



NATIONALISE CHRYSLER

The substitution of one group of profiteers for another is no solution for Chrysler workers

Chrysler workers were told at 3.30 pm on Thursday, 10 August, that, because of a financial crisis in the firm, all Chrysler operations in Europe would be taken over by Peugeot/Citroen. Bernard Lynch, an AUEW member at Chrysler, Linwood, gives the workers' reaction.

“No worker at Linwood will bemoan the demise of a company which has had such a deep and cynical contempt for working people and their families. Their record of strike-breaking and of provoking disputes is without parallel in the cut-throat trade of car manufacturing.

What every Chrysler worker suffered day in, day out was graphically shown at the time of the rescue deal in December

1975. Have Chrysler once again pulled off a coup? Their pride may be dented but their coffers are intact. After buying

Rootes out for a song, they recouped their modest outlay in government grants and the selling-off of a number of small factories in the London area for big money in real estate.

Then there was the “Swiss Connection”, unearthed by ‘Labour Research’ in 1976. Chrysler UK was selling cars in kit form to a Swiss subsidiary called Chrysler International for half price, then reselling them at the full price abroad.

By a Chrysler Shop Steward

Estimates of that little bit of “business” was £90 million profit. The £162 million rescue deal was just another piece of good business for these captains of industry. Now Peugeot/Citroen are to

give Chrysler £117m plus a 15% share of the firm.

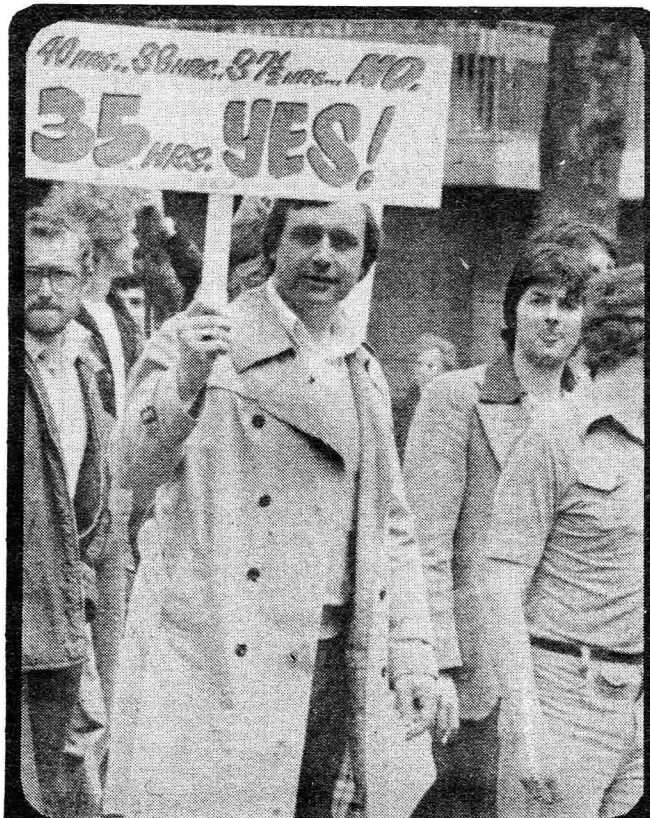
But by far the most important consideration now is the 24,000 jobs, including the 10,000 held at Linwood.

Peugeot/Citroen are no doubt mainly interested in Chrysler France (Simca). The British plants, Linwood, Ryton and Stoke, inevitably have the spectre of redundancy over them.

Any cuts in jobs must be fiercely resisted by the workers with the full backing of the TUC and the Labour Party.

Peugeot has the reputation of being hard, ruthless employers. If this means that they will try to slash jobs, undermine conditions and tame the workers and shop stewards' committees, then surely after the

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POEU LEADERS GIVE UP 35 hrs

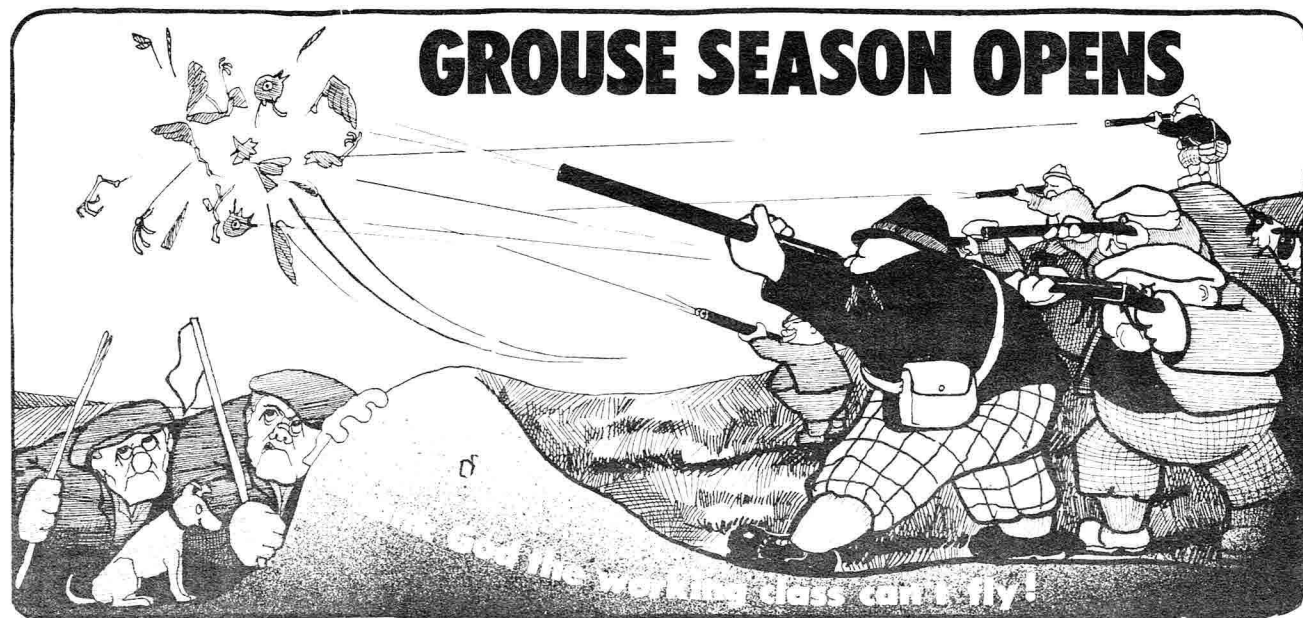
“It's like having a fight with someone, and when you've got him on the canvass, saying 'we've got to come to an agreement' and then telling him he's won the fight.”

This verdict from London North Central branch committee member George Blackmore sums up the feeling of disgust and anger felt by

thousands of Post Office engineers at the news of their leaders giving up the fight for a 35-hour week.

The NEC got cold feet just as the effects of the overtime ban and work-to-rule were accumulating and the selective

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GROUSE SEASON OPENS

The “Glorious Twelfth”, the start—as our readers will surely know—of the Grouse season.

Workers are still working. Farmers are anxiously studying their crops, trying to judge the right moment to harvest.

But the landed aristocracy, and City financiers masquerading as landed aristocracy, have donned

their dashing checks and are presently up on the moors of Scotland and the North trying to shoot Grouse.

Lagopus Scoticus, to give it its proper name, is one of the most expensive birds around. Not in the breeding, because it breeds only in the wild, but in the shooting down.

Grouse, so they say, is delicious. It has to be, at

anything from £15 to £20 a brace.

“A day's shooting on a typical moor could cost the sportsman £200 early in the season,” the ‘Financial Times’ warns would-be hunters. This does include the beaters, the rural workers who wade through the soaking heather to drive the birds over the guns.

But “tips to keepers,

paying the loader, protective clothing, and cartridges soon empty the pocket. A week with four days' shooting would not leave any change out of £1,000.”

The ageing rich types who can afford this escapade, however, are regrettably not the best shots. Casualties are common. The beaters carry white flags! To make sure of a respectable num-

ber of birds, a few ‘impecunious’ young men who can shoot straight are asked along.

Things, sad to say, are not what they were for the hunting and shooting brigade. The Grouse have two big moans.

The traditional mystique and prestige has begun to ricochet. Squads of Arab, Japanese, and other affluent businessmen are eager to enjoy the legendary sport. As a result, impoverished aristocrats and the sinking captains of Britain's floundering industry are being squeezed out by oil sheiks buying up the prime moors.

Then, the spendthrift hunters, Brits and foreigners alike, face another little threat—the tiny sheep tic. Thriving on this season's damp weather, this sport parasite has been spreading Louping Ill, a deadly virus disease.

The damned little tics are killing off the poor Grouse—before the brave sportsmen can blast them out of the air with shot.

Times are hard on the moors...

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Czech-
oslovakia
1968
centre pages

DITCH McCARTHY - NOT 35 HR WEEK

Report reveals union retreat



By Colin O'Callaghan

The McCarthy Report is the basis of the settlement between the Post Office and the POEU Executive, accepting a 37½-hour week. No wonder this confidential report has not been published and is being kept hidden from the eyes of those it affects most—the ordinary members of the POEU.

Fortunately, 'Militant' has obtained a copy of this document. London POEU member Colin O'Callaghan here reveals a damning insight, provided by the report, into the negotiations which took place between PO management and the POEU officials.

The so-called "impartial" McCarthy enquiry into the Post Office Engineering Union's claim for a 35-hour week has come down firmly on the side of the Post Office management, who have, not surprisingly, accepted all its recommendations.

It ignores the whole aim of the POEU campaign to save jobs through work-sharing, and goes right against conference policy. The union must reject the McCarthy Report outright.

Our union must reaffirm its conference policy, for a first-stage reduction to a 35-hour week with no loss of pay and a second stage to a 35-hour four-day week. With 120,000 members loyally and enthusiastically mobilised to fight off the threat to their jobs, there must be no back-sliding on this claim.

Speaker after speaker at our conference last June spelt out the urgent need for a 35-hour week. It was made abundantly clear that the reduced working week was to provide the basis of an answer to the disastrous manpower implications of the massive modernisation programme which the Post Office has now embarked upon.

With the introduction of new equipment up to 40,000 engineers could be made redundant. To adopt a policy of work sharing with no loss of pay was seen as the only way to provide job security in the face of technological advances.

But the McCarthy Report clearly indicates that the union leadership have shown flagrant disregard for both the mood and policy of conference. The rank and file members of the union will be shocked to learn that once behind closed doors our negotiators unceremoniously ditched our campaign for a 35-hour week now without even putting up a fight.

The Report reveals that the union negotiators asked only for "an initial move to 37½ hours net with a further stage which would reduce hours to 35 hours net."

The 35-hour week was immediately relegated to the background as something to be aimed at in the indefinite future. For the here and now, "They [POEU negotiators] argued for commitment to a single step reduction to 37½ hours, to be introduced as soon as possible."

McCarthy refers complacently to "their former objective of a 35-hour week." In return for this sop of 37½ hours, the union leaders meekly asked for a future move towards a 35-hour week. But this simply stiffened the management's intransigence: "The Post Office were not prepared to agree to any further commitment beyond 37½ hours."

The reduction to 37½ hours would be brought about by agreement to changes in attendance patterns. The Report goes on to say: "The main thrust of the POEU case for a shorter week is that all other grades in the business already work shorter hours than their members." This initial stance taken by the union negotiators is in blatant contradiction to conference instructions. Our claim was not born out of jealousy against fellow workers but out of the necessity of protecting our livelihood.

Save jobs

In mediation our negotiators treated the claim for a reduction in hours in much the same way as they would a productivity payment or similar benefit, in doing so they relegated the importance of the shorter working week to a mere perk, a pat on the back for boosting the PO profit: to £360 million. But that belittles the importance of the real issue at stake—the future of our jobs!

It was the union negotiators who first mooted the 'nil cost' approach, to replace the 'self financing productivity' deal, which was rejected by the Special Conference last January.

The 'nil cost' approach means that any reduction in hours must not lead to any increase in overtime or manpower levels nor any loss in service nor loss of output per man; i.e. the same amount of work previously done in 40 hours would still need to be achieved during any reduced hours!

Our negotiators also agreed that certain 'consequential' and 'additional' measures would be necessary to assume a 'nil-cost' introduction of a

shorter working week. These 'measures' were not clearly outlined in the Report. Heavy emphasis, however, was placed on changed attendance patterns with specific mention of "an agreed proportion of staff would start up to half an hour later than the existing starting time."

This approach is contrary to the conference understanding that the 35-hour week was to be claimed on its merits. It is clear that the 'nil cost' approach would negate the very purpose of the industrial action as outlined by conference delegates, i.e. to save jobs.

It is not surprising that, in the light of the way our claim is being negotiated, the findings of the report are so unfavourable and the recommendations so unacceptable to the membership. The McCarthy recommendations include: (1) A reduction to 37½ hours on a 'nil cost' basis. (2) Changes in attendance patterns.

(3) Additional 'measures' designed to improve efficiency and productivity. (4) Adjustments to productivity payments for over or under performance in output.

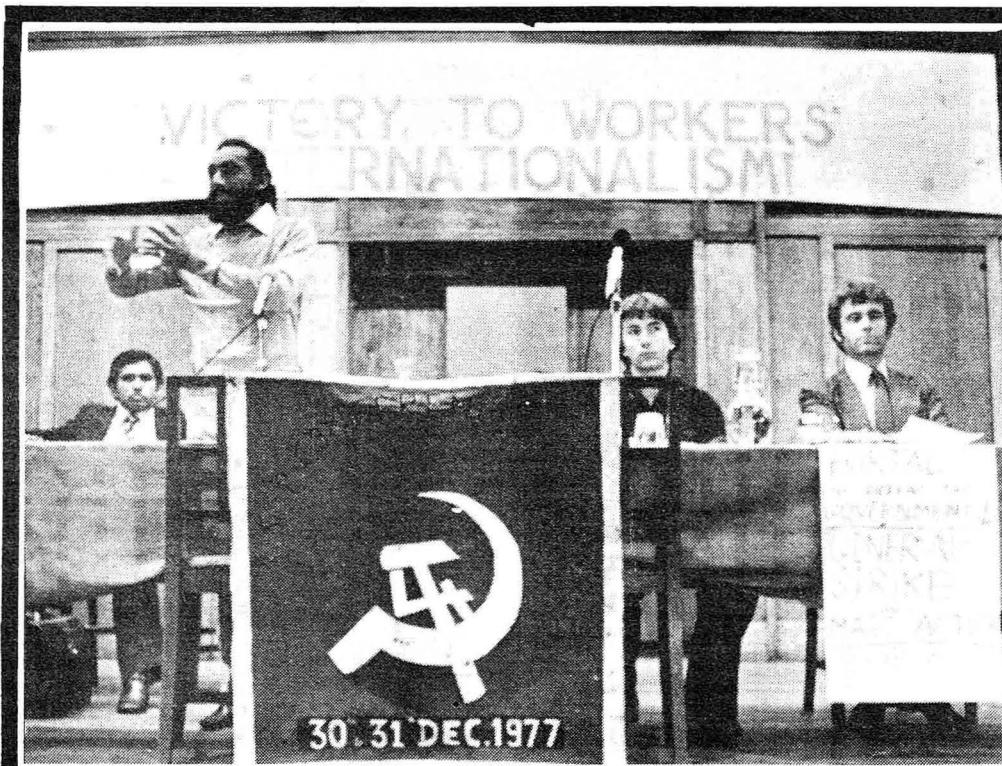
(5) Payments based on hourly rates to be assessed on one-fortieth of basic pay.

(6) No commitment to further reductions in hours.

The McCarthy Report has no basis for negotiation, never mind settlement, satisfactory to the engineers. Resolutions must be sent from every branch calling on the union to make an unequivocal public rejection of the McCarthy Report, to withdraw from negotiations immediately and escalate the action to achieve the full claim as mandated by conference.

The NEC should be reminded of their own comments when they turned down the advice of the London Overseas Telegraph branch at conference, not to be dragged down into the McCarthy enquiry: "We must repudiate any suggestion that this executive is seeking a way off the hook...If the Minister wants to set up a Court of Enquiry that is his business... You don't have to take any notice of a Court of Enquiry, if you think your claim is justified then you go on and fight until you win it."

Fine words! Now turn them into action!



The platform at the meeting: Bahu, Vasu, Nick Bradley, Roger Silverman

photo: Julian McKittrick

LSSP MEETING

The Conway Hall was full as comrades **Vasudeva Nanayakkara** (Vasu) and **Karunaratne** (Bahu) of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) spoke about the recent history and especially the present struggles of the Sri Lanka working class.

The meeting was called by the UK branch of the LSSP to win support from workers in Britain for the fight against repression in Sri Lanka.

Nick Bradley, LPYS representative on the Labour Party NEC, chaired the meeting of over 400, which later demonstrated its international solidarity with a magnificent collection of over £500.

Comrade Bahu, now general secretary of the LSSP, was one of those who began to organise a Marxist opposition to the LSSP leadership around 1970. Comrade Vasu, then an MP, was another. At that time the LSSP, together with the CP, was part of the ill-fated coalition government dominated by Mrs Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka Freedom Party.

Through its participation in the coalition, the LSSP was discredited in the ideas of many workers, even after being kicked out in 1975. "Only sacrifices were made and belts tightened, while promises of reforms remained unfulfilled."

The unsuccessful JVP uprising of 1971 represented an

By Vivien Seal

(Lambeth Central Labour Party)

ultra-left mood among sections of the disillusioned youth and ended in bloody repression. Comrade Vasu, although opposed to the insurrection, nevertheless vigorously opposed the repression which followed—as a result of which he was imprisoned for 18 months.

By November last year, the active majority of the LSSP had been won over to a Marxist programme, and the old leaders were replaced by Marxists such as Bahu.

General strike

Benefiting from the profound reaction against the SLFP government, the United National Party, the right wing representative of big capital, came to power on a programme "against corruption". By the time of its first budget, however, its subservience to the IMF and international capital was quite apparent.

"Free market" measures have inevitably been accompanied by welfare cuts and wage restraint. In response to growing mass opposition, the UNP government has introduced a whole battery of repressive measures, aimed

particularly against the labour movement.

Every attempt to reduce democratic rights or drive down living standards has, however, been met with stubborn mass opposition. At the centre of this are the LSSP comrades.

Both Bahu and Vasu, like other mass leaders, have been attacked by right-wing thugs, subjected to arbitrary arrest, and threatened with assassination.

The meeting was enthused to hear, however, that more and more workers, and even whole trade unions, continue to be won to the LSSP's programme of nationalisation, agrarian reform, and self-determination for the Tamil minority. There is growing support especially for their call for a Hartal—general strike drawing in all sections of the workers and peasants—against the right-wing government.

The discussion which followed the speakers was lively, even stormy at times. A wide spectrum of views was represented on the floor, the noisiest being those from the JVP.

But the warm applause and the big collection unmistakably showed that an overwhelming majority of the audience were wholeheartedly with the LSSP comrades in their heroic struggle and wanted enthusiastically to demonstrate their solidarity.



BRICK LANE

SWEEP OUT FASCISTS

The labour movement must mobilise to smash the fascists once and for all!

That should be the call to every shop stewards' committee, trades council, trade union branch, and Labour Party. For too long the National Front has been able to rear its ugly head in public. They are the people responsible for the racist murders and attacks.

Last Saturday night they struck again. Seven Bengali youth walking home through Brick Lane were attacked by about 20 white youths who were shouting "Kill the blacks!" while throwing bottles and bricks.

The police, who are supposedly protecting the Bengalis, were nowhere in sight. They turned up ten minutes after the fighting started, and made an arrest. But who did

they arrest? Not the racist thugs—but a Bengali youth who was defending himself!

Police patrols have been intensified—but the result has been increased intimidation of the Bengali community. The police cannot be relied on to provide defence.

But there are also grave dangers in leaving defence to ad hoc groups and to various fringe groups. Rallies and demonstrations have been held at the top of Brick Lane over the past few weeks. Members of the Labour Party Young Socialists and supporters of 'Militant' have been on all those mobilisations.

The rallies have shown that there is a determination to clear out the NF scum. But with the aid of the police, the National Front are still there! They are still selling papers and spreading their racist poison. They can still carry

out their attacks.

Driving the NF out of Brick Lane, and off the streets altogether, is a task that cannot be done by small groups, which have no organised, mass basis.

It's not much use simply talking about mass mobilisations. The lessons of the last few months have been that all the various fringe groups—clambering onto the bandwagon of the Bengali workers' struggle to defend themselves—have proved to be incapable of mobilising large numbers of workers.

There is only one force in society which can defend all workers, and smash the National Front. That is the labour and trade union movement, 12 million strong,

which has been built up over decades to defend the livelihood and the lives of workers. That is the force which needs to be mobilised.

The LPYS and supporters of 'Militant' are fighting for the labour movement to come to the aid of the Bengali workers in the place where it

counts—in the labour movement itself.

But racialism and fascism cannot be fought in isolation. They breed on the social evils caused by the capitalist system—unemployment, bad housing, low wages, crowded schools.

Because those evils exist,

the NF are able to appeal to sections of the middle class and to backward workers. That's why the fight against fascism needs to be linked to a socialist programme to end all the evils of society.

By Kevin Fernandes
(Hackney North LPYS, PNP)

- ★ No platform for fascists—drive them off the streets!
- ★ Expel the fascists from the trade unions!
- ★ Defence groups—organised by the labour movement and the Bengali community!
- ★ 35-hour week now! Minimum wage of £70!
- ★ End bad housing—a crash programme of useful public works!
- ★ A socialist society based on people's needs—not on profits for the few!

Asian workers, trade unionists and Labour Party members are all threatened by the NF thugs. They must unite to defeat fascism.

An LPYS member who lives in Brick Lane gives a first hand account:

On Saturday night (12th August) a group of young Bengalis were attacked by a mob of white youths, yards from where the National Front would be trying to peddle their filth the following morning.

This was no coincidence. On the previous Saturday night, a large group of Bengalis along with LPYS members and other anti-fascists had occupied the corner of Brick Lane and Bethnal Green Road in an attempt to prevent the NF from selling on the Sunday morning, while a dozen or so NF thugs looked on in impotence.

No such all-night vigil was taking place this time, but it is likely that the NF, expect-

ing that there would be one, had mobilised some young thugs. Disappointed, they attacked a group of Bengalis who were making their way home.

The following morning, the LPYS went to Brick Lane where our leaflets were enthusiastically taken by both passers-by and residents. The NF, meanwhile, in order to show their support for 'law and order', had left only two paper sellers at the top of the Lane, and had not mobilised any supporters to contest the area.

Or so they'd have us believe! While I and another comrade were leaving the area for a while we saw a large number of skinheads coming from the direction of the Lane and marching as a group into the 'Birdcage' in Wellington Row, where the NF now do their drinking on Sundays. It is rumoured that they hold their meetings in a room in

that pub as well.

That afternoon, I and another LPYS member were invited to speak at a meeting of the Bengali Youth League.

We spoke of the need for the Asians to work with all those people who are threatened by fascist groups, Labour Party members and trade union activists especially. (It is not without good reason that you will not find my name at the bottom of this article!)

One LPYS member in Tower Hamlets has had his front door kicked in by fascists and a member of the local Trades Council was once trapped inside his home while NF thugs cut his telephone wire and tried to batter down the door.

We were well received by the meeting, especially as we made it clear that we supported the Bengali community's initiatives in opposition to the NF. At the end of the meeting, the Tower Hamlets

LPYS programme of meetings was eagerly seized by those present at the meeting.

It is essential that the programme of the LPYS and the ideas of 'Militant' reach the Bengali youth and have an impact. The fight against racialism is the fight against unemployment, bad housing, low wages and inner-city decay. The fight against racialism and fascism is the fight for socialism—we are not prepared to equivocate on this point to accommodate pop stars, clergymen and the like.

Without a socialist programme, it may well be possible temporarily to drive the NF out of Brick Lane. But with such a programme, the ills of society on which racists and fascists breed will be eradicated, and we can ensure that the National Front are not only driven out of Brick Lane but will never return.



Repairing smashed windows after fascist rampage in Brick Lane

Demand debate for 35-hour week

For millions of trade unionists and Labour Party activists the battle for a 35-hour week is on! Conference after conference has come out in support of it as a way of reducing unemployment and also to improve the quality of life for working people. The POEU has been at the forefront of the struggle.

The demand was vetoed by Callaghan from the Party's youth broadcast in June, and now attempts are being made to prevent it even being discussed, let alone put in the election manifesto. Surely the governing body of the Labour Party has the right to debate this vital question?

The "arguments" used have either been that of the notorious three-year rule, standing order 2(6), or that the resolution covers more than one subject. Southampton West CLP were told that their resolution, which called for a 35-hour week, a lowering of the retirement

WHEN DID THE TORIES EVER WORK!



Alan Hardman's hard-hitting anti-Tory cartoon is being produced as a poster. Get your Labour Party, LPYS or trade union branch to order now; 18in x 24in. 10p each + 9p postage. 5 and over post free, 20 and over—5p each. From Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

age, and work sharing with no loss of pay as a way of fighting unemployment covered more than one subject and would therefore not appear on the conference agenda.

What is this if not a blatant

attempt to prevent conference discussing these ideas, particularly the call for a 35-hour week?

The Isle of Wight CLP had their resolution calling for a 35-hour week ruled out of

order under standing order 2(6). This rule is obviously undemocratic but even under it there was no basis for ruling this resolution out of order. The rule states: "...when the Annual Party conference has

by resolution made a declaration of general policy or principle no resolution or motion concerning such policy or principle shall appear on the Agenda for a period of three years from the time such declaration was made..." Firstly, as the Isle of Wight CLP has pointed out (Militant 418), no such declaration was made!

Important!

However, even if it had been the rule continues: "except such resolutions or motions as are, in the opinion of the NEC, of immediate importance." There are 1,500,000 reasons why the question of a 35-hour week is of immediate importance—every one of them signs at a dole office once a week. There are 120,000 other reasons—they are taking industrial action every day to get a thirty-five-hour week!

This issue is of vital importance to every section of

the labour movement, and conference must not be gagged on it. The NEC must allow the resolutions already submitted and any amendments demanding a 35-hour week to stand. The rank and file must demand that conference discuss it.

Undoubtedly, resolutions from CLPs, ward parties, along with letters from delegates and those with positions in the labour and trade union movement will be flooding into Transport House demanding that conference is allowed to debate this crucial question facing the movement. The Isle of Wight have already agreed to try and reverse the position at conference—and they will unquestionably have the support of many CLPs and trade union delegations.

By Tony Saunois

(Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee)

Labour students plan big drive

General Election campaign

With both Freshers' Week, and the prospect of a General Election, September and October will be a busy time for Labour students. Everywhere, Labour Club officers are now busy planning their activities for this period, and the Autumn term.

Where Colleges have "Freshers' Fairs", Labour Club bookstalls are being booked, ready to make an impact with Labour Club and LPYS literature and posters etc.

Leaflets are being produced, explaining the policies of the

By Mark Morton
(NOLS National Committee)

Labour Club and important issues for the new students—such as grants and housing.

It is very important that a Labour Club Public Meeting is organised for the start of

WEST MIDLANDS LABOUR STUDENT ACTION GROUP

Build Labour Clubs with socialist policies in Freshers' Campaigns.

- ★ Further Education A5 leaflet—£1 for 500
 - ★ Campaign against unemployment and education cuts, A4 (folded) £2 for 500
 - ★ Racialism pamphlet 10p each
- Cash with orders to P. Walter, Flat 4, 55 Barras Lane, Coventry. ORDER NOW!

term, with "big name" speakers and a Labour Club or LPYS speaker as well to draw new students towards the Club. Debates with the Conservative and Liberal students are an excellent means of attracting students to socialist ideas.

General Election

If there is a General Election in October, there will definitely be a heightened political mood in the colleges. It is the duty of Labour Clubs to take advantage of this to recruit new members to the Club and to the Party.

Leftward looking students will flood towards the Labour Club, as the student wing of the Labour Party, to help in the fight to keep the Tories out.

It is also important to work out a programme of political meetings for the term, inviting local trade unionists and Labour Party members to speak, as well as MPs.

But the most important work will be during the election itself. Labour Clubs are contacting the local Labour Parties now, to make sure that students are involved in the campaign, and election propaganda issued by

the Labour Club to students.

The next two months will be the best opportunity for recruitment of students to NOLS and the LPYS since the class battles of 1974. Every Labour Club should follow the example of the reports below, and plan the campaigns now.

Fight for a Labour victory and for socialist policies!

If any Labour Club wants a speaker from 'Militant', either for their Freshers' Week meeting, or for one of their meetings during the term, please write to: 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

At Brunel University, the Labour Club has already planned its election campaign, combining this with the Freshers' Week work. We have arranged a mass canvass by students in the Uxbridge constituency, a Tory marginal, early in October, and will be going all out to involve students in the Labour Party's election work. We have also arranged a debate against the Tory students, with the local Labour and Tory candidates as speakers.

Every year at Brunel there is a housing crisis at the start of term. The Labour Club will be organising a campaign on this key issue, which should win a lot of support for the Club. The pamphlet on housing being produced by the North West Region of NOLS should be of great value in this campaign.

Other initiatives we are taking include organising a joint meeting with the Afro-Caribbean society with a speaker from the PNP Youth [UK]. It is very important to recruit overseas students to the Labour Club, and every Club should organise meetings with speakers from the PNP Youth, or on Sri Lanka with speakers from the LSSP UK branch.

A meeting on India would also be useful for making contact with students from that country. Clubs organising these meetings should contact the overseas students societies in the colleges.

It is also important to expand the influence of the Labour Students into new colleges, and we are planning to intervene in two local technical colleges with the help of the local LPYS.

By Rob Walsh

Prepare for Freshers' Week

Last year, Newcastle Poly Labour Club was one of the most active in the Northern region. Regular political meetings were held, and good interventions were made in local strikes, particularly giving support to the firemen's strike.

Now we have already made plans for this year's Freshers' Week. With the likelihood of a general election, this will be doubly important this year. There can be no doubt that the return of a Tory government would be a disaster for students, so we must ensure that as many students as possible both vote Labour, and become active in the Labour Party's election campaigns.

At Newcastle Poly we have produced 1,000 leaflets for Freshers' Week, one on grants, and one on accommodation—both important issues for new students. We have also organised a public meeting for the start of term, with three speakers—Harry Cowans, the MP for Newcastle Central, Sue Ward [Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Newcastle North] and Alan Watson from the Labour Club. To follow this, we have arranged a series of political meetings for the term, and have also arranged two discos—so the Labour Club has a social life as well.

We are also making plans to co-ordinate our election work with Newcastle University Labour Club, and the Labour Parties in the city, to produce literature for students and involve them in the election campaign.

By Mike Howard



Asian youth on the Labour Party Young Socialists demonstration in Bradford, 1974

Photo: Vivien Seal

ASIANS JOIN LPYS

Despite local holidays and problems of shift working over 20 young people, mainly Asian, turned up to hear Keith Narey, Chairman of Manningham Labour Party, address the LPYS on why Asian youth should join the Labour Party.

The decline of British capitalism will arouse large sections of organised workers whose struggle to maintain their living standards is polarising the basic conflict between labour and capital, Keith pointed out. The ruling class try to divert the workers' anger by making scapegoats out of black immigrants.

The only defence, he said, is for the immigrant community to fully involve themselves in the labour and trade union movement to fight alongside their fellow workers for socialist policies which would end forever the conditions which breed racialism.

In the excellent discussion, one comrade from the Asian Progressive Youth Movement criticised the record of the LPYS on racialism and stressed the need for separate ethnic organisations and black self-defence.

One of the young Asian comrades at his first LPYS meeting, countered vigorously

ly. "We are not like our fathers whose main concern was to establish themselves financially—I regard myself as English and wish to participate fully in this society and all Asian youth should join the Labour Party and make it the kind of party they wish it to be," he said.

Defence

A comrade from Northern Ireland, Sean Brogan, pointed out that community defence even when armed had not prevented sectarian murders in his country. Only the trade union movement could

protect workers at home and at work.

Geoff Kernan defended the proud record of the LPYS on racialism. "In 1974 in Bradford the YS organised the first ever national demonstration against racialism and this led to the Trades Council setting up an anti-fascist sub-committee which adopted the YS programme on racialism!"

In summing up Keith Narey stressed that the LPYS would unconditionally support any group that organised to defend itself against racial attack, but pointed out that discrimination and inequality were not restricted to ethnic

minorities.

"The working class suffer inequality under capitalism yet they are the majority in society. Socialists suffer discrimination in the employment field."

He finished by stressing the need for a class perspective and class organisation around a Marxist programme.

The meeting marks a real turn towards the LPYS by Asian youth in Bradford and will be followed up by further meetings on India and Pakistan.

By Dale Ackroyd

LEFT & RIGHT

JOBS FOR THE BOYS!

Whatever the result of the general election it is bound to have an effect in lengthening the dole queues. According to Robert Arkle, a leading 'recruitment specialist', three dozen ex-MPs failed to get jobs after the 1974 election after approaching industry.

So he had the bright idea of approaching companies before the election to line up jobs in advance for MPs who will lose. But he reported to the 'Sunday Times' [July 23rd]: "The situation is more daunting this time," and he mentioned the "prejudice and antipathy to politicians and their policies." Perhaps the bosses have been listening to the broadcasts of parliament...

But employers are not too worried about who become MPs. The 'Financial Times' [July 24th] reported that "a major initiative aimed at increasing the number of MPs who have direct experience of working in industry was launched today by the Confederation of British Industry. Companies will be recommended to help their employees to become MPs by giving them time off when they become Parliamentary candidates [18 days a year] and by re-employing them if they are defeated."

The 'Sunday Times' made clear the scheme is aimed at "busy career people" [presumably as compared with just "job people"] whose pay as MPs "often compares unfavourably with previous salaries in industry." Such people are no doubt just as useful to big business whether as Tory or Labour MPs so they can justly claim that there is "no discrimination on a party basis."

But the bosses are not dishing out help to the enemy. The 'Financial Times' noted: "To allay worries among some large companies employees who became trade union-sponsored MPs would not NECESSARILY receive all the benefits."

RUSSIAN RACKATEERING

A novel method of getting rid of unwanted goods has been discovered by Russian street traders—that of forcing you to buy quantities of shoddy goods alongside good quality produce. For example if you want to buy a kilo of oranges you have to buy at the same time half a kilo of rotting apples, or if you want to buy a highly prized stick of lipstick you have to buy some cheap perfume as well.

This racket, although denied by Soviet officials is widespread and has extended to the sale of furniture, books and magazines and the theatre; if you want to see a visiting artist you have to buy a ticket for a local show at the same time. It seems a good way of subsidising poor artists, bad writers and shoddy goods, especially when we are told that at one bookshop someone was told that for every book he bought he would have to buy 20 volumes of Brezhnev's collected speeches in the Ukraine. Clearly Russians rate Brezhnev's ideas about as highly as rotten apples!

But the same wouldn't be said of Trotsky's works which are prohibited by the Stalinist bureaucracy, but whose programme for workers' democracy would soon stamp out such racketeering!

August Bank Holiday:

COME TO OUR SUMMER CAMP!

If you missed the successful LPYS Summer Camp or the earlier South Wales Militant Summer Camp, don't feel too left out—by popular demand readers in South Wales are organising another Militant camp for August Bank Holiday.

The camp will again be held at Horton, on the beautiful Gower coast, near Swansea, 25th-28th August.

All the expertise of the Swansea comrades will be put to good use ensuring an enjoyable holiday weekend, with entertainment laid on. A crèche is available, so bring the kids along.

An excellent course of political discussions on the 'History of Bolshevism' has been worked out, with top Marxist speakers, including 'Militant' editor Peter Taaffe, Ted Grant and Pat Wall (President, Bradford Trades Council).

The subjects are: (1) 'The rise of Russian Marxism and the 1905 Revolution'; (2) 'Preparing for power—the February and October Revolutions'; (3) 'Bolshevism in power 1917-24'; (4) 'Stalinism and the struggle of the Left Opposition'; (5) 'Marxism in Britain: what it is and how to build it'.

The cost of all this is a mere £6.50 (under 5s free, 5-12 year olds £1.50). Just

A new football season:

Profit Promoted!



Just a game?—while the amateurs play in the park (below), sponsors and advertisers make a killing (top).



bring your own camping equipment. But book right now to be sure of a place among scores of socialists coming from all over the country for a great camping weekend—it's your last chance!

Bookings etc. to Rob Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan, Swansea. Telephone Swansea 33542. Cheques payable to 'R Sewell'.

This week sees the start of the new football season. Since the nineteenth century, football has been one of the most popular working class recreations. Over half a million every Saturday watch football league games, thousands more play football. Millions watch games on television. Every daily newspaper has at least two pages of football coverage.

Millions more gamble every week on the pools; who make vast sums out of football. None of this money is put back into the game to provide facilities for working class youth.

Yet, football is as dominated by business interests as any other aspect of capitalist society. Sport has always played a role in trying to stop workers from thinking about revolution. One of the directors of Fiat, who give large sums to their local team, Juventus, once commented: "A successful team keeps the workers from thinking about communism."

Huge sums are made directly and indirectly from football. Players are cynically used in advertising campaigns; as the Scotland team found when Chrysler dropped their advertising campaign using the Scottish players after their disasters in the World Cup. The top players can command huge salaries; while young apprentices, who have staked everything from an early age for a career in football, are often cynically discarded at 18 if they don't make the grade. Even whole clubs can be 'discarded', as were Accrington Stanley, who

went bankrupt and collapsed in the early 1960s.

The local football league clubs are run in a completely undemocratic fashion. The directors dominate all decisions, and only rich businessmen can usually get on the club boards. Virtually no clubs offer facilities for local youth to play football, preferring to build 'luxury boxes' which they can hire out for £250 per season.

Some smaller league clubs are just a 'hobby' for local businessmen, who can use their money to do what they want.

The LPYS should take up the question of football. Football hooliganism is a protest of blind frustration and despair against the system. The LPYS should fight for local clubs to be democratically run, taken out of private ownership and control, and offer decent facilities for local youths who want to play football, and everyone who wants to watch.

In a socialist society, workers will have the time and opportunity to develop all aspects of working class life. Taking football away from the commercial ghouls who dominate it at present will be a great step forward. The 'differences' that divide football supporters can be overcome, as was shown by 'rival' supporters marching together against the YNF in February.

Every LPYS branch should take up the question of leisure facilities and football in their local area and link it to the need to change society.

By Peter Lush

(Hendon South LPYS)

Life's not so sweet in a chocolate factory

By a member of the
General and Municipal
Workers' Union

The grinding monotony of work in a chocolate factory can be summed up in the words of a young worker who commented that he and his work-mate on one process had played two pop quizzes and three games of "I spy" and the shift was still only half over! With often over two hours between official breaks on some continuous movement sections, even staring at the numerous official rules plastered over the walls can seem an interesting diversion from jobs like waste control in moulded chocolate packing. You have to watch endless

is the shift system. Practically all male employees are forced to work a three shift system [eg 7am-3pm, 3pm-11pm, 11pm-7am] that changes every week. No sooner has your body got used to being active at one time than you have to change around completely.

Apart from the dangers posed to workers' physical health by shift-work, the mental and social strain imposed is considerable, normal family life is impossible and even going out for a drink or watching TV is often precluded.

Have a break... Get Properly Organised!

rows of kit-kats flying past on conveyer belts and 'straighten' them so that the machines can pick them up.

On the other hand, on some of the other processes you don't have time to think straight as you rush around trying to keep up with the speed of the machines. In many areas increased mechanisation and new faster plants have inevitably put extra strain on the workers expected to run them—and the company has plans to stretch the workforce even more.

As part of the recently proposed productivity deal the bosses made it clear that their future strategy would be designed to trim off "unnecessary" manning levels. This would inevitably mean that workers would be tied even more to their machines, forced to work harder and faster in the attempt to do the work currently being done by more men.

Probably the most exhausting and demoralising aspect of the job

Basic pay is of such a low level that it is impossible for most workers to exist without doing overtime that normally entails one or two shifts at the weekend. The prospect given to workers is one of six or seven days work in order to get a decent standard of living. It's common for workers to comment that they can't tell the difference between weekends and normal work-days, and there is little to look forward to at the end of a hard week.

The conditions of work, the petty rules, the poor rates of pay and the monotony of work at this sweet factory can lead workers to one conclusion: The only thing to do is get the union properly organised to fight for better pay and conditions. We ourselves should run the industry through workers control and when the workers nationally have established a socialist plan of production we can end once and for all the exploitation of workers by companies like this one.

10% - no difference!

Sam Bottomly, a gardener employed by the GLC and a NUPE member, gives an indication of what is happening to thousands of workers who have been forced to accept wage rises under the 10% guidelines:

"My basic weekly wage is £40.60 and the bonus was

about £16 to £20. Before the 10% rise it went up briefly to £25. Now it's dropped down to £10.

"It seems to be part of the cut-backs from the Tory GLC. It's a case of give with one hand and take back with the other.

"My bonus is back to where

it was when I started 3 1/2 years ago. I've also had cutbacks on the London weighting allowance.

"The 10% increase has made no difference at all. I'm trying to transfer to the Borough Direct Labour. If I don't succeed, I'm leaving. The wages are diabolical."

Life on the dole

Many people think that if you are on the dole you are having a great time of it. It's not true.

I have two children, a boy and a girl, Emma will be 4 years old in August goes to a pre-school.

They tell you not to dress your child in their best clothes, as they can easily spill paint down themselves. Emma has got some nice clothes, but she wears them to school: naturally I like her to look nice and sometimes she has to wear the same dresses or trousers for several days running.

But, in a way, she's luckier than some because her Grandparents quite often buy her new clothes, which she wouldn't otherwise have because we can't afford them. My son Graeme is fourteen months old, and Emma's baby clothes were wasted because you can't take a boy out in dresses, it would just add to the inferiority complexes this rotten society thrusts on you anyway.

I was left a small amount of money recently, (£50 to be exact) and I bought two pairs of trousers and two tops each, and a rain cape for the pushchair which cost me £18.40. I wanted to buy some dresses for Emma but I had to buy trousers so that I could hand them down to Graeme.

Most housewives have to struggle like this, whether their husbands are on the dole or not. The most worrying thing is when the children need new shoes. Emma has very narrow feet and needs a good fitting, and at around £7 a time it's no joke.

Another problem is food. How many people can manage to eat well all the time? I don't know anyone that can.

Our best meal of the week is Sunday dinner when we have meat. Regardless of what we have on a Sunday, I use it for Monday and at a stretch Tuesday as well. Fish is something we like very much, but the only fish we ever have is fish fingers—cheap and cheerful, no, but cheaper than fresh fish.

Everybody despairs when the familiar buff envelopes pop through the letterbox. Our biggest bill was the electricity bill which was always over £50 a quarter.

We always had trouble in paying them, so we asked for a slot meter to be installed. We asked and asked, and waited and waited for a long time. Then came another bill for £80.

It was too high for us to pay the full amount, so we were disconnected for two months. Luckily the weather was quite warm so we were 'content' with salads and take-aways from the chip shop when we could afford them. My son was very young at this time and we coped with a camping burner to heat his milk and tinned food.

Then somebody we knew who worked for the Electricity Board told us that Wedgewood Benn in his official capacity as Minister for Energy had said in the House of Commons, that if the electric consumer wished to have a pre-payment slot meter it was their right to have one.

At this point my husband got on to the Electricity Board's head office in St

Albans and quoted this to the Area Manager for consumer affairs, who told him that as soon as we had paid the outstanding bill in full we could have a slot meter. When my husband asked why we hadn't been given one before he was told that in this instance we were being made a special case of.

I think everybody has difficulty in paying electricity bills at some time or another, so doesn't this make everybody a special case? I suppose it shows that if you go to the top and won't back down you might just be lucky enough to get you rights.

Another problem is the rent. We have applied for a rebate but we have waited eight weeks so far for it to go through.

Our dole money is £37.83 a

week and our rent at the moment is £12.24, so for all this time we have been really struggling to pay our rent and other bills, which is very hard.

If the Council would work in conjunction with the dole office we wouldn't be going without things. But then, why should they hurry themselves, they don't have sleepless nights.

My husband heard a story from a girl who works in our dole office and it went something like this: A father on the dole lost his young son in a tragic accident. He bought a new suit for his son's funeral and made the mistake of wearing it when he signed on next.

Remarks of a disgusting nature were made that he shouldn't be able to afford a new suit on the dole. I wonder if they lost their son, if they would go to his funeral wearing jeans!



5 Million live in poverty

One of the Tories' main chants is how wonderful capitalism is and how much better we would all be if so-called 'private enterprise' was left free to function without interference. Of course capitalism is very successful for the 1,000 people in the UK who have assets worth more than £1 million, but it's a different story for millions at the other end of the scale.

A recent report published by the Department of Health and Social Security said that no less than five million people, 10% of the population, must continue to depend for their existence on Supplementary Benefit because there is no prospect of other benefits being improved to reduce their numbers substantially. The report could only propose that the rules should be simplified, as at present only 74% of those actually entitled to Supplementary Benefits claim the sums they are entitled to!

One tenth of the population suffer poverty. What are the Tories and the owners of wealth and their State going to do about it? Or are they content to let 5 million remain in their humiliating position for good, while weeping crocodile tears at election time?

Apart from proposing these kinds of administrative changes the report did not say how poverty could be abolished. Age Concern, the pensioners' campaign, said the report was an attack on the living standards of millions of pensioners because it confirmed that "poverty will continue to exist unabated into

By Bob Labi

the next century." The British Association of Social Workers was disappointed at the acceptance of a continuing mass role for supplementary benefits.

Obviously the abolition of means testing for benefits would be welcomed as a step forward for millions of people, something we should demand immediately so that help can be rushed to those like the 700,000 old people which the new book 'Old and Cold' estimated are in danger of suffering from hypothermia this winter.

But it is not enough to demand an end to all forms of means testing, the labour movement must fight for all benefits to be paid at the rate of the average wage to those millions whom capitalism tries to throw on the scrapheap of poverty and want in the midst of plenty.

Such a campaign would rouse the morale of millions in the struggle not just for better social security but a socialist society where poverty would be a thing of the past.

One year after the Jubilee —

Perhaps the 1,600,000 workers on the dole will be comforted to see that unemployment is affecting all sections of society. Even Prince Charles faces a lack of regular employment.

we're left to pick up the bill



Of course, the polo season is upon us again, but a young man hoping to get married needs a steady job if he is to support a family.

Not that Charlie has all that much to worry about—they can always make do with Chevening House, with its 85 rooms and 3,500 acres, and his holiday home in the Scilly Isles. He shouldn't be too short of cash either, by 1976 he had received about £3 million from the Duchy of Cornwall, and now gets an income of £145,000 per year from it—all tax free of course.

By Beth Hensman

(Coventry SE Labour Party)

dinners, the lunch for the Queen and 300 guests cost £10 per head. Only £32 of the total figure paid by the council went towards street parties.

Taxpayers also paid for all the Queen's travel in Jubilee year. The royal train alone cost us £500,000, the royal yacht nearly £2 million and the aircraft of the Queen's flight over £1 million—through the Ministry of Defence.

All this was done to promote the image of one of the wealthiest women in the world. No one knows exactly how rich the Queen is, but it is known that Victoria left over £4 million on her death. In addition to what she has inherited, the Queen has the income from her own wealth, from the Duchy of Lancaster and from the Civil List.

She also owns what has been described as the finest private collection of works of art in the world. She has substantial investments (conveniently exempt from disclosure!) and all her income is tax free, and free from capital gains tax or death duties.

In 1972, when a 5% wage freeze was in operation for the rest of us, the Civil List allowance rose by over 100% to £985,000 per year, to make the Queen the best paid monarch in the world.

Prince Philip, that champion of individuality as against the Welfare State, had his share increased in 1976 from £20,000 to £85,000 per year. He is famous for being outspoken, and as one Australian journalist put it, "without a prepared speech [he] proves to be even more of a ninny than with one."

He is a spokesman for privilege. In the employers' journal *The Engineer* in November 1976, he declared: "The innovator hardly stands a chance... The Welfare State

is a protection against failure and exploitation. A national recovery can only take place if innovators and men of enterprise and hard work can prosper."

Labour MP Arthur Latham, in reply, commented that "a man whose idea of hardship is falling off a polo pony cannot be accepted as an authority on the Welfare State."

Perhaps if it wasn't for the Welfare State restricting our freedom we would all live in a palace with 40 acres of garden and lake (in the middle of London!) with an indoor swimming pool, private cinema and 500 staff. Then if they get bored with that, there's always Balmoral with 80,000 acres (which they use only in the shooting season), Sandringham, Windsor Castle...and the rest!

Kensington Palace was recently refurbished for Princess Margaret at a cost of £80,000 to the taxpayer. We also pay their gas, electricity and phone bills, and as far back as 1971/2 the heating and lighting bill for Buckingham Palace was £35,000 and the phone bill £53,000.

It costs £2½ million to run the royal residences each year, and the amount spent over the last 25 years would have gone a long way to getting rid of homelessness in Britain.

If they are so expensive to keep, why do we still have a royal family in Britain? Why do the ruling class put up with such extravagance when the economy is in such crisis?

Let no one be taken in by the argument that the royal family 'pay for themselves' because they encourage tourists. Over the last 25 years the number of visitors to the UK has been constantly between 7 and 8 million. During the same period the number of people visiting Italy (republic) rose from 4.1 to 12.4 million, and those visiting USA rose from 3.2 to 9.8 million.

The monarchy is a reserve weapon for the ruling class. In periods of capitalist growth the monarchy plays little part in government.

The Queen has been made to appear neutral in the political life of the country, independent of and above classes. Her assumed status of neutrality is reinforced by her religious sanction.

Pressure

If, however, there was to be no clear majority between the two major parties, or if the labour movement posed a threat to big business by a serious campaign to implement a socialist programme,

then the monarchy could be used to pressurise the Labour leaders into forming a National government—the tactic that was used by George V in 1931 to pressurise Ramsay MacDonald into agreeing to form a coalition government—or to dismiss a Labour government as the Queen's representative in Australia removed the Labour government in 1975.

Obstacle

The presence of a monarch in Britain will be used by the ruling class as an obstacle in the struggle for a democratic socialist society. This is why 'Militant' has always campaigned for the abolition of the monarchy and the House of Lords.

Meanwhile the vast sums of money lavished on maintaining the privileges of the royal family are a graphic example of the gross inequalities that exist under capitalism.

TORY FUNDS

The Tories are launching a hypocritical attack on the trade unions continuing to give their traditional financial support to the Labour Party—the party the unions founded as their political arm. But that money is raised from the voluntary political levy, which workers have the right to 'opt out' of paying, as Tory MP James Prior did recently [after contributing to Labour's funds for three years through APEX!].

But recent figures reveal in detail how the Tory Party is funded—from the big companies that stand to gain if the Tories win the next election. For example the Rank Organisation gave them £20,000 last year. Fisons gave £15,000, and the Sun Life Assurance Company chipped in with £10,000.

The big brewing monopolies are particularly notorious for giving tens of thousands of pounds to their Tory friends, paid for out of high beer prices. Other firms give large donations to the Economic League, which includes organising blacklists amongst its activities, and the notorious "Aims for Freedom and Enterprise", fervent campaigners against nationalisation.

So the next time you go to the cinema, buy any of the chemical products made by Fisons, insure your life or take refuge in a pint ask to opt out of paying for Mrs Thatcher's election campaign, or paying for anti-trade union and anti-nationalisation activities. You can ask...but until these companies are nationalised you will have no democratic choice of refusing to fund your political opponents.



ARTFUL DODGE?

The recent Conference of the Professional Association of Teachers, a tiny right wing "union", which is pledged never to go on strike, came up with some strange ideas. To solve the problem of teacher unemployment, they suggested that unemployed teachers, while still receiving unemployment benefit, should work in schools as "teachers' helpers".

The Association's Chairman commented that the plan "could be seen as cheap scab labour, so we will have to be very careful, but it is not possible for them to get full

pay."

At present, hundreds of thousands of school students are in classes of over 30. As one delegate at the Conference said, "Which child does not benefit from more attention, more stimulation and more help which one person alone cannot give?"

But the way to achieve that isn't through using unemployed teachers as cheap labour, but to properly employ the 56,000 more teachers needed to end classes of over 30. That would take the teachers off the dole queues!

In last week's article Alan Woods analysed the meaning of Dubcek and the reform movement within the Czech bureaucracy. Part II explains why the Russian bureaucracy intervened and how the Czech workers were left leaderless in the face of military intervention.

Alan Woods' article was first published in 'Spark', Winter 1968.

The movement in Czechoslovakia was nowhere as highly developed as the movement in Hungary or Poland in 1956. There were no workers' councils, nor were the workers armed, as in Hungary, where the Russians intervened.

But even in Poland in 1956, there was a general strike and an insurrection in Poznan! Yet the Russians allowed Gomulka to control the situation by means of reforms in Poland in 1956, but could not allow Dubcek to do the same thing in Czechoslovakia in 1968. Why?

The answer is to be found, partly, in the changed international balance of class forces since 1956. The intervening period has seen the monolith of world Stalinism shattered into pieces by a series of splits along national lines. In a very striking manner, Trotsky's prognosis of 1923 has been confirmed in the 1960s: that the theory of "socialism in a single country", which substituted the narrow, national interests of the Russian bureaucracy for those of the international working class, would inevitably result in the nationalist degeneration of the Communist International.

Since the events of 1956, the Stalinist bloc has suffered the split-off of China, which has led, not to the creation of two Stalinist camps, but to the opening up of a whole spectrum of "national roads to socialism".

With the Sino-Soviet split, the polices of the Rumanian and Yugoslav bureaucracies, Gomulka's "Polish Road", etc. the stranglehold of the Russian bureaucracy over the other bureaucracies and also over the CP's of the West has greatly weakened. The extent of the degeneration can be gauged from the frantic attempts of the Russian bureaucracy to drum up support for a world meeting of CP's for the purpose of a solemn excommunication of China.

Compare this to the ease with which Stalin was able to expel Yugoslavia from Cominform and the difference is clear. Nowadays, even the Castro bureaucracy in Cuba, resting on the narrowest basis of any Stalinist state, can afford to assert its "own" road to "Socialism", as can be seen from the purge of the pro-Moscow wing of the Cuban CP in January of this year.

Even more significant was the Budapest Conference of CP's in March. Only 67 Parties even bothered to attend, as against 81 in 1960.

Cuba, Yugoslavia, N. Korea

and N. Vietnam were absent. Rumania walked out; of the Asian Communist Parties only the pro-Moscow Indian Communist Party attended.

In the past decade, Stalinism has suffered a series of blows which have undermined its power and prestige internationally. No longer can the "Moscow Line" command the blind fanatical adherence it had before the war.

But far more important even than this fact have been the developments amongst the masses of Eastern Europe and Russia itself. The ferment among the Russian writers is only the tip of the iceberg as far as the discontent of the masses in Russia itself is concerned.

It is an amazing comment on the weakness of the bureaucratic regime in Russia that 50 years after the revolution a whole period of so-called "de-Stalinisation" and "Thaw", after all the promises about "building Communism in 20 years", it has to sentence writers to hard labour for the crime of demanding the implementation of the Soviet Constitution. But far more significant than the writers' trial earlier this year was the stream of protests by Soviet intellectuals that followed the sentences.

The grandson of the famous Soviet diplomat Litvinov issued an open letter condemning the trial, and signed his own name and address in open defiance of the secret police. The son of the Soviet general Yakir, murdered by Stalin in the infamous purges, issued a similar protest, in which he warned that Stalinism still existed and called for the re-habilitation of Leon Trotsky.

Yakir also signed his name and address. After the protests, the Bureaucracy clamped down hard in an attempt to gag the intelligentsia. The works of Alexander Solzhenitsyn who only a few years ago was hailed by the Soviet press as "a new Dostoevsky" have been banned. Solzhenitsyn had been leading the campaign against censorship and for freedom of the arts in Russia.

The developments in Czechoslovakia could not be tolerated because of the effect they would have upon the Soviet people, starting with the intelligentsia. The effect upon the Ukraine, which borders on Slovakia and which has been seething with discontent in the last eighteen months, would be particularly serious.

The abolition of the censorship in Czechoslovakia would leave the Russian bureaucracy without any grounds to resist the insistent clamour of a growing number of Soviet intellectuals to remove the dead hand of bureaucratic control from literature and the arts. But far more serious would be the effect on the working class itself.

The free airing of opinions in the press would provide a focal point for organised expressions of discontent, leading inevitably in the direction of a new programme and a new party. Already in Russia there are hundreds and thousands of underground study circles, where workers



Czech workers and students surround a Russian tank in the centre of Prague photo. Popperfoto

Why the Kre

read and draw their own conclusions from the works of Lenin, which are still distributed in editions of hundreds of thousands in the Soviet Union.

None of Lenin's safeguards remained

The glaring contrasts between Soviet reality and the ideas of Lenin is becoming clear to all. The 1919 Programme of the Bolshevik Party, drawn up mainly by Lenin, laid down the following basic prerequisites for workers' power, not "under Socialism", not "under Communism"—but in the very first stages of Soviet power, in the period of transition from capitalism to socialism:

- 1] Free and democratic elections, with the right of recall
- 2] No official to receive a higher wage than a skilled worker
- 3] No standing army, but the armed people
- 4] No permanent bureaucracy: "Every cook should be able to be Prime Minister".

Of these elementary safeguards of workers' democracy, not one remains in force in Russia and Eastern Europe today. That is why the movement of the workers in the East inevitably takes up the demand

for a return to Lenin, not back to capitalism, but for the purging of the Soviet state of bureaucrats, careerists and parasites, for a genuine socialist workers' democracy.

In Czechoslovakia, as in Hungary in 1956 (where the workers actually set up workers' councils to rule the country, Soviets in all but name) the working class would undoubtedly have moved in this direction. Already, in at least one Czech journal, the idea of Soviets (ie. genuine, democratic organs of workers' power) had been put forward. In the course of events, the workers would have learned by their own experience the need to by-pass the limitations imposed on them by the Dubcek clique.

The Hungarian workers in 1956 came late on the scene, after the stage had been set by the movement of the students and intellectuals, but when they did intervene, they went farther than the "liberal" bureaucratic Nagy and Kadar had foreseen. The movement transcended the "calm", "dignified", "constitutional" nonsense of the Nagys and Dubceks and became a genuine workers' revolution; not a social counter-revolution to overthrow the Socialist property relations, but a

political revolution to oust the bureaucracy and establish a healthy democratic workers' state.

That movement of the Hungarian workers was only crushed by the tanks of the Russian bureaucracy at tremendous cost and effort. Now, in 1968, they were faced with an awkward choice: to intervene would mean yet another terrible blow to the power and prestige of world Stalinism; not to intervene would probably lead to an even more dangerous situation for the bureaucracy, and one which will not stop at the borders of Czechoslovakia.

The invasion bears all the hallmarks of a sudden, panic move. The behaviour of the Russian leaders over the past months has been inconsistent, vacillating, dilatory. There may even be some substance to the speculation of bourgeois commentators about a split in the bureaucracy.

At all events, the invasion of Czechoslovakia must not be seen as proof of the strength of the Russian bureaucracy but as a move dictated by fear, a move that demonstrates beyond doubt the extremely shaky basis upon which Russian and East European Stalinism exists.

On the face of it, the appearance of Russian tanks in the streets of

Prague 1968 Part 2



Prague invaded

The tragedy of Czechoslovakia was that the Czech people found themselves leaderless, disarmed and unprepared. The Dubcek clique preferred to see the country occupied rather than arm the working class. For all his brave words, Dubcek was prepared to eat dirt, rather than risk sparking off the spontaneous mass movement of the working class.

Soviet Russia, with its overwhelming superiority of men and resources, would be ridiculous.

But for Marxists, military factors by themselves cannot be decisive in war. If that were the case, then the young Soviet republic, which at one stage was reduced to two provinces, around Moscow and Petrograd, would have been crushed by the twenty-one armies of intervention. But this did not happen.

Why were Lenin and the Bolsheviks able to emerge victorious from the Civil war against overwhelming odds? The answer lies in the clear internationalist position of the Bolsheviks and the class appeals that were made to the workers in uniform of the foreign armies of intervention. The result of the Bolshevik propaganda and fraternisation on the already demoralised troops led to mutinies in the armies of intervention which became "infected" with "Bolshevik influenza".

A genuine Leninist leadership would have prepared the Czech people for the eventuality of an invasion, both politically and militarily. The confrontation of the Red Army by an armed working class, organised in Soviets, would have had a tremendous effect on the Russian workers in uniform.

As it was, numerous eye-witness accounts told of the bewilderment and demoralisation of the Warsaw Pact troops, as the realisation dawned on them that they had been duped by their leaders. There were instances of Russian troops breaking down and weeping in the streets, protesting that they did not even know they were in Czechoslovakia, that they did not wish to fight the Czech workers, etc. In such circumstances, fraternisation based on clear class, internationalist lines would undoubtedly have led to massive disaffection in the Red Army.

Even without this, it is a measure of the complete demoralisation of the troops that whole units had to be withdrawn after one week of occupation. But no army, no matter how demoralised, can be expected to mutiny unless a strong alternative is clearly posed.

The Czech workers and students showed their instinctive grasp of the need to fraternise. But mere passive resistance is not enough. The interventionist troops should have been made to feel the absolute determination of the Czech people to fight to the death if necessary to defend their gains. They should have been confronted with a force so

implacable as to encourage them to disobey the officer with his pistol at their back. Without such a confrontation, the officer caste can always force the workers in uniform into line with the threat of the firing squad.

Also, in relation to the propaganda used by the Czechs, much of it was of a nationalist kind that would have no appeal to the Russian troops. Slogans like "Ivan go home", while undoubtedly having a demoralizing effect, would not be capable of winning the foreign workers in uniform as did the internationalist propaganda of Bolshevism.

The tragedy of Czechoslovakia was that, at the crucial moment, the Czech people found themselves leaderless, disarmed and unprepared. The perfidy and cowardice of the Dubcek clique which preferred to see the country occupied rather than arm the working class, is a clear indication of the real interests of this group. For all his brave words, Dubcek was prepared to eat dirt, rather than risk sparking off the spontaneous mass movement of the working class.

The workers will grasp the lessons of 1968

It is a measure of the cowardice of the Czech bureaucracy, and its fear of the workers, that even industrial action was ruled out, except for a one-hour stoppage. The French events demonstrated how quickly a "calm", "dignified", strike (i.e. a strike controlled and restricted from above) can develop into a revolutionary movement.

In the course of a general strike, workers' councils emerge, embryo organs of workers' rule, and that eventuality could not be allowed by the bureaucracy. It is characteristic of the 'liberal' bureaucracy that they used the only remaining weapons in their hands—the so-called "free" radio stations, as a means of appealing for "calm" and "dignity"—i.e. as a means of preventing all resistance to the invasion.

Undoubtedly the Soviet intervention is a defeat for the Czech working class and for the whole movement in the direction of political revolution in the East. The Russian bureaucracy clearly realises that it is impossible to put the clock back completely and restore the Novotny clique, and is prepared to permit the continuation of "liberalisation"—from above, and strictly under control. Dubcek was dragged off, manacled to Moscow and grilled by his "fraternal Soviet comrades", who presented him with an alternative: do a deal or go to jail.

And Dubcek, that courageous 'liberal', who solemnly swore to his people that there was no question of going back on the gains that had been made, took the only 'honourable' solution—and returned to Prague! All talk of withdrawing Soviet troops is so much dust thrown in the eyes of the Czech workers. In fact, all that will happen is that troops will disappear from the public eye—perhaps from the cities altogether. But they must remain, as a safeguard against the Czechoslovak workers.

Already there are reports of some 800 Russian agents operating in government offices in Czechoslovakia, as they did formerly under Stalin. A tight rein will be kept on Dubcek and friends, in case they give way to pressure from below once more. A number of "reformers" who have been compromised by their statements in recent months have been sacked.

Censorship has been restored. Ominously Pravda has called for the arrest of some 40,000 'young counter-revolutionary thugs'. Doubtless, the arrests and deportations have already begun. Crowds of intellectuals have fled the country. Unfortunately, the workers, as always, have no such easy escape routes; they must stay and suffer the consequences.

The immediate effect of the invasion on the Czech workers will clearly be one of demoralisation and disillusionment. With all the strategic points occupied, with all the levers of power in the hands of Soviet officer caste, no resistance is possible at this stage, although the series of provocations staged by the Russians may provoke clashes in which the Czech workers, leaderless and unorganised, will suffer a bloody defeat.

But in spite of the temporary demoralisation, the Czech workers will have learned important lessons from the present events. The experience of the reality of Dubcek's "reforms" will push the workers in the direction of a new alternative.

Already, during the invasion itself, slogans appeared such as "Lenin wake up, Brezhnev has gone mad". In one demonstration in Yugoslavia, two placards were carried, one of them with a portrait of Lenin and a caption: "He would never have done this", the other of Stalin, which read: "This is what he would have done".

Without doubt, certain sections among the workers and students of Czechoslovakia will already be groping forward to a new anti-bureaucratic programme, a programme which can only be based on the democratic ideas of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. The present mood of defeat will give way to a new movement on a higher level.

Even bourgeois commentators understand that the decisive force in Czechoslovakia has not yet had its say. A recent article in the Sunday Times (4 September) summed up the situation well: "Paradoxically intellectuals began the liberation movement with little worker support and now the workers are showing the strongest determination while the intellectuals run for the border with their prudently acquired exit visas. Maybe there will be a government in exile, but it will be less relevant than a campaign of resistance launched and conducted by the workers."

NEXT WEEK: Turmoil in Eastern Europe

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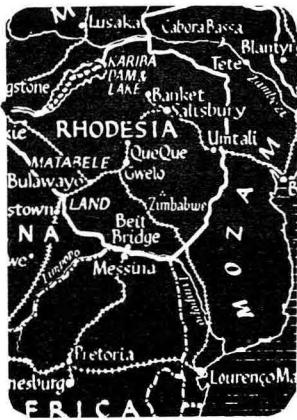
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AFRICA, US, CHILE.



WHO'S WHO IN ZIMBABWE

PATRIOTIC FRONT

ZANU: leader Robert Mugabe: claims to be 'Marxist-Leninist', but in reality is a broad nationalist movement incorporating different class elements. ZANU has approximately 8,000 guerrillas operating inside Zimbabwe and Mozambique under army commander Tongogara; it has borne the brunt of fighting against Smith; with limited help from China, none from international capital.

ZAPU: Leader Joshua Nkomo: a broad nationalist movement with over 10,000 guerrillas trained by Cuba and USSR as regular army; hardly any of its forces are committed to fighting as yet, but they are being kept in reserve. ZAPU is supported by USSR and UK, and by the 'maverick' multi-national Lonrho.

INTERNAL GOVERNMENT

UANC: Leader Bishop Muzorewa: a broad nationalist movement with virtually no guerrilla movement. UANC is supported by South African and some American business, but they are concerned about Muzorewa's ineptness as politician.

ANC: Leader Rev Sithole, who also still claims to be leader of ZANU, and his group has been using that name in the last few months. ANC has limited guerrilla support in the east of the country; it is openly a capitalist-nationalist movement, and is backed by South Africa, Uganda and Libya.

ZUPO: Leader Chief Chirau: Chirau is an ex-Minister in Smith's government and his 'party' is funded by Smith as a stooge movement. ZUPO has no guerrilla or popular support.

Rhodesian Front: Leader Ian Smith: party of Rhodesia's white ruling class, it still has firm control of the armed forces and internal security.

TIME IS RUNNING OUT

THE THREAT FROM THESE FELLOWS IN THE BUSH IS GREATLY EXAGGERATED.

By Chris James

FOR SMITH AND THE WEST

There is a growing feeling of desperation among the strategists of Western capitalism as they look at the situation in Southern Africa.

On 3 March, 1978, after months of negotiations, the Smith regime came up with its so-called "internal settlement". In theory, Zimbabwe was now on the road to independence, set for 31 December, 1978.

Smith and his nationalist collaborators, Muzorewa, Sithole, and Chirau, have taken steps to set up a transitional government, and there have been a number of well-publicised moves proclaiming the new regime's commitment to change.

But has there been any real change? In Britain the Tories have hailed the "internal settlement" as a solution that "must be made to work". Labour Foreign Secretary, Owen, has adopted an equivocal position, evidently torn between his fear of outraging the Tories by denouncing the 'settlement' and his desire to keep in step with the US which sees it as a recipe for disaster.

The British press, and

In South Africa the revolt of the black youth and working class continues, three years after the revolt of Soweto. The West has been unable to bring about the phasing-out of the apartheid system

and construct a viable African middle-class nationalist movement to replace it.

Faced with this failure, it has continued to give support to the Vorster regime, while pressing for a few cosmetic changes. Yet this will be unable to prevent the growing militancy of the black workers, whose actions threaten the continuation of capitalism in South Africa.

It is this which scares the Western powers. In the words of Vorster it is a situation "too ghastly to contemplate." Or as an ex-Tory Foreign Office Minister, Geoffrey Rippon, said last week: "The security and stability of the free world depends on what happens in southern Africa."

Time above all else is what the West is seeking, time to construct a non-socialist African nationalist alternative to white minority rule. But time is running out for the West.

What concerns them most

'Internal Settlement'

particularly the BBC, however, carry a constant stream of "atrocious stories"—mainly based on the Rhodesian government's 'evidence'—aimed at discrediting the Patriotic Front, and especially Mugabe and ZANU. In contrast, little or nothing is said about the working of the "internal settlement" and the continued repression in Rho-

desia.

A recent Fact Paper, 'Smith's Settlement: Events in Zimbabwe Since 3 March' (International Defence and Aid Fund, 104 Newgate St, London E.C.1., price 50p) shows that the internal settlement, under which much of the white dominated status quo would be preserved intact, has been accompanied

at the moment is the situation in Zimbabwe. There, things are beginning to slip out of their control and more radical forces are coming to the fore. Although none of the present nationalist movements has a revolutionary socialist programme, there is a growing conflict within ZANU and ZAPU between an aspiring middle class and those who pose a socialist alternative.

It is the realisation of these developments which has prompted the West's continued pressure for a negotiated 'solution' to the Rhodesia 'problem'. Michael Stewart, ex-Labour Foreign Secretary, warned last week that a Patriotic Front regime would be one of "fear, dread and tyranny" and that "we

Young are like Humpty Dumpty in 'Alice in Wonderland', "running very hard to stay in the same place"; but Smith does not want to run at all.

The situation is fast deteriorating for the Smith regime. The boom in the Rhodesian economy of 5% average growth in GNP from 1955-75 has ended. The last three years have seen three devaluations of the Rhodesian dollar.

African unemployment is increasing. An average of 116,000 Africans come on the job market every year for the next three years and there are virtually no jobs for them.

Those who have jobs are poorly paid. Most African workers (38%) are employed

the last century in the wars of resistance to white settler occupation. It was picked up again in the 1960s. But it has only become a serious threat to the Smith regime since 1972, when ZANU launched its military campaign in NE Zimbabwe. The last five years have seen an escalation of this struggle, which can be witnessed in the increase in Rhodesian security expenditure from \$40 million in 1973 to \$197 million in 1978.

Over 80% of the country is now an official military zone and the only 'safe' road is the one linking Salisbury to Bulawayo. The Smith regime has now had to rely on over 10,000 white mercenaries to maintain its rule.

In a distorted form, the

unwillingness to link in a practical day-to-day manner the socialist with the democratic revolution.

Even ZANU, the most radical of the two movements, tries to blur the position: "ZANU is guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism. It aims at achieving a socialist revolution. However, before the achievement of such a socialist revolution, a transitional stage of national democratic revolution is necessary preparation for the socialist revolution, and the socialist revolution is the inevitable sequel to the national democratic revolution. The deeper the national democratic revolution, the better the conditions for the socialist revolution" ('What is ZANU', ZANU Publicity Bureau).

The classless "national democratic" stage is just an empty phrase. Either the struggle moves to destroy the old structures of capitalism or it becomes accommodated within it.

Why then is there this accommodation within ZANU and ZAPU with sections of the nascent African capitalist class, a bourgeois class which would be too weak on its own to establish a capitalist state and would have to rely on international capital and a ruthless suppression of all opposition?

This is the real danger that threatens the Zimbabwe revolution. It is not enough to denounce the internal settlement or the Anglo-American proposals. The battle for democratic political rights must be linked to the take-over of industry and land.

The wealth of the country must be channelled to the benefit of all, not the present white or a future African elite.

A socialist approach which moved beyond the present rhetoric of ambiguous "African socialism" would have an enormous appeal within ZANU, ZAPU and other movements in Zimbabwe. It would link up with the developing struggle inside South Africa and defeat the machinations of the multinationals and their governments.

A socialist southern Africa could plan for the benefit of all not just the few, and ensure that the appalling poverty and degradation suffered by the masses of Zimbabwe and South Africa ended once and for all.



are on the verge of disaster.'

It is not Joshua Nkomo and his Lonrho backers that scares Stewart, but the fact that the youth in ZAPU and ZANU's army will not limit their struggle simply to replacing white with black faces in a new government. They will demand more fundamental social changes as in Angola and Mozambique.

So the past few months have witnessed an attempt by the British and American governments to get the internal settlement people to come to an agreement with Nkomo.

The difference between the West and Smith is quite simple. Smith wants no real change in the economic and social system within Rhodesia, whilst the West recognises that there has to be some reforms to safeguard the whole system. Owen and

in European agriculture, where real wages have not risen since 1900. Surveys have shown that 80% of white workers' wages are below the basic minimum to survive, which is worse than in South Africa. So crime flourishes.

The wage differential between white and black workers is on average 11 to 1, again a figure worse than apartheid South Africa. 50% of the land is reserved for white farmers and the African population is shunted off on to the overcrowded and eroded Tribal Trust land.

Discriminated against at work and all fields of life, and denied basic political rights, the African population of Zimbabwe have given their support to the armed struggle against the Smith regime.

This struggle goes back to

struggle in Zimbabwe is taking on an open class nature. International business had never welcomed UDI: they tolerated it, but they really wanted a moderate black government. With the escalating guerrilla struggle that has now become a necessity if the West is to prevent another Angola or Mozambique occurring.

All the African leaders within the internal government are aspiring moderate Presidents. But so are some of those who are conducting the guerrilla war. Failure to clarify the aims of the armed struggle spells danger for the Zimbabwe people.

Both ZANU and ZAPU talk in terms of two stages—first the democratic revolution, later the socialist stage. This reflects the ambiguity within both parties and their

have disappeared without trace after being taken into police or security force custody, and are feared dead. Other officials and supporters of the Patriotic Front of ZAPU and ZANU have lost their lives in unexplained circumstances.

The Fact Paper also examines the transitional government's developing links with South Africa including the deployment of armed South African police units inside Zimbabwe and the indications of further military collaboration. It concludes that the internal settlement is a recipe for widening conflict in defence of white supremacy in Southern Africa.

have been stepped up.

On the basis of previously unpublished evidence, including details of over 200 people known to have been arrested on security grounds since the signing of the internal agreement, the Fact Paper shows that the regime's harassment of its opponents is becoming increasingly violent and uncontrolled. Many suspects

by a clear and outspoken commitment on the part of the Smith regime to stepping up the war against its political opponents.

Despite the new Executive Council's decision to lift the banning order on the liberation movements ZAPU and ZANU, and to release several hundred political detainees, political repression has con-

tinued since the beginning of March. The regime's security laws and practices remain in force, and political trials have carried on without interruption. Measures by the police and armed forces to suppress popular support for the armed liberation struggle, including summary arrest, detention without charge, interrogation and torture,

INTERNATIONAL



NOTES

US-UNION LEADERS THREATEN LABOUR PARTY

With consumer prices rising at a rate of 11.4%, pressure from American workers is forcing their union leaders into confrontation with the employers and their government. Already the increase in industrial struggles has led to political conclusions being drawn, with the leader of the powerful United Auto Workers threatening withdrawal of union support from the Democratic Party and the formation of a union-based labour party.

With persistent inflation putting pressure on the workers' pocket, the strains in American society are beginning to show. Two weeks ago the auto workers' President, Douglas Fraser, resigned from the Labour Management Group, a body equivalent to the British NEDC set up by the government to bring big business and union officials together to discuss economic policy. The way 'Time' magazine saw it, Fraser was "invoking some class struggle rhetoric that sounded like the 1930s" when he declared "Why

pretend that labour and management in this country are sitting down and discussing the great issues of the day and that they have something in common when they don't?" As rank and file trade unionists realise more and more that far from having anything in common with their bosses their class interests are diametrically opposed they will follow industrial action with independent class political action. And as the Democratic government—which has already failed to repay the unions' electoral support with much-promised pro-union legislation—intervenes in industrial battles openly on the bosses' side, as in the bitter miners' strike, the question of forming a Labour party will be put on the agenda. And with major struggles coming in the spring when the electrical workers', auto workers', and Teamsters' wage contracts come up for renewal, that could be sooner than many think.

CHILE - PINOCHET MORE EXPOSED THAN EVER

Pinochet's attempts to improve the image of his dictatorship took a severe knock last week. In Washington a federal grand jury indicted General Manuel Contreras Sepulveda, the former head of Chile's ruthless secret police DINA, for murder. As head of DINA—ironically a dreaded organisation which the US through the CIA had a hand in forming—Contreras was directly responsible to Pinochet, who will now find it hard to avoid being implicated.

A long investigation in the US has led to charges that a number of Cuban exiles (a group that have frequently figured in CIA murder plots) together with DINA agents—including Michael Towney, who was recently extradited from Chile—in 1976 assassinated Orlando do Letelier, Allende's ambassador to the US, by blowing up his car in Washington.

Contreras has now been detained in Chile, but he clearly intends to fight extradition. Pinochet is in a dilemma. With splits in the armed forces and severe economic difficulties, he cannot afford an open breach with the US government,

which under Carter's direction is trying to demonstrate some concern about the violation of human rights in Chile (and also wants, no doubt, to warn foreign intelligence services against assassination operations in the middle of Washington).

If Contreras is forced to stand trial in Washington, however, the proceedings and the resulting publicity are likely to bring out even more information about the brutal repression under Pinochet's junta.

There are still thousands of political prisoners in Chile, and over 1,500 'missing persons' presumed to be detained by the Junta.

Splits within the officer corps resulted recently in the expulsion from the Junta of air-force General Gustavo Leigh, Pinochet's main opponent in the ruling clique, which was rapidly followed by the resignation of 19 out of 20 air force generals.

This leaves Pinochet and three compliant stooges in the Junta. Far from indicating a strengthening of his personal power, however, recent events only underline Pinochet's growing isolation and underlying weakness.

NEW COVER FOR REPRESSION

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

LETTERS

**WORK SLAVE GETS
£1.40 FOR
FIVE HOURS**

Dear Comrades

I am writing to tell you about my experiences as a 'work slave'.

I need money to travel to the Young Socialists and to buy a weekly copy of 'Militant' etc, so I applied for a job, advertised in my local newsagent, for a young person to deliver 'Guardian Extra'.

I got my job, and have to deliver 311 papers every Tuesday. For this, which is about 5 hours work as I

have to do about three trips, not being strong enough to carry all the papers at once, I receive £1.40!

Not only that, I have to walk a fair distance to get to the roads in which I deliver.

If that is not being a work slave and a good example of exploitation I don't know what is!

Yours fraternally
Ellen Simpson [age 15]
Epping Forest LPYS

WHAT FATE FOR RHONDDA?

Dear Comrades

At the moment there is an estimated population of 85,000 in Rhondda with 1,060 males unemployed and 1,640 females making a total of 2,700.

At first glance one may think it is not too bad. But look closely, and you have many people who cannot work for one reason or another and who are not eligible to be registered unemployed.

First the school children aged from 5 to 16; also quite a few aged from 16 to 18 who are doing 'A' levels in the hope of getting a better job when they leave school; next

the longest section, housewives with young children; old age pensioners; and one parent families.

So after taking all these from 85,000 and looking at the people who are working you must then look at the people living in Rhondda who are actually working outside in Pontypridd, Treforest Industrial Estate, Cardiff, and Caerphilly. Also there are quite a few workers on building sites moving around the place all outside the Rhondda.

Where the workers are in jobs in the Rhondda the fate of unemployment is slowly but steadily creeping over us.

During the past few months there have been a lot of jobs gone or threatened. These included 90 part-timers at Polikoffs, a clothing factory. My mother was one of these workers. Forty from Rhondda Transport, now known as National Welsh, the bus

company that is supposed to be nationalised yet it is trying to transfer the main work from Rhondda to Cardiff with the result that more jobs will go. Fifty at Rollo Hardy, a plastic company, and 50 from Firestone, a tyre factory.

But there is some real bad news. Redpoach, Dorman and Long, TC Jones plant, a subsidiary company of BSC (the plant is in Treorchy) there is a possible loss of 300 jobs in September. This will take unemployment to 16.1% of the workable population.

I have also heard that Maerdy Colliery may close if the production does not increase.

I am a miner and I'll be doing an article on mining soon so I'll let you know about Maerdy then.

Yours fraternally
Anthony Tynan
Rhondda LPYS and
South Wales Area NUM
Tymawr Lodge

EGGS UP 4p A DOZEN

Dear Comrade Editor

Remember the farce of the EEC's "over production" of butter. Whilst tons of butter lay rotting for profit, millions of people in the third world were nearly dying of starvation, and many people still suffer from malnutrition in the rotting, run down, areas of Western Europe.

Rearing its "ugly head" is another "problem" of "over production", that of eggs.

Whilst notably another failure of capitalism, it is on a much smaller scale than the butter crisis, but it still has the power to put 4p rise on a dozen eggs.

The reason for the sharp increase is that farmers, trying to snatch extra profits, bought up millions of extra battery hens merely for the production of more eggs. As more and more farmers climbed on the bandwagon for surplus profit, the availability of eggs increased and so the price decreased.

Farmers now fuming and incensed with the loss of profit have slaughtered one million hens so far this year.

The problem, they say, is that there are now over 50 million egg laying hens in this country, this is two million too many for them to hold up prices and hence also their astronomical profits. Their answer to the problem is obvious: slaughter another two million hens.

A spokesman from the National Farmers Union says that a 4p rise on a dozen eggs is not solely due to the slaughter of over two million hens. He claims the other factors of the rise in the price of eggs are: the costs of feeding the hens, which has



risen 6% (not surprising with the extra hens having been bought); and costs of labour, which have risen 10%.

The same spokesman then took an enormous amount of pride in the fact that eggs have "only" doubled since the war.

This small but important incident shows the state and the anarchy that capitalism is in.

We, the working class consumers, are abused as the capitalists fight their never ending price wars in the striving for higher profits.

Their apt proverb of the day is "scarcity is nice for a higher price".

This incident shows, as clearly as any other, the need for a socialist plan of production. Goods would then be produced in great abundance to meet the needs of all people regardless of the "drop in price".

Only with a socialist plan of production will goods be produced for need not for blatant profit.

Yours fraternally
Mark Richardson
Brighton LPYS

**WHY SCHOOL
STUDENTS NEED
A UNION...**

Dear Comrades

After having an excellent discussion about the possibilities of setting up NUSS branches in schools, at a Sheffield LPYS branch, we walked to the Bus Station, to catch a bus home to Rotherham.

In South Yorkshire most bus fares for children are 2p for three miles. Normally our fare would have cost us 4p and we caught a bus belonging to the private firm 'AC Wigmore's'.

To our great surprise we were asked for the full fare of 14p. The reason given was

that "subsidies" are discontinued after 9 o'clock at night—as if we are supposed to be in our cages after nine!

This just highlights the problems that students face all over the country and it blatantly shows how the bosses want to make money—even out of the students.

We have to organise our own union which can fight for our rights!

Yours fraternally
Simon Kaplan
Philip Hawes
Rother Valley LPYS

**THEIR ROTTEN
SOCIETY**

Dear Comrades

If there is to be an example to illustrate the rotten nature of our capitalist society, then it has to be this one mentioned over the radio today.

Jason, a two-year-old boy requiring immediate open heart surgery, is being refused

an operation on the grounds that his home is unfit for human habitation.

So poor Jason has two alternatives to death: have his operation and die in convalescence afterwards, or wait on the NHS until his parents find alternative accommodation.

The Nottinghamshire Tory controlled council have for the past year delayed moving the family. Their present house, damp and infested by mice, is considered not a priority.

Hopefully by embarrassing council officials, Jason's family will be moved to a decent house, but this is just one example in a thousand.

I wonder where the similar victims are? Capitalism obviously doesn't disclose all the examples. What a rotten, sick society we live in.

Fraternally
Shirley Bedford
Nottingham North LPYS

CANT AND HYPOCRISY

Dear Comrade

Much has been written in the capitalist press about Denis Canavan's recent remarks about the House of Lords and one noble Lord in particular [Lord Thorneycroft Chairman of the Tory Party and Chairman of Pirelli].

These remarks led to a day's suspension. Mr Canavan had said that Pirelli had stolen £9 million from the

Post Office and that many members of the present House of Lords were descendants of thieves and vagabonds.

It is interesting to note that Mr Canavan repeated these statements outside the hallowed halls of Westminster, [without any whisper of a law suit from Lord Thorneycroft]. In all the welter of com-

ment I have seen, no one questions the truth of Denis Canavan's actual remarks!

As Trotsky said, "No one can beat the British ruling class for cant and hypocrisy".

Their golden rule is never to say what you actually mean.

Yours fraternally
Jim Fril
Glasgow

Pensions

Dear Comrade

Bob Mellish MP, Labour's ex Chief Whip, was recently quoted as stating in Parliament that he was sick of always hearing the left Labour MPs constantly raising the question of the level of old-age pensions, whenever the House of Commons wished to raise the wages and pensions of MPs.

At the present time an MP's wage, including his expenses, is £240 weekly. It is just about to go up £24 a week. Further they are just about to raise their own pensions in excess of 30%.

Yet in November this year it is probable that the State old age pension will be raised by a figure between 6 and 7%—i.e. for a single person less than £1 a week rise.

I think the majority of people are sick, not of left Labour MPs as Bob Mellish claims, but of the large number of those hypocritical Labour MPs who put their own interests before the interests of the class they are supposed to represent.

Yours fraternally
Pat Skemp
Leicester

**Use
Militant!**

Dear Comrades

I read with interest the article on Tenants Rights [by Ella Gamwell issue 416].

I had a window broken by an air gun pellet 5 months ago. I was told it would cost £6.25 to replace, payable in advance, but disputed this.

Things had reached an impasse, until I took the aforementioned article to my local housing office, who having read the article, then informed me

that had I been home when it happened, I should have informed the police before claiming a free repair but as I was not in, they would now do it for me.

So it appears comrades that we should always be out when the damage is done.

Can we please have more articles on Tenants Rights.

Yours sincerely
MF Foran
T&GWU 3/211 branch
Rolls Royce, Bristol.

EVERY PENNY TAKES US FORWARD

This week's total of £800.75 is only two thirds of the amount sent in the previous two weeks. But it still brings our total to £31,334.60 which means that we are averaging over £1,000 a week.

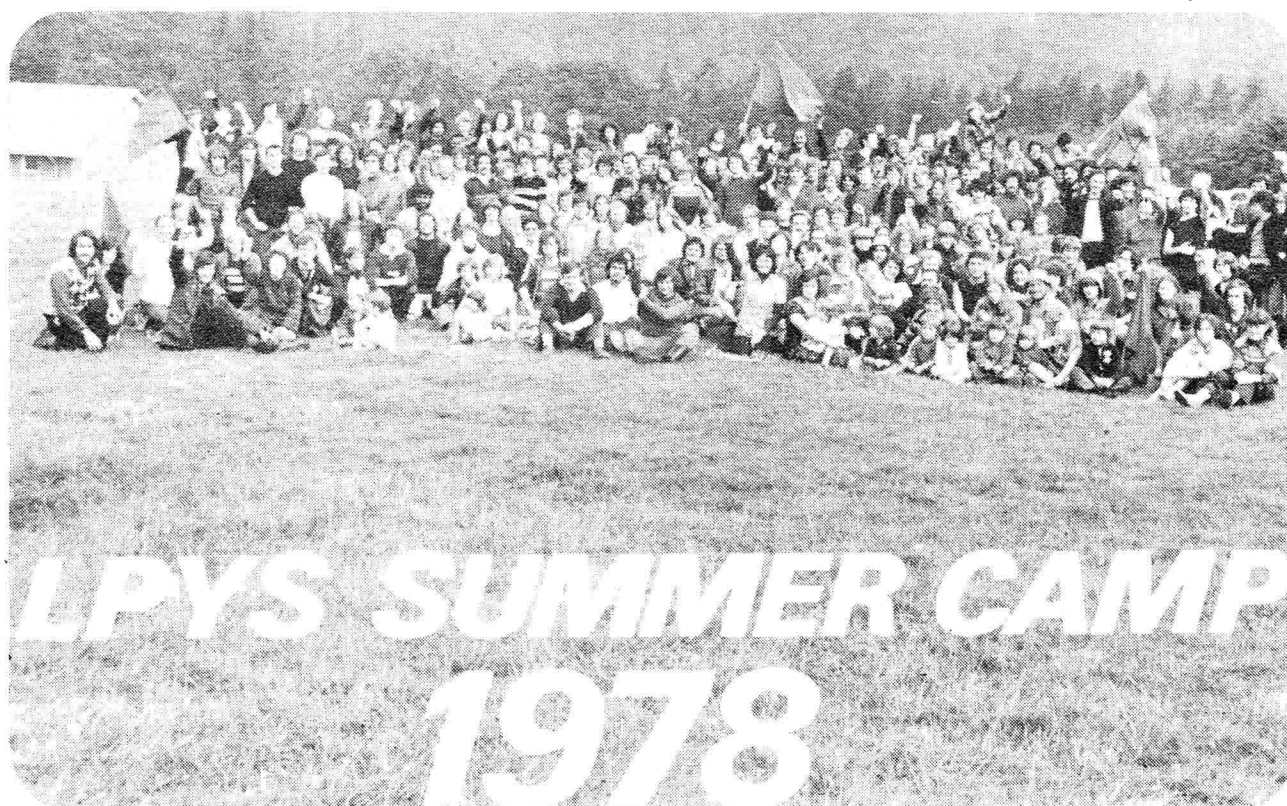
However, we are continually striving to increase the quality of our paper, not only on the technical side, but also by up to date information on the situation in the areas and photos of events as they happen. This all costs money.

So far this year we have gone from a 12-page to a 16-page weekly. The next step is to get the red back and then...well that depends entirely on what you can achieve by way of the fighting fund. Every penny you send helps us to take steps forward.

The bigger the amount sent in each week the more steps we are able to take. We need an average of £2,700 per week now to get back on target by October 5th (only 8 weeks away) and it is up to you to raise it by every means possible.

As well as spending the money on the paper we are also having to spend money on the protection of our premises. **The Premises Appeal, launched after the last attack on us, has so far brought in £1,700**, made up of big collections and small individual donations specifically given for the appeal.

This week we received £25.50 from Southampton, £16 from Dorset (with a promise of more to come), £21 from Glasgow and £20 from Oxford. Many thanks to all the comrades who donated to these appeals in these areas



Group photograph from LPYS Summer Camp—order your copy from Militant, 75p

and to the following for their individual contributions:

I Stiff (Ipswich) £5; A Bond (Wandsworth) £1.30; Wobey of Hackney £5; J Turner (St Pancras) £2; P Loundes (Salford) £5; D Reid (Wavertree) £2.96; A McKnight (Coventry) £3; P Cunningham (Fife) £5.32; J Campbell (Edinburgh West CLP) £2; V Carruthers (Glasgow) £10; D Moss (Brixham) £2; R Worth

(N Abbott) £2.50; A Zaple (Plymouth) £1.20; J Grimes (Slough) £2; Port Talbot supporters £3; B McCosh (Edinburgh) £1.28; B Thompson (Fife) £10 and C Jeffries (Wavertree) £3.50.

£1 donations were received from B Underwood (Stevenage); J Hill and R Caley (both from Ipswich); A Platter, T Waddington, J Kirkwood and J Lake (all from Hull); A

Campbell (Lewisham), G Matthews (Morden), P Russo (Newham), L Ashton (Hackney), R Scott (Nottingham), R Gaston (Gloucester), B Harris (Brixham), R Hill (N Abbott), T Hargreaves (Plymouth), B Erskine (Cardiff) and J Sillett (Norwich).

Supporters often say that it is easier to write about fund-raising ideas than to put them into practice. At the

LPYS Summer Camp two weeks ago every fund raising idea seems to have been put into practice at one time or another! D Nellist (the DJ for the week) charged 10p for every request played and made £5.99. T Doyle (London) sang a song he had written about 'Militant' at the Club Night and asked the audience to show their appreciation by putting the price of

a 'pint for the Militant' into buckets being passed round. A magnificent £42.89 was raised in this way.

Before every one went back to their areas it was made sure they didn't go back with too much change in their pockets—again the buckets were used effectively - and another £11.72 was collected to bring the **total raised at the summer camp** (including the collection at the Militant Readers' Meeting to **£365.50**. £35.87 has so far been made on the sale of the 'group photograph' of the summer camp: if you want to order a copy send 75p to the Militant offices.

Money sent in from fund raising events in the areas this week includes £50 from a dance in Driffield, a barbeque in Brent £9, sale of books in the Hackney area £3.48, sale of Militant badges (Southampton) £7.40, a sponsored walk in North Tyneside £5, a local raffle in Plymouth £3.90, accommodation in I.O.W., £5 and the sale of pontoon tickets in Stevenage £1.

The collection at a Militant Readers' Meeting in the Isle of Wight, after expenses, made £2.90; a Marxist discussion Group in Rotherham raised £3.50; West Lewisham LPYS sent £3 and Worthing LPYS donated £5.

Many thanks to every supporter who sent money this week. If every area manages to send something in the next week we will be well on the way to reaching the £2,700 needed weekly. WE NEED THIS MONEY URGENTLY.

£52,500 NEEDED BY OCTOBER 7th

FIGHTING FUND CHART £70,000

Area	Target 39 Wks	Target 52 Wks	Proportion of target received	Received
Eastern	3,300	4,400		1,523.69
Hants & IOW	1,575	2,100		1,630.04
Humberside	1,650	2,200		1,114.72
Lancashire	1,125	1,500		366.03
London: North	5,775	7,700		3,352.08
London: South	2,850	3,800		1,847.75
Manchester & District	2,175	2,900		1,049.47
Merseyside & District	3,375	4,500		1,497.56
Midlands East	3,300	4,400		1,581.03
Midlands West	5,500	7,400		3,171.57
Northern	3,675	4,900		2,044.49
Scotland East	1,875	2,500		794.33
Scotland West	2,125	2,900		862.94
South East	1,725	2,300		1,384.12
South West	1,725	2,300		1,140.23
Thames Valley	1,275	1,700		909.19
Wales East	1,500	2,000		907.63
Wales West	1,725	2,300		840.24
Yorkshire	3,900	5,200		1,588.93
Others	2,250	3,000		3,728.56
Total	52,500	70,000		31,334.60

Progress towards year's target: ■ Towards October 7th target

GREET TUC CONFERENCE

At this year's TUC Conference, the trade unions will debate the proposed 5% wage limit, in the run up to a General Election.

Let your voice be heard—greet delegates through the Militant, Labour's Marxist voice.

Rates: £2 per 2 column cm./ One sixteenth of a page—£9/One eighth of a page—£17. FINAL COPY DATE—WEDNESDAY 23rd August.

Rush copy from your union branch, shop stewards committee, Labour Party and LPYS branch or from individuals, marked 'TUC greetings', to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

NOTICES & ADS

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'.

Readers Meetings

LEICESTER Militant Public Meeting: 'What is Fascism?' Speakers: Bengali Youth League representative; Jeremy Birch (Birmingham Labour Party). 7.45 pm, Friday 18th August, Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, off Belgrave Road, Leicester.

Discussion Groups

WALLSEND Marxist Discussion Group: 'The Portuguese Revolution.' Speaker: Gavin Dudley. 23rd August, 8.00 pm. Stanley Arms, North Shields.

SUNDERLAND Marxist Discussion Group: August 18th—'Spain'; September 1st—'The role of the trade union activist.' Fridays at 8pm. For further details contact Diane English, Sunderland 44365.

NEWCASTLE WEST Militant Readers' Discussion Meetings. Monday 4th September—'TUC Conference: what perspectives for the movement?' 7.30pm, Pooley Road Clinic, Denton Burn.

Militant Trade Union Pamphlets
For a democratic fighting POEU..... 10p
Order from Roy Farrar, 74 Bull Lane, Liverpool 9.
G&MWU Review 1978 15p
Socialist Policies for the UPW..... 10p
CPSA: the tasks ahead 20p
A fighting programme for printworkers..... 15p
'Militant' Teacher..... 15p
Order now from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Please add 5p postage.

OUT NOW! Militant Pamphlet 'In Defence of October' By Leon Trotsky 20p + 5p postage
Order from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

MILITANT back-numbers for sale. Some copies, all issues 225-415. 12p per copy plus postage. All proceeds to fighting fund. Peterborough Militant supporters, 29 Lime Tree Avenue, Peterborough PE1 2NS

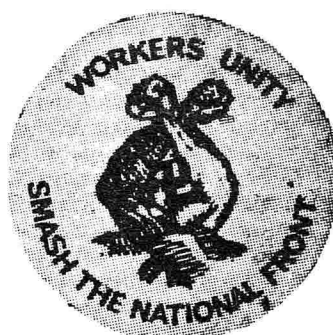
CLASSIFIED

BRISTOL NE 'Reinstate the LPYS.' Campaign Pamphlet—10p. Order from the secretary, 13 Camerton Road, Greenbank, Bristol 5

TOTTENHAM Public Meeting Support of five arrested anti-Fascist demonstrators;— Stop National Front — End Police discrimination

Sunday 20th August, 8.00pm at Tottenham Trades Hall, Bruce Grove (off High Street).

Called by Tottenham Labour Party; Haringey Labour Anti-Fascist Anti-Racist Campaign; Haringey Anti-Nazi League. Also speakers from Campaign Against Sus and Indian Workers' Association.



'WORKERS' UNITY' badge reprint. Bulk orders 12p per badge plus 10p p&p. Contact Simon Heather, 30 Mayfield Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 9HJ.

Building workers defend direct works

Over the past three weeks building workers in Wandsworth have been taking action against non-union labour on two sites in the borough. This is a very important issue in the whole of the building industry, where the presence, in some sites, of non-unionised workers weakens the unions and helps the bosses hold down wages and get away with unsafe and inadequate conditions.

On Friday the 4th the official UCATT picket line of over 80 was told by a union official that one of the sites

Garratt Lane, had agreed to directly employ all workers on the site and that the site will be 100% unionised. This in itself is a good step forward but it may not be enough to get all the pickets removed as the lads are now looking for Eve's to make this a policy for all their sites.

Tories

When the Tories took over the Borough Council in May, after seven years of Labour control, one of their first actions was to stop the council's own building works

from tendering for any new contracts. This means that over the coming years as the contracts that they won against the private contractors come to a close, the 800 building workers the council now employs will be thrown on the scrap heap.

The aim of the pickets is to ensure that the main contractor directly employs all workers on their sites and they must all be union members so protecting the rights and conditions that must be maintained and improved upon.

Any firms tendering for

jobs in Wandsworth will now have to consider if they will make enough profits in the area. When they realise there are no easy pickings in the borough they will stay out leaving a need that the council's own building unit will fill.

The actions that this new Tory council have taken: summer outings for the kids grant slashed from £1.13 per child to 7p; 53% increase in the prices of meals-on-wheels; £23½ million cut from housing investment over the next 3½ years; etc., in just four months; are a grim warning



SACKED - FOR CONSIDERING A STRIKE

Tom Leatham (UCATT shop steward, Woodlands) talked to Mick Slater.

UCATT members have been in dispute for the last ten weeks at Woodland Designs, a manufacturer of Pine furniture in Kirkham, near Preston. The union has only been organised at Woodlands for the last 18 months.

A "profit sharing" bonus scheme, with payment based on the previous months' sales, was introduced in March and the workers were led to believe that this would pay about £15 a month. During March, April and May production rose steadily, but there was no bonus paid—the Management had ordered the production of the wrong furniture at the wrong time.

Due to this, at a union

of the vicious action a Tory government would use against the workers of this country to keep their big business happy.

We have got to make certain that this doesn't happen in the coming elections. We must fight for a Labour government with socialist policies.

By Dennis English

(G&MWU Wandsworth area shop stewards' committee)

meeting, a vote of no confidence was taken in the Production Manager, and it was decided to hold a token one day stoppage the next day. The Management were immediately informed.

However the token strike never went ahead. That evening I contacted the UCATT Regional Organiser to inform him of the position, and he instructed the men to report for work as the union would not support the unofficial action.

The following morning the men received letters informing them that they had been dismissed—including two men who were off sick at the time! The Management refused to reinstate the men, despite the fact that the strike had been called off. In effect they were sacked for considering strike action.

This is clearly an attempt to break the union organisation at Woodlands by a backward, anti-trade union management

The men are taking their case to the Unfair Dismissals Tribunal, and their cases come up in September. Meanwhile a regular picket has been maintained on the gate, and they are being supported by the local unions including the FBU, the EETPU, NUPE, the NUR and the T&GWU, and also by Blackpool, Preston and Wigan Trades Councils.

Donations and messages of support should be sent to:—T Leatham, 1 Mellor Road, Kirkham, Nr. Preston, Lancs.



working in the union

In the second part of his article, John Huxtable, an AUEW shop steward from Harlow, describes the crucial role of the union leadership.

If there is a time for strong union leadership that time is now. The coming period will see great upheavals in the engineering industry. It's on the cards, according to some pundits of the economy, that engineering in this country is a dead duck, that is to say so much money is needed to resurrect the corpse (engineering) it would be better to give it a decent burial and go in for finance on the grand scale. Where would that leave us, should we commute to the Continent?!

On the other hand there is a new industrial revolution taking place with computer controlled machines taking over from the old skills (see AUEW Journal, May). This, under capitalism, would lead to unemployment on a scale never seen before, with millions permanently out of work and jobs becoming more specialised, calling for qualifications that the old craftsmen have never heard of.

Don't just think these developments apply only to the large multinationals. At the moment in America the people who are introducing these new innovations are saying that if the sub-contractors don't get in on the act their prices will be unreal and they will go out of business. A word of warning to the trade-shop lads, I think!

For the moment we have a right-wing leadership in the AUEW, but the struggles will go on. There will still be closures—rationalisations, redundancies, etc. especially if the new "computerised industrial revolution" takes place. The burden will be placed more and more on the shoulders of the conveners, shop stewards' committees

and even individual shop stewards who will no doubt be leading members into repeated unofficial actions, showing how divorced the leadership will be from the rank and file worker.

The press will no doubt have a field day denouncing us all as reds under everyone's beds and the like. The words "unofficial strike" will become commonplace. These are the dangers of a right-wing leadership. Only an active leadership with its finger on the pulse of events can serve us in such times, only a leadership prepared to say to a government, enough is enough. We have seen the power of the unions in action in the heroic stand of the NUM who by their co-ordinated actions gave us a shining example and brought down the Heath government. The miners after all are only part of the working class.

What power then would a TUC have if it was backed by member unions all with one goal in mind? And I would remind our brothers and sisters of the constitution of the Labour Party which was born out of the trade union movement:

"To secure for the workers by hand or by brain the full fruits of their industry and the most equitable distribution thereof that may be possible upon the common ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and the best obtainable system of popular administration and control of each industry or service."—Clause IV, part 4.

You won't get this promise from a Thatcher government, we haven't even seen it from a Labour government, such is its reformist and right-wing nature. Such will be the pattern for a right-wing union leadership. Fair enough, we've made a mistake and "they that don't make mistakes don't make nowt!"

Let's be wiser from our experiences. Let's get to the branch—keep it alive, because it's going to be darned useful in the near future brother.

Holset Engineering - NO to 5%

Eleven hundred AUEW members at the Huddersfield and Halifax factories of Holset Engineering have been locked out since Tuesday 8th August over a wage claim.

This dispute is of vital importance locally, since the company is the first to settle in the new local pay round. Our factory has by tradition been relatively well paid, but in the last four years these gains have been eroded under successive phases of pay restraint.

The AUEW claim was for a 19% pay rise, full sick pay, extra holidays, attendance allowances and a minimum of £9 productivity bonus (we already have one of £7). We felt this claim was entirely justified to bring us back to parity in the district and to catch up with the cost of living.

Management then said that since Volvo, one of their major customers, were insisting on a 10% price reduction,

a large claim could not be conceded, and even that redundancies would be coming. 150 redundancies are in fact already taking place among the staff.

After the government's new guidelines were published, management replied with an offer of 5%, and insisted that anything extra would have to come out of productivity. They wanted to tie the current bonus to a 43-hour week, when we had already been getting it for 37½ hours!

Rejected

We implemented an overtime ban and reduced output by 50%, but negotiations got nowhere. The stewards called a mass meeting to decide on the company's last offer.

Although there was no recommendation the workforce at both factories were almost unanimous in rejecting the offer. That's when we were locked out!

We are now picketing both factories every day to explain our case to the staff, who are still working, and to give information to our members.

I feel that the 5% limit is totally unacceptable. With the coming 12½% increase in bus fares and the price of food etc, the 5% is an insult. Even the TUC has been forced to reject it.

I'm an active Labour Party member, and I want to see the return of a Labour government, but not further drops in working class living standards. What we need is a Labour government elected on socialist policies and not one which implements policies dictated to it by big business.

By Terry Swinbank

(AUEW shop steward Huddersfield plant) in personal capacity.

Sell Militant to your workmates

For details contact: Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

POEU MEMBERS DEMAND NO RETREAT FROM 35!

POEU LEADERS BACK DOWN

(Continued from front page)

action was really beginning to bite. Despite the sacrifices already incurred, the activity was being stepped up by the rank and file. Their willingness to struggle was never in doubt.

But the same cannot be said for the majority on the NEC—they were more concerned about how to diffuse the mounting pressure from below than about carrying out the instructions of the last conference.

Seeing a deal on the way, last week's 'Sunday Times' showed how some officials were more afraid of their own members' action than of the PO and the government: "Norman Howard, assistant general secretary of the POEU, said yesterday, 'we are all optimistic that we will get some settlement out of it and the next problem is how we process it in the union.'"

The NEC were reluctant to enter the fray to start with, and were pushed into the ring by the members. Again it was the members who gave a lead to their leaders when they forced the NEC to restore the overtime ban they'd hastily called off.

The NEC have promised to convene a Special Conference to accept or reject the PO offer already accepted by the NEC itself. Without a doubt the anger of the rank and file—both of the traditionally militant branches and also the formerly 'moderate' branches which have been awakened by action—will be expressed there.

But the union leaders hope that by delaying the Conference for a few weeks, with the overtime ban, work to rule and selective blacking called off, thus wiping out most of the effects of the industrial action so far, the delegates will be demoralised and will be forced to swallow the NEC's fait accompli, however bitter it tastes.

The conference must reverse this decision as it has reversed previous NEC decisions. They have been forced to fight before, they can be forced to fight again.

Branches must demand that the Conference be held immediately and that the overtime ban and work to rule be kept on in the meantime. Already several branch meetings are being called throughout the country to keep up the action on a local basis. The NEC must ensure that the PO makes no attempts at victimisation of union members.

Having been mobilised only to be demobilised with victory in sight the ranks will now be looking for a new leadership. The demand must be raised for election of union officials subject to immediate right of recall by those who elected them, and to receive no more than a qualified engineer's wage.

The right-wing 'bloc' who control the NEC have proved themselves incapable of giving any fighting, national leadership whatsoever. Now the responsibility falls on the left wing of the union to offer itself to the members as an alternative leadership.

An open, democratic left wing must now be organised to prevent demoralisation over this climb down by channelling the anger and militancy of branch activists into a positive campaign to revitalise the union.

Along with a programme of democratising the union the left must also work out an industrial and political programme to defend the living standards and working conditions of the members, including a 35-hour week, no loss of jobs, a wage rise to combat the effects of inflation and for the Post Office to be run under workers' control and management.

Only by fighting under a democratic, fighting leadership for such a socialist programme, and by winning the support of other workers through their trade unions and the Labour Party, will the Post Office engineers protect their livelihood from attack.

Kevin Pattison

(Secretary, Leeds Internal Branch, POEU)

40 HRS., 38 HRS., 37 1/2 HRS., NO
35 HRS. YES!
POEU



London members remind the NEC of what it's all about

photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

WILLING TO FIGHT

STOP PRESS: Most of the following reports were sent to 'Militant' before the news that the NEC had accepted the Post Office's offer. However, they leave no doubt as to the determined mood of POEU members throughout the country.

The willingness of the rank and file of the POEU to put up a fight for their claim of a 35-hour week—providing they have a fighting leadership to match their determination—was shown at the last meeting of Southampton Internal Branch, held after the NEC called off the overtime ban and before its subsequent reintroduction

under pressure from the membership. 120 members attended and two resolutions were discussed.

One censuring the NEC was passed almost unanimously. But it was narrowly decided not to institute a local overtime ban, although the branch did call for "an immediate NATIONAL escalation of new and serious industrial action."

After the meeting some of the members made their comments. *Stuart Murry* and *Mike Entwistle* normally work continuous shifts in the main sorting office: they've lost a lot of money through the overtime ban and voted against a local ban. But as Stuart said: "If a lead had

come from the NEC for a national ban and work to rule, we would have had no qualms about going on.

"We were prepared to go on with this for months if necessary. If the Post Office management had written this letter for the NEC, they couldn't have done better. The ban would never have been called off here if the NEC hadn't made such a mess of it."

Mike explained how they had both not been active in the union before. "In the past we had always got what we wanted, now it seems different. I thought the meeting tonight was good. We need to be more active in the union."

Bernie Thornton, the branch organiser, was furious at the NEC. "Support for and carrying out the overtime ban in Southampton has been total. Indeed union membership during the dispute had increased.

"In our branch, only three members had resigned in protest at the action, but fifteen new members have been recruited. The action was beginning to have an impact here.

"But now people will be demoralised by the NEC action. How can you have a work to rule and then be working overtime? One works against the other. But I don't believe that we should settle for anything less than the 35 hours.

"This dispute has shown that our union is a force to be reckoned with, in spite of the leadership. We want to see a more determined attitude from the NEC. The branches must exert pressure to try and bring this about."

Bob Mann
(Assistant Secretary,
Midland Regional
Council, POEU)

Nick Brooks
(Southampton
Labour Party)

Birmingham External to keep the overtime ban

In Birmingham the mood is very strongly in favour of the 35-hour week. The overtime ban has been successful. In fact, we have gone further than just blacking new equipment, we have blacked all marketing trials of the new View Data.

National instructions were to do all the work on it, then black it when it goes into service—but we have put a black on it from the beginning. On our side—the External—we have blacked 180 jobs so far, and each job represents 100 subscribers.

The objective of the 35-hour week is work-sharing.

The annual conference has been firm for seven years over the need for a shorter working week. It's essential.

The introduction of System X by 1981/82 will cut the workforce from 120,000 to 80,000 after five years. The membership is beginning to see that something has got to be done when under the present productivity deal they have gained £1.23 a week, but 2,000 jobs have been lost in 12 months through natural wastage.

35 hours is just the first step towards maintaining the workforce, although it is not really enough to fully achieve this, we need to go further in reducing hours. 35 is such a

small step, it could be covered easily by the existing workforce doing extra overtime. So our branch has decided at the special meetings we held last month, when up to 200 members turned up, to retain the overtime ban after the present dispute finishes.

Jobs lost

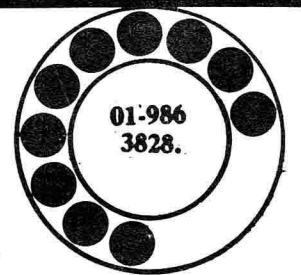
We also want to make sure that from now on every vacancy is filled. We have tried locally to get a manpower review with the General Manager, so that all wastage is replaced.

So far we have been completely unsuccessful. He

still complains that our productivity is unsatisfactory and wants it increased by 25-30%. But the number of workers in External has fallen from 1,400 in 1974 to 1,180 today.

We decided to go for the 35 hours and a four-day week. The real way to retain or increase the workforce is by reducing the number of days as well as hours.

I think the action we are taking marks a real step forward for the POEU. The only thing is we are starting it seven years too late!



**SPREAD
THE NEWS!**

LIVERPOOL

35 members have been suspended to date. On Friday Liverpool Internal Branch called a lightning strike and another five branches followed enthusiastically. But members of the Liverpool External Branch are dissatisfied with the lack of action from their 'moderate' leaders and over 100 have signed a petition for the recall of their AGM to elect new officers.

NEWCASTLE

28 exchanges are now closed in the area, with 11,000 new subscribers being held up. Although there are now 3,000 faults a day, no engineers have yet been suspended. Other good news is that 40 engineers who joined the right wing break-away union, EOTA, have been won back into the POEU.

STOP PRESS... On Monday management suspended an engineer. The union's response was militant and immediate—a two day strike was called. The strike was 100% solid with pickets out at every depot and exchange.

GLASGOW

The members there are chipping in £1 a week levy

LEEDS

A mass meeting of over 900 members, covering four branches, has carried a vote of no confidence in the union's National Executive for its attempt to back down in the fight.

BOURNEMOUTH

Out of a mass meeting of 400 members, only 8 voted to call off the overtime ban.

LONDON

The second largest POEU branch in the country, London North Central Internal, with 2,447 members, last Thursday voted unanimously to reject the proposals of the McCarthy Report as being totally unacceptable and contrary to the union's policy as democratically decided by National Conference.

★ ★ ★

Post Office H.Q. communications blacked.
Communications for new IBM building blacked.
Stock Exchange blacked!
Big business are starting to lose millions of pounds as a result of this action. The bankers and tycoons of the City are complaining that millions of pounds worth of business is being lost to other countries. If the engineers are so necessary and their contribution is so important—grant their claim now!

SAVE WESTERNS

- ACTION COMMITTEE DEMAND

NATIONALISATION

"I've never felt more confident." "That march was the best thing ever happened to me."

These are two typical remarks from the pickets at Western Shiprepairers, Birkenhead, who are determined to get the yard nationalised to save 650 jobs. New faces are appearing on the picket since the successful march through Birkenhead on 5th August.

The Westerns Action Committee have made plans to reach other workers in this battle against the bosses' attempt to attack jobs and conditions.

The first step taken was a public meeting organised by Birkenhead LPYS and the Action Committee, on 10th August.

Five people applied to join the Labour Party at that meeting. A motion was passed calling for blacking of the

privately owned Lairds Group ship repair work. It is up to shop stewards and trade unionists in other yards to implement this in solidarity with Westerns.

This was one proposal taken up at a meeting of the North West Regional Committee of the GMWU with Merseyside MPs, which Westerns workers were invited to on 11th. David Basnett is being contacted about calling for nationalisation, and to push an emergency resolution at TUC conference. Every GMWU branch must push such a stand, by resolutions and letters to their regional and national leadership. The same fight must be taken up in other unions, e.g. TGWU, ASOB, EETPU, AUEW,

UCATT etc. The Confed. unions have a particular responsibility to take this up.

The Action Committee are writing to the unions in other shipyards throughout Britain to explain that they have no intention of transferring redundancies to other regions. Instead, with 85,000 jobs facing 'rationalisation' in shipbuilding, the trade unions involved must look at schemes of alternative work, in order to plan the sharing out of work.

In the Labour Parties throughout the country, emergency resolutions on nationalisation of Westerns should be sent to Labour Party Conference, as well as to the LP NEC and your MP. This is the call of a letter going out jointly from Westerns Action Committee and Liverpool District Labour Party to Constituency Labour Parties throughout the country.

Letters calling for a public

stand against the closure and for nationalisation under workers' control should be sent with haste to all trade union leaders and trade union sponsored MPs.

Delegations of shop stewards and workers should be sent from every workplace—especially around Merseyside—to the public rally on Westerns in Transport House Birkenhead on 31st August at 7.30 pm.

Make this into a national fight by workers against redundancies. Make sure the Labour government and the TUC support the working class that they represent, and don't bow to the dictates of the Tories and their friends in the boardrooms of big business.

Rush cash and messages of support (with details of what you are doing in your trade union or Labour Party) to:

Westerns Action Committee, c/o 29 Gaywood Close, Ford Estate, Birkenhead.

Report by Richard Venton
(Birkenhead LPYS)

NATIONALISE CHRYSLER

Continued from front page
experience of Chrysler the Labour government and the TUC must say "keep these people out". The labour movement must act now to stop this deal. The substitution of one group of profiteers

for another is no solution for Chrysler workers. **What is needed now is the nationalisation of Chrysler as the first step in the complete nationalisation of the British car industry under workers' control and management.**

ACT- TO SAVE CAR JOBS

By Tom Smith
British Leyland Special Products Combine Committee Chairman
(Personal Capacity)

Chrysler's sudden European collapse and their private negotiations with Peugeot/Citroen—which the government claims to have heard about only at a very late stage—makes a mockery of planning agreements. This, the only such agreement signed under the Labour government, might just as well be thrown into the dustbin.

Eric Varley, Secretary of State for Industry, has admitted that at least £51 millions of government cash paid out to keep Chrysler UK going can never be recovered. Another £65 million is "technically recoverable" i.e. equally unrecoverable.

It is time that the Labour government stopped handing out "unrecoverable" cash to bankrupt, so-called "private enterprise" and drew realistic, socialist conclusions from the crisis-ridden state of the world's car industry.

Chrysler shop stewards are seeking urgent talks because quite correctly they see the threat of "rationalisation" hanging over their members' jobs.

In a new Chrysler/Peugeot/

Citroen combine the question of "rationalisation" would be posed. There would be a vast conflicting of cars and components. About 14 different engines are used in the group, whilst Ford use only 4. There are too many conflicting models.

The investment and efficiency push by Ford and Renault after the 1974/5 downturn drove British Leyland and Chrysler back against the wall. With the prospect of another downturn in world trade in the next year or so, Peugeot will undoubtedly approach a merger with a ruthless eye to their future profits.

The handover of Chrysler UK to Peugeot will in no way guarantee thousands of jobs at Stoke. After all, Chrysler bought out Rootes in 1972 with grand intentions of sweeping through Europe. Now they are crippled. No car worker should have any confidence in the proposed deal with Peugeot. The Labour government must oppose this merger and put forward a socialist alternative.

- ★ Oppose the merger
- ★ Nationalise the big four with minimum compensation on the basis of need
- ★ No redundancies
- ★ For a planned socialist transport system linked to a planned economy under workers' control and management

HEATHROW ENGINEERS STRIKE

By Dave Bayle
(AUEW, Heathrow airport)

At a mass meeting last Monday, Heathrow airport engineering and maintenance workers overwhelmingly passed a resolution calling for a twenty-four hour strike.

Workers who service and maintain the huge, wide bodied jets like the Jumbo are at present expected to cope with the increased workload without any extra manning. We are demanding cash payments for this extra 'productivity'.

British Airways have stated that they are willing to pay £3.88 extra for lower paid and £6.42 for tradesmen. But after a meeting, Junior Minister Clinton Davies announced

that the same 'anomalies' existed in other industries and no exception was to be made for BA workers.

This is despite workers at the privately owned British Caledonian airline winning a payment for work on the wide-bodied jets during the period of government wage restrictions. At British Caledonian, all the million and one extra payments have also been consolidated into the basic under the pay policy; something else that British Airways say is 'not possible'.

British Airways workers feel that they are bearing the full brunt of government policy as well as pigheaded management, because they work for the state airline. After years of wage restraint, pay is well below the level in other airlines.

Under Heath's rule, some of British Airways' best routes were hived off to British Caledonian, in another Tory asset-stripping exercise to cream the profitable sections of nationalised industries off to private hands. The Labour

government promised to return those routes, but they still haven't. With the money being steadily transferred to shareholders' pockets, BA try to tell us 'the country can't afford' to meet our demands. No wonder!

There is a growing mood of anger. Other BA workers, whose pay is also generally lower than in private airlines, are sympathetic. This strike will stop planes for one day. But it is a warning shot. Unless management and government stop hiding behind one another's skirts and recognise our justifiable grievances, the fight won't be over!

FIGHT WIGFALLS CLOSURES

The Sheffield based electrical company, Wigfalls, is attempting to close two of their service departments in the Midlands.

Stafford and Lichfield are the targets, and 8 out of 10 staff are threatened with redundancy! It seems ironical

that this blow should occur when Wigfalls is announcing higher than expected profits. The proposals, if imple-

mented, would have a bad effect on the service to customers and the savings would be nominal.

All the indicators point to success for Wigfalls in this area if they would open a shop in Stoke-on-Trent. But in their lust for profits this is ignored as an alternative to closing the depots and losing jobs.

The union must say no to these proposals and defend

the workers. At the moment, the facts are known only to the engineers involved. The full shop stewards' committee should meet to discuss the issue and then report back to their members. If the case is put fairly and squarely, support would be given to the threatened engineers, and this way the union would be in a stronger situation to meet the company.

By Judy Kenny (Shop Steward, Stafford Service)

Militant

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