rat-race

As the scramble for housing gets more desperate, so the council is increasingly given to establishing 'fairer' orders of 'priority' to try to shield itself from criticism over the way it neglects or gives too much consideration to this or that group of the homeless.

A recent document produced by the Glasgow District Council, 'New Horizons For Housing', points to the disgraceful rat-race for housing and how this situation has reflected badly on the reputation of the council. They propose a new 'points' system, people being put into three categories, A, B, and C, according to how many points they have. Points are awarded for any of a number of circumstances in your favour (!) from the point of view of urgently requiring a house. If you want a house in Glasgow, your best chance is to be

chronically sick, overcrowded, poor, mentally ill, with eight or nine kids running round your feet and the demolition men knocking at the door!

It is this method of selectivity which gives rise to the creation of what have become known as 'Welfare Streets'. These are areas in which all the evils of the system are concentrated; where almost every family is visited by a social worker; where there is often 40% or 50% male unemployment; where to have a 'broken home' is the norm. A youth raised in these deliberately created ghettos is marked for life. He is discriminated against in school and later, when he joins the 200,000 others in Strathclyde in their futile search for work, he will find that having come from a 'rough area' does

not help his chances of finding it.

For working-class youth in particular, the odds are stacked against securing the barest standards of life. Thousands have their spirit broken by the endless struggle. Petty crime flourishes. Vandalism, thieving, mugging, prostitution, and murder are all on the increase.

## Ruin

For increasing numbers of people in Glasgow, the 'housing problem' has become the problem of finding a warm and dry place among the enclaves and back alleys of the city. Drunkenness abounds. When whisky is out of reach, meths or 'Bellair' hair laquer will suffice to drown the misery. The admission rate to hospitals for alcoholism in Strath-

clyde is seven times the national average.

In this way, capitalism is claiming a growing number of victims for whom there is nothing 'temporary' about the measures of austerity forced upon us by the bosses. They lead to absolute ruin. Their condition must make the Tories' forebodings about a grim future for Britain if workers are too greedy seem laughable.

We can expect no help from the capitalist class in solving the housing crisis, which is a product of their system. They only spend money where it brings them a good profit, and far less profit is to be made from providing decent housing than from property and land speculation, keeping office blocks and hotels empty while the value goes up, or by lending money to Labour councils at phenomenal interest rates.

Labour can only solve the housing problem by taking measures against big business. All the 'fair' priority schemes the council come up with will not solve the basic problem of shortage.

That we have allowed the situation to reach such desperate proportions is a defeat for Labour. Not a defeat that has been suddenly inflicted upon us, but one which has come over us slowly as a result of leaving the purse strings in the hands of the speculator class. This is the reason for the unpopularity of the Labour councils and the Labour government.

Labour must launch the attack against the millionaires who have brought about this terrible crisis. It must raise a campaign for decent housing for all, pointing to big business as the main enemy. We must demand a crash building programme of one million homes a year, nationalising the land and the giant building firms (with minimum compensation strictly on the basis of need) to provide the means, together with the banks and finance companies who have bled the meagre funds of the councils dry.

On the basis of such a programme, Labour would gather enormous support from the council estates, from the factories, the unemployed, the homeless, and all those who have suffered at the hands of the profit system.

**Greg Oxley**

(Paisley Labour Party)



Noble street flats, Newcastle.

photo: Tish Murtha



## ROMANIA / USA

# ROMANIAN BUREAUCRACY FEARS MINERS

"In Lupeni we shouted 'Down with the proletarian bourgeoisie,' because for every two workers with spades there are five with briefcases."

These are the comments of one of the Romanian miners who went on strike last August (from a letter published in 'Labour Focus on Eastern Europe', vol 1, no 5). They show the growing hostility of the workers to the bureaucracy and indicate the storms which lie ahead.

Romania shows the contradictions which characterise all the Stalinist régimes of Eastern Europe. Established after World War 2 by the muscle of the Red Army, it in no way reflects a genuine workers' democracy, such as existed under Lenin in Russia, but is a mirror image of the deformed workers' state which later developed under Stalin.

## Poor Country

This means that control of industry and society as a whole does not lie in the hands of the working class, but has been usurped by a bureaucracy interested only in its own power and prestige.

Apeing the Russian bureaucracy, the Romanian bureaucracy has pursued the idiotic policy of "socialism in one country." This has meant the development of heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods and agriculture.

A recent report in the 'Financial Times' pointed out: "Output of basic products like oil and steel is proportionately greater than that of many Western nations and in some goods, such as drilling equipment, it ranks among the world's leading exporters. Even so there is still a large and backward agricultural sector which, seen alongside the country's generally low living standards, clearly places Romania among the poorer countries of Europe."

On the one hand we see the development of industry which is possible on the basis of a planned economy. Romania has been transformed over the last twenty years. At the present time investment amounts to 34% of national income, a figure that is the envy of every capitalist country.

By 1980 steel output is expected to reach 17 million tons. "In per capita terms this will be nearly twice the level of steel production in the UK today." (FT 12.10.77)

But this development has been one-sided. Investment in consumer goods accounted for only 10% of all industrial development in 1975.

**Chris Ridge**  
(West Nottingham  
Labour Party)

Agriculture has the lowest level of mechanisation in Eastern Europe. This means a shortage of goods in the shops with food, especially meat, often in short supply. This was one of the reasons behind the miners' strike.

Romania's industry has been built up by the efforts of the workers. Now they are demanding a greater share of the benefits. The minimum working week is still 48 hours.

In addition there is an increasing number of unpaid labour days. The bureaucracy has promised a reduction to 44 hours but the miners went further and demanded a six-hour day as well as the abolition of unpaid days of labour.

Because the workers themselves do not run industry, inefficiency and bad planning are inevitable. Production targets set by the Plan cannot always be met. But it is the workers who have to pay for the bureaucracy's mistakes.

## Miners

The 'Washington Post' quoted a miner as saying: "In August our salaries were cut by 40% because we failed to meet planned targets. And even under normal conditions (norms were apparently raised after the earthquake in March—CR) production is usually 5% to 25% under plan—so we never get what is announced." (WP 4.12.77).

Even when they do get "what is announced" Romanian workers cannot always afford the goods they produce. A Dacia 12, Romanian version of the Renault 12, costs 70,000 lei (£4,120), while the average wage is 2,000 lei (£120) a month!

Under socialism, it should be possible to shorten the working week and develop all sectors of the economy in conjunction with the raising of workers' living standards. It would be possible because of the participation of the workers at all levels in the running and planning of industry. By keeping a constant check on production, they would be able to

eliminate waste and inefficiency, putting society's resources to their fullest use.

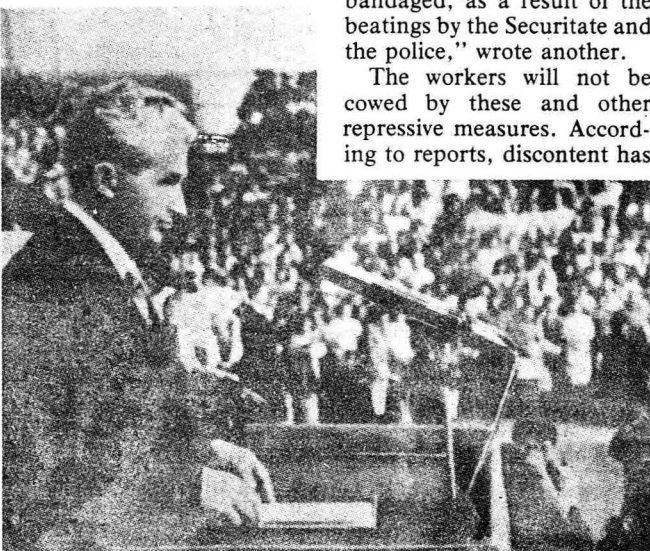
But the bureaucracy is completely incapable of doing this. They are only interested in the level of production, because that determines their salaries, and not the quality of output. This, together with the shortage of consumer goods, revealed itself in the miners' strike.

"The miners say their problems go beyond the narrow question of salaries. Even if they are paid more, they argue, there is little to buy in the shops. The new flats that have been built for miners' families are said to be tiny and badly-constructed—with concrete floors and doors and windows that do not shut properly." (WP)

Remote from the workers, the bureaucracy draws up a housing programme on the basis of building as many houses as possible as cheaply as possible. They do not have to live in these "tiny, badly-constructed houses."

The workers have shown that they will not tolerate this situation forever. They do not want a return to capitalism, to the horrors of unemployment and cuts in living standards such as face British workers today. They want an end to the bureaucratic rule which is hampering the further development of the economy.

The miners' strike, said 'The Times', was "the first serious sign of the growing confidence of the Romanian working class which was recruited from the peasantry and has been docile so far." Ceausescu himself was forced to negotiate with the miners (reminiscent of Gierek's confrontation with the Polish dockers in 1970/1), after two other Central Committee members of the Communist Party had been 'arrested' by



President Ceausescu attempts to be the people's man, but the people are against him.



## Profit - seekers wreck U.S. Railroads

**Even advanced capitalism cannot provide decent services in safety for its people.**

This is the message supplied by the case of the railways of the USA. Two recent derailments in Tennessee and Florida killed 22.

These brought the glare of publicity back to bear on the awful record of the multiple private-owned railways in the States. **8,000 derailments occur every year**—all of 50% being caused by inadequacy in the track maintenance.

**Some track is as originally laid in the nineteenth century when the first lines were opened.**

British Rail puts only a 20 year life-span on track

the miners! They went back to work after supplies of food had been rushed to the area and promises made to meet other demands.

"But now the shops are empty again and we're being made to pay for the strike," said one miner. The promises were withdrawn and the secret police were sent into the mines to soften up the militants.

"As soon as they hear you uttering a word, they take you away and beat you really badly: they hit us only on the head to make us stupid. A lot of people have their heads bandaged, as a result of the beatings by the Securitate and the police," wrote another.

The workers will not be cowed by these and other repressive measures. According to reports, discontent has

and it is frequently inspected. But a 1976 BBC documentary on America showed flimsy brackets bracing fractured "roadbed", as the track apparatus is called, and preventing its total fracturing. Rails were shown being depressed six inches under the weight of a passing locomotive.

## Nationalisation

The simple economic facts of life are that the \$3 billion backlog of maintenance is beyond the competing railroads with their paltry 2% return on investment. There has been the absurdity of millions being invested in the last word in computer technology, so as to cope with the tangle of shunting yards in bad repair. Ac-

surfaced in other factories and the miners have threatened further trouble if promised pay and pension increases are not implemented.

As more and more they see the emptiness of the bureaucracy's promises, they will seek to replace their rule with workers' democracy, whereby all state officials would be elected by the workers, under right of recall and on the same wage as the workers. This would serve as an attraction to the Polish workers, who have already served notice on their own bureaucracy, and the other workers of Eastern Europe.

## Federation

With the removal of the bureaucracies, the way would be open to establish a socialist federation of states, which would end the farcical situation where a country like Romania tries to develop its own full range of heavy industry in competition with its "socialist" neighbours.

All the bureaucracies rest on police terror and the army to hold back the workers. The Romanian troops should serve as a warning; ordered to work down the mines, they refused saying: "That's not our job, we're here to defend the country."

usually what is necessary is realignment of track etc.—but the elaborate botch is cheaper than getting to the heart of the matter.

In Congressional hearings on the derailments in Florida and Tennessee, a Florida senator accused the railway industry of being "in wholesale violation" of the laws. Penalties for abuse of safety standards are antiquated and payment is certainly cheaper than the mammoth task of bringing the railways up to scratch.

The scandal of trains in the USA is a long-running affair. Trapped by their lust for profit, so incapable are the railroad companies of modernising and ensuring safety that the state governors of Tennessee and Kentucky have both proposed nationalisation of the roadbeds of America's railways.

These gentlemen do so not because they have been won to socialism, but because they recognise that only state planning can salvage order out of 'private enterprise' chaos. And notice they only want the track nationalised—let the government have the burdensome task and the huge cost of repairing the track, but leave the profitable carriage of people and goods in private hands. As in Britain, the "nationalised" industry would be a milch cow to private industry.

The US railways reveal how capitalism chases profit at the expense of safety and how its own interests—both recent derailments featured the combustion of dangerous chemicals—are harmed because of the anarchy it begets. A finger is pointed clearly to the absolute necessity for a rational, socialist plan for the American transport system and indeed for the American economy.

**Paul Copping**  
(Battersea LPYS)



## HOLLAND / SPAIN

# Dutch workers fight back



## The Dutch economy is sinking further into problems.

203,000 are officially unemployed (about 5%), of which over half are under 25. If jobless school leavers, women and "disabled" workers are included, the real figure is far higher.

The prospects for the year ahead are equally grim. Out of 250,000 school leavers, only 50,000 will enter further education.

Of the remaining 200,000, only two-thirds will find work. This means that nearly 70,000 school leavers will be unemployed. These school leavers only get 55 Guilders (about £13) a week dole money, which is pathetic in a country with a cost of living nearly double that in Britain.

But it's not just school leavers who face enormous problems. More and more factories are closing, with redundancies threatened in the shipbuilding, metal and food industries.

In response to these attacks, the Dutch labour movement is beginning to

reawaken. A recent mass meeting of dockers was attended by 4,000, even though the union put little effort into organising the meeting. In Utrecht, 6,000 metal workers attended a meeting at only two days' notice.

In the food industry there has recently been a development similar to that with Spillers in the British baking industry. The KSH food and canning monopoly, which employs 3,600 workers in Holland, is threatening closures and redundancies.

## Occupations

There are three big monopolies in the industry, and like Spillers, faced with increasing competition, KSH intends to sell up its assets to its 'rivals' and pocket the money, throwing the workers onto the scrap heap. The response of the workers was to occupy the factories, continuing production without the managers, to prevent the company selling off the assets.

They demanded their jobs be maintained. Gov-

ernment promises of financial support for the company, echoed by union officials, persuaded the workers to end the occupation.

It now appears likely that the plant at Kood aan de Zaan (near Amsterdam), traditionally the most militant, will be closed. During the occupations, the workers discovered a transfer pricing racket which is being used by the company to justify closing factories, by shifting profits from one factory, and country, to another.

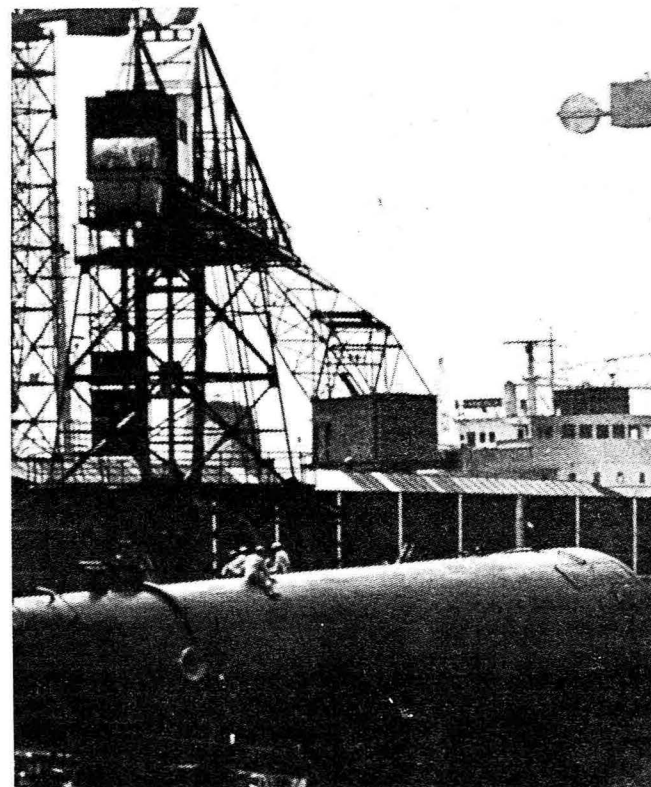
At the moment, because of the lack of leadership from union officials, there is a mood of uncertainty among the workers who want to fight but are unsure how.

One thing we can be certain about—with the developing world economic crisis, nowhere can capitalism boast to be safe and secure in its future. Even its former "miracle economies" of West Germany and Holland face crisis. Faced with unemployment and declining living standards, workers throughout Europe will begin to move into action, looking for

This process of radicalisation has begun in Holland. The Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) has already made its biggest ever gain in support in recent years and thousands of workers—particularly the youth—are looking to the left for

an answer to their problems, which are growing daily under Holland's big business government.

## By a Dutch Young Socialist



Rotterdam—the biggest port in Europe, but Holland's massive docks have been hit by the world trade slump

## Greece

Greek police took action against left wing trade unionists last Thursday. Thousands attended a rally in the main square in Athens to demand better pay and working conditions.

Their other main demand—for more freedom for trade unions—was very apt. As the workers tried to hold a march following the rally they were confronted by police and six were arrested.

## South Africa

There are four times as many blacks in South Africa as whites. Yet four times as much money is spent on educating white children as blacks. Is this what the apologists for apartheid call "separate development"?

## Poland

Three workers in the port of Gdansk have founded an independent trade union to rival the official Stalinist controlled unions. Workers in the port, which has been to the forefront in the strikes and occupations against the Polish bureaucracy in recent years, say the state unions have done nothing to defend the workers' interests against state-imposed price rises etc.

## Spain

80,000 primary school teachers are on strike in Spain. Faced with an inflation rate of 28%, they are demanding a wage rise of 22% and a readjustment of incremental scales. They are also fighting for a minimum monthly wage of 40,000 pesetas (£270). The private sector accounts for 40% of education in Spain.

## Pakistan

A military court in Karachi, Pakistan, sentenced 12 people to a year in jail and up to 15 lashes for taking part in a banned May Day march. Thirty journalists and print-workers have also been arrested for protesting against the repressive press laws of the right wing regime of General Zia. Those arrested have begun a hunger strike.

# Spain—useless bosses blame workers



Spain's premier Suarez

I'm one of the thousands of young unemployed workers. I'm going to tell you about my own case, which is just one of thousands related to young workers in Spain today.

I had to start work when I was 14, due to the economic position of my parents. My father had been unemployed for about a year and he was later to remain in this situation for another three years.

I started working in one of the hotels of Madrid. I used to start work at 7 am and finish at 3 pm, and for this would only receive 3,000 pesetas (£200).

This meant that my workmates and I had to kill ourselves working to get a few tips and so be able to make something extra. In the hotel industry the bosses have always considered tips as part of the wages, and that way they're able to save a considerable amount of money on wages.

I only worked for one and a half years in that hotel, and then I got a job in one of the big travel agencies. I started earning 5,500 pesetas and they told me that after three months they would increase my wages. Although I knew that they were taking advantage of me I accepted, as working in the hotel was worse.

## Juan José, UGT Madrid

After three months they increased my wages to 6,000 pesetas and they started teaching me how to do the office work. A tactic used by bosses in many firms to save paying the wages of a skilled person in the same job, because young workers under 18 earn considerably less. I wanted to learn the job as I couldn't go back to studying due to lack of money.

So I learnt, and I no longer worked 8 hours but 12 to 14. But they did not consider these extra hours as work to be paid. Once I worked 40 continuous hours and they only gave me 500 pesetas.

My father had just found a job, and so I refused to work more hours than the ones that were paid. They told me they wanted to talk to my father. They told him that I was a good lad but that there was a workmate who incited me to rebel against the firm, a total lie. The company really hated this mate of mine, and he only lasted until about a month after that incident.

Anyway I refused to work any extra hours; I didn't do any more office work until the summer,

the time when there is more work. I had another workmate at the same time who had a never-ending amount of work [that was so that they wouldn't have to put another person in the job helping him and so save his wages, and so this workmate had to do a double amount of work]. He had to work two extra hours daily, two extra non-paid hours, but the more he worked the more work he got.

## UGT

Then they told me to help him and they would increase my wages and I would be promoted. I started helping him but it was already too late in the year to do everything, and consequently there were people who didn't get any places booked on the planes or places in the hotels and so many people lost their holidays.

It was my workmate that got blamed for all this inefficiency, although the ones responsible were the managers, and so he got the sack. A little while before I had joined the UGT [socialist trade

union]. I gave him the telephone number of the lawyers, and he took his case to the courts, but although he won the case he wasn't reinstated.

As I said they raised my wages but they didn't do anything about the promotion and when I told them about this they again stopped giving me any of the office work. This happened about five months ago. I talked to my other workmates and nearly all of them joined the UGT.

We then asked for an interview to get union recognition. The firm refused and sackings started. They told us that there was an economic crisis but the truth of the matter was that they didn't know how to run the firm, they would pocket all the money they got and therefore the firm wasn't working.

The only solution for this and other similar cases is a socialist government uniting all the workers under a socialist programme and fighting against the top 100 families who own all the wealth [the banks are theirs], who own all the major industries and who own all the land.

Let's fight for a socialist government with a socialist programme that will nationalise the banks, the land and the monopolies!



LETTERS TO: The Editor, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

# LETTERS

## We fought for socialism

Dear Comrades,

I am writing this letter due to two events that made me deeply angry. The first was when Donald Dewar appeared on a television programme supporting a phase 4 of the social contract.

As one of many ordinary Labour Party members who canvassed for Dewar I was extremely angry to hear him supporting policies that are totally against the interests of the ordinary folk of Garscadden and totally against the feelings of the Labour movement that won Labour the Garscadden by-election.

The other event that disturbed me happened the following evening at Provan LPYS where we discussed the issue of unemployment. As the discussion was ending a new comrade gave her experience of being unemployed.

Our comrade, age 17, had been unemployed for 18 months. She didn't have a place to live and on many occasions was walking the streets all night! She had only one pair of shoes that had a hole in the sole.

Our comrade was given the princely sum of £13.00 a week to live on! She showed graphically to Provan LPYS why we must fight to end capitalism.

Perhaps she could persuade Dewar that we need socialism.

Yours fraternally  
Willie Griffin  
[Bothwell LPYS]

## Disappearing money in the NHS

Dear Comrades,

If anybody tries to tell you that there isn't any money available in the Health Service, and so some cutback will have to be made, don't believe a word of it.

There is money available, but because of the system of accounting it is probably tied up in some other area. Money is allocated to various departments of finance, such as equipment, building, wages, staff training, and if the allocated amount is not spent by the end of the financial year, it disappears.

It's as if you budgeted so much for bills, and if you didn't have to pay the full amount, you gave the rest away.

The result of this system is that towards the end of March management is madly rushing around trying to spend the money they have left, after having been

miserably all the year round. So in our area of the hospital we have had a new photocopying machine, new sterilisers, an audiometry set, and various other trinkets to the value of thousands of pounds.

All these things had to be ordered at the utmost speed, the money had to be spent in the area it was allocated for, and could not be carried over into the next financial year.

This new system of disappearing money was invented as part of the cuts a couple of years ago. The Health Service is indeed run in a strange way!

Yours

NALGO Health Member

## UPW Leaders

Dear Comrades,

I would like to reply to Bill Connor's letter about my article on the postmen's right to strike.

Bill quite correctly points out that the UPW executive have failed the membership on every issue from Grunwicks to wages.

Therefore, he concludes, it is nonsense to concern our-

selves with anything the leaders do. Ignore them and let's have some action!

But behind these bold phrases is despair for the membership. If only the rank and file didn't have such faith in the leaders, he bemoans, the executive could never have sold us this wage deal.

The majority of my branch voted for this deal. But they were just as angry with the executive as those of us who chose rejection.

If Bill were to ask these blokes why they accepted the offer he would have been told quite sharply: "There isn't any alternative."

To tell them, "What else did you expect from Jackson?" solves nothing.

It is the clear duty of socialists and Marxists to point out what the leadership of the union should be doing, and what programme can take the membership forward.

'Militant' supporters in the UPW stand for:

a £65 minimum wage, tied to the cost of living; a 35-hour week; no redundancies; blacking of all vacancies to ensure they are filled, and workers' control of the post office.

If the leadership are not prepared to fight for the interests of the membership, they must be replaced by one that will.

But this will be done only on the basis of a clear programme of demands and a principled struggle for their implementation.

Yours fraternally  
Dermott Mills

## Why abolish school uniforms?

Dear Comrades,

With reference to the LPYS schools leaflet, although agreeing with the majority of demands in it, I feel I cannot agree with one point, namely abolition of school uniforms.

As it stands now of course the wearing of uniforms is merely a covert attempt to subject school students, through subservience to the will of a corrupt and bankrupt system.

However if uniforms are worn this puts all children on a level footing. Obviously if a child's parents were affluent, that child would wear good or better clothes than the child of poor parents.

Although a seemingly small point, to us, to an impressionable child (one whom capitalism has told that the greatest goal in life is the accumulation of wealth) this could do immense psychological damage.

From a purely functional point the wearing of uniforms would seem better. The school person would wear out only the specially purchased school garments and not his or her good or 'best' clothes.

Needless to say if the wearing of school uniforms became compulsory nationwide they would have to be supplied free by the state. A cheap, robust material could easily be manufactured.

Yours fraternally  
D.Evans  
Soton Labour Party  
AUEW 106

## £100,000 for redundant manager

Comrades,

Reading the Financial Times I found a case of a £100,000 redundancy payment. At a general shareholders' meeting of the Commercial Union the chairman moved that £100,000 be paid to Mr NGE Dunlop as "an ex-gratia payment for his loss of office as chief general manager and director."

Mr John Smith [General Secretary of the Staff Association] opposed the move saying that Mr Dunlop had been 'a major disaster' during office and that he had been retained on full pay for a year after his resignation. Sir Francis, the chairman, supported the payment saying that Mr Dunlop had lost a well paid job and stressed that it would not be easy for him to find another.

It is thought the payment will be made.

Workers at Speke however, have been offered a pittance and have little chance of another job.

I don't oppose redundancies of the likes of Mr Dunlop [who was on £55,000 pa]. Industry should be run under workers' control.

As a worker sitting-in at Rolls Royce Parkside [Coventry] put it to me:—"When we worked-in we produced more than with the management. The management's a bleedin' parasite." No to redundancies. Forward to workers' control and a socialist plan of production.

Fraternally  
Paul Walter  
Coventry SE LPYS

## Thatcher fears the unions

Dear Comrades,

I would like to bring your attention to an article I read recently in the Daily Mirror April 19th. It was written by the Mirror's industrial editor Geoffrey Goodman.

The article was on the Carrington File, the top secret Tory Party view of trade union power which was leaked to the 'Times'. All that is known about the report is that it represents a 'deep think' about the lessons of February 1974 when the miners kicked out the Tory government.

The report was called for by Mrs Thatcher after she succeeded Mr Heath, probably because she wanted to find out how to avoid a similar confrontation to his if it arose in the future.

## Dundee feature wins new readers

Dear Comrade,

The centre page feature on Dundee acted like a tonic on sales of the Militant here. We trebled our normal sale to over 120!

We found a new pitch for street sales, far from the roadblock of other left newspaper sellers outside Boots. We sold outside the shipyard, on the dole queue, in the Labour and Trades Council Clubs and the University.

Most important of all, we got several comrades to commit themselves to taking the paper regularly and even selling it. The feature was a great advertisement for the 'Militant' and did help us to sell to people who would not normally buy it.

But the main boost was to the regular sellers' confidence, persistence and pioneering spirit—and we'll be back again every week.

By the way, here is the complete epic of the scones, as it should have appeared in the article on Robb Caledon

By no means were the politicians alone. There was a group of senior civil-servants advising Cabinet Ministers—who were quite convinced that the miners' demands were the forerunner of revolution. In fact some sections of the armed forces were on alert in case 'civil disorder erupted.'

The article made me realise just how frightened the capitalists are of the unions and their leaders. Leaders who were democratically voted into their position to represent ordinary working class people and lead the way to a socialist Britain.

Yours fraternally  
M.Robert  
(Newton LPYS)

shipyard: during a wages dispute the finishing trades and GMWU shop stewards were having a meeting with a manager who, at the end of the meeting, claimed to have seen labourers from the yard in Marks and Spencers buying the best chocolate biscuits. Why couldn't their wives bake scones as his wife did?

The stewards pointed out that the labourers' low wages meant that their wives had to go out to work and had no time for baking. Nonsense, said the manager, if I phone my wife now—it was nearly 5—the scones will be ready by the time I get home.

The stewards thought this was such a good idea that they offered to bring the jam themselves the next day if his wife baked scones for them all.

Yours fraternally  
Catherine Rice  
Dundee LP



£35,000 NEEDED BY JULY 8th

## FIGHTING FUND CHART £70,000

Area	Target 26 wks	Target 52 wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	2,200	4,400		799.20
Hants & IOW	1,050	2,100		893.13
Humberside	1,100	2,200		749.51
Lancashire	750	1,500		259.83
London: North	3,850	7,700		1,768.44
London: South	1,900	3,800		952.91
Manchester & District	1,450	2,900		360.20
Merseyside & District	2,250	4,500		829.49
Midlands East	2,200	4,400		1,043.66
Midlands West	3,700	7,400		1,680.62
Northern	2,450	4,900		1,019.09
Scotland East	1,250	2,500		496.04
Scotland West	1,450	2,900		409.76
South East	1,150	2,300		676.13
South West	1,150	2,300		592.31
Thames Valley	850	1,700		440.83
Wales East	1,000	2,000		451.25
Wales West	1,150	2,300		462.04
Yorkshire	2,600	5,200		905.60
Others	1,500	3,000		2,345.09
<b>£ 35,000</b>	<b>70,000</b>			<b>17,075.13</b>

## MILITANT NOTICES

**LONDON Militant Public Meeting 'May 1968'**—Massive General Strike in France—over 10m on strike. Speaker: Clare Doyle (Militant Editorial Board).

'May 1978'—The French Elections and Perspectives for Europe. Speaker: Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board).

Plus: **Sud-Aviation**—rare film of workers' occupation and May demonstrations.

Admission: 25p. Friday May 19th, 7.15 pm. Place: University of London Union, Malet Street, London W.C.1. Near Euston Station (Northern, Victoria, Metro, Circle). Buses: 14, 24, 29, 30, 68, 73, 77C, 77A, 170, 188, 239.

**SWINDON: The first ever Militant meeting in Swindon.** 'What We Stand For'. Speakers: Bill Mullins (Senior Shop Steward, Rover Solihull); Rob Cadogan (South West LPYS Regional Chairman). Sunday May 14th, 7.30 pm. Co-op Small Hall, East Street, Swindon.

**LEICESTER Militant Readers' Meeting.** 'The Socialist Struggle for a Living Wage'. Speakers: Liz Blackman (GMWU Home Help Branch); Nick Ramsell (AUEW GEC Whetstone). Brian Ingham (Militant Industrial Correspondent). Richard II pub, Highcross Street, Leicester. Monday 22nd May at 7.45 pm. Everybody welcome.

**HARLOW Militant Public Meeting.** 'Nuclear Power—Solution to the Energy Crisis or Disaster for Mankind?'. Speaker: John Haynes (Chairman, Harlow LPYS). Thursday 11th May, 8.00 pm. Town Hall, Harlow.

**CAMBRIDGE Militant Readers' Meeting.** 'The Menace of Toryism'. Hear: Ian Ilett (Peterborough Labour Party). Monday 15th May, 8.00 pm. Portland Arms, Mitcham's Corner, Cambridge.

**NOTTINGHAM Militant Meeting 'Europe in Ferment'.** Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor of Militant); Tony Saunio (Labour Party NEC-elect). International Community Centre, 61 Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Tuesday 23rd May, 7.30 pm.

**STAFFORD Militant Public Meeting 'The Future of the Power Engineering Industry and Stafford'**

Speakers: John Byrne (GEC Manchester); Dave Rothwell (AUEW Senior Steward, Castle Works). Plenty of time to raise your

problems and discuss your ideas Monday 15th May at 7.30 pm Railway Inn, Castle Street Phone Stafford 3968 for further details

**Marxist Weekend School** Friday June 30th-Sunday July 2nd. At Goldsmith's College Students' Union, Lewisham Way, S.E.14. Programme: Opening session: Role of Marxism in Britain. Courses: Marxist Economics; Marxist Philosophy; International. Final session: World Perspectives. Leading Marxist speakers for each course.

Registration: £2. Reading lists will be sent on registration. To register, write to: 'Marxist Weekend School', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

## Conferences

**UPW Conference in Blackpool Militant Readers' Meeting** Victory Hotel, Caunce Street, Blackpool. Tuesday 23rd May 1978. Start at 7.30 pm. Speakers: Peter Dodd (Delegate Manchester Amal); Bryan Beckingham (Militant); Cricklewood Branch Delegate. Chairman: Dave Griffiths (Stafford UPW). (All speakers in personal capacity).

**Labour Women's Conference Militant Readers' Meeting.** Monday 15th May, 7.00 pm. Queen's Hotel (opposite Town Hall). 'Women and Socialism'. Speakers: Julie MacLean (Prospective Labour Councillor, Arundel Ward, Liverpool); Muriel Browning (TGWU delegate).

**ASTMS Conference Militant Meeting.** Speakers: Ed Bober ('Militant'); Geoff Jones (ASTMS Delegate). Chairman: Pete Watson (Delegate, Bradford). Sunday 14th May, 6.00 pm. Prince George, Trafalgar Street.

## Discussion Groups

**HARLOW Militant Discussion Group.** 'Nationalism—the Socialist View on Devolution and Separatism'. Speaker: Brian Bostock (Harlow LP and NUT); Thursday 18th May, 8.00 pm.

'France—May '68 to May '78—Prospects for Socialism after Election Defeat'. Speaker: Chris Huxtable (Harlow LPYS Sec). Thursday 25th May, 8.00 pm. At: 48 Morley Grove, Harlow

**SUNDERLAND Militant Discussion Group.** Every other Friday at 8.00 pm. Phone Gateshead 774948 for further details.

**NEWCASTLE Marxist Discussion Group** for students, unemployed and shift workers. Fridays, 1.30 pm. Audio Room of Newcastle Poly Students' Union.

12.5.78—The Labour Party in Perspective. 19.6.78—Role of Marxism in the Labour Movement.

**GATESHEAD Marxist Discussion Meetings.** May 22nd: The History of the Trade Unions (John Pickard); June 5th: Workers' Control and Management (Wilf Flynn). Phone Gateshead 881165 for details.

## Events

**Islington Militant Supporters** present an evening of food, drink and folk on Saturday, 13th May, 8pm 'til late, in the Labour Rooms, 295 Upper Street, N.1. (near Highbury Corner, Victoria Line, buses 279, 4, 19, 30, 43). Admission by ticket £1, or pay at the door. Includes dish of pasta, glass of beer and entrance to folk singing.

**YOU could win**  
A holiday in France for two worth £250!  
A 3-room frame tent worth £150!  
A family caravan for a week or a "Galleon" British holiday worth £100!  
Plus a pocket camera, picnic set, sleeping bag, camp bed, deck chair, battery lantern and a football, if you bought every ticket for the **MILITANT HOLIDAY RAFFLE** to be drawn on Saturday July 1st!. But if you just want to take a chance and buy a few books and sell as many as you can—Order now from: Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Price per ticket 10p, ten tickets in a book.

**SOUTH WALES Militant Summer Camp** Friday 26th—Monday 29th May (Spring Bank Holiday) Horton, Gower Coast Near Swansea  
**Political Programme**

1. The Marxist Method Ted Grant
2. The Class Nature of the Soviet Union Peter Taaffe
3. What is Fascism Ted Grant
4. World War—Future Prospects Bryan Beckingham
5. Marxism and the Trade Unions Brian Ingham

**Book Now!**  
Cost: £6.50 per person  
Cheques payable to R. Sewell. Further Details: R. Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan, Swansea. Tel: 33542.

## USE YOUR REBATE WISELY!

This week's total of £557.06 is well down on previous weeks and means we still have £18,000 to raise in only nine weeks if we are to get back on target.

The tax rebates promised in the budget are now being given although probably most people won't notice much difference in their wage packets! The amount due has been estimated at about £2-£3 extra (backdated) and this won't in any way help to reduce the problems of the rising cost of living. The best use you can put your rebate to is to donate it to 'Militant' and to keep up the fight, through its pages, for socialism.

On the question of student donations we have received a letter from Peter Lush (Chairman, Middlesex Poly Labour Club) who states:

"Student grants are to go up by 9.8% next academic year! The maximum grant will now be £1,100 [£1,315 in London]. This increase will not cover rises in rents, food prices and books. More students will face real hardship because of this.

Two lessons can be drawn from this latest award. First, that the present strategy of the 'Broad Left' leadership is completely inadequate in defending student living standards; and that the need for a Marxist leadership of NUS, fighting for a living grant for all students, is an urgent one.

## THIS WEEK: £557

The second lesson is that the only way this can be built is through increased support for 'Militant' among students, and the labour movement as a whole. This can only be done through every student who supports 'Militant' giving a donation from their grant to the fighting fund. Capitalism can't guarantee a decent education system—the only way this can be assured is by building a mass movement of Marxism. Invest in the future—send your donation now!

Students who donated this week include: I Mackintosh (Newcastle Poly) £10, M Nunford (Canterbury) £2, and 'Anon' (London) £4. Other donations this week include: G Hold (Lewisham) £2.30, Wobey (Hackney) £4, H Bell and 'a friend' (Wallsend) £5 and £1 respectively, D Harris (Gateshead) £3, M Dewdney (Plymouth) £6, Port Talbot supporters £5.50, NGA supporters in Wavertree £8.54 and 'Anon' (Scunthorpe) £30.

D Brown and S and M Hatherley from Gosport sent £2 and £1.30, D Brown (Hull AUEW) sent £2 as did S Pervinal (Tower Hamlets), B Brum (Brent) sent £1.36, K O'Connor and N Clarkson (Woolwich) sent £1.50 each and R Russel (Nottingham North LPYS) donated £1.28.

There were many £1 donations this week of which only a few can be mentioned. They

are: J Tree (W Hull LPYS), J Turner (St Pancras), C Welch (Tower Hamlets), P Vaughan (Chesterfield), J Watson (Gateshead), A Smith (Edinburgh), A Allan (Dundee), J Stevenson and D Sutton (N Abbott), D Selwood (Caerphilly) and two NALGO members from Wakefield £1 each.

Collections at Militant Meetings raised £22.76 in Harlow, Salford £6.26, Blyth £8.20, Bristol £10, and a readers' meeting at the USDAW union conference £23.05. At the Tobacco workers' union conference £6.36 was raised from rattling tins. Fareham LPYS sent in £1.88 and a Marxist Discussion Group in Gosport raised £4.82.

From fund raising ideas this week we received: from the sale of coffee (Cambridge) £1.18, a book (Stevenage) £2, songbooks (Woolwich) £3.30, posters (Brent) £9, and badges and posters (Leeds) £10. A weekly raffle in Ipswich raised £1.15, one in Leeds university made £7.65, and one in Reading raised £6.19. A pizza party (also in Reading) made £13.33, a sponsored swim in Leeds made £13.50 and catalogue commission from a comrade in East Merseyside £2.70.

If you would like to make a donation but do not know of anyone who could collect it from you send it direct to the Militant offices, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN and make all cheques and postal orders payable to 'Militant'.

## ADVERTS

## Partido Socialista de Gibraltar

**Fraternal greetings on Workers' Day 1st May to all socialists in Britain.** We salute your struggle against the National Front and other fascist hoodlums, against unemployment, income controls and other manifestations of the crisis of the capitalist system and against the insidious class collaboration of the Lib-Lab pact.

Forward to a Socialist United States of Europe

**Hammersmith and District LPYS Action Committee** Public Meeting. 'Youth Unemployment'. Hear: Ben Bosquet (North Kensington Councillor and NUPE Shop Steward); John Bulaitis (Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee). Wednesday 17th May, 8.00 pm. Hammersmith North Labour Hall, 446 Uxbridge Road, London W.12.

**LPYS PUBLIC MEETING** 'The Fight for Re-selection of MPs.'. Speakers: B Kissen (ASTMS Labour Party Working Party); Paul Schofield (ASTMS). Prince George, Trafalgar Street, 6.00 pm, Saturday 13th May.

**Days of Hope**—New bookshop of Tyneside Socialist Centre opens Saturday 13th May at 115 Westgate Road, Newcastle.

**Newbegin Hall Labour Party Young Socialists Day School FRANCE '68 AND '78**  
Speakers: DAVE COTTERILL (Blyth Labour Party); JOHN HARGRAVE (Communist Party) Saturday 13th May, 10.30am, Labour Rooms, Westerhope. Contact Steve Walker, Bedlington 822181, between 8.30—4.30

**PNP Youth Movement [UK] Monthly Disco**  
Funk ★ Roots ★ Reggae  
May 20th, 92b Ladbroke Grove Entrance 25p  
Tube: Ladbroke Grove, Buses 52, 15. Nine till late.

**Scottish Socialist Feminist Conference:** Rosevale Centre, Partick, Glasgow, 13-14 May. Details from Mary Brand, 131 Montgomery Street, Edinburgh, Tel: 031 661 7315

## RATES

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum 10 words  
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.

All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY.

PAYMENTS must be sent with advertisements. Cheques and Postal Orders should be made payable to 'Militant'.

## TRADE UNION

## DISCUSSION GROUPS

**NEATH:** Full Moon Pub, The Parade, Neath. Every second Tuesday, 8.00 pm, from 18th April.

**PORT TALBOT:** contact P. Harris, 13 Beverley Street, Port Talbot, for details.

**PONTARDULAIS:** Kings Public Bar. Every Tuesday, 7.30 pm.

**AMMANFORD:** The Welfare Club. Every Monday, 8.00 pm.

**GWENDREATH VALLEY:** every Thursday, 7.15pm, Upper Tumble Social Club, Tumble.

**Peace News/Leveller Defence Campaign:** 'Whose Contempt?'—with speakers from these papers, from the Aubrey/Berry/Campbell Defence Campaign, trade unionists...details to be announced. Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London W.C.1. Thursday May 18th; 7.00 pm.

**Public Meeting**—'The Rebirth of Trotskyism in Britain'. WSL splits—Spartacist League founded'. 7.45 pm, Friday 12th May, Labour Party Social Club, Bristol Street, Birmingham.



# BRITISH LEYLAND

## WHO IS NEXT



Will the production of volume cars at Longbridge [Minis and Allegros] be the next to receive the axe from Edwardes and the Leyland management?

Following the two to one vote for the productivity deal which both Longbridge management and the media said would mean up to £28 a week in the wage packet of the average worker, Longbridge management have been engaged in an efficiency exercise to get the "realistic" manning levels such a productivity deal would in their opinion require. The result of this has been the creation of a large 'pool of labour' affecting 2,000 workers.

However, after six months, the idea of the productivity bonus has become a joke in the eyes of the Longbridge workers and the proposal was overwhelmingly rejected in a recent second vote. This has left the workers carrying the can yet again with only the 10% from last November and an efficiency exercise imposed by the management from which we have gained nothing.

I spoke to Brother Ray Ward to discover what action

## LONGBRIDGE?

Management have announced that they want 10,000 Minis to be produced at the Leyland factory in Seneffe, in Belgium. With the sudden pick-up in demand for Leyland cars following the successful sales campaign earlier this year, the company claim that stocks are running down, and that production from Longbridge is not enough to meet the expected demand. So they want 10,000 cars to be built at Seneffe, on a "once off" basis and imported into Britain.

But it's the same old story with Leyland management. They are blaming the Longbridge workers for being "too lazy". They are blaming the workers for their own mistakes.

Production at Longbridge is running at only about 50%,

the works committee were taking in the face of the de-manning exercise.

Bro Ward said that in the face of the initial rejection of the Car Council's advice in November, when the productivity deal was voted in, the works committee felt tied by that vote. Although they pledged support for any stewards who wished to resist the de-manning, no opposition to the management's proposals would be led by them.

He explained that using the length of service criteria, management had demanned by about 14% in the affected areas. As a result of this the men left on the job were suffering extra workloads, and management interference in established work practice.

Because of the length of service criteria, it is the older men who are facing the increased work loads, while the younger workers were left idle in the labour pool.

Bro Ward said that both the works committee and the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee are opposed to all redundancies and see the labour pool as a method of preventing labour being sent through the gate. It was the

but this is largely because management have just switched the production of different types of Mini (Clubman, 850s, 1000s, Canadians etc.) between tracks and departments without providing adequate tools, job descriptions, training or other back-up facilities.

The Works Committee have said they will black the export of engines needed for the proposed Seneffe Minis—the engines are made at Longbridge. But appeals should also be made to the workers at Seneffe, in the same way as the Speke workers successfully appealed to the Canley workers to black the TR7.

**Nic Boulter**

(T&GWU Shop Steward, Longbridge)

By Richard Lewis

(T&GWU Longbridge)

view of the works committee that some kind of productivity deal was viable and that the recent market share announcements for Leyland Cars would mean the reduction of the labour pool as productivity was stepped up to meet demand.

This position is in stark contradiction with the views of 'Militant' supporters in the factory. We are totally opposed to productivity deals and believe that the works committee should have led a fight against the demanning, despite the November vote which was influenced by the massive media backing and more seriously by the lack of an alternative union claim for a decent across-the-board rise without strings.

The 2,000 jobs will be lost since no new labour will be taken on to cover for natural wastage until the labour pool has been emptied. The redundancies are back door, but none the less real. We believe that they could be saved by a campaign for work sharing and a reduction in the working week.

The whole 'efficiency' exercise is a sham; management are constantly calling for overtime working. Workers are on overtime on Saturday and Sunday every weekend.

Militant supporters call for:

- ★ An end to overtime working.
- ★ A 35-hour week with no loss of pay.
- ★ Struggle for a decent wage increase in November.
- ★ Immediate payment of parity agreements.

The 'pool' is a shameful waste of time and skills; it is an attack on jobs and manning levels throughout the factory. After the first 2,000, who goes next? It must be ended. **Distribute the work, cut the hours and scrap the pool!**



Liverpool workers, including large delegation from Speke, lobby MPs demanding action on jobs.

Photo: Julian McKittrick

## Speke workers bitter

By two votes to one the workers at Speke No 2 plant have decided to accept the management's redundancy payment offer. They decisively rejected the recommendation of the shop stewards' committee to join in with the Leyland Combine and the rest of the labour movement on Merseyside to fight the closure. **Mick Everett [T&GWU convenor, Triumph, Speke]** gives his opinion to **John Scully [T&GWU 6/612, Speke]** on the reasons why.

**John Scully: What are your feelings at the result of today's meeting?**

**Mick Everett:** One of total disappointment. Not in relation to the membership, because I think sooner or later there would be cracks developing as a result of the long term effects of waiting for decisions that should have been made by the National trade unions, to fight the closure and refer them to the National Officials.

I totally deplore their lack of interest in relation to saving the jobs. As far as we are concerned, these people

have to examine their consciences, because if a decision had been forthcoming to fight this closure, then I believe the membership would have been unified, and the decision today could have been a different one.

**JS: You feel you have been let down by the National Officials?**

**ME:** Totally. The Confed. in my opinion, went through a sell-out exercise, purely because of the tenacity and the purpose being shown by the members in Liverpool. They decided to make a decision to split the rank and file, a decision that was not conducive to get the membership solidified to fight for the plant.

I do not believe that those responsible for the closing of the plant are the membership, and their reaction today, but the lack of action and decision at the level of the national trade unions.

**JS: Is there any help we can look for from the combine now?**

**ME:** The combine are insisting that the public enquiry goes ahead. They are

still insisting that the L pool closure should not take place. We have the necessary support from the Transport and Commercial Groups and support from the combine. We were getting support from the areas that mattered most—the membership. But because the action was short coming, the membership got a little bit browned off waiting. As a result we got a decision against the shop stewards' recommendations.

The one day token strike is still on as far as we are concerned. That is a decision by the previous stadium meeting. If we had got the necessary support at national level we would have saved 3,000 jobs at Speke and all those jobs that are spin-offs.

**JS: Are you now agreeing with the company to dismantle the machinery?**

**ME:** Until we have clearly defined exactly what the closure terms are we will still be retaining the principle of no work leaving the plant, either in TR7 form or convertible form, or dismantling components, machinery, jigs, tools etc.

## 35 HOUR WEEK NOW!

## Victory at Robb Caledon

Victory at the eleventh hour! Within a few days of their notice of strike action expiring, the shop stewards at the two Robb Caledon yards of British Shipbuilders at Dundee and Leith received a phone call from the management.

The result was a settlement that we regard as a victory.

The workers voted unanimously to accept a new offer which included a nine and a half per cent increase on all earnings and the claim for a "fair wage", under the terms of the government shipbuilding contracts, to be decided on 1st June. This is a means of getting the same wage as other workers on comparable jobs in other yards.

With this settlement, and the possibility of a new bonus scheme, we are convinced that our wages will be brought up to levels now being paid by privately-owned ship-repair firms in the area, £86 for skilled men, which was always the heart of the claim. As a result of the settle-

ment, the Boilermakers have been able to lift their ban on ship-repair work being done in the yards, which could mean more work for the finishing trades, who otherwise would have been temporarily laid off. The Boilermakers have also agreed to the transfer of 600 tons of steel to be fabricated in other

By Alex Allen  
(Finishing Trades Convenor, Dundee)

yards. This will mean that the building programme will be brought back into line. These two moves by the Boilermakers will give us a strong case for having no temporary lay-offs.

So for the moment the struggles to keep the yards open and to bring pay up to

## Rolls Royce return to work

At a mass meeting on Friday morning 28.4.78, the manual workers at Rolls Royce voted overwhelmingly to accept a shop stewards' recommendation to return to work. After a month of occupying the works, both at Parkside and Ansty, the men voted to return to "normal" working.

Significant gains have been made. A 9.8% rise was obtained and restrictive conditions such as no regrading claims to be lodged for 12 months, have been removed. A new formula to resolve the piecework issue with the help

of ACAS has been developed. But "normal" working is far from guaranteed. The electricians' dispute, which originally led to the company laying off men, has not been resolved. So the men may return to find themselves laid off again.

It was to counter such management tactics as lay-offs that the men had used the work-in. Only when the whole factory was threatened with lay-offs did the sit-in begin. Now they may find themselves in the same position as they were over two years ago—

the levels of other comparable firms have been partially successful. The reason for this is obvious—it was because the workers at both yards, and in the different unions, came together in a united struggle and made it absolutely clear to management that there would be strike action unless our demands were conceded. That is the lesson for all workers in the industry.

forced to accept layoffs.

No money will be paid for the wages lost during the sit-in. Each manual worker lost an average of £240. Money for work done during the work-in still has to be negotiated.

So limited gains have been made, but one of the main causes, the piece work issue, remains unresolved. The men have returned, but future battles are on the agenda.

**Darell Cozens**  
(Coventry SE Labour Party)

## DER National Strike

820 ETU members employed throughout the country by the TV firm DER have now been on strike for three weeks.

Their present basic rate is just £55 per week, and they are demanding consolidation of all the supplementary payments, to take them up to the £80 mark.

The workers consider their claim to be absolutely justified—the Price Commission is right now investigating DER's record profits. But the company have not spoken to the strikers since they were out. The men are still confident, though, for DER is

part of the giant Thorn group, which includes other TV firms like Radio Rentals, Multi-Broadcast and Rumbelows, all of whom have pay claims coming up. The workers at DER are first in line: if they win it will set the pace for the others, so they are approaching all their fellow workers for support.

Already the London region of Radio Rentals has organised a collection, raising £300. But clearly the more backing they receive, the more likely they are to succeed.

John Bulaitis spoke to EETPU pickets in Penge High Street.

## WORKING IN THE UNION

This series has unfortunately been temporarily squeezed out by the coverage of trade union conferences. It will be returning as soon as possible. We hope to continue the series with lessons and experiences of workers in industry today.



# WAGES FALL SAYS ASTMS

"The preceding twelve months have seen little improvement in the basic economic situation...without a change in government policies, we do not envisage a reversal of this trend."

This statement in the introduction to the report of the ASTMS NEC to annual conference is fully supported by the mass of resolutions critical of government policy. Only one resolution out of five specifically on wage restraint supports it, and on the subject of unemployment out of more than a dozen, all are critical.

There are, however, differences as to how the government should tackle the problem. Resolutions 138 and 147 talk of the government using investment grants and planning agreements, as a "carrot and stick" to force companies to invest in areas of high unemployment. But the old saying "you can't control what you don't own," has been borne out over the last four years of Labour government. The policy outlined in resolution 149, and the *Liverpool Plessey amendment to 143*, for taking over the major

sections of industry as the solution to our economic problems, shows the practical steps forward for the labour movement.

Resolutions 140 and 141 demand a reduction in the working week to reduce unemployment, but fail to link it to no loss of pay, as resolutions 134 and 137 correctly do.

The cuts, especially in the NHS, also figure prominently with no resolutions supporting government policy. Resolution 173 shows concrete steps that the NEC should

take against these attacks on the social wage.

Resolutions 91 and 93 call for the regular election of full-time officers. This demand must be supported so that we are ensured officers who democratically represent and fight for us.

Resolutions on racial discrimination are prominent in the resolution book. Two call for the expulsion of fascists from the union.

This demand should be supported because groups such as the National Front are not just 'anti-black', they use this as a weapon in an attempt to drive a wedge between black and white workers, with the ultimate aim of destroying the organisations of the working class. There is no way, therefore, that we can afford them in our union.

**Peter Watson**  
(Delegate, 252 branch, Bradford)

## CONFERENCE ROUND-UP

### USDAW—minimum wage demanded

The most significant resolution passed at the USDAW conference demanded an "immediate national campaign for a 35-hour week for a basic minimum wage of £55." The resolution, passed unanimously, also called upon the Executive Council to campaign against the twelve-month rule and for a "return to free collective bargaining."

The union leadership will, no doubt, try to avoid such a campaign by falling back on their own EC statement of policy which called for an "orderly" return to free collective bargaining, which was also passed. Now the

policy of the union at TUC and LP meetings hinges upon interpretation—the EC document, passed by only 40,000 votes, or resolution 56 passed unanimously?

USDAW members throughout the branches and Divisions will have to keep up pressure on the union leadership, to make sure that they act in accordance with the real aims of the conference—by campaigning on resolution 56.

The leadership of USDAW have been more rattled than ever before by the Broad Left, which is now organising itself properly on a national level.

USDAW 'Militant' readers should look out for BL meetings in their own Divisions in the next few months, in the run-up to the EC biennial elections.

By no means the least significant feature of the USDAW conference this year was that 126 'Militants' were sold long with £8 worth of LPYS literature; about 25 people were interested in joining the LPYS and a 'Militant' readers' meeting raised a collection of £25 after an excellent discussion.

**John Pickard**  
(Delegate, USDAW, Newcastle)

### Tobacco Workers' Internationalism

"The Imperial Group's profits were £168m last year, so that proves that we aren't lazy, workshy and inefficient," said Ian Wilson, a Glasgow delegate to the Tobacco Workers' Union Conference. He was demanding an end to wage restraint, a £70 minimum wage, and a 30-hour week in the industry.

Delegate after delegate called for a shorter working week to end unemployment, and the EC committed itself to campaign for a 35-hour week immediately.

Conference came alive on international issues and against racism. A fraternal

delegate from the Spanish UGT, Elena Vasquez, got a standing ovation.

Dan Gallin, president of the International Union of Food and Allied Workers' Associations, pointed out the international interests of tobacco workers. Except for the state-run firms, five or six monopolies control the entire world's markets.

"Racism is not South Africa's monopoly," he said. "In Europe, the most reactionary wing of the Conservatives—Thatcher in Britain and Strauss in W Germany—are using fascists groups to test the ground. If they're not

stopped—as you have started to do—they will be used as strike-breakers."

Bro Gallin said he was greatly encouraged by the British labour movement's response. "We must stop them by all means at our disposal; a setback for the NF helps trade unions all over Europe."

Delegates exposed the lies of the racials and called for the expulsion of fascists from the union. Two resolutions against racialism were passed unanimously.

**Tony Cross**

### TSSA—No to wage restraint

In opening the TSSA Conference, President Johnny Johnston, MP for Derby South, assured delegates that after three years of sacrifices by the working people, the government had gone a long way to solving the country's economic problems.

Inflation had fallen, living standards would rise this year: all this, of course, would be ruined if there was a free-for-all over wages. This would mean that lower-paid

workers would only get the crumbs from the militants' table.

But he quickly had to add that it was his personal opinion that there should be a continuing incomes policy, as the Executive Committee agreed, and conference confirmed on Tuesday morning, a commitment to free collective bargaining from August 1st.

Conference overwhelmingly rejected moves to end the

closed shop. They pressed for more open debate at Conference and totally defeated Conservative Central Office-inspired resolutions to change the political levy from contracting out to contracting in.

The general mood was reflected in the demands for more democratic rules and more accountability of the EC to the rank and file.

**Irving Nichol**  
(Delegate, Euston No 2)

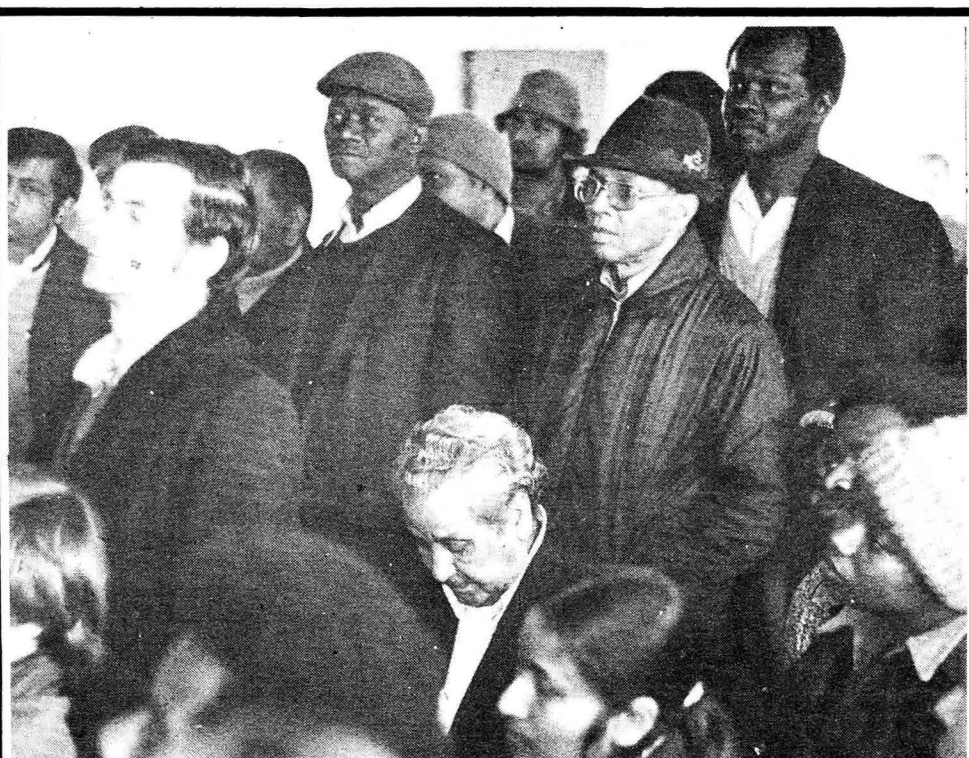


Photo: Julian McKittrick

## Beecham workers go back

In lashing rain 150 Beechams workers had a mass meeting on the company premises to hear a recommendation from their T&GWU District Officer Bro Foskett.

He reported that in the negotiations with the company after four weeks of strike action they had arrived at a formula which he was recommending a return to work on:

That the strikers return to work on May 8th under the same conditions that existed prior to the beginning of the dispute [April 9th], and the company would not operate the new canning line or the three-quarter litre line, nor any other new machines or innovations.

That the local and national trade union reps would meet management at a national meeting to resolve the issues.

With no strike pay for four weeks and the promise of full backing from the union if the talks fail, the meeting voted overwhelmingly to return to work [two

against].

I asked one of the T&GWU shop stewards his view on the dispute. "This was a big victory for the unity of the workers—we have stayed together. The management wanted to split the shop floor unity. We have 99% union in here.

"They offered us nothing for the new speed-ups; the canning line was up from 600 to 1,400 with less staff. The same with the three-quarter litre bottle. We've never done these before—they wanted to pay us nothing.

"The company should pay us for the four weeks out. They broke the procedure. But in the future all issues must be negotiated. We will not be dictated to."

'Militant' supporters at the meeting sold 20 'Militants' and 20 PNP papers.

**Bob Faulkes**

(Hackney Central Labour Party)

## IRSF

# MUST TURN TO LABOUR

The Annual Conference of the Inland Revenue Staff Federation meets after a stormy year for the union.

Important lessons have been learnt from the autumn and winter work to rule, and from the Executive Committee's retreat.

28 motions on the original agenda demand that decisions on industrial action be by the members, and many are critical of the EC. A further 21 call for a strike fund to be set up.

### Fight on wages

Pay remains the burning issue in the offices. But PRU—comparing our wages with workers outside the Civil Service—can never meet our needs. That requires a militant campaign with the CPSSA and SCPS, involving all the members.

The Federation should fight for a restoration of real wages, linked to a trade union cost of living index as demanded by resolution 106.

This would make a reality of the call made in the Progress Report by the IRSF President for unity of the Civil Service unions, uniting the members in action at local level, with the aim of one union for the Civil Service.

Conference motions map out a fighting approach on several issues, especially automation, where motion 229 from Bradford (Taxes) demands opposition to redundancies and wastage and a shorter working week with more holidays.

But resolutions must be more than just adopted. They must be explained to the membership and fought for. The budget campaign showed that IRSF members are no longer the government's "obedient servants". They are prepared to fight for their rights.

### Secretariat

We need a programme of demands that will answer the members' needs—a minimum

wage of £65, six weeks' annual leave, a shorter working week. And we need a leadership willing to fight for such a programme—not one dominated by management grades. The Secretariat should be subject to regular re-election by the membership, and on the same pay—for example TO(HG) maximum salary.

### Labour Party

If our gains are to be safeguarded and progress made, a break is needed with the past—especially the dead end of "political neutrality". As workers in the public sector, all the decisions affecting us are directly political.

The IRSF must recognise that reality, and its position in the labour movement. It should affiliate to the Labour Party, to fight there for policies that would benefit its members.

**An IRSF Delegate**



# Militant

Thunderous applause greeted the presidential election results for the CPSA.

A right wing challenge to the presidency was decisively defeated. Despite a split in the left vote, Len Lever was re-elected as president, polling over 103,000 votes.

Kate Losinska, the right-wing candidate, who openly admits to being backed by TRUMID, an organisation financed by big business, could only poll a miserable 66,420 votes. She was also ousted from her position as vice-president, when both places were taken by Broad Left candidates.

These election results were a great victory for the left wing, and a vindication of the approach *Militant* supporters took to the elections. They are an indication that the policies of the right-wing majority on last year's NEC have been completely rejected by the union's rank and file.

A further indication was the tremendous support for Terry Adams, full-time official of the CPSA, whom the right wing tried to sack for the crime of being a *Militant* supporter. Not only were there a record number of resolutions on the agenda supporting Terry, but he also received a standing ovation when he made his first speech at conference.

About 200 delegates attended a *Militant Readers' Meeting*, the biggest ever held at CPSA conference.

CP  
SA

## Right Routed



Kate Losinska, ex-vice president, on the platform

Photo: Julian McKittrick

Kevin Roddy, a *Militant* supporter on the NEC, spoke about the growing support and role of *Militant* in the CPSA. "The fact that Alistair Graham, Assistant General Secretary of the CPSA, appealed to conference to reject an important motion because it was a *Militant* motion, is a testimony to this support."

Peter Taaffe broadened the discussion by pointing out that the move to the left in the CPSA is a reflection of the processes taking place in society as a whole. He welcomed the change in the CPSA from its traditional image as a staid civil servants' association to the beginnings of a fighting, militant trade union.

But he also warned that in the period of capitalist de-

**NEC ELECTIONS**  
STOP PRESS: Following the elections at conference, the Left has a 20-6 majority on the NEC. Four *Militant* supporters: Kevin Roddy, Frank Bonner, Pat Byrne and Steve Appleton, were elected.

cline, action on wages and conditions of employment could only lead to permanent gain if linked to a bold socialist programme.

The meeting showed its response to these ideas in a magnificent collection which raised £535. A further indication of our support is shown by the sale of over 300 *Militants* so far.

Enormous support was given to the General Secretary when he pledged total opposition to the Social Contract,

and any Phase Four. Judging by this, it seems certain that conference will overwhelmingly reject any further round of wage restraint in the debate on pay.

Tremendous battles loom ahead for members of the CPSA over pay, conditions and even jobs. It seems likely that a Broad Left majority will be elected to the NEC.

They have an enormous responsibility, not only to members of the CPSA but to the whole labour movement, in organising a struggle to defend living standards.

**Heather Rawlings**  
(SEC Member,  
DHSS Section)

★ Full report on Conference in next week's *Militant*.

## Moro Murder Aids Reaction

The murder of former Italian President Aldo Moro has been met with horror and revulsion by workers everywhere. No activist in the labour movement can give any credence whatsoever to the methods of individual terrorism of the so-called "Red Brigades".

Within hours of the assassination, workers throughout Italy held a General Strike against terrorism.

ist Party?"

It is significant that Moro was kidnapped on the very day that the CDs and the Communist Party signed an agreement guaranteeing the CDs a majority in Parliament in return for CP participation. The far right of the CDs, who, it is widely known, have links with the fascist MSI and who have been involved in plots to organise military coups, believe they would benefit from the confusion caused by a strategy of terror leading to the suspension of democratic rights and a strengthening of the military forces. If any CD had to be martyred in the process, who better than Moro, the liberal who designed the accommodation with the CP?

Whether the murder was the work of hysterical ultra-lefts or agents-provocateurs, objectively the damaging result for the labour movement is the same. But the blame for the growth of ultra-leftism among a section of disillusioned middle class youth rests with the CP leaders, who are tying the workers' organisations to the party of big business rather than giving a bold socialist lead for its overthrow.

### "Democratic"

The "democratic" Italian capitalists have demonstrated through their support for Mussolini and financing of fascists today, that they are quite prepared to drop their form of democracy when it no longer serves their aims. It is up to the workers' parties to show that the only guarantee of democratic rights, along with civilised housing and working conditions, proper state welfare and education and jobs for all, is a workers' democracy, a socialist state.

**Brent Kennedy**

## NUPE CONFERENCE:

# END LOW PAY

This year sees the 50th anniversary of the National Union of Public Employees since it adopted that name in 1928.

In 1968, membership stood at 283,471—today there are over 700,000 members in our ranks. Much of this growth is due to the militant stand adopted by the union.

### Wage Claim

The battles against the Tory government in 1970-74 have resulted in a strong union stewards' organisation, which would have been unthinkable ten years ago. Now that strength must be used to defeat the bosses' attacks on public sector workers.

Last year's NUPE conference agreed to fight for a £50 basic minimum wage for all grades. That was not achieved. In fact our members have suffered a terrible fall in living standards. The gap in earnings between local authority manual workers and average industrial earnings now stands at over £12 per week.

One of the claimed objectives of the Social Contract was that it would help the low paid. It has quite clearly been of no use at all. That is why

**Greg Oxley**  
(NUPE)

this year's conference should categorically reject any Phase Four, and support resolution 16 from Cynon Valley.

The Executive Council Policy statement—Union Wages Strategy 1978-79—points a way forward. Firstly, it says: "The union should fight vigorously for a minimum wage target of £60 per week in the 1978-79 pay negotiations." It proposes that "the second major plank in the union's 1978 wage campaign should be a demand to reduce the working week to 35 hours."

If these proposals are adopted by conference we can then begin the campaign to make these aims a reality this year, using industrial action, if necessary, to achieve them. We can win the support and confidence of our members if we show that we are serious in this campaign.

The firemen fought a tremendous battle in their attempt to break the pay policy. The lesson from their struggle is that public service unions must fight as one to succeed.

Our union has always believed in industrial unionism—in one union for the public services. Joint Shop

Stewards Committees at local level are an effective way of proving that as trade unionists united in action we can increase our strength.

Frank West—in his presidential address to the 1977 conference—said: "We must take active steps to ensure that racials do not establish themselves within our union by perverting the language and philosophy of trade unionism to gain positions as stewards and branch officers."

### Fascist Menace

Since then NUPE itself has been at the receiving end of a bomb attack when our Stockwell office was sent a parcel bomb which luckily did not explode.

The National Union of Railwaymen agreed to expel from its union all members who openly proclaim membership of the National Front. That is the way to deal with these lunatics!

Whenever the NF raise their ugly head we should deal with them swiftly. Resolution 209 from Rainhill Nurses clearly spells out the issue: "This Conference feels that any individual member who becomes a member of, or actively involved in the activities of, any fascist organisa-

tion is acting not only against the basic principles of trade unionism but also against the interests of our union, and is therefore bringing the union into disrepute, and as such is subject to expulsion under rule."

NUPE has made progress over the last few years. The new structure has been a step forward in involving stewards and developing the union.

The next step forward must be the election of full-time officers. Not a single officer is elected at the present moment. The union belongs to its members; elected officials, subject to recall, as shop stewards are, would directly reflect the wishes and needs of the membership, and have full backing in the struggles they lead.

### Build the Union

Conference now has the responsibility to build NUPE into a fighting union that will win the unorganised public sector workers to its ranks, campaigning on a programme that will put an end to low pay, poor conditions and cuts in public services, and guarantee expanded efficient social provisions for every worker.

Labour's youth broadcast, originally planned for Wednesday June 7th, has been postponed until Thursday June 15th. Thirty CLPs have already sent in resolutions welcoming the broadcast for the LPYS. Doubtless many more will be flooding in. The officers of the LPYS National Committee have agreed to postpone the 'Week of Action' until June 10th-June 18th. All LPYS branches must now change their arrangements accordingly and plan street meetings, mass leafletting etc. for the big recruitment drive now.

# Militant

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