

Militant

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15p

ANGER OF LOW PAID



In the most impressive display of trade union solidarity ever mounted by public sector manual workers, at least 80,000 demonstrators marched through the streets of London on Monday 22nd January.

They were enthusiastically playing their part in the one-day strike and lobby of Parliament called jointly by the public sector unions, NUPE, COHSE, the T&GWU and the G&M-WU, as the opening shot in the fight for £60 and a 35-hour week.

Shoulder to shoulder, despite bitterly cold weather, nurses, ambulance drivers, hospital porters, gardeners, gravediggers, school dinner ladies, cleaners, care-takers, all marched together with legions of other workers from the local authorities, universities, National Health

Brian Ingham

Service and water authorities. Meanwhile, throughout the country an estimated million public sector workers took some form of strike action. According to NUPE, 80% of the workers concerned supported the call, and most of the remainder had special dispensation from their union.

Many were on strike for the first time. A few weeks ago, quite a few were not even in a union.

80,000 ON THE MARCH

BIGGEST STRIKE SINCE 1926

Now they were together, realising the potential muscle they can wield if they stand united. There was an overwhelming mood of determination to win the full claim.

A basic wage of around £42 a week is all that most of these workers receive. For anything like a decent wage, the majority have to work long hours of overtime. For the thousands of part-time workers, the situa-

tion is even worse.

Enough is enough! That was the mood of the march in London. It was echoed in local demonstrations through Glasgow, Belfast, Liverpool and other major cities.

A television broadcast on Monday night all but explicitly accused ambulance drivers of being responsible for casualty deaths! But this despic-

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£60 MINIMUM & 35hr WEEK

inside...



**DON'T BE
TAKEN IN
BY THE
BOSSES PRESS**
centre page feature

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DUNLOPS-SPEKE ... FIGHT NEW JOBS THREAT

Richard Knights asked Eddie Loyden, Labour MP for Garston, about his reaction to Dunlop's threat.

In an area already devastated by unemployment, workers at Dunlops, Speke, learnt that they were threatened with the sack. In Speke itself, where most of the workforce live, it is estimated that one in four are now on social security. Now, another 2,500 jobs are to be axed.

Militant: What was your reaction when you heard of the announcement of the closure of Dunlops?

Eddie Loyden: Obviously one of shock—in line with a number of shocks that have reverberated around Merseyside recently with all the closures and redundancies. Whilst there was an intimation by Dunlops that they were cutting back on the workforce, the decision to close came as a shock to the workers—and came as a shock to me.

Militant: How do you think the Dunlop workers can fight back?

EL: I think the workers will have learned the experience of the Leyland closure in Speke. Resistance will not be successful unless early steps are taken to occupy the factory.

I believe that it is essential that close and speedy links are formed with the labour and trade union movement in the area. It is essential

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FASCIST SILENCED

By Rod Fitch
(Convenor,
Brighton and
Hove Anti-Fascist
Committee,
Brighton
Kempton
Labour Party)

Within an hour of learning that Giorgio Almirante was to be speaking locally at a meeting organised by the European Movement, the Brighton and Hove Anti-Fascist Committee had mustered a 50-strong group to provide a suitable reception for this notorious fascist.

Almirante is the leader of Italy's neo-fascist MSI, the direct descendant of Mussolini's Fascist Party. This character was Mussolini's wartime public-relations officer, and also took part in the right-wing government following his downfall, which concentrated on destroying the influence of the anti-Fascist partisans.

Our Committee organised a very, strong picket and brought the meeting to a swift end. Almirante's anti-Communist speech had little to do with 'Europeanism', and was interrupted by the shouts of "fascist", the singing of the Internationale in Italian, and

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WE WANT A LIVING WAGE

"What's 5%? It's 1½p per hour." This is how Mrs Hobson, a G&MWU member working in a school canteen in Doncaster, summed up why at least 80,000 low-paid public service workers braved the cold in Hyde Park for Monday's highly successful Day of Action.

The dissatisfaction with pay has risen to boiling point: "Our hospitals are Dickensian, so are our wages," read one placard.

Mr Turley, a COHSE branch secretary from Burderop Hospital for the Mentally Handicapped near Swindon, thought the action was not before time:

"A chargehand porter gets less than £40 basic a week, and a porter £35. You have to work on seven days a week to get £50. A lot of people leave. A family man might be better off on the dole, which is a terrible thing to say knowing dole rates."

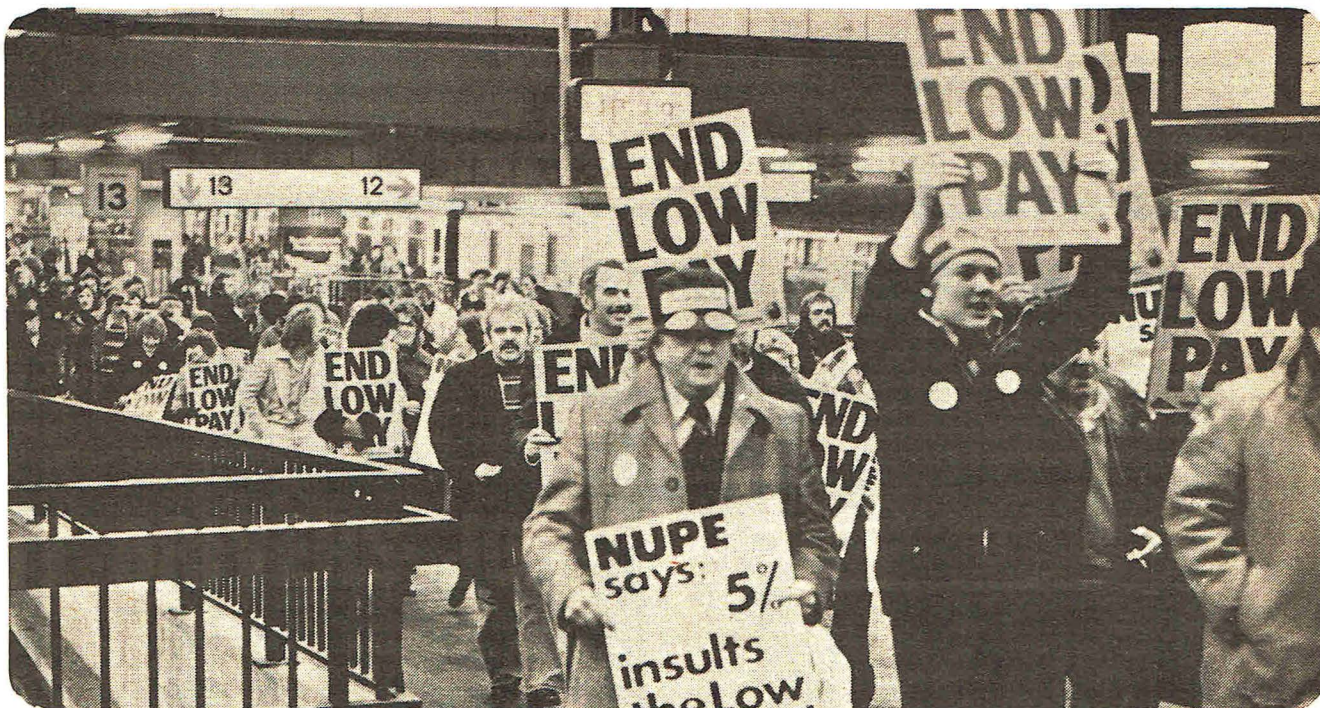
Ambulancemen in particular were angered by the hysterical press campaign against their claim. Robert

Burns, a NUPE member at Slough Ambulance station, pointed out the continuous loss of men due to the wages of £44 after 25 years' service:

"The volunteers for the ambulances are well-meaning, but why don't they give up their well-paid jobs to join us? They don't get volunteers for the sewers which can be just as much a health risk. We will carry on national action until we are successful."

Building workers were also up in arms at their deal which would put up the basic £2 a week plus an extra £1.30 bonus but only the £2 was actually guaranteed.

A West Midlands Regional Council member of UCATT stressed that, with the busting



The low paid came from all over Britain.

Photo: MILITANT

of the 5%, public sector workers were in danger of being left behind: "The press campaign is just to get an election. But we don't want Thatcher. She won't do any better for us, will she?"

Lawrence Coates, a school caretaker in Oadby and Wigston NUPE, said:

"I work two different shifts, 6 to 2 for one week for which I get £40.80 and 2 to 10 the next when I get £1.70 more for unsocial hours! We've had a strike rally in our area of all the unions in the

local authority and the feeling was unanimous for action.

"All the schools in the area are out and the laundries will be out indefinitely as this will cost the authority money. Also six or seven small hospitals may be closed and patients transferred to bigger ones."

"Workers do feel though there is the need for a sense of direction, for strike committees to be formed and so on. Stewards are at the moment constituting themselves as a strike committee, co-ordinating the struggle and getting support of other workers."

COHSE ON THE MOVE

The need for a united struggle involving all members of the health service has been called for by the NEC of COHSE.

In the past COHSE had always attempted to keep ancillary workers and nursing staff out of united action, by planning campaigns involving only nurses or ancillary workers.

Now the lessons of the past have been learnt by the membership. Through the cuts campaigns it was shown that not only unified action within one union pays, but also linking with other unions.

The growth throughout the country of Joint Shops Stewards Committees, shows that rank-and-file members involved in the day-to-day disputes on site recognise the strength

and support of the JSSC.

The significant demonstration which took place on 22nd January illustrated the power behind the united action of the unions involved.

Prior to the demonstration COHSE members throughout the country received guidelines from the General Secretary regarding the action. Unfortunately these guidelines did not give a clear call for strike action, although many branches called their ancillary members out giving emergency cover only.

At the North West Regional Council of COHSE (No. 3 region) held last week an emergency resolution was unanimously carried, calling for the setting up of committees of action made up of shop stewards to co-ordinate future

activity.

The resolution also pointed out the need for future campaigns to be directed to the broad labour movement.

The suggestion that an area Joint Shop Stewards Committee be organised in the Liverpool Health Authority was greeted by the members with enthusiasm.

The NEC have given instructions as to the kind of action approved from 22nd. Guidelines for action by nursing staff have been laid down and it has become clear especially with the threatened strike action from the RCN that a clear policy for industrial action by nurses is needed urgently.

Marie Harrison

(Chairman, Liverpool Central and Southern Branch COHSE, in personal capacity)

STRIKERS DEFY POLICE INTIMIDATION

In Rochdale, the local authority workers' action was hampered by COHSE's decision not to join the one-day strike. But the decision seems to have backfired on COHSE and on the Area Health Authority who have undertaken not to sack workers who lose their union cards by not joining the strike.

NUPE shop steward Mr Ken Riley said: "I have heard of a lot of COHSE members leaving their union to join ours because of the union's refusal to join our strike."

A transport worker, Mr Riley works up to 13 hours a week overtime and still takes home little over £50 a week. His wife earns 40p an hour more producing motor car upholstery.

Mr Calo, an operating theatre admissions assistant, earns a basic £42.92 a week. Trainees are paid only £38 a week. This story was echoed by a road maintenance driver who takes home £43 including bonus for a working week including five hours' overtime. His wife earns more than that in the accounts department of a local factory, but this will end shortly when she gives up work to have a third child. The family is so pressed for money that the man works several nights a week as a taxi driver to make ends meet.

The strike was supported 100% by NUPE, T&GWU, and UCATT workers employed by the local authority. They were picketing at vir-

tually all the authority's premises despite a strong police presence. At the town's hospital the police limited pickets to ten—for all the unions combined.

At one depot numbers were reduced to four and the pickets' placards removed. The strikers were also denied the public meeting outside the town hall.

A NUPE shop steward reported that a top official had said "You are all rotters and involved in a Communist plot! If you don't like your wages, you can leave!"—"yes, with a million on the dole!"

Militant

TORIES FEAR WORKERS POWER

"Now we find that the place is practically being run by strikers committees... They are 'allowing access to food. They are 'allowing' certain lorries to go through." This is Mrs Thatcher shrieking in the House of Commons last week against the lorry drivers.

Echoing the sentiments of the enraged moneybags whom she represents, she went on to declare: "They have no right to prevent them [lorries] from going through."

The Tories and their press have undoubtedly distorted and heaped lie upon lie in their reports on the lorry drivers' strike as the article in our middle pages shows. Thatcher similarly exaggerates when she says that the strike committees are "running Britain."

Nevertheless, the impro-

visation of the strike committees by the lorry drivers and the enormous authority which they have, in the eyes not just of the road haulage workers, but of all trade unionists shows the colossal potential power which the British working class has once it is on the move.

The BBC TV programme 'Nationwide' showed that the government's own Emergency Committees were completely impotent. Those who phoned the regional emergency centres were politely referred to the headquarters of the Transport and General Workers Union!

This shows that the use of troops which the Tories are howling for would have no effect against the magnificent solidarity which the lorry drivers have established.

Dockers and other workers would render any attempt to use troops comp-

letely ineffective.

The features of the lorry drivers' strike which enrage the capitalists and their Tory mouthpieces are a source of strength and encouragement to the working class as a whole.

The idle rich who have never done a day's work in their lives are ranting against lorry drivers and denouncing their very modest demands for a living wage. More than the wage claim even, they have been horrified by the power of the strike committees. The capitalists and their hirelings—managers, supervisors etc—so used to the habit of commanding and ordering have had to go cap in hand to the workers' committees.

It is this which has resulted in the hysteria of the capitalist press and the terrified howls of Thatcher, Joseph, Whitelaw and the rest of the Tory crew. Those who produced the wealth—

the working class—are through the checking and control exercised by the strike committees deciding what will move by road and what will not.

The lorry drivers have shown the power of the working class and also given a glimpse of how society would be organised on the basis of a planned economy. Nothing moves without the permission of the strike committee.

The democratic rights, together with the trade unions and the workers' organisations, are the elements of a new society. It would be through committees of the trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small businessmen that a socialist plan of production would be drawn up and implemented. The lorry drivers' strike is the music of this future society.

UNITED ACTION

Low paid workers in COHSE and NUPE have been expressing their anger at continuing pay restraint in a series of meetings over the last two weeks at St Nicholas Hospital, Gosforth.

Despite a long-standing lack of communication between the two unions, the mood of the members in these meetings (the best attended in recent years) showed no demarcation lines and the over-riding demand was for united action to end low pay.

NUPE members traditionally ancillary staffs (cleaners, porters, cooks etc.) voted by 90 to 11 for a one-day strike on the 22nd with strict sanctions and work-to-rule continuing from that day.

Meanwhile COHSE, the minority union in the ancillary sector, voted full endorsement of its NEC recommendation and to support the other union's action with similar sanctions.

For the nursing sector the

most hard-hitting measure taken as yet is an overtime ban, which on current overtime levels may oblige local management to request ward closures. There may be selective strikes if the action needs to be stepped up.

By far the most important development of recent weeks has been the growing awareness of all workers of the necessity to fight low pay. Not on a phased three-year basis, not when investment in Britain is increased, but now.

Union members are naturally concerned about the effect of action on patients. Not one voice, however, has been raised against the argument that—with low pay, low morale, cuts in services, and the idea in Whitehall that the NHS is a luxury—the patients have suffered too long already. Only action by trade unionists fighting for their jobs and against the cuts can reverse this process.

Chris Edwards (COHSE)

AND A 35HR WEEK NOW!



Marchers leave Hyde Park to lobby Parliament

Photo: MILITANT

SEWAGE WORKERS : NO OTHER COURSE

In Bristol, T&GWU, NUPE, and the G&MWU held a joint meeting to co-ordinate action against low pay. After the meeting, Wayne Jones spoke to Brian Marshall, G&MWU shop steward NO. 5 Branch, a sewage worker in the City Engineer's Department:

The lowest paid is a yardman. He takes home £34-£38 for a 40-hour week. This includes bonus. There is never any opportunity of overtime.

The highest paid employee—and I'm one of them—takes home £44-£46. Five per cent would mean 60p for the lowest paid and £3.25 for the highest.

Underground

My job entails cleaning out streams, drains and even the River Frome, which runs underneath Bristol, to ensure a regular flow of water. It involves working in a 'barrel' 2½ feet high, kneeling down and pushing the blockage (excrement, urine, rats, etc.) between my legs to clear it.

It means wading through water up to breast high in dark underground passages. I've been in sewers 280 feet underground. No extra money for it. I work in gas with breathing apparatus.

When benches or shafts are dug, I make them safe by "timbering". I tunnel beneath roads and carry out sheet piling to prevent flooding.

I check ditches, loose scaffolding or roadside lamps that have been blown over, or anything that is liable to be dangerous to the public.

Every third week I'm "on call" i.e. four hours Saturday four hours Sunday. I'm also on emergency service, including clearing snow.

We don't stop for rain or bad weather. When clearing blockages at streams, we have to clear the obstruction as soon as possible to avoid flooding.

If I'm called out at night, and this could be all night, no food or drink is provided. For any of this work I get no travelling expenses if I'm based at the yard.

Our claim is entirely justified. Our wages are not good enough. We feel strongly about this and intend to do something about it. I fully support strike action...There is no other course left to take.

5%

As a Labour Party member, I'm disappointed with the Labour government. We're held to 5% but there is no restraint on the shareholders of the big companies. They avoid tax, make fat

profits and we haven't even got a living wage. And what about the rises awarded to the heads of nationalised industries, judges and army chiefs? It's all wrong!

We hear a lot of noise about workers striking, but nothing about the investment strike by big business. You don't see that in the papers!

Labour Party

The government should carry out the decisions of Labour Party Conference. The Labour government must break the blackmail of big business by taking it over under workers' control and management. They must carry out socialist policies in order to release the wealth, boost production and thus pay decent wages to all. It's the only way.

I also think the Labour government must democratise the armed forces so they won't be used against the working class. This is essential in my opinion.

Newsham, Liverpool

Domestic staff from Newsham Hospital, Liverpool, on their way from Euston to Hyde Park, were verbally attacked by a City gent. Needless to say, they laid into him: "Bastards like you have never done a real day's work in your

life. We may not have university degrees, but we work bloody hard for the money we get. See how you'd like a 40p increase in your wages!" This was not all they said, either, but the rest was unfortunately unprintable.

MISERABLE WAGES

This was the view on Monday of the ladies who came to London from Whitley depot, Coventry, which is the hospital laundry for Coventry, Rugby and Nuneaton.

Angry at conditions under which they are forced to work, one lady told us what she got paid in a normal

week: a miserable £35.72 for 40 hours, with a flat rate supplement of £7 and a bonus that is purely at management's discretion.

Many women work 10 or 11 hours overtime a week to maintain families where both parents must go out to work.

But the management will

not only hold down wages but also cut staff levels and increase output. On a shift where 36 women had been employed, only 10 are now doing the same work!



BLACKPOOL: SOLID STRIKE

The mood of the Blackpool NUPE workers is one of solidarity—and disgust.

They are 100% solid in their will to win this dispute, and very disappointed in the Labour Government's effort to try and buy them off with £3.50 per week.

As one worker put it: "What's the good of £3.50 a week before stoppages, I'll still be earning less than fifty quid a week and I've got to keep a wife and two kids on that." Only two workers were working on the 22nd: the keepers at Blackpool Zoo, and they are donating their day's wages to the strike fund, of course.

The workers manning the sea-front pumping station are being called out and if Blackpool gets a high tide it may well be flooded.

Neil Brooks talked to Neil Tricket (NUPE shop steward, Blackpool)

LONDON 'MILITANT' PUBLIC MEETING

'The Iranian Revolution' Hear: Ted Grant [Militant Editorial Board] and a speaker from 'Campaign Against Repression in Iran. Friday 23 February 7.30pm Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, WC1 [near Holborn Tube]. Iranian students and workers especially welcome.

Picketing power terrifies bosses

"The nation demands better protection from its government...this requires readiness to use troops and, if necessary, volunteers to keep industry and essential services supplied. Later, the law on picketing must be precisely defined so the police can corral the bullies and keep factory gates open."

This quote from a national daily paper is typical of the Tory press's strident demands for action to fetter the trade unions. Faced with the organised power of the workers in the lorry drivers' strike, big business is once again calling for the removal of rights won by the labour movement in the past.

Margaret Thatcher, egged on by the CBI leaders, has made it clear that a Tory government would attempt to implement new anti-union laws.

Incensed by the lorry drivers' extremely effective picketing, the press and television has concentrated its attack on so-called "secondary" picketing.

From long and bitter experience workers see the need to picket places not formally involved in the dispute. The outstanding recent example was the miners' flying pickets on the power stations and coal depots in 1972. Lorry drivers' stewards undoubtedly learnt from the weakness of the bakery workers' strike, and were determined to prevent the road hauliers undermining this strike by using alternative carriers.



"The picket line is the front line"

Grunwicks 1976

The bosses want measures against these tactics precisely because they want to make picketing ineffective. When it comes to a real battle, the capitalists are against any trade union right that can be used against them to good effect.

The Tories and the CBI have said that they would strike at the closed shop and cut off social security from strikers' families.

The growth in the size and strength of the unions, and the power that strategically placed groups of workers now have to paralyse the economy, have inevitably brought calls from the bosses for the balance of power to be tipped back in their direction.

While denouncing the "monopoly power" of the

Andy Beadle

unions and stigmatising union activists as "bullies", the press is silent about the methods always ruthlessly used by the employers. It is quite in order, of course, for them to operate blacklists, to give one another financial backing against strikes, to organise blacklegs, and to call on the police—and ultimately the army—to break through picket lines.

The Tories, moreover, are always ranting about the "privileged" position of unions, and especially pickets, under the law, particularly since the Labour government's legislation repealing the Tories' Industrial Relations Act.

But pickets outside Grunwicks or outside Garners and many another establishment might wonder of what this "privilege" consists. Although the labour movement has over the years compelled the state to recognise the right to picket, the law is still stacked against pickets.

Increasingly, the police have exercised the arbitrary power to limit the number of pickets at any one time. By narrowly defining "obstruction", the police have on countless occasions arrested pickets for doing nothing more than picket.

In aggressively trying to clear a path for blacklegs and blacked supplies, the police (especially units like the Special Patrol Group) go in with the pre-meditated aim of

arresting as many people as they can grab for "obstruction", "assault" or whatever other charges they can trump up.

When it comes to the crunch, the right to picket depends not on legal "privileges", but on the strength of the workers concerned, and ultimately the power of the labour movement as a whole.

When he came to office in 1970, Ted Heath proclaimed that he was going to curb trade union power with new legislation. But putting his Industrial Relations Act onto the Statute Book far from achieved the Tories' aims.

Defying the Tory government with magnificent solidarity, the miners, the dockers and other sections completely frustrated the working of the

IRA and the Industrial Relations Court set up to police it.

When the Court imprisoned five dock stewards for refusing to call off blacking, it came within inches of provoking the first general strike since 1926—and had to capitulate to the labour movement.

If a Thatcher government repeats the attempt to place legal fetters on the unions, it will be met with the same mass resistance, if anything even more powerful and determined.

Nevertheless such a threat should not be viewed with complacency. Anti-trade union laws, while they would not fundamentally undermine the strength of the workers' organisations, would certainly be an unwanted problem.

In the hands of a Tory government determined to hammer the working class, such laws could hold back the organisation of weaker sections of workers, and in the short run seriously hit relatively weak and isolated strikers.

It is particularly scandalous that some right-wing members of the Labour government—which rightly repealed the IRA and enhanced certain rights in its Trade Union and Labour Relations Act (1974)—should now be echoing Tory attacks on long-established trade union rights.

The Tories will undoubtedly attempt, one way or another, to undermine democratic trade union rights, which are the essential basis of all other democratic rights for the working class, in order to be able further to drive down living standards in the interests of the bosses' profits.

Any such attack must be resisted with all the power of the labour movement.

PUBLIC EXPENDITURE WHITE PAPER

More cuts on the way?

STOP CUTS IN THE SOCIAL WAGE

CUTS CAUSE CASUALTIES

CUT ARMS not education!

The Labour government promised that the years of the 'social contract' would be worthwhile because schools, hospitals and all the social services would be safeguarded. The "social wage" would provide support for workers who were facing a freeze in their wage packets. The effects of the world capitalist crisis could be moderated and deflected by co-operation between the trade unions and the Labour government.

Unfortunately reality has been somewhat different. The last few years have seen disastrous cutbacks in all the social provisions. This has not been to help the workers, but to help maintain the capitalist system.

1979 has been proclaimed by Jim Callaghan as the 'year of advance'. He has declared that the government would put more money into helping those in need.

Again, reality tells a different story. The logic of capitalism cannot allow a major improvement in living standards.

Last week saw the pub-

lication of the government's plans for public expenditure for the next two years. In this the government reveals its analysis of the economy. It estimates that there will be a 1½% cut in real earnings this year (April 1978 to March 1979) and a further 1½% cut April 1979 to March 1980.

It gives three possible developments for the economy. The most optimistic forecast is one of 3% growth. Few people would take this as having much touch with reality.

Yet 1979/80 is when North Sea oil is meant to be bringing almost maximum help to the British economy. It is a desperate position for British capitalism. Last year the White Paper described their target of 3½% growth as "disappointing". This year even their hopes have shrunk.

The consequences for

workers are tragic. The White Paper announces that there will be cutbacks in school and hospital building. Capital spending on schools is down from £320 million to £301 million; on hospitals and community health services it is cut by £17 million.

There will be some increases. An extra 8.7% in provisions for law and order and 3% for defence. Britain's net contribution to the EEC will grow from £790 million to £895 million in 1980.

The future stagnation as far as essential services are concerned takes place against a background of the cutbacks of the past few years. One measure the government has introduced to police these cutbacks has been a cash limit to local authorities. Yet these cash limits have resulted in even more stringent cuts than the government en-

visaged.

In the current year there will be underspending by government departments to the tune of £2,000 million. The same is forecast for next year. Housing will be under-spent by £410 million this year, at a time of chronic homelessness. The National Union of Teachers estimate that the last three years have seen £314 million under-spending on education.

It is therefore not surprising that the public sector unions have reacted strongly to the government's proposals. Ten unions have called for the abolition of cash limits. In a pamphlet entitled 'Behind Closed Doors' they have also criticised the whole procedure by which the government draws up its public spending.

The government's plans are drawn up in total secrecy with no public discussion. The

White Paper presented to Parliament cannot be properly amended. Even when the White Papers were rejected in 1976 and 1977, they were still implemented by the government obtaining a vote of confidence. The unions have called for the publication of planning papers, negotiations with public service unions and Parliamentary debate at all the stages.

Launching the booklet, Alan Fisher, NUPE General Secretary, pointed out that the lunacy of the present policy with half-built hospitals and bridges without connecting roads. The current White Paper just continues this madness. It is a strange way to "advance" into 1979.

Peter Jarvis

LEFT & RIGHT

CHERISHING THE FREEDOM OF UNEMPLOYMENT

In the thirties, governments in Britain used to expend a lot of energy exhorting the millions of unemployed to better themselves by emigrating to countries like Australia. A big country, with no shortage of work, was the propaganda dished out. Even then it was pretty utopian. A similar suggestion now would be beyond a joke. A leading Australian economist fears that unemployment there could reach 14% by 1985. The Home Affairs Minister, not wanting to spend too much money on supporting the victims of capitalist crisis, has suggested a means test for the dole to prevent money going to the offspring of 'affluent parents'. The Minister for Unemployment wants unemployed youth to do welfare and community work at basic dole rates.

One politician is less optimistic even than this. He talks of unemployment being a permanent reality, and recommends a 'change in ideology' for Australians. Instead of the 'Puritan' work ethic, they should value leisure and the freedom of unemployment. He cites the young school leavers who have no chance of getting a job and the men in their 50s who have given up expecting work again as a positive development. 'Going Bush' as he put it, was a good response.

A chance for workers to laze on the beaches in the Australian summertime may be one thing, and workers in both Britain and Australia have no wish to spend all their weeks working. But the 'change in ideology' the Australian workers will take up if unemployment carries on rising is one to socialism. That way it will be possible to greatly increase leisure for all without the grinding poverty capitalism has in store for the future unemployed.

PLUGGING THE LEAKS IN YUGOSLAVIA

At certain times, the bureaucracy who control, and cream off the wealth from the Stalinist economies of Russia and Eastern Europe are forced to put a stop to the worst excesses of waste and greed by fellow members of the elite. A curb on the power of these officials is needed, either for economic reasons, or to prevent an eruption of anger from the working class.

In Yugoslavia at the present time, the Communist paper 'Borba' has demanded that high-ranking and high-living officials should be brought to account for what they spend on themselves, their friends and relatives from the public purse. Perks, which can include dining out in an exclusive restaurant at a cost three times that of the average workers' monthly salary, are causing alarm. These "representational expenses" rose according to official figures by an enormous 133% in the first half of 1978. [The official inflation rate is 12%].

Members of the Yugoslav parliament, themselves very comfortably treated, complained that while lack of facilities forces some schools to work in shifts, the country was one of the main European importers of Mercedes and other expensive cars for both the public and private use of the bureaucracy. Government-sponsored festivities at the New Year were charging between £25 and £50 a head for the evening before drinks and lodging costs, and this was obviously no problem financially for these officials. The top layers of the 'Communist' Party may be able to plug some of the leaks and some of the most noticeable abuses, but it will as always be a task for the workers of Yugoslavia to really finish such privilege when they take up the fight to gain political control from the corrupt caste of bureaucrats.

SPECIAL BRANCH

Spying on the schools

Reports of attacks on left wing teachers, and clear signs of involvement of the Special Branch in schools are highlighted in the new issue of 'Socialism and Education', the journal of the Socialist Education Association.

These revelations should be taken seriously by every teacher, lecturer and student politically active, member of the Labour Party or trade union activist.

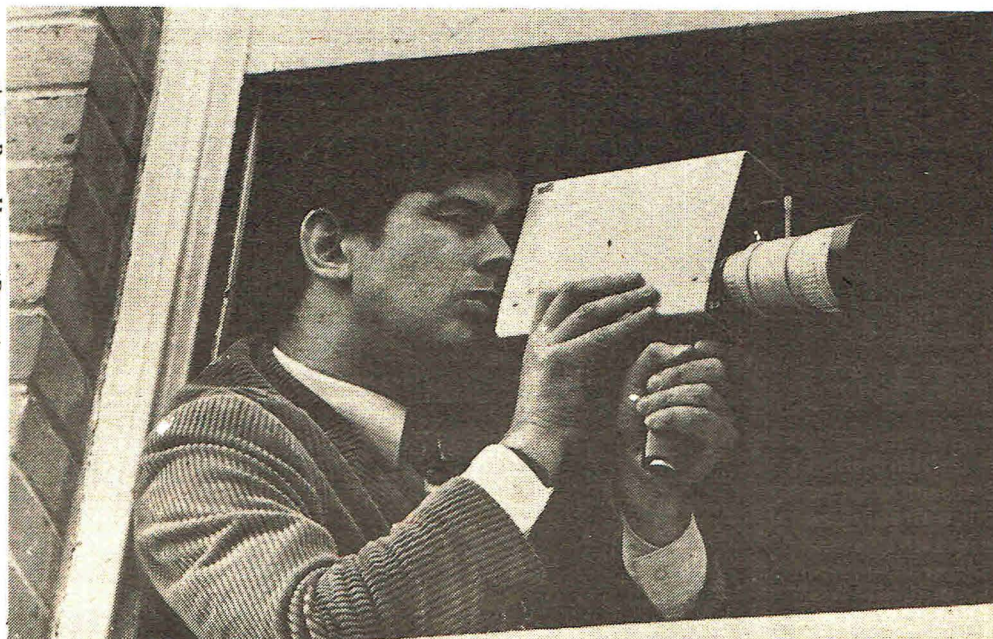
In Autumn 1977, a WEA course in South Wales on 'Great Marxist Writers' was visited by Special Branch Officers. When Neil Kinnock MP raised this with the Home Office, he was told that the course could "attract extremist elements in the same way as a course on...the National Socialist movement..."

In Higher Education as well, the left has been attacked at the Open University, when the whole University was accused of "Marxist bias", and at North London Poly when members of the Sociology staff were accused of running a sociology degree with "Marxist bias".

However, a number of new cases have come to light, which indicate an organised Special Branch intervention in colleges and schools. There are numerous examples of harassment of overseas students; with some being imprisoned in their own countries for activities which were completely legal in Britain.

There is also evidence of college authorities—perhaps unwittingly—providing information to help the secret police of other countries. For example, lists of Iranian students were compiled by some universities.

The report also shows up the use by the Special Branch of paid informers in the



Police photographer spies on student occupation in Colchester

colleges. 'Militant' revealed last year how the Special Branch had tried to recruit Robert McNeil at Paisley College.

The case has also come to light in Kent, of a headmaster reporting, apparently to Kent County Council, on the activities of two teachers who were both members of the Labour Party. Neither was very active in the Party, one even supported the right-wing 'Manifesto Group'. So just being a member of the Labour Party was enough to be under surveillance.

There is also the question of arbitrary attacks on teachers by school authorities.

The SEA outline a case in which a teacher with a good professional record, was attacked for not attending the religious part of the morning assembly, which is every teacher's right.

He was questioned about whether the school children should attend a royal oc-

casation, and then asked to 'curtail' a project on racial harmony. He was asked to sign a list of undertakings, one of which was not to communicate with parents except through the head, which he refused to do.

It is unlikely that the attacks on this teacher were unconnected with his activities as the NUT representative, during the sanctions they applied last year, as this was when the attacks on him took place.

Victimised

This is one case that has come into the open. How many more teachers have been driven out of education by intolerance and this new form of tyranny in schools?

These revelations must be of concern to every teacher active in the trade union and labour movement. The NUT and the Labour Party must take up the demand that the

Labour government disband the Special Branch and other types of secret police.

In November the Labour Party NEC agreed to organise an enquiry into the accountability of the special police and intelligence services. That opportunity must be used to press for their abolition.

The coming year will see the NUT moving into more activity. Already in Liverpool, there has been a half day strike against the Tory council's plans for education. The NUT are also pushing for a pay rise which could end up in a confrontation with the government.

NUT members must be especially vigilant to ensure that militant trade unionists are not victimised or attacked because of their political activities.

By Peter Lush
(Vauxhall LPYS)

Public Lending Right just a diversion

When the government pleads of difficulties in finding time for such legislation as a Freedom of Information Act it comes as a surprise to find it giving time for a Bill to introduce a Public Lending Right.

The Bill proposes to establish a central funding of £2 million to be distributed to authors in proportion to their showing in a sample of loans from public libraries.

The basic argument for PLR is that a book is a piece of literary copyright, for which the author is not compensated when the book is borrowed from a library. Authors have made much of the financial worries of writing and are obviously hoping for considerable financial rewards through PLR as this will provide 'compensation' for the library loans. It's true that many writers are not well paid for their work.

The average first novel sells only 1,000 copies, so with author's royalties at 10% of cover price the income would be £400 or less. But would PLR help the authors? It seems very unlikely: on the basis of the £2 million fund proposed the average author would receive only £12 a year!

Even if the fund were increased substantially, as some authors' groups have suggested, it obviously would not make much difference to the average authors' income.

More sickening is the argument that PLR would benefit literature by providing financial support for new writers. Not surprisingly, those who would benefit most would be those writers most popular with public library users—such as Cather, Cookson, Alistair Maclean or Frederick Forsyth—and these are already rich enough through their writing. Good entertainers they may be, but hardly literature and certainly not impoverished!

Publishers

Since the publishers effectively act as the employers it is surely to them that claims for better remuneration should be directed. Instead, publishers are in favour of PLR—it directs attention from their failure to pay adequately.

Generally speaking, the publishers are in a good position to pay more to authors. For example, the top seven technical publishers, who are in a near-monopoly position, increased profits by

50% over the last year. A glance through the publishing trade journal, the 'Bookseller' will reveal many other examples of publishers' increased profits.

Many publishing houses are part of larger conglomerates—Heinemann is part of the Thomas Tilling holding company and Methuen is part of ABP. The top twenty publishers accounted for 51% of the 1977 publishers' turnover of £470 million.

Set that against the piffling sum of £2 million put aside by the PLR proposals and it must be obvious that the publishers can and should pay more to authors.

There has been no obvious socialist opposition to the proposals for PLR.

On the other hand, a handful of Tories, notably Iain Sproat, Nicholas Ridley and Roger Moate have led the opposition. However, the presence of this bunch of right-wingers shouldn't hide the socialist arguments that the Bill is a diversion both for the authors and the state of literature.

Under capitalism authors are a relatively privileged group drawn overwhelmingly from middle and upper-class backgrounds. It is impossible

at present for the vast majority of working people to write books.

Working men and women don't have the leisure to write and in any case are subjected to a capitalist education system which is not concerned with developing individual talents. Its aim is rather to ensure that workers fit the needs of capitalism.

Even such a simple measure as a 35-hour week would boost the leisure time for writing and reading. A planned socialist economy would really make possible the development of writing talent.

Socialism could make the printing and publishing resources available to all rather than a clique of academics and leisured bookworms.

It could also make possible decent living standards for those authors whose work is at present considered too 'literary' to sell well. Seen in these terms, PLR is a miserable diversion caused by the government listening to authors' pressure groups rather than the movement that put them into office.

By a librarian
(NALGO)



Past disputes have shown that CPSA members are capable of a determined struggle photo: Militant

RIGHT WING VICTORY MUST NOT STOP PAY FIGHT

Civil Servants are lining up for what could well prove to be their most bitter struggle on wages ever.

The government has offered public sector manual workers the chance to take part in an 'independent' exercise which would compare their earnings with those in private industry,—supposedly, the best way of calculating a fair wage increase.

Such a 'comparability', however, seems only likely to produce meagre increases.

Civil servants have for some time had their pay calculated by precisely this method. There is a so-called "independent" Pay Research Unit to compare civil servants' pay with that in private industry.

Yet this body has been suspended during the government's incomes policy. It is now functioning again. **But because it has demonstrated the need for an increase above 5% the government has refused to implement its findings.**

Such is the government's blatant double-dealing as it clings to its thoroughly discredited wages' policy.

The Unit's findings underline how iniquitous that policy has been for ordinary working people.

Manoeuvres

The managers and directors in private industry who clamour for wage 'restraint', have themselves been doing very nicely. All kinds of perks, including lucrative expense accounts and the provision of company cars, have come the way of the top echelons of private industry.

When pay comparisons are made, therefore, it is hardly surprising that the tops of the civil servants are shown to be over 30%-40% behind, while the lower grades organised by the CPSA are shown to be only 12%-15% behind, and in some cases below this.

The government came out against even the most minor increase above its arbitrary 5%. Thus a battle on pay is almost certain.

CPSA members will want

at least the full findings of the PRU report. In fact they want more. An increase of at least 20% is the general figure that CPSA members feel they deserve, and need!

A determined mood is growing within the lower grades of the civil service for action to achieve a living wage.

It was precisely to undermine such a mood and sabotage any struggle over pay among civil servants that the press poured out its venom against the CPSA left wing in the recent elections for a new CPSA NEC.

Those elections were the result of behind-the-scenes manoeuvres by Kay Losinska, the leader of the vicious right-wing so-called "moderate" group on the union's NEC.



Kay Losinska photo: Militant

A number of branches—including her own—had not voted for the person they had nominated in the Vice-Presidential elections at last year's conference. This involved less than 30 branches out of over 1,000, but it was contrary to a rule that was operating for the first time that year.

The voting was close. But if all the votes of the nominating branches had been re-allocated to the candidate nominated, then Peter Coltman, the candidate supported by the left, would have remained Vice-President.

However, just as the preparations for the battle on pay were beginning, with threats of legal action Kay Losinska narrowly managed to secure the Vice-President position.

The President, Len Lever, re-allocated only votes cast,

Steve Appleton (Leeds DOE Branch, personal capacity) writes



leaving out of the count the votes of branches that had nominated but then not voted. This extremely dubious ruling was a gift to the right wing—and to the employers!

The left executive had not had a chance to prove itself to the membership. It was disbanded by the President in order to allow Peter Coltman, the chance to stand for the NEC. This was called 'common justice', but Kay Losinska, the instigator of the whole upheaval, escaped any election.

Naturally, the unprecedented removal of the NEC delighted the mass media, who all joined the chorus with banner headlines of "ballot rigging" and "left wing cheats".

Similar lies and innuendos poured out of the glossy journal produced by the right wing.

The left fought back with a special broadsheet explaining the facts and answering the lies—and a drive was launched to try and get round the branches. It has to be said, however, that sections of the left ought to have done more in this respect, particularly given the persistent onslaught on the members from the media.

Sovereignty

But the victory of the right will be short-lived. Having been more involved than ever before in looking at their leadership, the members will now be keeping a close eye on them. If the right wing does not deliver the goods, they will be thrown out.

Scurrilous accusations from the right will not be able to hide their nakedness when it comes to a programme of action to take the membership forwards. The right wing are on the horns of a dilemma. They have been solidly in favour of the pay

research method of pay determination, believing that the system would absolve them of the need to struggle for a living wage.

At the last NEC; the right wingers remained virtually silent on the crucial issue of pay, simply voting in line with the recommendations of the senior full-time officials. They had no ideas of their own!

It seems, too, that they are already busying themselves with constitutional games in order to try to undermine the sovereignty of the union's conference.

Rather than championing the interests of the members they are only interested in bolstering up their own positions as an elite within the CPSA.

Leading officials of the union have tried to give some

thrust to the battle on pay. A resolution has gone round all the branches—now being discussed at special branch meetings—which promises "full support to the NEC in any programme of industrial action it feels is necessary to achieve" the full implementation of the PRU settlement.

The CPSA has also taken part in the formation of a £1 million fighting fund to finance industrial action.

It is already clear that a left NEC would have pursued the battle entirely differently.

Fighting leadership

At the last NEC, 'Militant' supporters on the NEC argued that a special conference be held to launch the industrial action, with mandating meetings, mass publicity and regional rallies as part of the build-up to that conference in order to thoroughly prepare the membership for action and bind the union together as a fighting unit.

We called for an all-out one-day strike of the whole membership to begin the battle, to be followed im-

mediately by the most intense programme of industrial action possible, including strikes of the most important areas.

The declared intention of the NEC not to call on the DHSS or the Department of Employment for strike action, in our opinion, weakens our battle before it starts.

Certainly, the computer areas that the right-wing NEC has singled out are vital areas for action. A special government report of last year highlighted the key position of these computers for the running of the government.

Nevertheless, we cannot rely on these alone. We cannot rule out the possibility of the government finding alternatives. This should be investigated and plans for blacking laid down.

We have to remember, though, that the government is no ordinary employer that can be forced to concede a just pay increase through loss of revenue, etc. We will win a just settlement quickly only by unleashing as much general pressure on the government as possible.

The pay of the Air Traffic Controllers is tied to that of the civil service. They should be called out in the struggle. And areas such as the DE and DHSS should also be involved from the start. If hardship is caused, the government will be to blame, not our members.

This battle can be won. There are signs that unofficial action may be taken if the NEC is hesitant. It is crucial though that any action of this kind be co-ordinated as effectively as possible through the Section and Area Committees. Where this is not possible then joint strike committees across branches should be initiated.

Civil servants should learn from the example of Ford workers and the lorry drivers. **Let us ensure, not only the full implementation of the PRU findings, but a minimum 20% increase for all civil servants.**

Then let us ensure the election at the next conference of a fighting leadership for the CPSA.



photo: Militant

EEC COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY

National antagonisms cause food chaos

Last week, John Cantwell wrote of the effect of the agricultural policy of the EEC on food prices, and outlined its waste and irrationality.

This week, he looks at the growing divergences between the national economies and puts forward a socialist alternative.

In theory, the "common" prices—the prices fixed by the EEC commission for all the main farm products—are common to the Nine. This might seem like a statement of the obvious.

In fact, however, the "common" prices have never applied equally to all the member states. While participating in a common system of price-fixing and subsidies, the actual prices of farm products have always been on different levels in the different EEC economies.

The differences are now greater than ever before.

Moreover, nothing could show more clearly the lack of any real agricultural planning or co-ordination than the mind-boggling financial juggling which goes on to reconcile a common policy with enormous national price differentials.

Common prices are fixed by the EEC Commission in "units of account". These notional prices are then supposed to be converted into the different national currencies. But as far as food prices are concerned, the member states have never agreed to do this at actual market rates.

The reason is simple. Whereas with the import or export of manufactured goods, a devaluation or revaluation would take some time to "work through" to consumer prices, a rise or fall of the national currency would have an immediate effect on farm subsidies and food prices—because it would immediately change the actual value of the "common" price.

To get round this problem, the EEC adopted the so-called



Food prices escalate due to the chaos of capitalist farming photo: Chris Davies (Report)

"green" money for the operation of CAP. The rates at which common EEC units of account are converted into national currencies are not determined by the current market price, but by agreement between the EEC governments on a "green rate".

Thus the "green DM" has been revalued much less than the real Mark, thereby avoiding a sharp cut in subsidies to German farmers; and, on the other hand, the "green pound" has been devalued

much less than the real pound, thereby avoiding an even sharper rise in British food prices.

If the "green pound" were now to be fully devalued to the market level of the pound, farmers would get higher subsidies (about 20% higher)—and we would immediately have to pay at least 8% more for food in the shops! (This might, however, lead to a saving on food imports for British capitalism of about £300 million, because higher

prices would mean less demand while higher subsidies would probably boost home production.)

Clearly, the green money system makes nonsense of any claims to a genuine "common agricultural policy". The currencies of the Nine have moved further and further apart. Since 1970, the DM has doubled its value against the pound. As we showed in our earlier article ('Militant' 435), the EEC is further from a common currency than

when it was founded, as the experience of the "snake" and the European Monetary System have already indicated.

And as the currencies diverge even more, because of the underlying weakness of economies like Britain and Italy, the CAP's "green money" bears less and less relation to reality.

The gross national discrepancy of the so-called "common prices", moreover, has given rise to another glaring contradiction.

If British farmers, for instance, whose production costs are relatively lower because of the substantial devaluation of the pound, could export their products to Germany and sell them at Germany's "green" prices, they would have a considerable competitive edge over West German farmers. To prevent this, the EEC imposes "monetary compensatory units" on farm products moving between EEC countries.

In other words, a whole new network of internal tariffs has developed within the EEC. It is well known that the speculative possibilities created by loopholes in the tangle of regulations, together with sudden changes in price levels or rules, has created a vast and thriving business for a whole army of sharp operators.

This fact alone gives the lie to the grand claims of the EEC's founding fathers that they would overcome the national antagonisms between the capitalist states of Europe. In the case of food production, while they have imposed the same wasteful and incredibly bureaucratic system on all nine countries, the capitalists have not succeeded in establishing even the semblance of a "common market", i.e. a genuine trade area for food.

Clearly, then, as far as agriculture is concerned, the EEC has neither overcome the problems for capitalism nor improved the position for the working class.

But in this aspect of the EEC, as in general, it is no alternative simply to call for Britain's withdrawal from the Common Market.

As far as food is concerned, there can be no question of self-sufficiency. Britain will always have to import a major share of its food needs, and if it left the EEC there would be no guarantee at all of a return

PART TWO



John Cantwell continues his analysis of the CAP

to the pre-1973 position when Britain could import relatively cheap food from some of the world's cheapest producers of basic foodstuffs. These countries have mostly found other markets, and would never again grant Britain the preferential treatment of the past.

In any case, since 1973 there has been a steady rise in the world prices of basic foods, as with oil, minerals and other raw materials. Although EEC prices are still significantly higher than world prices, the latter are tending to catch up.

For these reasons alone, it is necessary for the labour movement to pose a socialist alternative to the EEC. Only a socialist planned economy could provide a framework for the efficient development of agriculture.

The nationalisation of the big monopolies would be accompanied by the socialist re-organisation of farming: big business farming corporations would also be nationalised, while for farmers a socialist government would provide cheap credits and technical assistance, and marketing facilities.

As the present chaos in Britain and Europe shows, agriculture is crying out for a Socialist United States of Europe within which food production could be developed in a planned way.

This in turn would be a first step to the world-wide re-organisation of agriculture, to eliminate both the shameful scarcities and the waste produced by the anarchy of the capitalist market, and to ensure that the whole of humanity is fed adequately and without worry.

Wide and getting wider

Every worker has suffered from the pay policies of the past few years. But it is particularly ironic that the lowest paid sections of the working class, who the government said would be beneficiaries of the curbing of wages, have been its worst victims.

In fact the gap between the pay of local government and NHS ancillary workers and employees in all industries has been widening in the three years from 1975 to 1978. These jobs have always been among the worst-rewarded in the country.

But the strikes of the local authority manual workers in 1970 and 1973 ensured that previously poorly-organised sections got a fairer deal.

The last three years have seen this reversed. In 1975 the difference between the wages of local authority employees and the average male workers was £13.30 a week. By 1978 it had reached £22.40. When the average wage itself is so paltry, how can any worker live so far behind the average?

For women the gap is less, largely due to the scandalous wage levels of women workers in general, but it still amounts

to £10.10 per week.

In terms of hourly earnings too, the percentage of average earnings for NHS ancillaries went down from 77.2% in 1975 to 70.8% in 1978.

The figures finally give the lie to the idea that the government's pay policy helps the lowest paid. Even when the £6 pay policy was in operation, the gap between these workers and the rest of the working class increased. They came nowhere near the vast benefits which these policies gave to the rich.

The present struggle is one to put an end to this scandal

of poverty wages. Any offer within 5% would be useless, particularly for part-time workers. Average earnings rose by 12.5% in the 11 months to October 1978 as workers tried to partially recoup their losses of the past years.

Just because they work for public bodies, these workers have no intention of being sacrificed to a dead wages policy which perpetuates the evil of low pay.

By
Steve Amor
(Stevenage LPYS)



The campaign for a socialist Europe more vital than ever

THE BOSSES PRESS.

The bold and effective tactics adopted by the lorry drivers in fighting for their claim has raised the shrill voice of the capitalist press to new heights of anti-working class hysteria.

The so-called 'popular' press—in reality the gutter press—has abandoned even the vaguest pretence of 'objectivity'.

Day after day, the national dailies, together with the provincial papers which are largely owned by the same interests, pour out a stream of lying vilification and abuse.

Not only the trade unions involved, but even individual shop stewards and strikers, are singled out for attack. Thousands of workers, drawn into action for the first time, have been incensed by the treatment they are getting from the press.

Many shop stewards and pickets, quite understandably, refuse to speak to any Fleet Street or local reporter. They know from bitter experience that the slightest comment is liable to be misrepresented and used against them.

Fleet Street moguls and Tory politicians are always proclaiming the need to defend the "freedom of the press". But what does it mean?

In reality, it means the ownership and control of the press by big business. "Freedom of the press" really means capital's divine right to a monopoly of news and information.

Everyone is free to express their views. But not everyone has the millions necessary to run vast presses. Not everyone can get the support of advertisers prepared to spend millions to influence readers.

The press—alongside television—is a powerful weapon in the hands of the capitalist class. Talk of "press freedom" is so much cant.

There is of course the pretence of "editorial freedom". But editors are hired to do a job. If their views weren't right, they wouldn't be there. And if they step out of line, they get the push.

Victor Matthews, the new boss of the Express group,

has always been quite open about this, and to prove his point he recently sacked Simon Jenkins, the editor of the *Evening Standard* for daring to criticise the Tories.

Most of the press, and especially the national dailies, operates as a permanent propaganda machine for the Tory Party.

Apart from the *Mirror*, all the "popular" dailies attempt to sway support in favour of the Tories. This blatant Tory bias has become even more

the so-called "quality" press, papers like the *Financial Times* and *The Times* are fundamentally hostile to the labour movement.

These papers are owned by some of the biggest monopolies operating in Fleet Street: S Pearson & Son (with highly profitable interests in publishing and leisure industries) and the Thompson empire, which, apart from its extremely lucrative control of much of the provincial press, has a fabulously profitable stake in North Sea Oil.

But the circulation of these papers is relatively small, counted only in hundreds of thousands rather than millions. They address themselves to the capitalists themselves and to their hangers-on.

Because big businessmen need to know what is going on in the world, they usually report the facts accurately. But when the vital interests of the ruling class are at stake, they are quite prepared to use their traditional authority in order to lie all the more effectively.

If *The Times* were now appearing, it would undoubtedly be vehemently denouncing the trade unions and calling for tough measures to undermine the labour movement and further cut workers' living standards. But in its own greed for profit and callous indifference to the fate of "redundant" workers, the Thompson management has locked out the print unions, silencing the presses of *The Times* and the *Sunday Times*.

However, it is the 'popular' press—the *Sun*, *Mirror*, *Express*, and the *Mail*, with a combined circulation of about 12 million—which are the real

Most of the press, and especially the national dailies, operates as a permanent propaganda machine for the Tory Party.

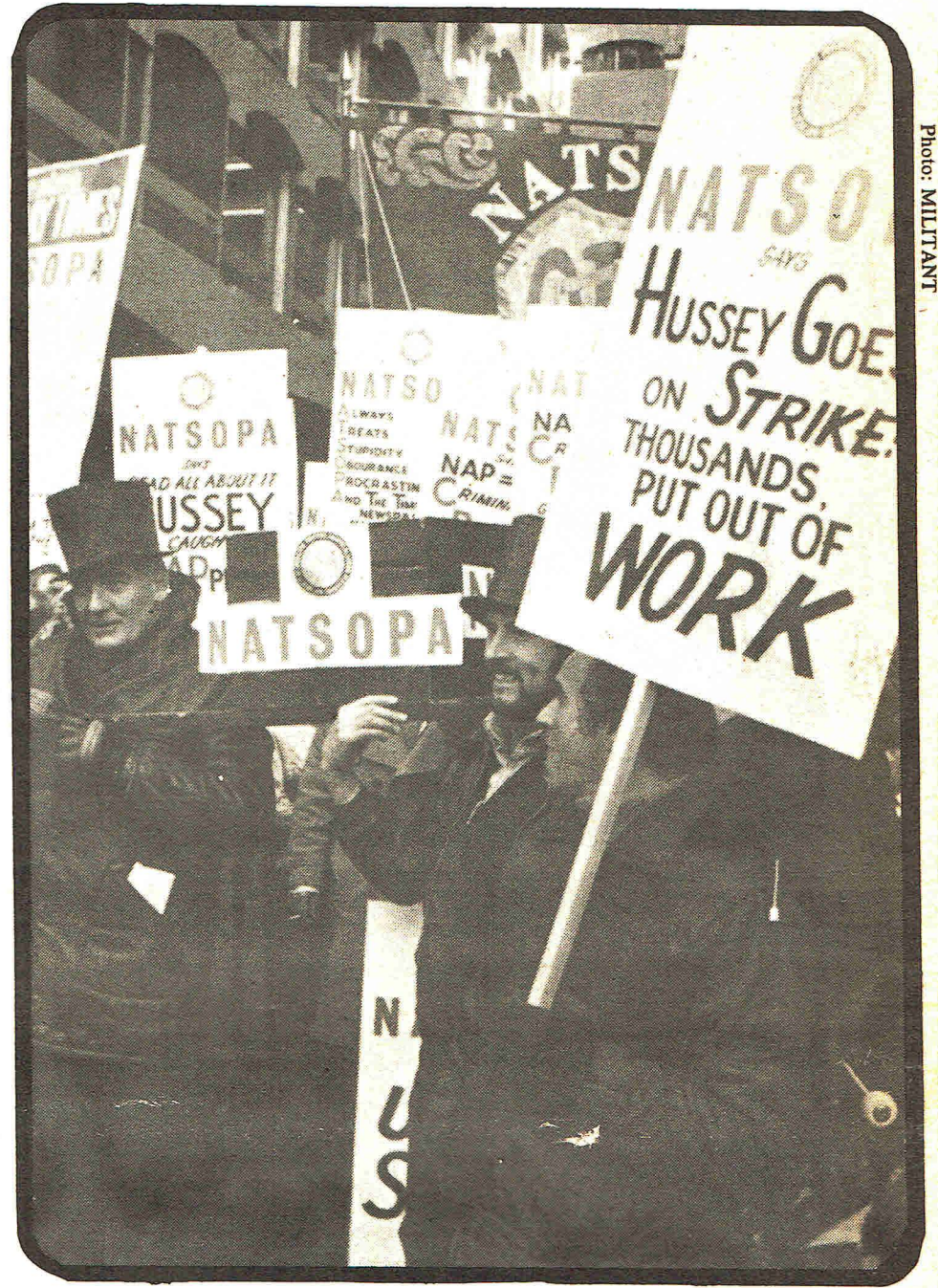
marked since the *Sun*, which has now overtaken the *Mirror* as Britain's biggest-selling daily, began its crusade in fervent support of Mrs Thatcher.

A number of Fleet Street organisations, like Trafalgar House (*Express*) and S Pearson & Son (*Financial Times*), make substantial financial contributions to the Tory Party: £20,000 and £10,000 respectively in 1977.

It is hardly surprising that

class weapon in the hands of big business.

"The rule of fear!" ranted the *Daily Express* (15 January) about the lorry drivers' strike. "Public opinion [ie big business] now desperately wants excessive union power to be curbed." [12 Jan] "Let us hit the pickets with the law." (15 Jan) Shouldn't very thoughtful consideration be given to the idea of a volunteer body along the lines of the Territorial Army being trained and



Times workers demonstrate outside against Thompson Newspapers' threatened lock-out

A WEAPON AGAINST 1

equipped to provide any vital service which may be 'black-ed'? Or it could be a pioneer force conscripted from the young unemployed." (20 Jan)

Such rabid attacks on the unions, which the *Express* rightly sees as the main barrier to the draconic cuts in living standards and social services they are constantly demanding, are typical of this paper under the direction of Victor Matthews of Trafalgar House.

Matthews' pronouncements make it crystal clear what so-called 'freedom of the press' really means. He can inflict his views on millions of people because Trafalgar House, the giant company of which he is chief executive, had the £13.6 million required to buy up Beaverbrook newspapers in 1977.

Trafalgar House started as a property development and investment company in the 1950s and has since diversi-

fied into construction and civil engineering, hotels, air freight and shipping.

Its 1977 turnover was £587 million, to which Beaverbrook contributed just 4.1%. The group has numerous foreign subsidiaries and over a third of its 27,472 workforce is employed overseas.

Can there be any room for doubt that when the *Express* uses phrases like 'the country', 'the nation', 'public opinion', and so on it really means, 'big business', 'capitalists', 'the ruling class', etc?

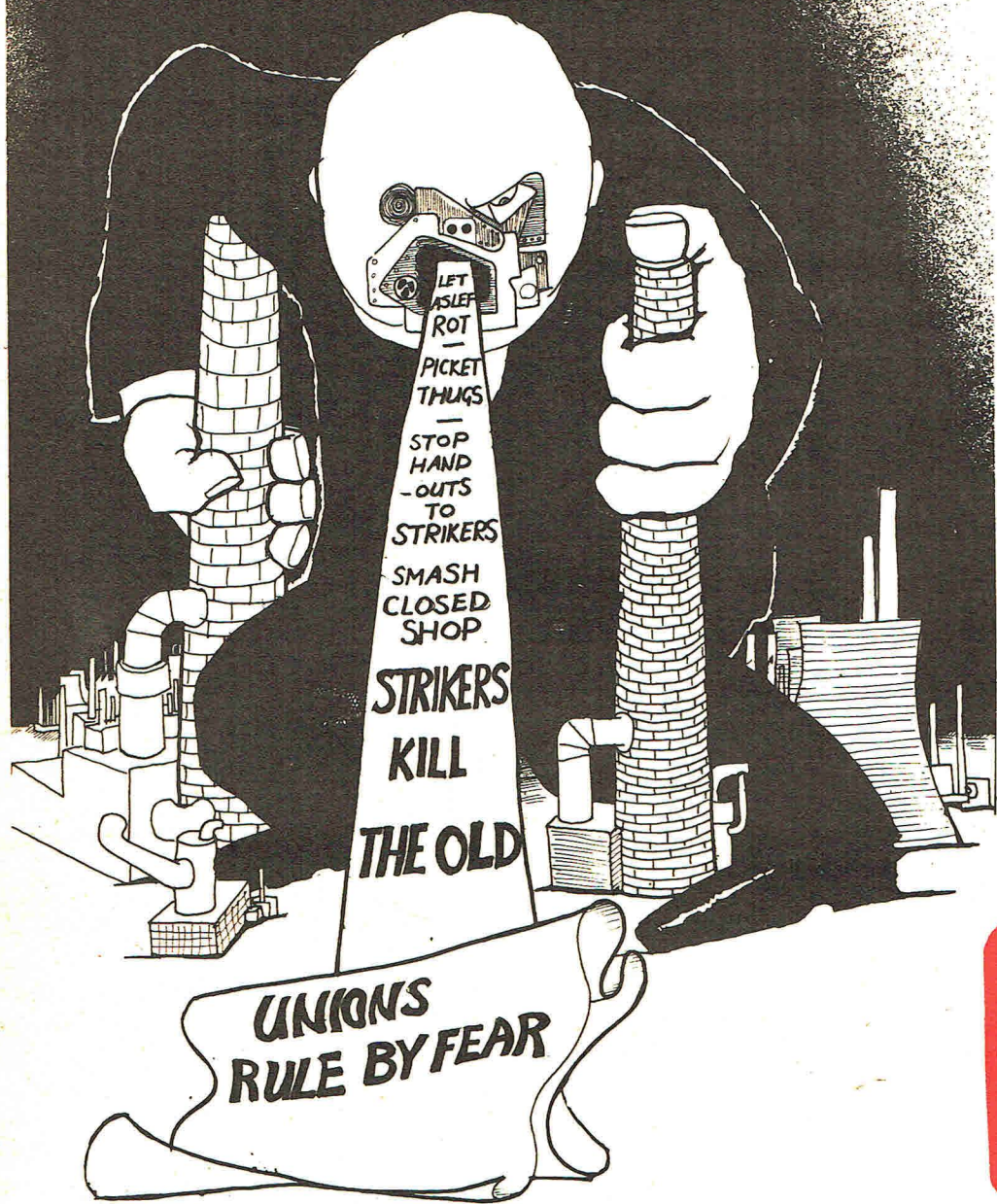
If there is any doubt, let us quote Victor Matthews himself. When he took over the *Express* group the *Financial Times* (1 July 1977) reported him saying: "It is very important in the present state of the country that the Beaverbrook papers should continue and express their views which are sympathetic to those of the Conservative Party and of capitalism."

When asked whether he would support the Tories in the next election, he told the *Sunday Telegraph* last year (5 March); "We will support any party that stands for capitalism and private enterprise. So the answer is yes. Unless another party appears... (further to the right, of course!)...She (Margaret Thatcher) represents my idea of the Tory Party."

Matthews—"whose grip remains tight on editorial policy"—also confirmed to the interviewer that he would not wish to emulate papers like the *Washington Post* in exposing Watergate. This champion of 'press freedom' brazenly admits that 'he would, to protect big business and its hired politicians, cover up a scandal of Watergate dimensions!

Hypocritical press barons of this type are 'fearless' only when it comes to 'exposing' the so-called 'evils of trade

Express hysteria...



THE WORKERS

The 'Mirror' has to adopt a leftish pose to maintain credibility with working class readers.

market research and transport. "The men who drive Britain's giant lorries steered the country down a one-way road to chaos last night." Daily Mirror, 12 January.

Hardly sympathetic to the lorry drivers! But the Mirror's comment is far removed from the hysteria of the other tabloids. Unlike the blatantly reactionary dailies, the Mirror puts on a 'left' face, generally supporting Labour—which means the right-wing Labour leaders.

From time to time it also agitates brilliantly against one

or two capitalist scandals, as in some of the articles of John Pilger for instance.

Why should it do this? Like the others, the Mirror is owned by big business, by one of Britain's biggest multinational companies in fact.

Together with the Sunday Mirror, the People and a host of regional papers, the Mirror is owned by Reed International. Despite the huge circulation of its titles, however, newspapers are a very small part of its hugely profitable business, which is mainly in pulp, paper and packaging.

THE LABOUR MOVEMENT MUST FIGHT FOR THE NATIONALISATION OF PRESS FACILITIES

So why the left face? In his memoirs, a former editor and boss of the Mirror Group, Hugh Cudlipp explains how Cecil King originally built up the paper's mass readership: "If we were to move the Mirror into a new market it would have to be the working class market... Our best hope was therefore to appeal to young working-class men and women, and in general the least educated part of the population... If this was the aim, the politics had to be made to match."

'Socialism', in other words, was good for business!

But while they are forced to take account of the trade union loyalty and socialist sympathies of a great many of its readers, the Mirror, like the rest of the so-called popular press, also aims to lull the awareness of its readers with "a daily drug".

Again, Cudlipp has spilled the beans. He reveals how in the early days the Mirror, borrowing from "the advertising world", deliberately set out "to appeal to the greed and envy and fears of the lowest common denominator... (caring) little about the wider responsibilities of journalism."

Clearly, the Mirror adopts its leftish line quite cynically—to keep up sales; to

maintain credibility with its working class readers; and above all to build up the influence (they hope) to deceive and divert the workers when it really matters!

Thus while not hysterically denouncing the actions of the lorry drivers and other sections like the Mail, the Express and the others, the Mirror plies its readers with a more subtle but no less poisonous mixture of half-support, criticisms, moralistic appeals, half-truths, and outright lies to try to undermine the confidence and determination of workers in action.

While the press remains firmly under the control of a small clique of tycoons, it will inevitably be a propaganda weapon in the hands of big business. There can be no genuine freedom of information and expression.

The labour movement, therefore, together with campaigning for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy as the only means of planning production in the interests of the working class, must also fight for the nationalisation of press facilities.

In the first place, only when the vast means of production required to publish daily and weekly journals in millions of copies are taken into public

ownership—with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need—and run under democratic workers' control and management, will the jobs and conditions of print workers be assured.

Then new technology would be used to modernise and improve production for the benefit of all, not simply to boost the owners' profits at the workers' expense—as is now being attempted in Fleet Street and elsewhere.

But more importantly from the point of view of society as a whole, the nationalisation of press facilities would be the only real basis of genuine 'freedom of the press'.

Under socialist management, the press facilities at present monopolised by a handful of big companies and rich families would be allocated to political and cultural organisations and groups according to their actual support in society.

These measures would allow a fundamental democratisation of the press, with newspapers and journals for the first time corresponding to the interests of their readers, and meeting their real needs for news, information, analysis, commentary, education, or amusement.

unionism'!

Expressing the brutal aims of big business, they call for the crushing of the trade unions, which would mean the end of all democratic rights, to clear the way for barbarous cuts in living standards, education, the national health service, and anything else they feel benefits workers at the expense of their profits.

After the Express come the Sun and the Mail, vying with each other to see which can make the most vicious attacks on striking workers and the labour movement as a whole.

Both these papers are run by giant big business concerns: the Sun by News International, which also controls the News of the World and a number of Australian newspapers; and the Mail by Associated Newspapers, which controls a string of provincial papers and also has interests in

IRAN

The Rise and Fall of the Pahlavi Dynasty



They used to kiss his feet

When the Shah finally left the country last week, hundreds of thousands of jubilant demonstrators filled the streets to celebrate his departure. Portraits and statues—those which remained—were torn down and destroyed. The remnants of the Peacock Throne crumbled like a mummy exposed to the air.

There was no mistaking the profound hatred of the Iranian masses for the Shah and his monarchical dictatorship, which was soaked in the sweat and blood of the Iranian masses. Lynn Walsh recounts the rise and fall of the Pahlavi dynasty.

Despite the Shah's grandiose claim to be the true son of Iran's 2,500 year old monarchy, his Pahlavi 'dynasty' dates only from 1925. It was founded by his father, Reza Khan, who far from being born to rule actually seized power through a military coup in 1921.

Using the notorious Cossack Brigade, Reza Khan had drowned in blood the Gilan Soviet Republic set up in the north of the country under the impact of the Russian revolution. Needless to say, although Reza Khan employed a few anti-imperialist phrases and carried out some limited reforms, his highly repressive state was dedicated to the defence of Iran's property-owning exploiters.

Like many an upstart before him, Reza Khan set out to legitimise his regime by surrounding it with all the 'monumental pomp and ceremony of an ancient dynasty. He began the process of regaling Iran's largely peasant population with cooked-up history and monarchist cant which was to reach unparalleled heights under his son.

Reza Khan adopted a nationalist pose, but under his rule the country remained a satellite of British imperialism, and it was British business interests which suc-

ceded the main profits out of Iran's developing oil industry.

In 1941, however, unsure of Reza Khan's reliability in the war with Nazi Germany, Britain and Russia (allies for the moment) kicked out the first Pahlavi. Determined to have complete control over this strategically vital region, the Allies installed his more malleable son, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, as Shah.

Puppet

Thus the now departed Shah was from the very beginning a puppet, though in the last few years he had begun to tug ungratefully on the strings once held so tightly by his powerful mentors.

The Shah's recent ignominious exit, moreover, was not his first. In the summer of 1953 the proud peacock of later years was forced to flee to Baghdad and thence to Rome by a mass movement on the streets.

The threat to the Pahlavi regime came from the radical nationalist movement led by Mosadeq. Iran's Communist Party, the Tudeh, which was hamstrung by its enforced role as a tool of Moscow's foreign policy and its lack of independent class policies, completely failed to gain a significant influence. As in India under Ghandi and in

Egypt under Nasser, it was the liberal-capitalist nationalist party which came to the forefront of the popular movement.

In 1951 Mosadeq was elected prime minister, and promptly set out to nationalise the country's oil to halt the drain of profits abroad. British imperialism immediately organised to bring him down, using both economic pressure and under-cover disruption in Iran.

In 1952 the Shah tried to dismiss Mosadeq but failed. The next year, however, the United States government, regarding Iran as a crucial 'front line' buffer against Russian encroachment on the Middle East and South Asia, decided to act.

Mass demonstrations against the monarchy sent the Shah scurrying into exile. But Mosadeq's National Front was just a loose grouping of middle-class politicians. It was incapable of fighting for social and economic demands which would have welded together a mass movement for a fundamental change in society.

CIA help

Exploiting Mosadeq's shaky position, the United States—through the Central Intelligence Agency and with some help from British intelligence—set to work. Post-Watergate Congressional enquiries, as well as the first-hand testimony of ex-CIA agents themselves, have amply confirmed the CIA's key role in the restoration of the Shah.

Gold and provocateurs were sent in to create turmoil and assist the reactionary forces. Bolstered with US arms and assured of American government backing, the Iranian army arrested Mosadeq and rolled out the carpet for the Shah's return.

Back on the throne, the Shah set about making his rights more secure—this time with the generous help of the US which wanted to build up Iran as a bastion of its influence.

All organised political opposition was crushed, and genuine trade unions were made illegal. With US support the Shah began to re-arm his vast military machine, as much against mass opposition from within as any enemies outside.

In 1956, moreover, the Shah re-organised the security forces, forming the now notorious secret police organisation, SAVAK, which ruthlessly hunted down his opponents.

Even so, the Shah was not completely secure. Despite the proclamation in 1963 of the so-called "White Revolution", a programme of reforms which would allegedly bring prosperity and democracy to Iran, that year saw another revolt against the dictatorship.



Even the 'mighty' are only made of stone

By gunning down thousands in the streets, the Shah survived. Repression was again intensified. It was then, moreover, that the Ayatollah Khomeini was bundled off to exile in Turkey and later Paris—to await his moment of revenge.

The Shah then speeded up his reforms. The most important were in the countryside. Lingered feudal relationships were abolished—in order to hasten up the development of capitalist rent and farming techniques. This accelerated the massive exodus to the towns—a pre-requisite of the country's modernisation.

Apart from the destruction of the traditional peasantry, industrialisation was achieved at an enormous cost to the rapidly expanded urban working class, which was forced to live and work under atrocious conditions.

Modernisation, however, extended the Shah's lease. Dragging Iran's feeble capitalist class into the 20th century, the bonapartist monarchy largely pre-empted the economic programme of the National Front, thus cutting away much of its support.

At the same time, like other self-appointed caretakers, the Shah and his family and their hangers-on grew fabulously rich on the commercial privileges they reserved for themselves—and on the proverbial "commission", the opulent bribery, of the East.

But like all "strong" states,

the Shah's was a regime of crisis. Lacking secure support even among the middle strata, it above all feared revolt by those carrying the main burden of economic development, the working class.

Hence the indispensability of SAVAK. In the last decade or so, this infamous organisation, with teams of sadists who deliberately set out to terrorise potential opponents by the virtually indiscriminate use of torture, became notorious throughout the world.

Bad dreams

After the fashion of most personal dictators, the Shah claims he knew nothing of the torture chambers: it was the unauthorised work of lackeys; he was misinformed by his advisers, etc. But who will believe these pathetic, despicable disavowals of a fallen dictator?

In the last few years the sorcerer's apprentice began to assert his independence in grand style. Once the pawn of the foreign oil companies, Iran became one of the most militant members of OPEC after the 1973 Middle East war.

Growing fat on the inflated oil revenues, the Shah bought even more industrial equipment from the West and augmented his armoury with the most expensive and sophisticated weapons.

Posing as the leader of a

great power, Shah Pahlavi began to lecture the Western leaders on the dreadful decadence of their societies, and pompously advise them on the best way to deal with political opposition and strikes.

But the Shah's sleep, it seems, was disturbed by bad dreams. He suffered from a recurring nightmare in which he saw the resurrection of toil and trouble. He and his family, reputedly one of the richest in the world, prudently deposited their cash in Swiss banks and bought up property in Europe and America—as a hedge against revolution.

In fostering industrial development to aggrandise his regime, however, the Shah prepared the means of his own destruction. Opposition can be repressed for so long. But the development of factories, transport, oil production, cannot but produce a working class which, as it grows and begins to feel its strength, will demand a share of the new wealth—and push against the bars of the dictatorship.

The revolutionary events of recent weeks, which have once again sent the Shah scurrying into exile, more than likely for ever this time, signify the coming-of-age of Iran's youthful proletariat.

Having brought down the Shah they will now proceed to dig a grave for all the other exploiters on their backs.

STEEL / FRANCE

WORLD STEEL PRODUCTION

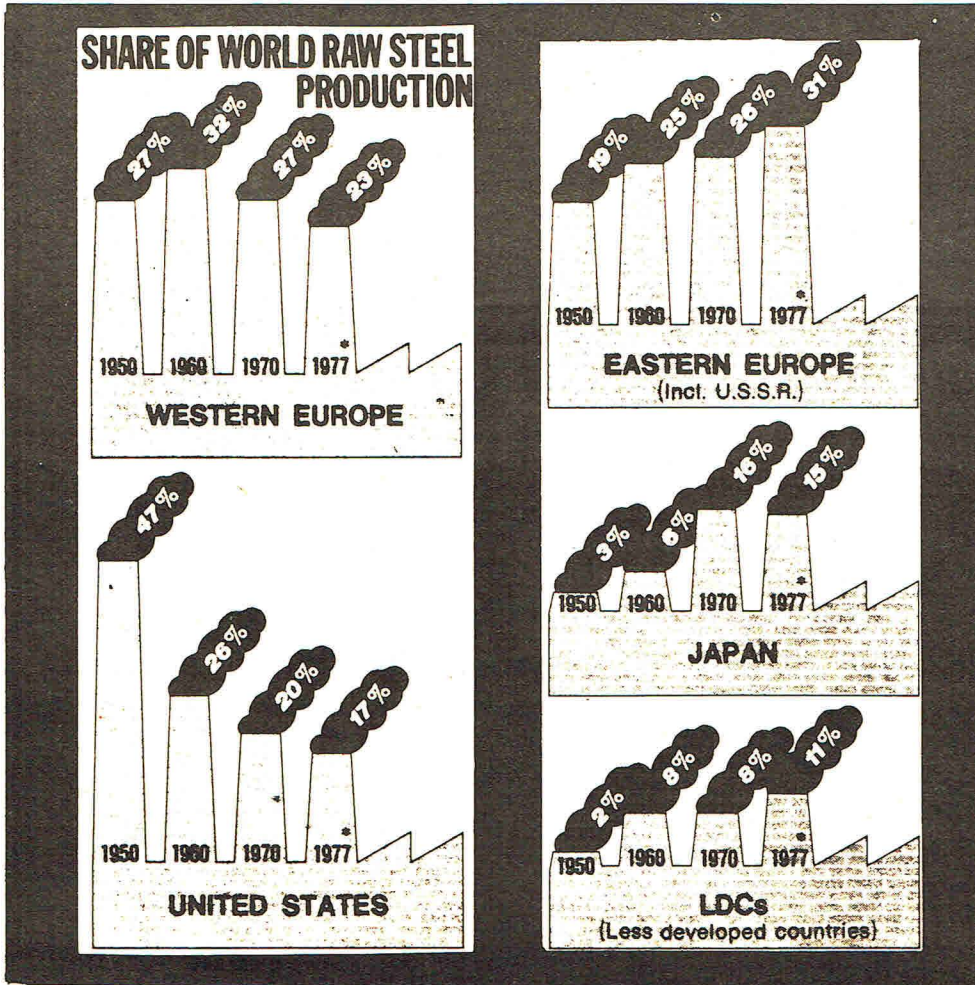
'Crisis for unplanned economies'

Steel production is an index of economic strength. Generally speaking, looking at a country's steel industry tells you about its health.

In 1978 world steel production, at 712.5 million tonnes, passed the 1974 level for the first time, and more steel was made than in any year in history. But the years of recession in between have been bitter ones for the capitalist and imperialist west. The recovery to make more steel has not been made possible by their decadent system.

The Western industrialised countries made 420 million tonnes of steel in 1978, 43½ million less than in 1974, a yawning gap of 9.4%. In every case it is the same: the USA is 6.4% down; Japan is 12.8% down; the EEC is 14.9% down! Capitalism is sliding backwards, not forwards. It is utterly incapable of making and using the steel that is undoubtedly needed for equipment for new hospitals, schools and services. The crisis of steel-using industry is paralysing steel itself.

So if world steel production is resuming its upward march we must look outside the West. Certainly we can find no



explanation in the performance of bankrupt British capitalism which is back at rock-bottom, producing even less this year than last at 20.2 million tonnes. In 1872, the UK was the leading iron maker in the world; in 1945 she was still third; she is now eighth, and will be ninth this

year as Poland's output passes her.

There has been an increase in steel output from developing countries. Those countries in the past provided raw materials to be processed in the west which were then often re-exported to them as finished goods. They are now

developing their own steelworks, and the vainglorious generals and bombastic brigands who rule them lay down grandiose plans for the future. Some of them have greatly expanded output. Brazil is making more than 12 million tonnes a year com-

pared to 7½ million in 1974; Taiwan has quadrupled production; Mexico has increased by a third.

'Third World'

Western bosses are disposed to blame the developing countries for the crisis in steelmaking. They tremble at the thought of steel being made and exported from Abu Dhabi and Libya. And Third World countries have increased their production by 10% in a year, but at 46.4 million tonnes all told they are still responsible for less than 7% of steel made in the world.

Indeed, the dash for growth is starting to have unpleasant consequences for the new ruling elites in these countries. They shudder at the spectacle of the mighty Iranian revolution partly brought about by the grandiose industrial dreams of the Shah and the unbearable tensions brought into the country. What is the use of erecting gigantic steelworks while poverty and disease flourish all around?

Marxists are not opposed to industrialisation. We welcome the weakening of imperialism's grip, but this can only be very limited while developing countries have not broken with capitalism. The EEC and the USA have not hesitated to use protectionist measures to keep out imports from the Third World. While they are helping to build steelworks there, they are tying up young industries with harsh contracts.

The proof of where the crisis really lies is in a contrast between the West and the East. Capitalism makes steel in spasms because it cannot forecast demand. But the planned economies of the East control the factors of production and as a result the recession has not noticeably affected this crude steel output. Comecon countries are approaching one third of world steel production; four of the top ten steelmakers are Russia, China, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The European planned economies have steadily increased production while the West has been floundering.

China is embarking on the biggest industrial development programme in the history of the world. In 1978 she made 31 million tonnes; in 1985 she intends to make 60 million and will therefore become fourth world producer ahead of Germany. She will build 10 new iron and steel complexes (not to mention 30 power stations, five major harbours and nine non-ferrous refineries).

All these statistics tell a story, and one which has an unhappy ending for the capitalists and their apologists in the government. If you want a successful steel industry you have to plan, and you can't plan unless you totally break with private enterprise.

Michael Unwin

FRENCH SOCIALIST PARTY

The appearance of France which is presented in the British media is one in the main of 'order' and 'stability' benignly presided over by Giscard d'Estaing.

Yet just before Christmas a 24-hour general strike and demonstration was organised in Paris by the country's biggest trade union federation, the CGT, in protest at redundancies and higher social security charges.

A seaman's strike, a dustmen's strike in Paris and a dockers strike in Marseilles have all taken place in recent months and there have been convulsions in the steel-making areas of France because of the massive redundancies which are threatened.

Reflecting this radicalisation, the Left have been victorious in recent by-elections with Socialist Party (PS) in particular increasing its support since the General Elections last year. But it is precisely at this moment that the SP has been thrown into turmoil by the challenge which has been mounted by Michel Rocard to Party leader Francois Mitterrand. Rocard has criticised Mitterrand from the

right despite the left-sounding phrases he used.

According to 'The Guardian' (27 December) "he opposes outright nationalisation on classic lines, in favour of majority state shareholding in selected firms". He criticises Mitterrand for being "politically archaic" Rocard's 'modern' vision of socialism is inspired, amongst others by Proudhon, the philosopher of what Marx called "middle class socialism". Proudhon was also the father of anarchism! Rocard's ideas in fact pre-date Marxism. His proposals for "majority shareholding in selected firms" is similar to the demands advanced by the 'Tribune' in Britain and are similarly utopian. The capitalists would oppose and frustrate any attempt by a Left Government to take over a majority shareholding in the monopolies just as much as they would if nationalisation were proposed.

Piecemeal measures of this character would not satisfy the demands of the French workers or the middle class but it would give the capitalists time to prepare to whip up the middle class and thus prepare the social forces to bring down the government. This has happened on pre-



Mitterrand and Maire: Looking for Rocard

vious occasions when Popular Front government's have come to power in France.

Rocard justifies his opposition to nationalisation because it is allegedly "bureaucratic". He counterposes to this "autogestion" ('self-management') which says that for local government "people should control the use of public equipment as well as the running of their factories" ('Guardian').

But it is impossible for "people" to control "public equipment" or "run their factories" on the basis of capitalism. Only on the basis of a planned economy could full workers' control and management be established.

Rocard's programme is a hotchpotch of reformist ideas in the tradition of the right wing of the Socialist Party and semi-syndicalist phrases.

He clearly sees the socialist transformation of France; if at all, as a vague and distant goal for the labour movement. One of his principle supporters, Mauroy—mayor of Lille—recently declared that "one should not give way to illusion about the speed with which capitalism can be replaced in a country like ours." (Guardian 5th January).

The rightward shift of Rocard has surprised most capitalist commentators. It is only a few years since Rocard

left the leadership of the Unified Socialist Party, which claimed to stand on the 'extreme Left', to join the PS. But Marxism was not taken unawares by Rocard's evolution. He was always a centrist, that he would sometimes use very radical sounding phrases but never drew clear revolutionary conclusions from them.

A similar path has been trodden in the recent period by Mario Soares in Portugal and Felipe Gonzales in Spain. After all, in the first stages of the Portuguese Revolution Soares came out verbally for the "Dictatorship of the Proletariat". But without a clear Marxist programme and perspective it is inevitable that these leaders will reflect the hostile pressure of capitalism and vacillate between Left and Right.

But Rocard has been fed on the stand of the Mitterrand leadership of the PS. The clash between the PS and the Communist Party during the Elections on precisely how many of the subsidiaries of the nine major monopolies should be taken over has been exploited by Rocard and his supporters as a "quibble". They have used this as a pretext to throw overboard the whole idea of nationalising the monopolies.

Consequently, the instinctive strivings of the French workers to change society is only given a distorted reflection in the clash between Rocard and Mitterrand. Edmond Maire, the leader of the pro-socialist trade union, the CFDT, although he is a supporter of Rocard, hinted at the explosive mood of the French workers in the the 'Guardian' (15 January) when he warned the government that "an explosion of anger will occur" if living standards continue to be cut and unemployment rises.

Neither the programme of Rocard—who clearly represents the younger reformist middle-class layers of doctors, teachers, lecturers, etc, who joined the party during its explosive growth earlier in the decade—nor Mitterrand can solve the problems of the French workers.

But a programme which had as its central demand, the nationalisation of the assets of the handful of families which control most of the wealth of France, would find an enormous echo from the members of the PS.

The big events which loom in France will teach both the PS and PCF rank and file that this is the only way they can go forward.

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

LETTERS

SUPPORT
FOR THE
LOW PAID

Dear Comrades

The following resolution, moved by the LPYS, was passed unanimously at the last meeting of Bristol South East CLP.

"This GMC gives its full support and solidarity to the NUPE workers and other public sector workers in their fight for a £60 minimum wage and for a 35-hour week.

"We note that NUPE has called a one-day strike and lobby of Parliament on January 22nd in pursuit of their claim and this GMC calls on all Labour Parties to support their day of action and for as many Labour Party members as possible to travel up to London to take part in the demonstration."

Yours fraternally
Duncan Bowdler
Secretary, Bristol South-East LPYS.

INTIMIDATION OF
SCHOOL STUDENTS

Dear Comrades

I was disgusted to read the following report in the *Daily Mirror* (13.1.79) of an incident at Larkholme High School in Fleetwood.

"Schoolgirl Susan Goodwin put up her hand at morning assembly when the headmaster asked: 'Whose fathers are involved in the lorry drivers' dispute?'"

"Then she stood red-faced while the head, Douglas Reed, launched into a tirade against strikers. Susan, 14, said: 'It seemed I was expected to be ashamed of my own father.'"

"Susan said Mr Reed also attacked the bakers' strike—and singled out a baker's son. ...Susan's father...said: 'She won't go back to school until she gets an apology.'"

"Mr Reed would not comment."

I think it's scandalous that teachers are given free rein to victimise, intimidate and try to brainwash working-class

children.

We should campaign in the labour and trade union movement, in the schools and colleges and in the Labour Education Authorities on the LPYS demands: Trade union speakers should be allowed to go into the schools and colleges. School students should be able by right to organise unions and political activity in schools.

Education must be placed under the overall control of the trade union and labour movement, with day to day running by elected representatives of students, teachers, parents, other staff and the local Trades Council.

Yours fraternally

Julie Morgan
Swansea LPYS

WRITE TO MILITANT
Have you any points on, or disagreements with, letters or articles in the 'Militant'? Any experiences which make you angry? Let us know in a letter [preferably a short one]. Letters to arrive by Saturday morning to the address at the top of the page.

POOR DUMB
CAPITALISTS IN
DANGER

Dear Editor

Watching the news this week I have been furious at the way the plight of egg producers as a result of the lorry drivers' strike has been highlighted.

Hardly anything has been said of the disgusting rates of pay the drivers get—mind you it is always emphasised that most drivers 'enjoy' at least 10 hours overtime! OK, but who wants to work 10 hours a day or 6 days a week for a £53 basic?

Now the egg producers are worried that food stocks are running out and chickens will have to be slaughtered, resulting in egg prices going up 10%. Tonight one of these gentlemen said these 'poor dumb creatures' would be forced to acts of cannibalism if nothing was done.

'Poor dumb creature'; only six months ago we heard that thousands of chickens had to be slaughtered as too many eggs were being produced and prices were falling. This was of course in the cause of economic planning. Profits of the poor dumb producers were falling.

The hypocrisy of the press and TV gets more and more blatant.

Yours fraternally
Louise Birch
Selly Oak Labour Party

EQUAL
BEFORE
THE LAW

Dear Comrades

While travelling on a bus today I noticed that the maximum penalty for fare-dodging on a bus in Brighton has gone up from a £20 fine to £400. The maximum for assaulting a busman is only £150. What price a worker's safety?

This really illustrates the nature of our legal system. An employer who consistently illegally underpays his workers for a number of years only gets a fine of about £100 if he is unlucky. Princess Anne only gets fined £40 for speeding which could have seriously injured or even killed someone.

Yet a working class man or woman can get fined £400, plus costs, for defrauding Southdown bus company of a maximum of 72p!

Who says our legal system acts without fear or favour towards all classes in society?

Yours fraternally
Clive Walder
Hove LPYS

TORY FREEDOM, TORY PRIORITIES
AND OUR ALTERNATIVE

Dear Comrades

A recent article in the 'Guardian' described the National Association For Freedom's answer to the capitalist crisis.

They not only propose cuts in health, education, housing and environmental services but also the abolition of the National Enterprise Board, development agencies, regional and employment subsidies and other government assistance to industry, together with axing passenger subsidies, new roads, municipal control over waste disposal and parks, the Equal Opportunities and Racial Equality commissions, expenditure on Northern Ireland and the size of the Civil

Service.

They think it necessary to have new charges for museums, student loans instead of grants, bills for hospital treatment, etc. This, the NAFF estimate, would save £17,737 million.

However, they do not believe merely in government cuts—they also have plans for "investment"—an increase in the military and law budget of £1,963 million. They obviously understand that not everyone would be entirely happy with their plans.

Their ideas of 'freedom' apply to a tiny minority to enable them to make massive profits at our expense.

However, the fly in the ointment is the overwhelming

strength of the working class through their own organisations. NAFF have a chance only if they succeed in smashing the labour and trade union movement.

The answer to their crisis is a massive increase in public spending and a vast increase in the quality of life for all, through the planning of society. This means the labour movement owning and controlling industry, and production on the basis of need, not greed. There are already the resources in terms of raw materials, machinery and labour power.

Yours fraternally
Josie Bell and Terry Crow
Southampton LPYS

IRAN: Future lies with the international working class

Comrades

There can be no doubt at all that the magnificent movement of the Iranian workers has surprised and horrified all ruling classes and elites around the world. In less than a year the seemingly stable, secure Shah has been all but toppled from his throne.

At first the world's rulers hoped to be able to maintain this figurehead. The speeches of Owen and the British Ambassador to Iran and the birthday greetings the Shah received from Carter, Brezhnev and Hua testified to this. But as the Iranian revolution continued to develop it became clear that the Shah's days were numbered and his supporters began to distance themselves from his regime.

It was only at this stage that the Russian bureaucracy began issuing warnings to the

US Government not to intervene in Iran.

The twists and turns of their policies towards Iran clearly shows that the last objective they have in mind is to support a socialist revolution in Iran. They have not opposed the overthrow of capitalism in countries like Vietnam, Angola or Afghanistan because regimes similar to their own were established i.e. planned economies but with power concentrated in the hands of a bureaucratic elite.

These countries are not workers' democracies, whose existence would be a threat to the Russian elite. The Russian bureaucracy came to power suppressing the workers' democracy which existed in Russia in the immediate aftermath of the revolution. They have since then put down any movement towards

workers' democracy, as in Hungary 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

The overthrow of capitalism in a number of underdeveloped countries in recent years, which was a bitter blow to imperialism and a tremendous advance, was supported by the Russian bureaucracy as widening its spheres of influence at the expense of imperialism.

It has been the magnificent movement of the Iranian working class which has spearheaded the Shah's overthrow. The strikes by the oil, bank and shop workers completely undermined the dictatorship. The Iranian working class has demonstrated the strength of the 10 million and more workers, 36% in industry and 31% in service industries.

If a Bolshevik Party had existed in Iran the working

class would already be in power and beginning to carry out the socialist reconstruction of society. The absence of such a party in Iran poses the great danger to the Iranian revolution of the ruling class being able to weather this crisis and at a later stage launch a counter-attack on the working class.

It is because of the strength of the Iranian workers that the Russian bureaucracy views the revolution in a different light than, for example, the overthrow of capitalism and landlordism in Afghanistan last year. The Russian bureaucracy fears that the Iranian working class will be able to carry through a genuine socialist revolution and establish a workers' democracy.

But does the fact that the Iranian workers, in their struggle to establish the

foundations of a socialist society will have to fight against American imperialism and Stalinism mean they will be defeated? On the contrary, the very fear of both the imperialist and Stalinist leaders is based on the fact that one successful socialist revolution in the capitalist world or political revolution in the Stalinist countries will mean the end of capitalism and Stalinism throughout the world.

Therefore Ian Sugarman is not right when he writes that "it seems that...Brezhnev and Hua, offer the only hope, in the short term, to the workers of Iran". The establishment of a deformed workers' state in Iran would mean that the Iranian workers would have to make another revolution to remove the bureaucratic elite. The only policy which can act in the interests of the Iranian

and other workers is an internationalist policy, looking for support from the workers of the world.

Such a policy would receive an enormous response, as did the Russian Revolution. All around the world we can see the sharpening class struggle. The achievement of workers' democracy in one single country would transform the world situation, it would show the working class the way forward.

It is towards the world working class that the Iranian workers "can turn for assistance when the Shah is overthrown", not holding back their struggle in order to curry favour with the Kremlin bureaucrats.

Fraternally
Bob Labi

Slow start to '79

As the pace of developments in Britain quickens, so must the pace of donations to the 'Militant'.

To sharpen this fighting weapon of the labour movement over £1,600 is needed every week. So far (in two weeks) a total of £1,486.48 has reached our offices.

But just look at some examples! Birmingham supporters wrote:

"Enclosed is a cheque for £76 which the strikers at Bradfords Bakery in West Bromwich have raised through individual contributions as a token of their appreciation for our help at that plant during the strike."

The Secretary of Castle Goring Branch of Worthing Constituency Labour Party wrote: "I have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for £5 as a donation to the 'Militant' Fighting Fund, in recognition of all the hard work Worthing Young Socialists do to spread the message of socialism in this backwater of Worthing."

Hartlepool LPYS Branch donated £10 itself and a student—D Maples of Newcastle Labour Club—donated a magnificent £30.

Show your appreciation of

the work done by 'Militant' and its supporters and step up the donations in your area!

Many thanks to all those who have contributed so far.

This week's total of £698.85 came as usual from workers and supporters in all parts: **Hampshire's** £40.75 included nearly £36 from Southampton supporters and £1 from L Toole (Isle of Wight), bringing them to £49.35.

Eastern area supporters reached £41.80 last week, but don't rest on your laurels! **Humberside** supporters have sent us £41.80 including £4 from a Bridlington social evening.

London North readers have pushed along to £183.50, but have a long way to go yet. **Hendon North LPYS** members sent £12, and £5 came from Sheila Dunn (LSE Labour Club), and also M Wedderburn (CPSA), and J McGuinness. £2 came from the Wobeyes and £1 from S Marchini (EETPU).

A reader in South Croydon, P Rogan, sent us an extra £7.50 with his subscription: A Roberts and J Arnstein (Croy-

don NW CLP) gave us £1.50 and another fivers was raised at a discussion group in the area. J Short and J Lambert gave us each £1 and **London South's** total is £81.41.

Manchester and Lancashire were boosted by £20 from J Brown (Middleton), and other contributors included J Hoyle (50p): total so far £121.85. Two fivers from L Evans (Wavertree CLP) and J Wilson (Garston CLP), together with £1 from two Kirkby NALGO members who have helped **Merseyside** to £48.50, but it is still way behind Manchester. See what you can do, comrades!

Midlands East have sent us £115.01 in two weeks, and this good start included £1.10 (plus £1.02 from 'extras') at Landers Bakery (Mansfield), £2 from J Collinshaw (Ilkington), £4 from J Bell, and £2 from T Warby and £1 from J Giles (all via supporters in Nottingham). Five Leicester readers sent £19.55, including money from three students. S Bookbinder (school student) sent us 39p.

Midlands West's £156.98 was made up from £5

six-shot-bandit (presumably one-armed), £10 from P Nestereuk (Handsworth LP YS), £5 K Birch (Birmingham USDW), £1 H Clark (student) and 50p C Mullins (NUPE). A reader exiled from Walthamstow to Coventry sent us £10. Can other readers follow this example? Students at Keele who sent donations included M Dennison (£2) and P Feeney (£1). £1 also came from T Jepson (AUEW/TASS) in Stoke.

Northern have reached £226.05, and as well as the donations we have mentioned included £8 from a social on Tyneside. **Scotland East** have reached £12.67 including £2.50 from M&R Brown (Leith LP/AUEW) and £1 from a cat's litter. £39.98 from **Scotland West** went up by only £2 this week including 68p from H Grant (Irvine) but we are sure supporters in Strathclyde have one or two surprises for us in the near future.

South East have made their usual excellent start in a target-smashing bid; our supporters from that area have sent us £182.60, including

£37 from a Brighton New Year's Eve party and £5 from R Clark, also Brighton. A social in Thanet left us £10.50 better off, and Tony and Janet Baker (Medway) donated a fiver. £2.20 came from S Williams (Horsham).

South West's starting total of £59.28 included haircutting surplus (i.e. the cash), £1.90 from Coffee (M Well Exeter LPYS), 50p from N Costley (Gloucester) and 80p from Kingsholm Ward Labour Party members (also Gloucester).

£1.50 from **East Wales** supporters in Cardiff, brings their total to £6.50, whilst £3.70 from a coffee jar and £9 from J Lewis (both Swansea) helped **West Wales** to £19.95. We know from previous years that both areas are 'strong finishers', but don't leave it too late!

Yorkshire have reached £126.69 with Christmas bonuses being donated, and 50p from M Pawinski (Leeds).

'Others', mainly change donated from postal subscriptions, has reached £4.31. Thanks to K Alfredson (Sweden) amongst others.

THIS WEEK'S TOTAL £698.85

Racist Murder in E. London



Funeral procession last Saturday

Five in eight months. That is the death toll of racist murders in East London. The latest victim was Michael Ferreira, a 19-year-old West Indian.

Michael was with two friends in Stoke Newington Rd, Hackney, in the early hours of the morning, on December 10th. Three white youths shouted National Front slogans from across the road. Michael's friends ran

Kevin Fernandez

PNP Youth
Hackney LPYS

off to avoid trouble; but he stood his ground. The three white youths came across the road, and one stabbed him.

Michael's friends came back and took him off to the nearby Police Station. It is said that the police took ten minutes to phone for an ambulance. They asked the youths what they were doing at that time in the morning. Eventually, an ambulance came, but Michael died in hospital.

Last Saturday, 600 people joined the silent funeral procession, through Hackney, to show their opposition to racist attacks, and the attitude of

the police. A number of black youths joined the march as it went through shopping centres. While there was only singing during the procession ('We shall overcome', 'Justice must be done') the anger of the marchers came out clearly near the end. Many black workers at the front of the procession, raised their fists up high as they passed the Stoke Newington Police Station.

The local community can expect no real protec-

tion from the police. The three white youths have been arrested, but one has already been released on bail, only to be charged under the Public Order Act. Only defence groups organised by the black community and the local labour movement, can defend the lives of black members, and others attacked by racist or fascist thugs.

ADS

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SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres
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WEST MIDLANDS Militant Rally. Saturday January 27th, 1-5 pm, Dr Johnson House, Bull Street, Birmingham

SPEAKERS: Ted Grant [Militant Editorial Board]; Sam Maddox [Gen Sec, Bakers' Union]; Dennis Mills [Chairman TGWU 5 35 Lorry drivers' branch]; Dick Hackett [Secretary, Central Birmingham Health District, NUPE]

* Plus stalls, entertainment and crèche. Tickets 50p from: J Birch, 109 Northfield Road, Birmingham B 30.

SOUTH WALES Readers Meetings: 'The Fight for a living wage. Support the local authority workers'. Speakers: Kevin Ramage (LPYS National Committee) and leading NUPE speakers.

Port Talbot: Monday January 29th. Contact Cwmavon 391 for details.

HACKNEY 'Militant' Meeting 'END LOW PAY'

Speakers: John Barratt (Convener Hackney Direct Works), Phil Frampton (National Chair-LPYS). At Hackney Labour and Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, Hackney E8. Sunday January 28th 7.30pm

NEWCASTLE Militant Public Meeting. 'The fight against low pay'. Saturday January 27th at 1.30 pm in the Durant Hall, Ellison Place, Newcastle. (Speakers being arranged). All welcome.

CLASSIFIED

Brentwood LPYS 'Support the public sector workers—End low pay'. Speakers: Steve Glennon (LPYS National Committee), Dave Smith (NUPE Area Organiser), Terry Stephens (Brentwood Trades Council Chairman). 8pm Tuesday 30th January. At Co-op Hall, Kings Road, Brentwood.

Hillingdon LPYS Public Meeting

'The Fight Against Low Pay' Speaker: Mike Jackson NUPE area organiser. Tuesday January 30th 7.30pm. Labour Party Rooms, 12 Hercies Road, Hillingdon.

Newham NE LPYS

At school or College? A grant for all over 16!

Public Meeting Tuesday January 30th 8pm at Labour Hall, 241e High Street North, East Ham, London E12.

Deptford Labour Party Public Meeting

'Support public service workers' Speakers: Rodney Bickerstaffe (National Officer NUPE), Alan Haley (T&GWU shop steward, London Borough of Lewisham), Brian Ingham (Militant Industrial Correspondent). Monday 29th January 8pm. Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road, SE14

NEWCASTLE TRIBUNE GROUP RALLY

Friday 2nd February 1979 at 7.30 pm at the Guildhall, Quayside, Newcastle upon Tyne Chairman: Richard Clements (Tribune Editor). Speakers include: Jimmy Reid PPC; Frank Allaun MP; Joan Maynard MP, plus another Tribune MP. Tickets 40p. Available from John Egerton, 18 Ely Way, Fellgate Est., Jarrow, Tyne-Wear. (Please enclose a SAE). A limited supply will be available on the door.

Social workers:

NATIONAL ACTION NEEDED

After six months of strikes by social workers throughout England and Wales, NALGO faces a crisis of leadership and strategy over its handling of the dispute.

No one seems to dispute the need for regrading of social workers within the local government scales because of the low recompense given to workers in many difficult fields.

The situation of social workers has been aggravated by the failure of NALGO's leadership to offer any fight back against the social contract, the results of which have been cuts in the real wages and attacks on the jobs of NALGO's 700,000 members. This failure more than anything has contributed to the ferocity with which some social workers have fought to achieve a better standard of living. In the early 1970's failure of the leadership to

mobilise social workers to fight for national regrading led to the more militant branches pressing for local negotiating rights as a way round ineffective leadership. In the face of a resolute national employers' side—NALGO's strategy (or lack of one) of allowing branches to initiate their own action to break the national employers has proved to be useless.

In addition by blocking, or at best not encouraging, other NALGO members' solidarity actions (eg not crossing picket lines) the strike operations committee has successfully blunted the effects of the social workers' action. The lesson seems to be that while local action of social workers may be easier to achieve, national action plus sympathetic action would be more effective.

The national claim and action of Ford and British Leyland workers and now the

lorry drivers will need to be examined and the lessons learnt if NALGO is to continue to progress as a trade union.

The local government-employers are divided—the British national side (in practice England and Wales) are offering a divisive "framework for local negotiations of social workers' grades" which in practice is so well-defined, with abhorrent parts like three rates for the job and more money for 'effectiveness' that, even if it's possible it will take months of negotiations and interpretations and appeals to achieve social workers aspirations.

The Scottish employers have made a straight offer of Scottish AP3-4 (£4,368 to £5,403) for qualified social workers. If there is no improvement in both of these offers then they need to be rejected. The former for its divisiveness and the latter for its amount.

Of course rejection is not enough. Only nationally-led, concerted action will achieve what social workers want i.e. more money for an arduous job. If the strike fund can't take any more then we need a national levy of all members. Other members will have to be involved to achieve the aims of regrading.

By
Ronnie Stevenson
(Glasgow Social Work
Convenor,
Strathclyde NALGO,
personal capacity)

Social workers' demonstration in London, September '78



Photo: Militant

"We proved we can fight"

After six weeks on the streets, provincial newspaper journalists last week decided to accept a 14½% offer from the employers, the Newspaper Society.

The offer—which ranges between £4 extra a week for the lowest-paid juniors, to £18 for the highest-paid,—falls short of the £20 across-the-board claim for all members. Most members will only receive half that amount, and some a great deal less.

Even though the settlement doesn't reach the union's demand, the strike has shown the solidarity of workers, many never previously involved in industrial disputes.

Despite no strike pay and only a small amount of hardship money, the strike has been rock-solid throughout. By Christmas many members were broke, but they soldiered on.

Over six weeks, the union has grown up. "At last we've proved we can fight", said one member.

Police have quite viciously broken up picket lines and carried out dozens of arrests up and down the country.

At Barnet, in North London, police have consistently broken up large pickets. Before Christmas, eight people were arrested to clear a way for printers to go to work.

The NUJ have since registered a complaint with the local police chief.

At Uxbridge, in West London, the largest print works in the country, print workers brought production to a halt, disgusted at heavy-handed police tactics. The 'Kentish Times', circulation 100,000, is printed there; it has been stopped for several weeks running.

The crunch came when T&GWU lorry drivers, who have backed the strike magnificently throughout, refused to cross the NUJ picket line with newsprint. Management persuaded them to dump it and took it in themselves.

NATSOPA members refused to handle it, and were sacked. As a result of their solidarity, the entire works were eventually closed.

Most of the print unions were instructed to work normally, which in many cases meant crossing picket lines. Fortunately, some members took an independent stand and refused to cross picket lines or be intimidated by management.

At the Bristol 'Evening Post' and 'Western Daily Press' (profits £6m last year) when print workers took sympathy action, management suspended production. At a large weekly newspaper group in Kent, owned by the

bosses' chief pay negotiator, printers prevented production on four occasions.

On one occasion, the NGA held a long meeting which delayed production until they told management it was too late to print, and went home. **Management were so shaken by the losses that they offered a huge bribe to pickets in an attempt to buy them off.** The money—between £2,500 and £3,000 according to a local print union official—was immediately rejected by the chapel at Surrey and South London newspapers.

What this strike has proved to many NUJ members—previously doubtful of their own industrial strength, is that fighting as organised trade unionists, they can win better wages.

If the Newspaper Society had faced not just a section of the NUJ, but the concerted might of the print unions, this strike could have been brought to a decisive, victorious, conclusion much more quickly. A strike like this shows the need for one print union for the whole industry, to unite all print workers in the common fight on pay, conditions and jobs.

By Martin Halle
(NUJ)

JACOBS WORKERS FIGHT SACKINGS

Four hundred workers at the Sheffield factory of Jacobs Manufacturing have been on strike since before Christmas, in support of 65 fellow workers who were sacked by the company on December 15th 1978.

Piecework rates have so stagnated that the latest national minimum rates are now practically on a par with piecework earnings. As deputy convenor, Martin Murphy told 'Militant'—"incentives have narrowed so much it is not worth the odds to work piecework."

For over a year, union representatives have warned management that unless something was done to re-

establish piecework earnings, workers would go datal (day wages).

Management still did nothing—a section of workers did go on datal. The result—65 workers were instantly dismissed despite the fact that according to procedure they were perfectly entitled to take this step.

As pickets said, this is the reaction of a basically anti-union management who were forced to recognise the union, but always grudging it.

The company is still refusing full reinstatement of the sacked workers. AUEW, G&MWU and NSMM members are involved. The AUEW has made the strike official,

but some workers, mainly NSMM, are still working.

Support has been forthcoming in the area, but more is needed. As Bro. Murphy said—"If we lose it is a bad precedent for others."

"It is a question of who determines when you can go datal as well as the basic question of victimisation."

Please send messages of support and donations to:
Bro. R Tombling
Treasurer, Strike Committee
905 Abbeydale Rd
Sheffield 7

Bro. Murphy (deputy convenor) spoke to **Rob Jones**

working in the union

BY BILL CHARD
[T&GWU]

Concluding his account of his own trade union experiences, **Bill Chard, T&GWU and Morley and Batley Labour Party**, spells out some of the things he has learnt. If you want to comment on this, or discuss any of the issues you face as a trade unionist, write to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

The next day I spoke to the drivers but they had been well and truly scared. They were sure they would lose their jobs. Some five or six who had been very active and militant in the past were noticeably absent from the meeting.

The drivers had been treated to a feast of beer and sandwiches that lunchtime, in return for their loyalty to the firm. Unfortunately no one choked on it! We felt very bitter at the way we had been let down, but I realised it was just another classic example of workers allowing themselves to be split.

After about a week of picketing, nine of us were issued with redundancy notices. A vote was taken by all the leaders and a majority voted to accept redundancy or go back, whichever was applicable. Three of us took our cases to a tribunal and received an out-of-court settlement on the morning of the hearing.

During my term as shop steward I was threatened with various forms of discipline, suspended, offered bribes and promotion. All

sorts of devious means were used to undermine my position. However, I can honestly say that I never compromised—some might say that more could have been achieved in the long term if I had done.

This may be so, but I know that without my socialist beliefs I could never have stood up to the pressures the company put on me. I really learnt the meaning of the saying "It's a hard life if you don't bend."

I am sure that to be a militant trade unionist, without compromising, you must have a sound political base and convictions. And also, as in my case, the support of my wife. I am sure that after a long strike, if things were looking bad, nothing could be worse than to have pressure from home, prodding you to return to work.

I have only been involved in minor incidents since then, but I realise that we workers must stand and fight the capitalist system, with all its injustices and prejudices, by sticking together. It is only when we stand united that we win.

Civil Aviation workers' special conference

REJECT EMPLOYERS' SCHEME

The Civil Aviation Authority Group of the CPSA, which represents 2,000 workers employed by the Civil Aviation Authority [CAA] including the Air Traffic Control Assistants, are holding a Recall Delegate Conference at the Central Hall, Westminster, on Tuesday 30th January to determine the union's response to management proposals to hold a job evaluation exercise leading to establishing a new system of pay determination in the CAA.

Under the present pay agreement, the pay of the CAA employees is determined by a direct link with the pay of the Civil Service employees. Management want to man a job evaluation exercise using a system known as Hay MSL, the data from which would be used to break the pay link and create the CAA's own salary

and grading system.

The unions in the CAA are divided on the issue. Some unions, like the IPCS and SCPS, have agreed to join the exercise, whilst others are sitting on the fence. The CPSA's CAA Group Executive Committee have come out strongly against the exercise and breaking the pay link, after a full analysis of the facts, and launched a campaign leading to the special Conference.

The campaign has included a special leaflet being issued to all CAA employees; special feature articles in the Group's Journal 'Aviation Organiser' and membership meetings in every branch up and down the country addressed by a union speaker.

A special Conference document has been issued to all members containing the terms of a motion to be put to the Conference rejecting the evaluation exercise and re-affirm-

ing earlier Conference policy in favour of retaining the Civil Service pay link.

The Executive has told members that if the Conference votes for this policy and the employer refuses to accept the wishes of the union and its members, members will be balloted at branch meetings for authority to be given to the Executive for an industrial action campaign.

This time the ATCA's won't be on their own and already the Executive is drawing up its plans for industrial action embracing all sections of its membership in the event of action being necessary to protect members' interests and Conference policy.

By Frank Bonner
(CPSA Assistant Group Secretary, in a personal capacity)

CPSA pay fight—page 6

LORRY STRIKE SOLID IN NORTH

From the very beginning the strike in this region was solid. There are about 5,000 drivers on strike in the region at the moment and at five mass meetings in various parts of the region last week they overwhelmingly rejected the RHA offer.

In Newcastle, for example, 1,300 men packed into a local cinema voted absolutely unanimously against the offer and to continue the strike. The strike committee consisting of TGWU, URTU and

GMWU members meets continuously to issue dispensation papers to farmers and to lorries carrying feedstock, medical or other essential supplies.

In at least one or two cases, however, the good-will of the lorry drivers has been abused. At the Gateshead Green Market, for example, farmers were allowed through the picket lines where they were bringing their own produce onto the market.

All was going well until one of the pickets happened to lift

a tarpaulin covering the local farmers' produce. What did he find but dates and satsumas! Quite clearly some farmers were simply using the agreement to go into haulage themselves and scab on the drivers.

good-will abused

The continental fruit-carriers were, dumping their goods at the farm where the farmer was loading it up with his own produce. After the

first incident was discovered, the pickets prevented any more Durham dates going onto the market!

The regional press, like the national press, is conducting a campaign against so-called secondary picketing, but one of the strike committee explained why it was necessary: "If we only picketed the lorry depots the manager could simply get on the phone and sub-contract the work out to someone else—what is known as 'ten-percenting'. Then again when pickets have been

outside firms where they get their regular traffic, the managers have been coming out and threatening that they will change over to another company if they continue to picket—so the men cover each others' regular firms."

In the last day or so at least seven companies in the area have come forward with agreements conceding the full claim of £65 for 40 hours. The mass meeting last week was clearly of the opinion that the men in the region should all go back together so that there

were no small groups of drivers left on their own.

Some agreements have now actually been signed so that drivers are being sent back to work by the union. Some of the men on strike are very concerned about this development which could break the magnificent solidarity that has been built up.

Report by
John Pickard

FREIGHT DRIVERS JOIN IN

National Freight Corporation workers, in three different unions, the T&G WU, NUR, the National Carriers group which was formerly with British Rail—and the TSSA, for salaried staff, have a wage agreement which expires in November, as compared with January for the rest of the industry.

When the road haulage workers were less well organised, it made sense for the settlement in the nationalised companies to set the pattern for the private sector. But with the major private hauliers being forced to recognise the TGWU, and the loss-making NFC companies being pressurised by the government, the situation is reversed.

Last year, when the NFC workers were only awarded the 10% stage 3 agreement, the NUR and the TGWU went to Central Arbitration, on the grounds that the NFC were paying less than the Road Haulage settlement.

They obtained an increase which brought for example, the basic wages of a driver of a small artic to £51.50 with

some consolidation of Stages 1 and 2. But the increase was not backdated, and the TSSA were not involved. (The basic for a Class C clerk is still only £48.02.)

Now the three NFC unions are awaiting the results of the lorry drivers' strike. The unions are not playing leapfrog but piggyback, with the TGWU members in NFC relying on their colleagues in the private sector, the NUR on the TGWU and TSSA on the NUR.

An NUR circular states that: The NUR are not in dispute with NFC; their members should carry out their normal duties; they should not prejudice the future situation by doing work normally done by the TGWU.

But the circular fails to offer any real lead. Many of the places NUR drivers deliver to have had TGWU picket lines.

Docks and warehouses are served by both unions.

NUR drivers have refused to cross the picket lines, and are losing money as a result, particularly after the Christmas rush when overtime and bonus earnings are low. The

Naval Depot at Deptford are bringing in forces' baggage the depot where I work, a small example of troops being used to break the strike.

The management of the Southern Region of National Carriers have issued a directive stopping all overtime, with an exception. Overtime will be allowed if the drivers bring in sufficient extra work. So they are being encouraged to break the strike.

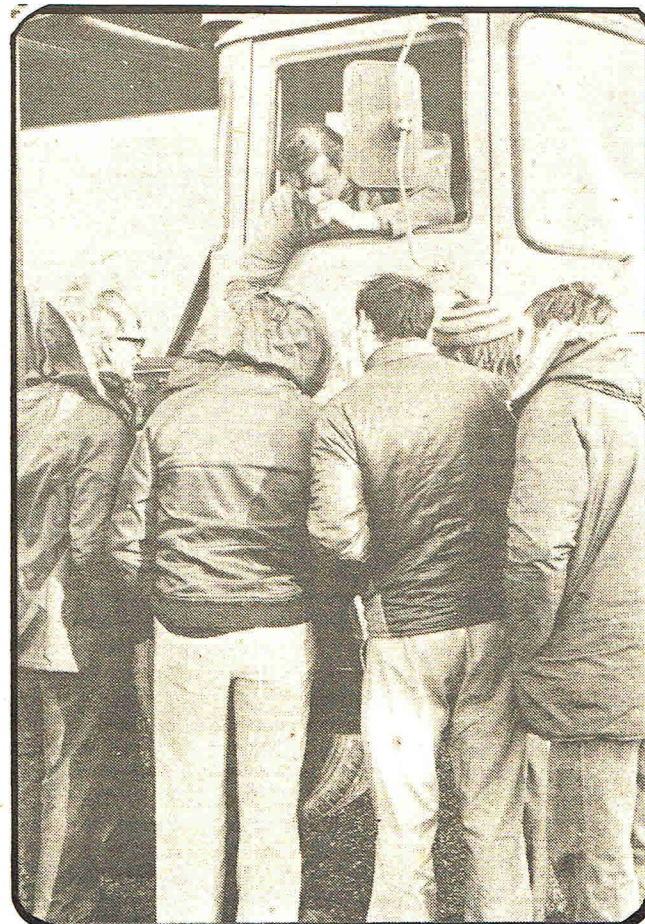
Also staff are being cut. At my depot they are picking on the clerical staff first, reducing the establishment by 13.

The success of the lorry drivers' strike is essential for all workers in the industry. But we cannot lean on their efforts.

The power of the workers in the industry is divided between TGWU, NUR, URTU, TSSA and ASLEF. If these five unions took united action, what power could stop them?

By Peter Redfern

(TSSA,
personal capacity)



T&GWU lorry drivers' pickets at Tilbury Docks checking a driver's licence.
Photo: Militant

POOLE, DORSET

Support for the lorry drivers strike has been 100% in Poole, Dorset.

Pickets successfully stopped two boatloads of rye for the local Ryvita factory being unloaded. This action is costing Ryvita £2,000 per day and lay-offs are inevitable.

Deliveries to Max Factors, Plesseys and Metal Box were stopped and police were called last Friday to Fern-down industrial estate, Dorset after complaints that lorries were causing an obstruction.

Now that the strike is official, the roll on, roll off ferries have stopped and the local docks are virtually at a standstill.

Flying pickets were going from Poole to Weymouth to help picket the Channel Islands Sea Link ferries.

Report by Julie
Harris (Poole CLP)

A UNITED FIGHT FOR THE FULL CLAIM

In Brighton there is full co-operation between the RHA and NFC drivers and we believe this could and should be achieved nationally and in every area.

We have elected a joint strike committee with all stewards working together, and we have successfully blockaded the ports at Shoreham and Newhaven.

We have had one mass meeting, and another will be held tonight. We think it is essential to keep every driver involved and informed. We have interpreters in the main European languages. This is

important for proper communication with Continental lorry drivers.

As you would expect, they have been told a pack of lies by the employers. But by talking to them in their own language, the common class interest comes through and fraternal links are built for the future.

We are afraid that the tactic of dividing drivers from the private and nationalised sector is going to be used. At the present time NFC lorry drivers have been offered only 5%. This is completely unacceptable; we therefore walked out to join our brothers from the

RHA.

This was decided at a meeting of Region 1 NFC shop stewards and branch secretaries which was held on 7th January. We are demanding that our strike be made official.

We deplore the views of those who suggest we ought to await the outcome of the RHA drivers' dispute and then try to negotiate parity. If we want the same rewards we must be prepared to do the fighting and make the same sacrifices.

In any event the 'wait-and-see' approach is shortsighted. NFC drivers could become

isolated, with a strong possibility of the government workers getting less than the private sector.

We urge all NFC drivers to come out now and join in the fight. We think that it is scandalous that a Labour government is considering using troops to break our strike, although the announcement that troops may be used was greeted with howls of laughter on the picket line.

The troops couldn't cope even if they brought them all back from Northern Ireland. Threats like this will only harden our resolve. We also deplore any attempt by our

union officials to co-operate with the government in ending so-called "secondary picketing".

Instead they should co-operate with the local strike committees in extending such action, and in the interest of all bring about a rapid and successful conclusion of the dispute. **Total victory for our full original claim—£65 for 35 hours.**

By Alex Ingram

(T&GWU shop steward,
Brighton Strike
Committee)

OVERTONES OF 'IN PLACE OF STRIFE'

Jimmy Goldbourne, Chairman of the Merseyside 6/541 Commercial Services branch, talked to Terry Harrison.

"We have solid support from our membership. We are still only putting out sparse pickets. We are allowing various people, who are not affected by the strike, to go in and out of the docks, to collect animal foods and medical supplies.

"It is having a very solid effect in this area, and it's the same all around the country as far as we know." He knew of no unfavourable public

reaction to the strike.

Some are feeling the pinch: "We've had reports that certain employers said they would be prepared to pay our demand for £65 for the basic working week. Some of them feel that it is a justifiable demand."

Concessions have been made—"for essential animal foods, when we get evidence that poultry or cattle are starving. We release any medical supplies, and recently we released a cargo of fresh fruit.

"Certain papers have distorted the facts. They are quoting the RHA, and people

who are not getting dispensation... We have asked them to rectify it. The local radio have done so. One particular paper—the 'Echo'—didn't."

Reports said that pickets had refused to allow the movement of essential supplies such as kidney machines to the new Royal Liverpool Hospital. Jimmy explained:

"We did make contact with the hospital administrator to ask him to retract his statement. It was completely wrong. Our members, although in dispute, have allowed all that stuff to be moved."

The membership, he said, would have the final say on a settlement. On the question of future legislation against picketing and the "secondary boycott" he said: "It wouldn't be welcome. It's got overtones of 'In Place Of Strife'."

"It would affect not only us, but anyone else in dispute. As long as picketing is being done peacefully, I don't see that we've got a problem."

I asked why the T&G in the Midlands had not applied for their strike to be made official. "In my opinion, there is an inter-union problem in Region 5, with some of the full time officials and a

section of the drivers. Not all the Black Country or West Midlands is in dispute, contrary to what the delegates' decision was. All the container operators in the area are out since the dispute started.

"We have sent a Telex in support of the membership down there who are in dispute." Finally Jimmy mentioned the Labour Party Young Socialists who have visited the strike committee, pledging their support by pursuing the drivers' cause within the Labour Party and the rest of the labour movement.

BRS Bethnal Green

I asked John Fletcher, shop steward for the maintenance men at BRS, about the mood of the men: "It's good, there is no aggro, and the men are prepared to go all the way."

The seven pickets seemed in a very confident mood despite the weather. John said there was some bitterness about the media, particularly papers like the 'Daily Express'.

Albert Perez, with eleven years working for one firm, said: "I drive a 32-ton lorry for £53 basic. We want to do the work but we want a fair share of the cake. I have to do overtime to make up a living wage like all of us. What will happen when these Common Market regulations come in and we are restricted to how many hours we work etc.? How are we going to live then? The cost of living is so high I can't keep pace. I'm not going to drive a 32-ton lorry for £53 a week. I would rather pack up. I travel all over the country. I'm a class one driver."

By Bob Faulkes

RAIL WORKERS - FIGHT TOGETHER

We want the NUR alongside us, in the fight for a decent wage for every railman.

-FOR A LIVING WAGE

On Friday 19th, ASLEF members of the Morden branch who work on London Transport Underground, arranged a meeting with some representatives of British Rail main-line ASLEF members: Bill Elms and Ron Lifford of the Southern Region and Tony West and Martin Elvin of the Eastern Region.

The purpose was to see if any support could be given to our brothers on the main line services in their present dispute. Ron Lifford and Tony West gave a very detailed picture of the dispute and pointed out that BRB under the disguise of productivity deals, are ready to throw men out of a job.

Quite a discussion followed, and Bob Harris, London

Transport ASLEF rep, who organised the meeting, pointed out that if the BRB were successful, this would seriously weaken the union on the main line and the London Transport Executive would then try to do the same on the underground. He urged that the membership on LT should fully support the action taken on the main line and co-ordinate the action, bringing the underground men out on the same day.

A resolution proposed that the executive committee should take steps to bring the LT membership officially into the dispute. This was accepted and passed. All the LT branch officers present agreed to take the resolution back to their branches and ask their members to support it.

All members were invited to a further meeting to be

held at 10.30 am on Saturday 27th at Liverpool Street, at which Ray Buckton will give details of the latest situation.

By Stan Godwin (ASLEF Morden)

For far too long railway workers have accepted falling living standards, under the name of 'fighting inflation'.

For too long we have been put off by watered-down management proposals; for too long we have been taken in by so-called 'impartial' tribunals and working parties.

For too long we have accepted cuts in public expenditure, and for too long we have seemed divided.

Now is the time for ASLEF and NUR to settle any differences and fight the real culprit—the British Rail

Board.

We don't just want NUR support—we want them to come out alongside us, in the fight for a decent basic wage for every railman. No more flimsy bonuses! Gone is the excuse that "all traffic will go to the road".

The strike is for a 10% rise on the basic wage. We have been offered 6-7% with vicious conditions attached, including cuts in staff.

This is totally unacceptable to the members. The BR bosses say that they cannot afford a rise or they will have to put up prices.

We say they are wrong. The railway is a public service. It should be run for need and not for profit. It should be run for the people, by the people.

By Colin Lawson (ASLEF No. 1 Edinburgh)

GARNERS - A YEAR OF STRUGGLE

Saturday 27th marks one year on the picket line for Garners Steak House workers. 84 were sacked for joining the T&GWU in an attempt to better their poverty wages and appalling conditions. To mark the anniversary, an all-day picket will be held at the 399 Oxford Street branch on 27th. All trade union, Labour Party and LPYS members should give their full support.



Photo: Mark Risher/IFL (11)

REVOLT OF LOW PAID

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

able propaganda will not wash!

There will be overwhelming support from the working class for all the public sector workers who take strike action in support of their demands for a decent basic wage. The public sector manual workers have not taken their decision to come out lightly.

These workers keep alive the essential public services which we all depend on. They are dedicated to their work. Many have put in years and years of loyal service.

But dedication does not buy food or pay the rent. They are demanding a living wage and an end to the exploitation of their dedication.

They have been driven out on strike. Speaking in Parliament at the time

of the lobby, Eric Heffer MP rightly castigated those "well-heeled" Tories who have never done a productive day's work in their lives, yet sit in idle judgement on the most lowly-paid workers when they begin to stand up and fight for a living wage.

At Central Hall, Westminster, the leaders of the four main unions addressed a packed meeting where the mood, at times, reached boiling point.

Shared by every worker present was a burning conviction in the justice of their claim. And there was furious anger at the anti-trade union outpourings of the press.

Every time NUPE leader Alan Fisher referred to the lies and distortions of our "friends

and our enemies" of the press, he was interrupted by thunderous applause.

The paltry last-ditch effort of the government to ward off this dispute by offering rises of about 8% was not even mentioned! It was absolutely clear that workers present were determined to end the scandal of their own low pay—and to give a lead to all low-paid workers.

Their confidence has been fed by the successes of workers in private industry. They know they can achieve the pay increase they need.

But in order to bring about a speedy and successful settlement, the unity demonstrated on the march and at the lobby must be maintained and extended.

The action must be

made as effective as possible from the onset. This can be achieved only by all the unions working together through joint strike committees—across the unions, and across the different industries—in every single area of the country.

Some regional union officials in certain areas are trying to dampen down the mood and quell any signs of struggle. But they can—and must—be made to change their tune by massive pressure.

It is already clear that ordinary members of the unions want a united struggle.

Public-sector workers are involved in a crucial battle. The whole of the labour and trade union movement must extend to them its full and active support.

Militant

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DUNLOPS

Continued from front page

that this support is gained in order to call a halt to the loss of jobs in the area.

Nationalisation is the key question, particularly because of the nature of the rubber industry. Dunlops is a multinational company, and many of the decisions affecting workers are taken outside of Britain. The process of rationalisation being undertaken by the Dunlop Company will result in more redundancies than those already announced.

However, I think that the international contacts made by the Dunlop workers from

Speke will stand them in good stead during this struggle.

But above all, it is important that the lesson of the closures of Leylands, GEC, and in fact all of the closures on Merseyside are assimilated.

It is important that every Dunlop worker fights against the closure. A job lost now is a job lost forever. The former workers of Standards, Speke, have found it impossible to find new jobs. And the same would be true for Dunlop workers.

We have to also get the full support of the labour movement behind the Dunlop workers.

FASCISM

Continued from front page

He was also pulled up short by angry questions about his Party's more recent activities like the bombing of a train and their families in 1971, and other murders for which MSI members have been responsible.

On the platform, too, was none other than Julian Amery, Tory MP for Brighton Pavilion, whose own brother was hanged after the war as a traitor after broadcasts from Mussolini's Italy.

Amery attempted to say that he believed in democracy and free speech which was drowned by "No free speech for fascists!"

How is it that Almirante is on the Conservative Central Office's speakers' list? Why was this notorious fascist allowed into this country?

Why did the European Movement invite this speaker without the knowledge of many of their own members?

Why does Brighton Council and East Sussex County Council bar all anti-fascist meetings, and yet allow this meeting to take place on council property? Is it because it is organised by the Tories and these Councils are Tory-controlled?

We will make sure these questions are answered in the coming months. Meanwhile, our successful action can only be added to the victories of Brighton and Hove Committee Against Fascism.



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