

Issue 500

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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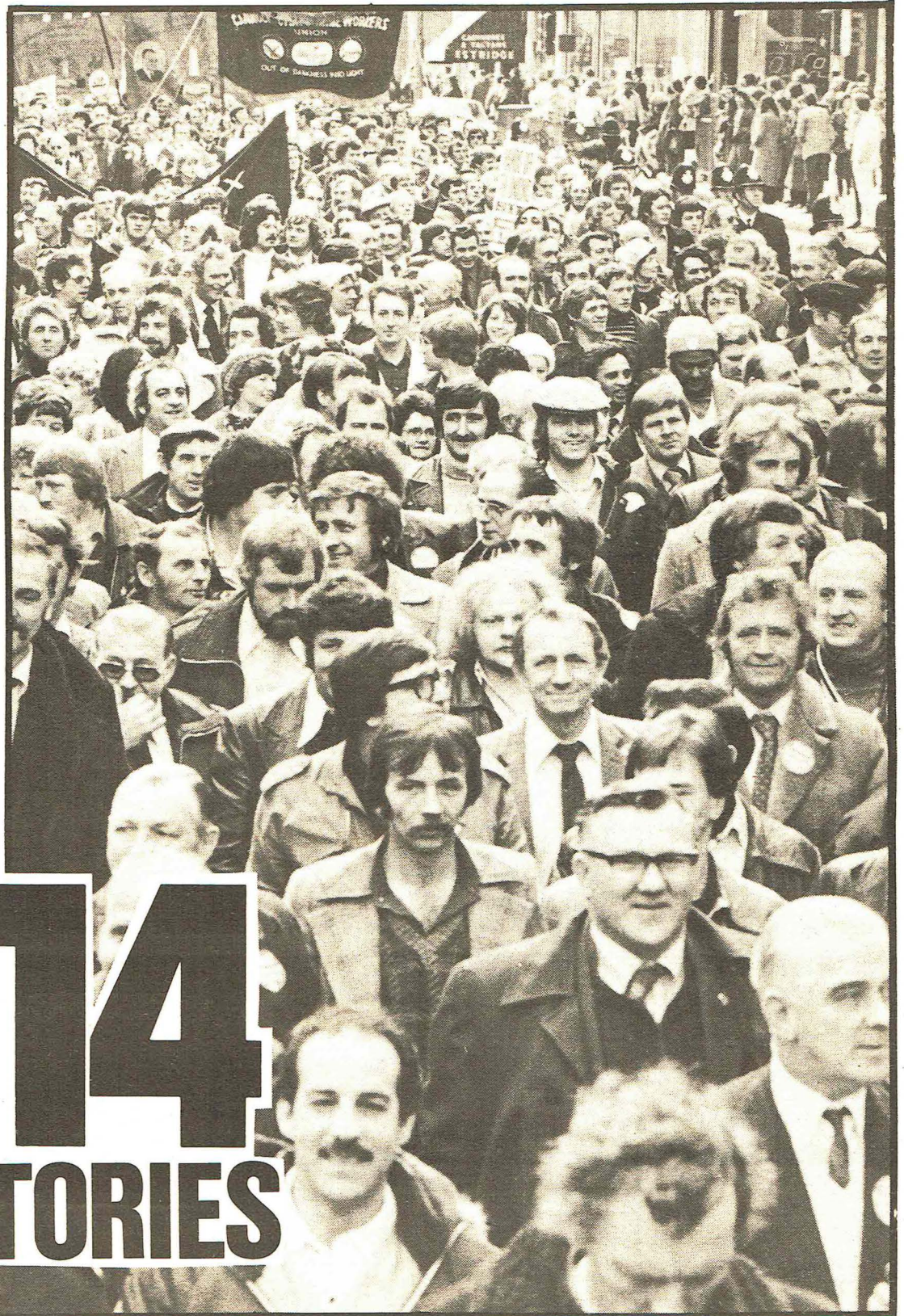
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24 page
Celebration
Edition

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1.5 million jobless... benefits slashed...

ALL OUT ON MAY 14 KICK OUT THE TORIES



More than 1½ million people are now officially unemployed in Britain—a million and a half reasons why the Tories must be thrown out.

Another huge rise in unemployment this month means that unemployment is at its highest April figure since the end of the Second World War.

The growing dole queues are only part of the assaults on the working class being carried out daily by the Thatcher government. If you are unemployed or sick or

poor, the Tories will trample all over you.

Prices are rising daily. The rate of price increases has now topped 20%. Far from reducing inflation as the Tories claim, the government's monetarist policies have given it

an extra twist.

Will the sick or the unemployed get more money to cover their extra costs? Not on your life.

The Tories' new Social Security Bill going through Parliament will cut unemployment benefit by £1.50 a week in real terms. Invalidity benefit will be slashed by £1.85. If the Bill operates for two years the cuts in benefits will be approximately doubled [see page 3].

One major worry haunting the less short-sighted Tories, however, is that their policies will encounter fierce opposition from the organised

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Merseyside will STOP

Why hadn't the TUC called on all trade unions to come out in support of a one-day general strike on May 14th, as the best answer to the Tories' attacks?

This was the burning question forcefully put to Len Murray by Liverpool shop stewards last week.

The TUC's general secretary got a stormy reception at the meeting of 400 shop stewards organised by the Transport and General Work-

nature of the call for action on 14 May.

Responding to the demands for a 24-hour general strike, Murray said that such action could only mean that we were trying to bring the government down. He was drowned in a flood of enthusiastic cheering.

He continued shakily that the only way to remove the Tories was through the ballot box. Besides, the TUC had no power to "dictate" to unions, some of which

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By
Roger Shrives

By Terry Duffy

(T&GWU ACTSS
10/68 Branch)

ers' Union. When the meeting was opened for discussion, the sparks really began to fly. Delegate after delegate criticised the unclear

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Militant

1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

MAY DAY

May Day is historically the occasion on which the working class turns out to demonstrate its strength, to put forward the most urgent demands, and to reassert the fundamental aspirations of the labour movement. Above all, it is the time when the organised workers demonstrate international class solidarity.

This year, the need to mobilise the organised forces of the working class is greater than at any time since 1945.

Working people in Britain are under attack from the most reactionary Tory government for decades. Their policies are determined by the catastrophic crisis facing

British capitalism. While British capitalism faces a specially intense crisis, however, the whole of the capitalist world faces the prospect of profound economic crisis, with a convulsive period of social and political upheavals.

The strategists of capitalism are themselves filled with gloom, if not black despair. Recently, the 'Wall St. Journal,' the mouthpiece of American finance capital, commented on the seizure of the American hostages in Tehran: "This period is...the shocking prologue to an equally intense drama that stands poised to unfold in the decades ahead. It promises to be an absolutely ghastly period."

Reflecting the bankruptcy of ideas and policy of the ruling class, President Carter's anti-inflation advisor recently said: "Anybody who isn't schizophrenic these days, just isn't thinking clearly." ['Time' magazine, 21 April].

Undoubtedly, the 1980s will bring even bigger struggles of the workers and exploited masses of the advanced capitalist countries, the neo-colonial world, and the Stalinist states than in the 1970s.

'Militant', as our special material on the history of the paper shows, was not surprised by the developments of the last two decades. On the contrary, from its beginning in 1964, it advanced a bold Marxist perspective of renewed crisis and upheaval as the long post-war boom of capital-

ism inevitably exhausted itself.

We warned that the labour leaders who believed that they could achieve reforms for the working class within the framework of capitalism were suffering from a fundamental illusion, and were doomed to fail. Similarly, those on the left who still believe that capitalism can survive for another indefinite period, and think that gains can be made for the workers through partial inroads into the wealth and power of capital are labouring under an equally disastrous illusion.

Only a fundamental socialist transformation of society, with the planned control of resources and productive forces by the working class, through workers' democracy, can resolve the burning problems facing the world working class.

All the day-to-day struggles that arise—and they will inevitably take on an even greater intensity in the next few years—must be linked to this fundamental aim. If this is not done, partial gains will prove purely transitory, and the workers will face renewed onslaughts on their conditions of life and democratic rights, with the prospect of the capitalist class resorting

to bloody counter-revolution, and ultimately [if reaction were to succeed] to the holocaust of nuclear war.

But 'Militant', following the great teachers of Marxism, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky, has always been imbued with an unshakeable confidence in the unconquerable will of the working class to change society. Never has the working class been stronger than it is today, both in Britain and internationally.

The vital task of Marxists is to intervene in the momentous struggles that will be provoked by events in order to give the struggle conscious socialist aims, and to ensure that the transformation of society is successfully carried through.

The support the paper has built up during its first 500 issues—support that has only been strengthened by the attacks of the millionaires' press and the right wing within the labour movement—testifies to the fact that 'Militant' is firmly rooted in the labour movement as a powerful voice for the ideas and programme of Marxism.

We are confident, moreover, that in the next period 'Militant' will go from strength to strength.

'The vampires strike out'

The Tories are beginning yet another onslaught onto the defenceless masses of unemployed. Last week, the Social Security [No 2] Bill received its second reading in Parliament. The Bill will put into practice the vicious election promises of the Tories—the unemployed, the invalids, children and the families of strikers will suffer.

Unemployment benefit for a couple will be cut in real terms by £1.50 a week. And invalidity benefit for the chronically sick will be cut by at least £1.85. And if the Tories manage to make the Bill operate for a second year these cuts will, in real terms, be £3.15 and £3.95 less a week respectively.

While the cost of living soars, the unemployed and sick's only income is to be cut. This is the ruthless tactic of the Tories in defence of the profits of big business.

One of the biggest cuts will be in injury benefit, paid for the first six months after an industrial injury. Although the Tories have increased the payment, it will be by only 10%—this does not keep up with inflation and will mean a real loss of £1.95 a week.

Benefits for a couple with two children will be cut by £2.80 a week—an annual loss of £145.60.

Of course the Tories have a particular venom for workers who dare take on the bosses in an industrial dispute. So between £12 and £16 will be cut from any payments for a strikers' family. Very few workers who go on strike have

By Kevin Ramage
(National Chairman
LPYS)

much savings to rely on, given the poverty level of wages in this country.

But the Bill will also remove any possibility of 'urgent needs payment', which is paid out in the case of emergencies. For example, if the family of a striking steelworker in South Wales

had their home destroyed by a flood (and floods have hit some areas of Wales hard this winter) they would receive no payment. As far as the Tories are concerned they can live in the street and live on fresh air.

This Bill gives a sharp indication of the reactionary policies to be expected from the Tories—they are rapidly smashing up the gains of the 'welfare state' which were won by the labour movement.

Photo right, C Davies.
Below: YS Day of Action

...FIGHT BACK WITH THE LPYS

The National Committee of the LPYS have called for a week of action from 31 May to 7 June by Young Socialists to highlight the need for action on youth unemployment by the labour and trade union movement.

No work for 1 in 5 school leavers! That is the grim prediction by the Manpower Services Commission. Over 170,000 school-leavers will not find a job before 1981. They will join half a million other young people on the dole.

Unemployment is a threat to all workers. The labour movement must take up the fight if the youth are not to be sacrificed for profit.

In the week of action we intend to get LPYS speakers into the factories and trade union branches. To call for action by the town councils. To canvass the estates and town centres and call public meetings, marches and days of action. We must show the youth that they can fight



back—with the labour movement and the LPYS.

- We fight for:
1. No cuts—a guaranteed job for school-leavers
 2. A £25 grant for all school students over 16
 3. A massive increase in apprentice quotas



4. Useful public work schemes on union rates and under trade union control
5. Trade union control of all training centres
6. Open the trade unions to the unemployed
7. Open the schools and colleges for evening and holiday use
8. Free access to council leisure and educational facilities for the unemployed
9. A national minimum wage of £80 and a 35-hour week with no loss of pay.

(Militant)

A year of trials for Southall

This Sunday sees a demonstration called to mark the first anniversary of the murder of Blair Peach and the police violence in Southall.

The black community in Southall is still suffering the consequences of April 23rd last year. A report published last week by the Runnymede Trust shows what happened in the trials that followed.

Although not primarily concerned with the National Front meeting in Southall itself, it gives an indication of how the police worked with the fascists. One police officer testified at Barnet Magistrates Court that his orders that day were "to prevent anyone approaching the Town Hall except members of the National Front and people that they had vetted."

So much for the pretence that this was an open public meeting protected under electoral laws. 2,700 police officers were drafted in and the thugs of the Special Patrol Group ran riot, resulting in the murder of Blair Peach.

342 people were arrested, the vast majority of Asian or West Indian youth living in Southall or surrounding areas. The Runnymede Trust report, written by one of the defence lawyers, shows what happened at the trials.

Firstly most cases were heard at Barnet Magistrates Court, 20 miles from Southall with no direct public transport in between. This was seen by many people in Southall as an attempt to 'depoliticise' the trials.

Secondly the prosecution evidence almost entirely relied on identification by police officers. Police swore blind for example that six defendants were the same people they had glimpsed in the upstairs room of 6 Park View (local community centre) as dusk approached. Other frequent descriptions were 'an Asian man in a blue shirt' or a 'West Indian woman in a brown headscarf'.

The professional magistrates almost always accepted the police evidence and their conviction rate was markedly higher than all but one of the other magistrates, who were practicing solicitors or barristers. The Report comments that "the allocation of magistrates was of such great importance to the determination of cases that a considerable injustice may have been



Arrest at Southall last April

Photo J McKittrick (Militant)

Anniversary of Southall and murder of Blair Peach London Demonstration Sunday April 27th, 1.00 pm Assemble Speakers' Corner March to rally in Trafalgar Square

done to those accused who had the misfortune to appear before the 'wrong' bench."

A number of defendants changed their pleas to guilty in order just to be 'bound over' rather than face a trial before a magistrate who had acquired an "unfavourable reputation."

The conclusion of the Runnymede report is a stinging rejoinder to those who believe that what happened at Southall and its aftermath is exceptional, and that really

British justice and law and order is basically fair.

The report concludes: "The difficulties of the Southall defendants and their lawyers were the problems of every day in the Magistrates Court writ large. To the Southall Community they came as final blows in a sequence of affronts which began with the occupation of their Town Hall by racists on April 23rd...for the Southall community the lesson is that the courts were the final stage in a process of

victimisation which began with the National Front."

The march this Sunday has been called to remember the murder of Blair Peach and to call for an amnesty for the Southall defendants, the disbandment of the Special Patrol Group and a stop to Tory racist laws. It is being supported by the Labour Party's National Executive, but it must only be part of a really vigorous campaign to resist attacks on blacks and the labour movement.

PROTECTION RACKET FOR FASCISTS

About 5,000 police practically occupied the southern half of Lewisham borough on Sunday to protect at most 800 fascists in a provocative march from Forest Hill to Catford.

A Lewisham park had been commandeered to store police equipment including vanloads of riot shields. The whole of the busy South Circular Road between Catford and Forest Hill was patrolled by ranks of police along the proposed route and at every street corner.

The demonstration, held on Hitler's birthday, was intended as proof that the NF

could now march in Lewisham the scene of the first major defeat for the fascists in 1977. The fascists marched through the area shouting racist slogans, abusing local blacks and Asians.

By the evening there had been 59 arrests, but only 18 of them were NF demonstrators. Forty-one counter-demonstrators were arrested for alleged offences such as offensive weapons and obstruction.

The police operation created a virtual no-go area in Lewisham at a cost which could reach £500,000. Many local people, old and young,

black and white, felt resentful not only at the fascist march but at the intimidatory nature of the police presence. The police chief saw the opportunity to mount a training exercise using the whole paraphernalia of helicopters, mounted police etc.—an exercise in riot control.

The massive operation, at huge cost, to protect the fascists has added another incident to the list which has made a large section of Lewisham workers hostile to the police.

Lewisham council last week threatened to stop paying the police precept, the money

taken from the rates to pay for the Metropolitan Police, unless the police were made more accountable. The military-style operation here makes it vital that the trade union movement carries out its own enquiries into police activities.

'MENACE OF FASCISM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT'
By Ted Grant

40p (plus 10 P&P). From World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

LABOUR MOVEMENT ENQUIRY NEEDED IN BRISTOL

Over 110 arrests, almost 50 people charged, and a growing dossier of police harassment.

This is the reaction of the authorities to the St Pauls riot on 2 April.

Everyone has a story of police "persuasion" and terror, like the boy who admitted to stealing a TV after being threatened with an alternative charge of rape, and others who spent days in the cells on bogus charges.

"They enter the houses, When asked for a warrant, they say they don't need one," said one West Indian woman. "They play on the fears of the people."

Without any clear leadership and organisation of the working class in the area, the response to the police action has been confused and limited. The riot itself flared up, not only out of frustration at the terrible conditions and the harassment, but also because there was no fighting leadership and planned struggle.

Labour must give a lead to the workers and youth. This feeling was expressed at a meeting of St Pauls Labour Party, the biggest for years, which was held just after the riot.

The area has been solid Labour for years and has three Labour councillors. But under the old right-wing leadership, membership was allowed to decline to just over 30, only appearing on the streets at election times. Now the party has begun to change, with the left giving a lead.

Membership is on the increase, but still the right wing in the constituency are severely restricting party activity. The Labour Party alone in the area can offer a viable alternative to unite the workers and housewives, the unemployed, the black and white youth.

However, the party must take up the demands of the area and build a mass active membership. As party secretary, Pat Graham, said on the radio: "While we do not support rioting, we are calling for the defence of those charged by the police, because the real criminals are those who have allowed St Pauls to rot for decades."

The call has now begun for the government to stage a public enquiry into the riot, and some labour leaders are supporting this. But such an enquiry would be totally inadequate.

Will the Tories stage a tribunal to investigate how they and their big-business friends ruin the working people? Why old people go out looting? Will Thatcher, who publicly expresses her contempt for the unemployed, immigrants and the working

By Phil Frampton

class as a whole draw the necessary conclusions?

The Tories have already made their gesture by denying St Pauls even the measly £9,500 requested under the urban aid programme. Their enquiry would at the most lead to the reprimand of a few individuals in the police force, and a few cosmetic proposals.

"I went to the shop run by Hamid and his wife. She told me they had a 5-year-old girl staying with them. Her mother had been detained in police custody for six hours following a raid on her home.

"They took away her children's Easter eggs saying that they had been stolen during the riot. The manager of the store had to come and testify that she had bought them.

"Then the police raided again saying they were looking for a black youth who had been seen running into her house. They went all over the house and the young girl was so upset the doctor had to give her tranquillisers.

"Now she's too frightened to stay in her own home."

Pat Graham, Secretary, St Paul's Labour Party

Others suggest an "independent" enquiry, as if there are people who exist outside the system of exploitation in this society. If the working class is to understand the events of 2 April then its leaders must call a public enquiry.

'Militant' supporters' call for a labour movement public enquiry now has the support of seven members of the Labour Party National Executive, several Bristol Labour Parties, many shop stewards, the secretary of the Trades Council, and St Pauls party itself.

The trades council have said they will investigate calling their own enquiry. Organised with the District Labour Party and made public, with statements not only to the press but to the unions, the workplaces and the residents of St Pauls, this would be an enormous step forward.

It must be combined with action to defend those arrested in the police 'mopping up' operations and give a real lead to the people of St Pauls.

We demand:

- ★ Stop the police rampage—for labour movement defence of those arrested.
- ★ Stop the cuts—reinstate the Bristol Labour councillors expelled for fighting the cuts.
- ★ An immediate programme of work-schemes and skill-training for all, at trade union rates.
- ★ A massive re-housing programme.
- ★ A 35-hour week with no loss of pay.
- ★ Free use of council education and leisure facilities for the unemployed.
- ★ Trade union recruitment of the unemployed.
- ★ Build a mass active membership of the Labour Party.

TIME TO CHANGE COURSE

As the 470,000 strong Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers meet for their Annual Delegate Meeting this weekend in Bournemouth, it will be able to reflect on the lessons of the Labour government's defeat a year ago, and must chart out its path for the next year.

USDAW members have, since the union was founded in 1948, been among the lowest paid sections of the trade union movement. Many members have received wage settlements this year which has left them with a gross wage barely above £55 per week.

This, in 1980 is nowhere near being a living wage, in fact it is a disgrace.

USDAW members have, many cases among the less well organised sections of the movement have to work long hours in often poor conditions of work.

This situation can be pinpointed to the fact that the present leadership of USDAW have never attempted to mobilise the membership around a campaign to fight for a decent living wage. The membership, time and again, have been disappointed and through apathy and frustration have been forced into the blind alley of poverty wages.

This year delegates must change course and begin the fight for a decent living wage.

The Executive Council's statement being presented to the ADM, "Wages and Economic Policy", states that 'there has been a significant development in the reduction of the working week below 40 hours...particularly in the retailing sector'. There have been many settlements in recent months reducing the working week to 39 hours and even to 35 hours in some cases.

By George Williamson

(London Metropolitan, USDAW branch delegate)

This can only be welcomed. On the other hand the wage levels still remain among the lowest in the movement. The union policy of two years ago, £55, is only now beginning to be met, but rampant inflation has meant that for those members on these wage levels, living standards have fallen as their wages in real terms decline.

The statement goes on to attack the Tory government's 'monetarist' policies, pointing that they will neither solve the problems facing the decrepit British economy, or alleviate the appalling conditions facing many British workers. While the EC is undoubtedly correct in its general analysis, it puts forward no alternative or suggest what the membership should do to defend their livelihoods when under threat.

At a time when strong leadership from the EC has never been more essential, absolutely none is forthcoming.

The agenda of the conference puts forward more realistic solutions to the problem of low pay. No less than 25 propositions demand an end to the present situation. The demand for £70 minimum per week and a



The banner of USDAW

Photo: MILITANT

35 hour maximum is repeated again and again.

This demand being pursued by the Broad Left supporters of USDAW goes together with the clear need for a campaign of the members to achieve it. It is not sufficient to merely pass resolutions at the ADM; action must be taken!

The question of unemployment is taken up on the agenda. The demand that redundancies should be fought and new jobs created to eradicate unemployment are repeated throughout the agenda, along with the realisation that only a Labour government committed to tackle this question effectively.

These propositions call for the nationalisation under workers' control of any firm threatening redundancy, with compensation to the old owners to be paid on the basis of proven need. Also a massive increase in public works to schools, hospitals etc, work or full pay, and the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, and a socialist plan of production to develop an economy in the interests of the working people, are put

forward. Quite obviously, only this kind of programme is capable of combatting unemployment effectively and should be wholeheartedly supported by the ADM.

Opposition to the Tories' spending cuts feature on the agenda. There is a demand for opposition to all cuts, for the mobilisation of the whole trade union movement behind local authorities not implementing cutbacks. Clearly this should be supported by the delegates in order to ensure that USDAW plays its part in the fight against the government's measures.

There is a call for the establishment of a Youth Section of USDAW. The propositions state that it is young members of the union who very often have to take the brunt of the low wages and long hours. They call on the Executive Council to involve all young members of the union at all levels to be encouraged to become involved by forming a Youth Section nationally. This is undoubtedly a very good way of doing just that and should be fully supported.

New technology is an increasingly important subject for USDAW members.

Proposition 65 by Liverpool Retail Dry Goods calls on the Executive to support any section of the union engaged in struggle against the introduction of new technology where this will merely swell the company's profits and threaten redundancies.

An amendment by Manchester Central takes this further and calls for all agreements to ensure that there are no redundancies, loss of pay, longer hours, and erosion of health safeguards as a result of the introduction

The debate on Labour Party Democracy at the Annual Delegate Meeting will be one of the most important, certainly as far as the broader labour movement is concerned.

The 1980 Labour Party Conference will, in all probability, be evenly balanced between left and right on the questions of democratic extension.

If the Labour Party is to be an effective force in the fight against the Tories, its members must be able to have greater say in its running, and the representatives must be made more accountable to those who elect them. That is why it is very important that the 1980 Conference upholds the decisions of the 1979 Conference.

The executive council have prepared a report on this issue for the ADM. The document deals with three main topics: election of party leader, mandatory re-selection and responsibility for the Manifesto.

The report suggests that there should be no change in the method of electing the party leader; but surely the leader of the Labour Party is the representative of the whole Labour Party, not just the PLP. Every other part of the NEC down to local branches elect their representatives every year, so should it be with the party leader as well.

On mandatory re-selection, the EC proposes having a two-stage selection procedure to select Labour candidates. This system would have the effect of causing and prolonging dis-sension, whipped up by the

Details of 'Militant' meeting Page 13.

of new technology. The proposition and the amendment form the basis of ensuring that USDAW members do not suffer in this way and should be supported.

One debate which will attract considerable interest will be on the Tories' Employment Bill.

The Executive Council has already expressed its opposition to the Bill, and this attitude is reflected in the propositions and even extended. There are several demands for a concerted campaign to defeat the Bill, including one amendment, by Newcastle Branch, which calls on the EC to make May

Tory press, within the party—it would be far better to instigate the principle of re-selection as a matter of course.

In this way every constituency would be in the habit of regularly selecting their candidate, and dis-sension would be kept to a minimum. If a constituency was happy with its sitting MP then it would re-select him. If a constituency had an unpopular MP, he could be removed with very little fuss in one stage, instead of the drawn-out acrimonious method suggested by the EC.

In relation to responsibility for the Manifesto, the EC report states that all that is needed is to 'improve relationships' between the various levels of the party, rather than the constitutional changes needed. What does this mean? The EC is fudging the issue on this question.

The trade union movement must play the leading role in building the party, by setting up factory branches of the Labour Party to involve trade unionists at local level. This should be carried out at all levels by forming joint Trades Councils/Labour Party liaison committees to win members and regionally by forming Regional TUC/Labour Party committees.

USDAW must play its part too, and the union leadership should launch a mass recruitment campaign in conjunction with the party to encourage USDAW members to join the Labour Party. This would ensure a mass democratic party which armed with socialist policies would ensure the election of a massive majority Labour government, committed to socialist change.

Bristol

By Cllr. Pete Hammond

"The Bristol City Council resolves to fully support the Trades Union Congress in: [a] its campaign for economic and social advance; [b] the call for an alternative economic strategy to that being pursued by the present Conservative government; [c] the call for a Day of Action against the policies of the government on 14th May 1980.

"The council further resolves to allow all its employees who are members of trade unions an extra day's paid holiday on 14th May 1980 in order that they may take part in the TUC Day of Action."

This was the text of the resolution moved by Councillor Pete Hammond (expelled from Labour Group) and seconded by Cllr Dave Parsons (also one of the expelled). The resolution visibly placed some of the Labour Group in an uncomfortable position, many of the Labour Group being trade union officials and members of unions that are organising for the May 14th action.

However their position was solved by an amendment to

delete the last paragraph. This was carried and the main resolution was then carried.

The resolution carried includes support for the May 14th day of action and it is now open for the public employees of the council to take action on that day—after all they are only doing what is now officially recognised by the city council!

Since the eight councillors have been expelled from the Labour Group for voting against implementing Tory cuts by the Labour Council, support for their action has gathered enormously. A majority of Party branches, three CLPs in Bristol (out of a possible five)—Bristol SE, NE and West and the District Labour Party have all given their support and demanded

their reinstatement.

It is now not us who are 'independent' Labour—a title which we reject but which the media has called us—but the Labour Group majority who, on issue after issue, are flouting the policy of the party. The party branches and CLPs must look very seriously at the record of their councillors when re-selection occurs.

Only the eight expelled councillors voted for the full resolution above despite the fact that many of the leading councillors are officials or members of trade unions. Perhaps their union rank and file should also be questioning the role of some of their members!

The special Labour Party conference to be held on May 31st will not consist of delegates to last year's conference as reported in Militant two weeks ago. New delegates will be elected from all affiliated organisations and CLP's.

Oldham

Last Saturday marked a turning point in the attitude of the immigrant community in Oldham.

For months now they have been the subject of attacks from the '71 Immigration Act as families have been divided, young children refused entry in spite of conclusive evidence of their family connections, old people—one woman of 80—returned to areas where there is no one to look after them.

In addition to this 'legal' oppression, the last few months have seen a terror campaign by thugs, including fire bombs, window smashing, car tyre slashing, NF

slogans daubed on houses and children beaten up.

On April 12th, the NF demo was the final straw. Over 600 black workers and youth lined the proposed route of the march waiting for the NF's 60 supporters, mainly young thugs led by six or so 'heavies'. Hundreds of police were rushed in when it was realised that the immigrants were not prepared to allow the NF onto the streets of Oldham.

The police drove the anti-racists into a side street, all the exits already having been cordoned off, in an unprovoked attack. Immigrants were pushed to the ground. Stewards attempting to direct the demo had their mega-

phones confiscated, then they themselves were arrested.

The Front with most of the opposition diverted by the police were still heckled the whole length of their march along Union Street and during their rally, where they were invisible behind hundreds of police. Finally they were escorted all the way to cars waiting to whisk them away.

It's absolutely essential that the Labour Party takes up the cause of the black workers and their families and takes up a campaign to recruit them to the Party.

By a 'Militant' reporter

LEFT and RIGHT

IT'S ALL THE REDS' FAULT

The old hacks from the Tory press have no doubt been scowling ever since they realised that even they could not put the incidents in Bristol down to a race riot—even they had to admit it was a direct result of youth frustration at high unemployment and bad social conditions. But the 'Daily Mail' managed to come up trumps. In a page article on April 16, entitled 'Now the Left's agitators are fanning the flames of Bristol', they explain that the trouble was caused by "revolutionaries and anarchists" who had since "moved down to Bristol" [that sounds familiar]. Oh well, if you can't blame the blacks, blame the reds. The trouble is you see, these left-wing groups are pointing out the inadequacies of capitalism to the working people of St Pauls [as if they needed to be told]. The way to combat this, the 'Mail' points out, is to make "greater job opportunities" in the area. What the 'Mail' fails or refuses to understand is that the very system they represent, where nearly 40% of youngsters in St Pauls are unemployed, cannot provide better job opportunities, or it would have done so in the first place. And even if the Tories could pump money into St Pauls as a short term measure, what about the mass unemployment in Merseyside, South Wales, Scotland, the North East, Northern Ireland and inner-city London? But the last word on St Pauls to Roy De Frietas, a member of the Commission for Racial Equality whose comment must have scared the pants off the 'Mail': "There is a danger that out of frustration, we will all, the old as well as the young, become revolutionaries."

A RESPECT FOR TRADITION

A church in Amsterdam which is to be used for the coronation this month of Princess Beatrix, is currently being guarded by three dozen armed police. Local homeless people have threatened to pack into the church before the coronation ceremony as a protest against the shortage of homes—many of these were squatting in apartments earlier this year, but were evicted by police using tanks and armoured cars, in scenes reminiscent of the Nazi occupation of Amsterdam during the last war. The trouble is, the police say, is that these people have no respect. As a police spokesman told the 'Daily Express' [April 16], "We hope they don't spoil this royal event, but socialist activists do not respect ancient traditions." Capitalism's "ancient traditions" of inflicting the misery of homelessness, let alone poverty etc., onto the shoulders of the working people is a tradition that may be tolerated by ancient relics such as the monarchy, but the traditional role of socialists and trade unionists is to fight for social reforms and struggle for a new society where resources are not squandered in silly medieval rituals but used for the benefit of all.

WRONG!

The old crook Nixon is currently being lauded by the 'Now' magazine as some great intellectual analyst, with his series on how the Soviet Union is precipitating a third world war. Of course, the purpose of this great essay is to add to the increasing sabre-rattling propaganda from the Tories, the bosses and their yellow press, so they can boost arms expenditure and divert attention from the real problems facing the working people. But the accuracy of the in-depth research Tricky Dicky has made into this whole subject, can be well measured from a small snippet from the introduction of the British edition of his book: "I had been greatly impressed by Ernest Bevin, who was Foreign Minister and later became Prime Minister." As any school kid doing 'O'-level history could tell you, Bevin was never Prime Minister.

THE REVOLUTIONARY ARTIST

Rossina Conroy

(Blackburn CLP)

reviews 'Art and Revolution' by John Berger [Writers' and Readers Co-operative, £5.95].

With a constant trickle of writers, artists and intellectuals leaving the Soviet Union, John Berger's book, by concentrating on one individual, the sculptor Ernst Neizvestny, gives a vivid account of the difficulties facing artists in the USSR.

Neizvestny was born in 1926, brought up in the Urals among exiles, later becoming a lieutenant in the army. During the second world war he was wounded and left on the battlefield, behind German lines, presumed dead. In the next twenty years, however, no one connected the missing 'patriot' with the notorious, officially condemned, 'decadent' and 'unpatriotic' sculptor of the same name.

Before explaining Neizvestny's work and its powerful imagery, Berger sets it against the development and character of the traditional Russian art of religious icons and folk art which has exerted a strong influence over six centuries. There was no secular art and no sculpture except Church carving.

In the eighteenth century, a rigid academicism took over which stifled artistic potential and only gave way in the early twentieth century.

The new class of industrialists began to patronise the radical art of western Europe, bringing Russian artists into contact with the revolutionary forms of Cubism and Futurism.

Then, the great revolutionary upheaval that came in 1917 produced a burst of creativity and confidence in the arts, expressed in different ways in the works of artists like Tatlin, Malevich, Lissitsky, and Rodchenko.

But the freedom and experimentation of the first years of the revolution were

replaced by the severe restrictions and stifling of all creative activity which came with the smothering of workers' democracy and the growth of bureaucracy and totalitarian rule.

Under Stalin, a form of art called 'Socialist Realism' was justified to meet the demands of the public who had a right to art in a style based on "natural appearances," it depicted people and scenes for propaganda purposes. Berger analyses this in detail. Today, the studios of Moscow are still reserved for official artists doing this sort of work. They are extremely privileged artistic functionaries, and live far better than the average engineer or teacher.

The Academy and the Artists Union are opposed to Neizvestny and see his work as a threat. In ten years he has only received one official commission.

The Academy and the

Union also have a monopoly of artistic materials, including the stone and metals he needs for his sculpting. Neizvestny has no alternative but to buy privately, that is on the black-market, which is of course illegal. The state foundries only accept official work, and so a large sculpture by Neizvestny has to be cast in many parts on his own tiny furnace in his small workshop.

Berger also gives a very revealing account of an exhibition held by the Union which included Neizvestny's work, as well as that of other experimental artists. It was, predictably, promptly closed down even though there were long queues of people waiting to see it.

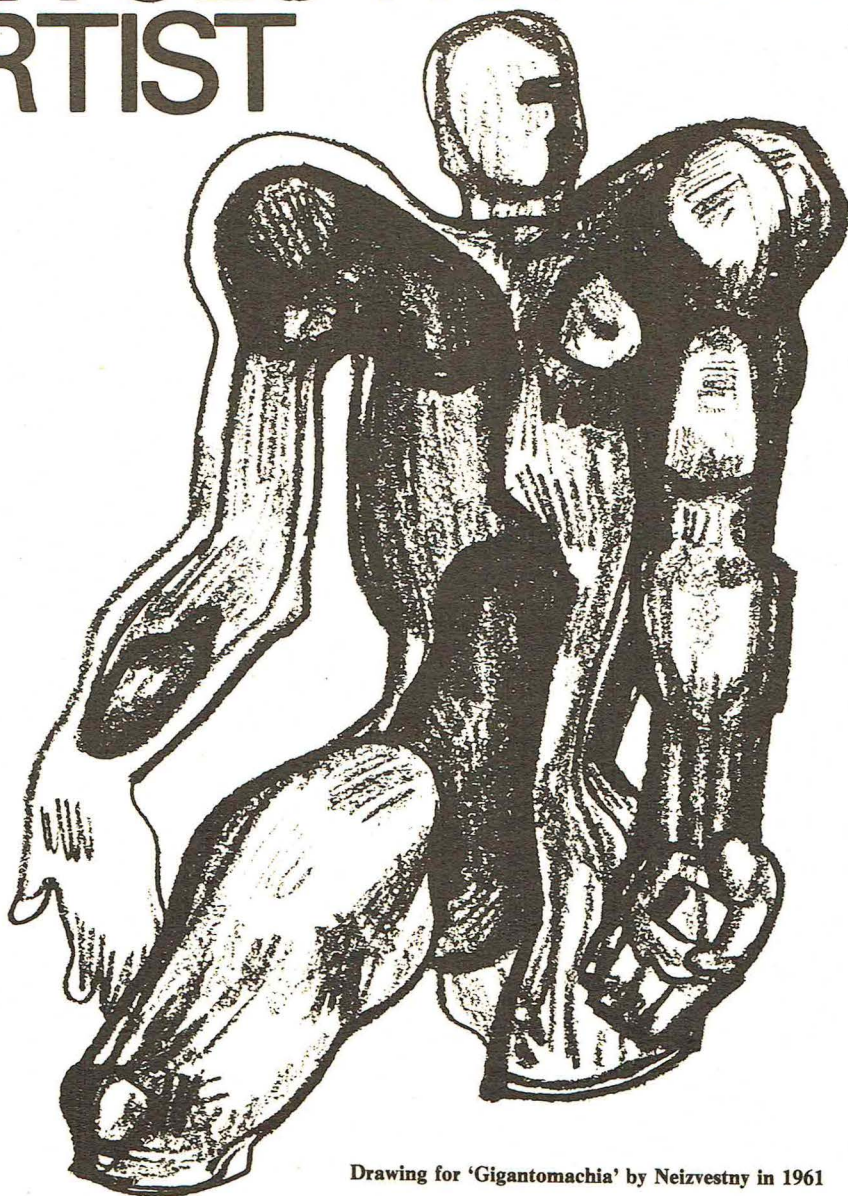
The exhibits were inspected by Krushchev who, as he walked round shouted such profound comments as: "Dog shit!" "Filth!" "Disgrace!"

Neizvestny was subjected to

a medical examination to see if he were 'mad'. Eventually, like many other artists, he has left the Soviet Union and now lives and works in Europe.

Numerous photographs illustrate Neizvestny's working conditions, as well as his works—sculptures of powerful figures, with heavy limbs and muscles and machine parts. His sculptures are not just aesthetic work but attempts to express the experience of struggle lived by millions of people.

'Art and Revolution' is a very personal and accessible book for those who seek an introduction to the history of Russian art. The concept of revolutionary art and the role of the artist in society are discussed against the background of the forces unleashed by the revolution of 1917 and later by the introduction of 'Socialism in One Country.'



Drawing for 'Gigantomachia' by Neizvestny in 1961

THE MATCHGIRLS' STRIKE

At the time of the matchgirls' strike, one of the strikers was asked where it had taken place. "Well, it just went like tinder," she said. "One girl began, and the rest said yes, so out we all went."

The revolt of the matchgirls, the "most miserable of the miserable", was a symptom of deep stirrings amongst the most exploited sections of the workers of London's East End, and it also played a part in setting off a widespread movement of the unskilled workers.

For years workers in the match and other sweated trades had been ignored by "respectable" trade unionists, who largely came from the "aristocratic" upper crust of skilled craftsmen.

By taking action to improve their conditions and secure the right to union organisation, the matchgirls opened

By Bob Wade

people's eyes to a whole section of the working class which, sunk in hopeless misery and degradation, had been forgotten by the rest of society.

Reg Beer's excellent pamphlet gives the background to these developments. Based on thorough research and a wealth of detail, the pamphlet analyses the appalling social and economic conditions of the workers of East London in the 19th century. It also describes, sometimes in vivid detail, the terrible conditions of the matchgirls, particularly the horrifying effects, such as "phosphy jaw", which resulted from contact with the phosphorous used in match making.

The most bitterly ironic grievances of the matchgirls was that their employers deducted pennies out of their



Striking matchgirls during the 1888 strike.

meagre wages to pay for the statues to "great philanthropists" like Gladstone, and to send missionaries to Africa to civilise the "natives".

Reg Beer's pamphlet is the second produced by the National Museum of Labour History, which is now at Limehouse Town Hall, Commercial Road, London E.14. (telephone 01-515 3229).

There is also a large-format edition available for schools. The Museum have also reproduced 'The Matchgirls' Register' (75p), which gives

individual details of the strikers, their homes, and their participation in the strike.

Reg Beer: 'Matchgirls' Strike 1888: The struggle against sweated labour in London's East End'.

National Museum of Labour History Pamphlet No. 2, 75p plus 15p postage.

THE POISONED PROFITS OF

2,4,5 T

News that household herbicides and pesticides contain 2,4,5 T, a highly toxic chemical believed by scientists to be responsible for a horrifying increase in birth defects, skin diseases and cancer, has again rightly intensified demands for the tighter screening and control of potentially dangerous chemicals.

At the moment the major manufacturer of 2,4,5 T is refusing to release the results of medical studies on their workforce. There have also been allegations of a Watergate-style break-in at the home of a doctor who has been investigating the effects of 2,4,5 T.

It has also come out that Mr Dennis Thatcher, the prime minister's husband, is a director of a firm producing weed-killer based on 2,4,5 T.

Predictably, there have been the by now almost customary government claims that the chemical is absolutely safe, and that the eight unions and six local authorities which have banned it have acted out of scientific ignorance.

So what is the truth concerning 2,4,5 T? What hazards does it really pose to the public?

In a two part article Ronnie Sookhdeo shows the chemical industry under control of the bosses is a danger to the workers.

The chemical Trichlorophenoxyacetic Acid (2,4,5 T) and its impurity Dioxin—described as the most lethal man-made poison ever—have both achieved notoriety in a remarkably short period of time.

Dioxin is produced during the synthesis of the base chemical Trichlorophenol, which is used in the manufacture of two chemicals, hexachlorophene and 2,4,5 T, with Dioxin being retained as an impurity in both substances.

Hexachlorophene, a bactericide, was widely used as a wash for treating acne, in soaps, surgical swabs and as an antiseptic in hospital nurseries. But in the late 1960s evidence began to accumulate linking its use with internal and brain damage. Its use was supposed to have ceased after a dramatic occurrence of infant mortalities in England and France.

Talcum powder containing hexachlorophene was daubed on the bottoms of new-born babies. In the most recent case last month, the manufacturer and distributor of talcum powder which killed 33 babies in France received suspended sentences.

The herbicide 2,4,5 T has had a much more chequered history. It was formulated with another chemical and

called "Agent Orange". This was used by the US military with devastating and horrendous effects in Vietnam. Over 90 million pounds of Agent Orange was sprayed over Vietnam and a staggering 10% of the population was exposed to it.

The full horror of Dioxin poisoning was revealed to the West when the Swiss-owned Icmesa plant exploded in Seveso, Italy, in 1976. Within days of the explosion rashes began to break out on the skin of babies and young children, followed by acute diarrhoea and severe vomiting. People began to suffer headaches, excessive violent sweating and to experience liver and kidney pains.

But the most horrific result was the high incidence of spontaneous abortions amongst pregnant women and the birth of grotesquely malformed babies.

Today, four years after the Seveso accident, the region produces more deformed babies, including mongoloids, than the whole of the rest of Western Europe!

This calamitous mishap, sounding like a horror story from a science-fiction book describing the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust, is a searing indictment of the misuse and perversion of science and technology in capitalist society. When profit is the



This little girl is a victim of Seveso—after the chemical works blew up horrendous rashes and blisters broke out on the skin of young children.

ultimate motive for development, the risks of serious danger to health and damage to the environment are strictly secondary considerations.

Although big business complains ever more loudly about health and safety regulations, in most countries, including Britain, the laws and procedures used for checking new products and controlling the production and use of dangerous substances are woefully inadequate.

The enormity of the crime committed against the people

of Seveso becomes even clearer when it is realised that the disaster in Italy was not the first accident for the Swiss manufacturers.

There had already been accidents in the United States, Britain, West Germany and Holland. In each case, the whole plant had to be destroyed and buried in deep underground wells.

In the British accident, at the Coalite factory in Bolsover in April, 1968, seventy-nine men were affected by 2,4,5 T fumes!

In part II next week, Ronnie Sookhdeo gives more evidence of the serious effects in Britain of 2,4,5 T on the health of workers and their families, and explains the urgent need for stronger health and safety safeguards under the control of the trade unions

Work harder so the bosses can make millions

There was quite a commotion amongst employees at Glaxo Operation's Ware site over the appointment of an 'energy' manager.

Was this (no doubt expensive) overhead to see that we don't work too hard, to shorten the working week or even lower the retirement age in an effort to save the energies of our labour force?

Could he be organising a fleet of coaches to take us to and from work, thus saving us petrol?

Unfortunately, this seems most unlikely. It is much more likely that he will be asking employees to work in cold, poorly-lit conditions, and calling for higher production levels. In fact, he will be asking us to work harder to increase the massive £72.3 million 1979 pre-tax profits of this multinational company, which produces pharmaceutical and food products.

But why did they hand out £25,000 to the Tory Party last

By a
'Glaxo' worker

year?

Why doesn't Austin Bide, chairman of the Glaxo Group, hand back some of the £44,000 plus he got from his 2,812 shares, which paid a dividend of 16p per 50 ordinary share last year? This is in addition to his director's salary of £73,180 a year for driving home in his white Rolls Royce at the end of 8 hours' hard slog.

It would seem to such people more important that the working class should pay the cost of their mistakes, be it through poorer working

conditions, lost jobs or higher prices and taxes.

Passing the workload from electrical or fossil energy to human sweat and toil is not saving anything.

The only effective way really to save energy is to build re-circulation plants for waste and to make 'heat machinery', like boilers, more efficient.

This however, would take a large chunk of profit from the bosses and is therefore unlikely to happen.

It is also unlikely that the alternative energy sources will be developed by big business, as this would involve massive outlay and little short-term profit, making this an unsuitable suggestion to the capitalist in this sick system which can provide no way forward for society.

Only through socialism and a planned economy will it be possible to channel resources correctly and to make the most of what energy technology can provide.



"Satisfied? I'm never satisfied." So Mr Glaxo himself, chairman Austin Bide, tells his company newspaper when discussing the massive profits Glaxo have made.

"It is time," says Austin Bide, Glaxo's chairman, in his 1979 Annual Report, "for the Glaxo family to make common cause for the good of the Group and the country. That way we all stand to gain. Only our competitors, foreign and domestic, reap the benefit from the alternative."

Companies like Glaxo, says Bide, have the advantage of the people, the technology, and the will to succeed. "But this is not enough. The successful companies of the future will be those whose operations are cost-effective in every way and this calls for unremitting attention to efficiency and productivity by all concerned."

But which members of the "family" will really pay for the "cost-efficiency" and "productivity"?



NUPE members protest at closure of St. George's Hospital, London. Never have the fighting traditions of NUPE been more needed.

Photo: Militant.

NUPE-THE MARXIST PIONEERS

This article is reprinted with thanks from NUPE's journal 'Public Employee'.

Much has been written in the press recently about 'infiltration' into the Labour Party and the trade unions.

This is something that is dear to the hearts of NUPE members. We know all too well about the result of Tory infiltration which led to characters like Richard Marsh, Dick Taverne, and Reg Prentice to gain leading positions in the movement only to desert labour and join our opponents.

We know at first hand about the last Labour government which brought in a Tory incomes policy and forced many NUPE members to take strike action for the first time in their lives.

The Fleet Street press—owned and controlled by giant firms—is not content with

By Alistair Tice

directing the affairs of the Tory Party; it also wants to determine the constitution and policies of the labour and trade union movement.

We must reject their interference. Our movement alone, through democratic conferences, determines policy and organisation. What terrifies Fleet Street is that the movement, in the face of a terrible economic crisis, has shifted to the left.

The press has begun a witch-hunt against the Marxist newspaper 'Militant' produced by Labour Party members. Tony Benn has warned of the dangers of such a witch-hunt for the whole labour movement, rightly pointing out that "An inquisition set up to root out such people would not stop there. Voices will soon be raised to carry it further."

The Tory press has attempted to show that Marxism is alien to the British labour movement...

Tony Benn has pointed out that:

"...the indisputable historical fact is that Marxism has, from the earliest days, always been openly accepted by the Party as one of many sources of inspiration within our movement... Many of the great pioneers of the trade union movement were Marxists."

One example of the influence of Marxism within the trade union movement can be found within our own union. NUPE's history can be traced back to 1888 when Albin Taylor, a labourer at Cross Ness Sewage Plant, played a leading role in establishing the London County Council Employees Protection Association.

Albin Taylor became a Marxist and joined the Social Democratic Federation which later became part of the Labour Party at its foundation.

Albin Taylor retired in 1925 and was replaced by Jack Willis, a former building workers' leader.

Jack Willis was a strong

supporter of independent working class education and helped found the Central Labour College. When he died in 1933 the NUPE journal carried a lengthy article on Jack's life and pointed out that he was "A keen Marxist" and "...did much socialist propaganda on its behalf."

Jack was succeeded by Bryn Roberts, a South Wales miner, who had been imprisoned during the First World War for refusing to fight in what he regarded as an "imperialist war." Bryn Roberts had also been a student at the Central Labour College in London.

Bill Craik, in his biography of Bryn Roberts, pointed out that: "The works of Karl Marx were certainly in the foreground of Labour College studies."

"At the Labour College, however, the works of Marx were not treated like Holy Writ. He supplied no fixed chart for the socialist navigators, but a methodological instrument with which fresh groundings must constantly be taken."

In 1943, NUPE's journal commemorated the 60th anniversary of the death of Karl Marx by printing a front page article under the headline: "His name and his work will endure throughout the ages."

The article surveyed Marx's life, pointing out that "He was no armchair philosopher... His fighting made him a thinker and his thinking made him a fighter."

Brother William Setchell, the Union's President in 1933 could have been speaking about the situation today when, addressing NUPE's conference, he said: "We meet today in a world which is filled with distress and sickness, due to the failure of the capitalist system, and the outlook almost looks hopeless."

"The harvests of the world are in abundance, yet millions are living in semi starvation. The genius and science of man in producing machinery is being used to destroy mankind instead of lightening their labours; surely, fellow delegates, as intelligent men and women, we must see to it that we play our part in putting an end to this hideous system, and I believe that this can only be accomplished by the establishment of a Socialist State. Let us keep our vision and we shall triumph."

The task of our generation must be to complete the ideas expressed by our President in 1933. We can start by bringing the power of the movement to get rid of this Tory government and replacing it with a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

A taste of what's to come

Following the end of the steel strike the Kings Lynn District of the Transport and General Workers' Union scored a victory over the forces of reaction in the shape of local haulage boss Maurice 'Lucky' Loades.

By Tim Webb
(TGWU 10/28A)

At the beginning of the steelworkers' action 35 of the 40 drivers at "Loades for Loads" refused to pull foreign steel in solidarity with their brothers in ISTC. These drivers have been without even unemployment pay for the past three months because Loades told the local dole office that they were refusing work, i.e. pulling steel through a picket line! This is the subject of an appeal.

Five of the Loades drivers scabbed on the strike; they are due to be the subject of our union's democratic disciplinary procedures within the next week.

At the end of the strike Maurice Loades approached the union and offered a return to work on the following terms: the dismissal of two workers (not the "last in") on the grounds that he had to "reduce the fleet", and the reinstatement of shop steward Roger Duckham only on condition that he was prepared to use a very old tractor

unit in place of the fairly new unit with a sleeper cab he normally drove.

The drivers of course found this unacceptable and agreed on the following action: most of them returned to work but at the same time the T&GWU contacted trade unionists in King's Lynn and all over the country where "Loades for Loads" tipped and loaded, requesting them to black Loades' lorries.

Within a few days Maurice Loades found himself with a workforce he had to pay but with no work to make profits from. He very quickly agreed on the reinstatement of all who wanted their jobs back, under working conditions as they were before the dispute.

This represented a complete victory for the power of organised labour.

Just before he capitulated,

when he was finding that he was not able to get his lorries loaded or unloaded because of trade union action, Loades complained to the T&GWU, "Knowles has sacked Tim Webb, why don't you black Wisbech Roadways?"

Wisbech Roadways is owned by Knowles Transport, whom I worked for until I was dismissed "because of the steel strike and the general economic situation," in January of this year. I find it instructive that a haulage boss is as concerned with getting his rivals blacked as he is with getting his lorries back to work.

At the end of the steel strike I and four other drivers employed by Wisbech Roadways did not get our jobs back because apparently the fleet has been reduced in size.

I find it irrelevant whether I have been dismissed for my political opinions or because capitalism cannot provide work. The fact that one week I can be driving a lorry for up to 54 hours (and many drivers exceed this legal maximum) and the next week I can be thrown into unemployment and poverty is in itself the result of a political decision: that profits are more important than people.

A lot of Wisbech Roadways' normal work is pulling 20 tonne loads of steel. When I asked for my job back I was told that the fleet was being

reduced because "there isn't the work about."

Is there a shortage of workers willing to produce steel? Ask any steel worker now being made redundant.

Is there a shortage of plant or machinery? Do people not need the things which are made from steel: do we have too many hospitals or too many houses? Are there too many cans of food, in a world where many are going without?

You have to be unemployed to fully understand the irony of this situation.

Being unemployed has brought home to me more forcefully than ever that the only way out of this tragic situation is to fight for the socialist transformation of society.

Only with socialism will we eliminate unemployment and at the same time achieve a working week of 35 hours or less. Only a socialist plan of production will ensure that no one goes without while there is unused productive capacity and unemployment.

The other day I checked in the Job Centre to see what work was available. The only two jobs in my line were at £10 and £11 per week less than the union's £77 basic negotiated rate in the area.

That is only a foretaste of what is to come for as long as we live in a capitalist society run by a Tory government.

Militant Meetings

Thursday 24 April

Bradford

Hear: Peter Jarvis (Hackney South Labour Party)
7.30 pm, Bradford Central Library

Folkestone

Hear: Ray Apps (Brighton Labour Party) 7.45 pm
Labour Hall, St John's Street, Folkestone

Brighton

Hear: Dave Farrar, 7.39 pm
The Labour Club, Lewes Road

Leicester 'Militant and Internationalism'



Hear: Pat Wall (President, Bradford Trades Council). 7.30 pm, AUEW Offices, Vaughan Way, Leicester

Tyneside

'1926—the lessons of the General Strike'

7.30 pm, Curtis Auditorium (behind Haymarket Hotel). Speakers: Jeremy Birch, also local strike leader of '26, and slide show

Paddington



Hear: Ted Grant (Militant Political Editor)
8.00 pm, 21 Star Street, London W.2.
(Near Edgware Road Tube)

Newham

Hear: Clare Doyle (Militant Editorial Board)
7.30 pm, Newham Labour Party Rooms
241e High Street North, East Ham, London E.12.
(Near East Ham Tube)

Saturday 26th April

Liverpool

'Militant 500th Edition dance'

Chaucers, Hardman Street, Liverpool 2
Tickets £1. Contact 051-263 1084

Southampton



Hear: Cathy Wilson (PPC for IOW); also
Bill Mullins (senior shop steward Rover, Solihull),
and John Melly (Pres, Soton Trades Council)
2.30 pm, St Matthews Church Hall,
St Marys Road, Southampton

Birmingham

500th edition rally, 12 noon-5 pm
Digbeth Civic Hall, Birmingham
Speakers: Ted Grant [Political Editor Militant]
Stan Sheridan [Press Officer, ISTC, S Yorkshire
strike committee]
Clive Gravell [Secretary, COHSE
Kidderminster branch]
Plus Venceremos [Chilean folk group] and stalls,
creche, refreshments. Tickets 50p at door

Sunday 27th April

Liverpool

Hear: Ted Grant (Political Editor, Militant)
Terry Harrison. 7.30 pm, AUEW Hall
48 Mount Pleasant, Liverpool 3.
For further information ring
Terry Harrison, 051-733 9810

Manchester

Hear: Roger Shives. 7.30 pm, Star and Garter
Fairfield Street, Manchester

Teesside

'General Strike— 1926 and today'

Hear: John Pickard. 7.30 pm, Cleveland Hotel
(upstairs), Linthorpe Road,
Linthorpe Village, Middlesbrough

Monday 28th April

Swansea

'Kick out the Tories'

Hear: Peter Taaffe, 7.30 pm
Dynevor School, Swansea

Dalkeith

Hear: Ted Grant, 7.30 pm, Cross Keys Hotel

Wimbledon

Hear: Nick Bradley (Member of London Labour
Party Regional Committee), 7.30 pm
Raynes Park Hall, Approach Road, Raynes Park

Tuesday 29th April

Dunfermline

Hear: Ted Grant, 7.30 pm, Nethererton Institute

Wednesday 30th April

Lambeth

Hear: Jim Brookshaw (Greenwich Labour Party)
7.45 pm, Brixton Town Hall, Acre Lane,
London S.W.2.

Croydon

Speaker: Rod Fitch (Brighton Labour Party)
7.45 pm, Ruskin House, Coombe Road, Croydon

Perth

Hear: Ted Grant. 7.30 pm.
See next week's issue for venue

Hackney

Hear: Bob Edwards. 7.30 pm, Hackney Labour
and Trade Union Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E.8.

Thursday 1st May

Greenwich

Hear: Roger Silverman (Militant International
Review Editor) and Mike Cleverley. 8.00 pm
Greenwich Labour Party Rooms,
32 Woolwich Road, London S.E.10.

Tottenham

Hear: Peter Jarvis (Hackney South Labour Party)
8.00 pm, Tottenham Trades Hall,
Bruce Grove, London N.17.

Friday 2nd May

Hounslow

Hear: Keith Dickinson (Hammersmith North
Labour Party), 8.00 pm, 20 Heath Rd, Hounslow

Sunday 4th May

Leeds



Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant). 7.30 pm,
Victoria Hotel (behind Leeds Town Hall)
(Includes exhibition of development of
Militant and a bookstall)

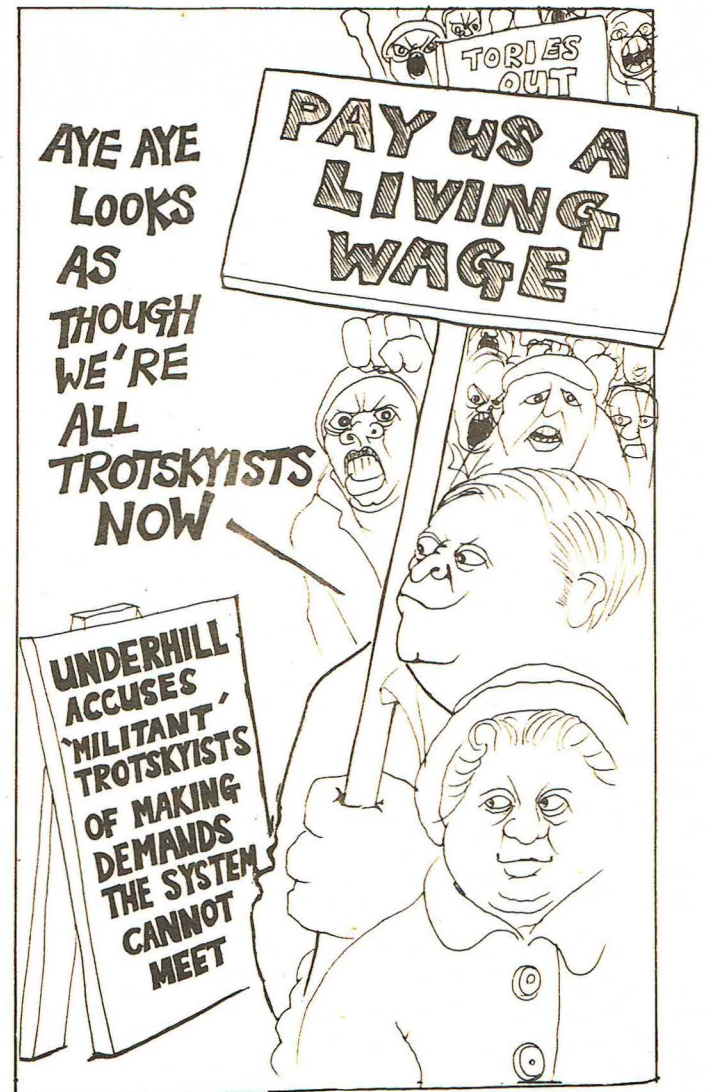
Wednesday 7th May

Southwark

Hear: Bob Faulkes (Hackney Central Labour
Party), 7.45 pm, Lansbury House
41 Camberwell Grove, London S.E.5.

Issue 500 of a fighting Marxist paper

OUR IDEAS HAVE BEEN VINDICATED BY EVENTS



'Militant' has been subjected to an unprecedented barrage of attacks in recent months, both from the millionaires' press and from their right-wing echoes in the Labour Party.

The enemies of the labour movement have singled out this paper as the focus of their attack on the left, blaming 'Militant' for the swing to the left in the Party and the process of radicalisation among the rank-and-file.

But they never pose the question: How is it that a Marxist paper, which began in 1964 as a monthly with very meagre resources and a tiny circulation, could gain the significant influence in the labour movement that it has today?

To explain this away, of course, the Fleet Street hacks and their right-wing friends in the labour movement are kept busy fabricating fantastic stories of 'plots', 'infiltration' and sinister sources of finance.

Yet as we have explained many times, 'Militant' has had no funds, no resources, no assistance, other than that provided by its readers, supporters and well-wishers in the labour movement.

If 'Militant' has grown into an influential weekly, with a strong and active Marxist following in the movement, it is because the ideas, perspective, and programme which it has advanced from the beginning have been borne out by events.



The magnificent 10-million-strong general strike in France confirmed the key role of the working class in the struggle to change society and heralded the world-wide upheavals and mass movements of the following decade.

Through their own experience, the activists in the Young Socialists, the Labour Party, and increasingly in the trade unions have come to recognise that it is not the right wing, not left reformism, but the Marxists around 'Militant' who have been able to predict the course of

events and provide the programme and policies required to take the working class forward.

The ideas of 'Militant' have indeed been vindicated by events.

In the early 1960s, the labour leaders claimed that through the methods of Keynesian economics Labour governments

would be able to control the 'mixed economy' [ie. the capitalist economy] to eliminate recessions and slumps.

Through their reformist programme, so they argued, the 'welfare state' would be strengthened, gradually reducing the inequality of wealth, and wiping out unemployment,

poverty and social deprivation.

The crisis conditions of the 1930s were a thing of the past, gone forever, reformism argued. The Fabian sociologists even argued that there was no longer a 'working class,' even. In the 'affluent society' workers were being assimilated into the

"middle class."

Who would defend these ideas now, in 1980—under the Thatcher government?

But 'Militant' refuted the reformist ideas of the Labour leadership at the time, in the 1960s when the conditions of post-

CONTINUED ON
PAGE 12

Issue 500

WOKINGHAM & BRACKNELL
'MILITANT' SUPPORTERS
send May Day greetings to all workers
Get rid of Thatcher—
scare her to death with a daily 'Militant'

MAY DAY GREETINGS

May Day greetings from the Iron and Steel Trades Confederation



The Rotherham BSC
Joint Committee
wishes to take this opportunity
to thank all those
in the labour movement
who gave financial, physical and
moral support to steelworkers
in their 13-week strike
Thank you

Woolwich East LPYS
and Thames Polytechnic
Labour Club
send greetings and
congratulations
to 'Militant'
on its 500th issue

Harlow TUC
Extend fraternal
greetings and
announce our
annual May Day
festival
details 0279 38582

Fraternal
greetings to all
our comrades
in the
movement from
Washington
LPYS

Greetings to
'Militant' from
the supporters
of the Greek
Marxist paper
'XEKINIMA'

"To change the
conditions of life,
we must...see them
through the eyes
of women."
Coventry SE Labour
Party
Women's Section

Coventry SE Labour Party

Congratulates 'Militant' on its 500th issue
and reports its own achievement of a
35% increase in membership in 1979
Fraternal wishes to all comrades
for an even greater increase
in the support for socialism in 1980!

Dave Nellist Mohammed Iqbal
[Chairman] [Secretary]
c/o 30 Coundon Road, Coventry

For a general strike
on May 14
Kick out the Tories
Fraternal greetings
Oxford LPYS

KNOWSLEY NALGO
'MILITANT' SUPPORTERS
For NALGO affiliation
to the Labour Party
Stop the cuts—save jobs

Avon Labour Party Young
Socialist branches send revolu-
tionary greetings to fellow
socialists.

- Bristol West LPYS
- Bristol NE LPYS
- Kingswood LPYS
- Bristol South LPYS
- Bristol SE LPYS
- S. Gloucestershire LPYS

"Working class youth of the
world unite—forward to a
socialist Britain and a socialist
world."

May your 1000th edition be published
in a socialist Britain
Sack the SPG! Disband Edwardes!
Arsenal for the cup!
BL SELF-CHANGING GEARS
'MILITANT' READERS

No cuts. No rent or rate rises.
Keep Tories out. Socialist policies for Labour
GODIVA WARD,
COVENTRY LABOUR PARTY

COVENTRY SOUTH EAST LPYS
For a socialist programme to fight the Tories!
For a mass campaign against the cuts

LOWER STOKE WARD LABOUR PARTY
increased membership in 1979 from 46 to 139
We wish all branches the same response
to a militant recruitment campaign in 1980

NUEVO CLARIDAD

The supporters of the Spanish
workers' paper, 'Nuevo Claridad'
send their warmest greetings
and solidarity to mark
the occasion of the 500th
appearance of the 'Militant'

BIRMINGHAM



Bromsgrove & Redditch
Erdington Edgbaston
Handsworth Ladywood
Yardley Perry Barr
Labour Party Young
Socialists branches

send fraternal greetings
to all comrades in the labour movement
We'll keep the red flag flying here!

Greetings from
'Militant' supporters
on the NEC of the
Civil and Public
Services Association

May Day greetings
from LLANELLI
'Militant' supporters
Forward to socialism
—the only hope
for the world

Fraternal greetings
on 500th issue of
'Militant' to all
workers. Forward to
the daily 'Militant'
from Trent Poly
Labour Club

READING SOUTH
LPYS
SEND MAY DAY
GREETINGS:
WORKERS OF
THE WORLD
UNITE!

T LUCAS, BRISTOL

SALES FROM FIVE
TO FIFTY-FIVE
KEEPING 'MILITANT'
ALIVE

- C Jones [steward]
- Lily Brown [steward]
- R Gills [steward]
- A Golding [steward]
- R Lambden [steward]
- K Harwood [steward]

Issue 500

MAY DAY GREETINGS

FIRE BRIGADES UNION

extends May Day greetings
to all comrades
in the trade union and
labour movement and calls
for a united attack on
the government's
ruinous economic policy

Bill Deal
President



Terry Parry
General Secretary

SOHO WARD,
LADYWOOD
sends May Day
greetings and calls
for a socialist
Labour government

Greetings from QMC
Labour Club
'Militant' supporters
Forward to socialism
in the next 500 issues

Long live workers'
internationalism!
Long live May Day!
Hail the 500th
'Militant'!
Leicester West LPYS

Oldham 'Militant'
supporters say:
BLACK & WHITE
UNITE!
SMASH THE
NATIONAL FRONT

Strathclyde NALGO 'Militant' supporters

send fraternal
greetings for
May Day and urge
support for NALGO
Affiliation to the
Labour Party
No cuts,
no rate increases



Bristol South East
Labour Party
sends fraternal
greetings on
May Day
FIGHT
TORY CUTS!

May Day greetings
to all socialists
RON THOMAS
(former Member of
Parliament
Bristol North West)

500 STEPS TO THE
SOCIALIST STATE
Yours fraternally
comrades in
North Fylde LPYS

BRIGADA

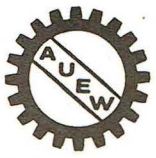
Santiago City

'Brigada', official organ of the
Federation of the Young Socialists
of Chile, sends fraternal revolutionary
greetings to 'Militant' in its
500th issue, and wishes it to march
forward in its battle for socialism
in Britain and throughout the world
LONG LIVE THE
INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT!
UNIDOS VENCEREMOS!

Executive Committee, 'Brigada'



ST PAULS
LABOUR PARTY
BRISTOL
sends May Day
greetings
End police
harassment!
For a trade union
and Labour inquiry!
Build a mass
Labour Party!


The Bristol
District
Committee
AUEW
sends May Day
greetings to all
members
everywhere

COVENTRY SOUTH WEST LPYS
No redundancies at BL!
Nationalisation of the whole car industry
under workers' control and management!
Forward to socialism in the '80s!

Cllr Pete Hammond

(expelled from
Bristol Labour
Group for fighting
Tory cuts)
sends May Day
greetings

Labour
councillors—
fight the cuts
Forward to
socialism

May Day greetings from
the Labour and
Trade Union Group
in Northern Ireland
For workers' unity
and socialism!

UP THE REDS!
Greetings to
socialists everywhere
from Leyton
'Militant' supporters

Binley and Willenhall Labour Party



congratulates
'Militant' on its
500th edition
All out on May 14!
Tories out!
Labour to power on
a socialist
programme!

May Day greetings

from Quatermass—
Scotland's socialist
disco. Rock on to
socialism and
'Militant' No. 1,000

Fraternal greetings to the best paper in the
labour movement on 500th issue
and to all workers everywhere
Forward to socialism and the daily 'Militant'
NOTTINGHAM WEST LPYS

Glasgow Hillhead
LPYS sends
May Day greetings to
workers everywhere
KICK OUT
THE TORIES

Congratulations
from
Wood Green LPYS
The first 500 are
always the hardest!

MAYDAY GREETINGS FROM THE LPYS NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Josie Aitman (North West)
Claire Baines (London South)
Chris Burns (Wales)
Yasmin Barry (West Midlands)
Rob Cadwgan (South West)
Laurence Coates (East Midlands)
Willie Griffin (Scotland)

Gary Hawes (Yorkshire)
Kevin Ramage (London North, Chairman)
Margaret Reavey (Northern)
Tony Saunois (NEC Member)
Nick Toms (Eastern, Vice Chairman)
John Cantwell (Southern)
Linda Reid (Editor, 'Socialist Youth')

Woolston
Branch
[Southampton]
Labour Party
sends May Day
greetings to
socialists
everywhere

Church Ward
Labour Party
greet Militant
for May Day
& 500 editions
of SOCIALIST
news



BLACKPOOL LPYS
sends May Day
greetings to the
readers of 'Militant'
Forward to workers'
control and
management and a
shorter working week



Fraternal
greetings
on May Day
to all in the
trade union and
labour movement
from the
Liverpool branch
of the NGA

We call on you to fully mobilise
in order to defeat the Tories
and their Employment Bill

Issue 500

Only de capitalism will take the v

HOW MILITANT HAS DEVELOPED

- October 1964: First edition appears, four-page monthly.
- 3 September 1971: Militant begins to appear fortnightly.
- 28 January 1972: Militant becomes a weekly.
- 29 September 1972: Weekly increased to eight pages.
- 9 January 1976: Enlarged to twelve pages weekly.
- 3 March 1978: Militant now with sixteen pages weekly, but temporarily losing red masthead.
- 19 January 1979: Red masthead reappears on sixteen-page Militant.

MILITANT'S WORLD OUTLOOK

Militant has always adopted a consistently internationalist outlook. Next week, in issue 501 which will cover May Day demonstrations and rallies in many areas, we will be reviewing the Militant's position on key international events during the sixteen years of its first 500 editions.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

war boom gave them a certain credence.

The Labour leaders see politics as 'the art of the possible,' moving empirically from week to week, year to year. Marxists however, base themselves on scientific perspectives, analysing the economic and social trends in society in order to arrive at a general prognosis of future developments.

Only by understanding the process of developments in society can we intervene effectively to change it in the direction of socialism.

From 1964 onwards, 'Militant' explained that the long boom of the post-war period would inevitably give way to a new period of downswing, recession and slump, both internationally and especially in backward Britain. A new period of economic crisis, we predicted, would threaten all the gains of the past, once again facing the workers with the spectre of mass unemployment and mass impoverishment.

But we were always confident, contrary to the reformists who believed that the workers had now assumed the role of passive consumers and manipulated spectators, that the working class would, under the pressure of events, move into action to defend their past gains and to bring about a socialist transformation of society.

'Militant' never lost sight of the fact that the other side to the political stability, even inertia,

produced by the boom period was an enormous strengthening of the working class. Its weight in society was increased by the growing monopolisation of capitalism itself, and flowing from this was a strengthening of trade union organisation, a self-confidence, and combativity.

Who, having witnessed the 'irreversible decline' of British capitalism in recent years, and the mighty struggles of the workers under both Labour and Tory governments, can deny the perspectives on which the 'Militant' was founded have been brilliantly confirmed by events?

Last May's general election defeat for the Labour government, a government of 'reformism without reforms,' also marked a decisive repudiation within the Labour Party of the right wing's utopian perspective of running capitalism for the benefit of working people.

The very first issue of the paper warned against such illusory ideas: "For conscious socialists the problem is to make the mighty labour movement aware of the impossibility of solving the national and international problems of our time, such as peace and security, prosperity and abundance, without taking decisive measures against capitalism." (October 1964).

From the time of the first headline, 'Drive out the Tories', to the most recent in 1980, the paper has been a campaigning

paper for the ideas of socialism, but never avoiding the need to tell workers the truth "against the lies and exaggerations of the capitalist class and the half-truths of Labour's officialdom."

It is noticeable that in all the attacks on 'Militant', our opponents almost invariably resort to general denunciations of 'Marxism' or 'Trotskyism' or resurrect stories about 'plots' and 'infiltration', rarely, if ever, taking our ideas and perspectives and trying to answer them.

We were always confident that the working class would move into action.

No one can look back upon any of the last 499 issues of the 'Militant' to find any article that could not be reproduced today: in those sixteen years there have been no mad flights of fancy and no 180 degree turns on policy.

But, of course, it has not been ideas alone that have increased the size and influence of the paper—it has needed the experience of the working class itself. At the time of the election in 1966, when Labour's majority was increased, the paper warned again

about the inevitability of attacks upon workers' living standards: "...on a capitalist basis every government is compelled to act in a similar way. Only a break away from capitalist policies can end the impasse."

Acting on a capitalist basis, the Wilson government introduced a wages freeze, cuts in housing subsidies, increased health charges and, before the trade union movement mounted a massive campaign against it, was preparing 'In Place of Strife', an anti-trade union Bill that could have resulted in the jailing of trade unionists.

The defeat of the Labour government in June 1970 came as a bitter blow after the frustrating years of the 1964-70 period. Under Labour, the aspirations and hopes of tens of thousands of activists had been disappointed and that period saw the biggest decline in Labour Party membership—contrary to the present-day claims of the ultra-right that the 'lefts' are driving people away.

But the defeat also acted as a catalyst on the processes of change taking place in the minds of many labour movement activists. It was in 1970 that the Labour Party Young Socialists for the first time elected a national committee with a majority of 'Militant' supporters and the serious campaigning outlook of the LPYS has since made it a powerful force in the Labour Party.

The experience of the



1970 defeat, the growth of Marxist ideas in the YS and in the constituencies, and above all the social and political upheavals of the Heath government, was reflected in the increase in the frequency of

Decisive measures against working class forward



Photo: Popperfoto

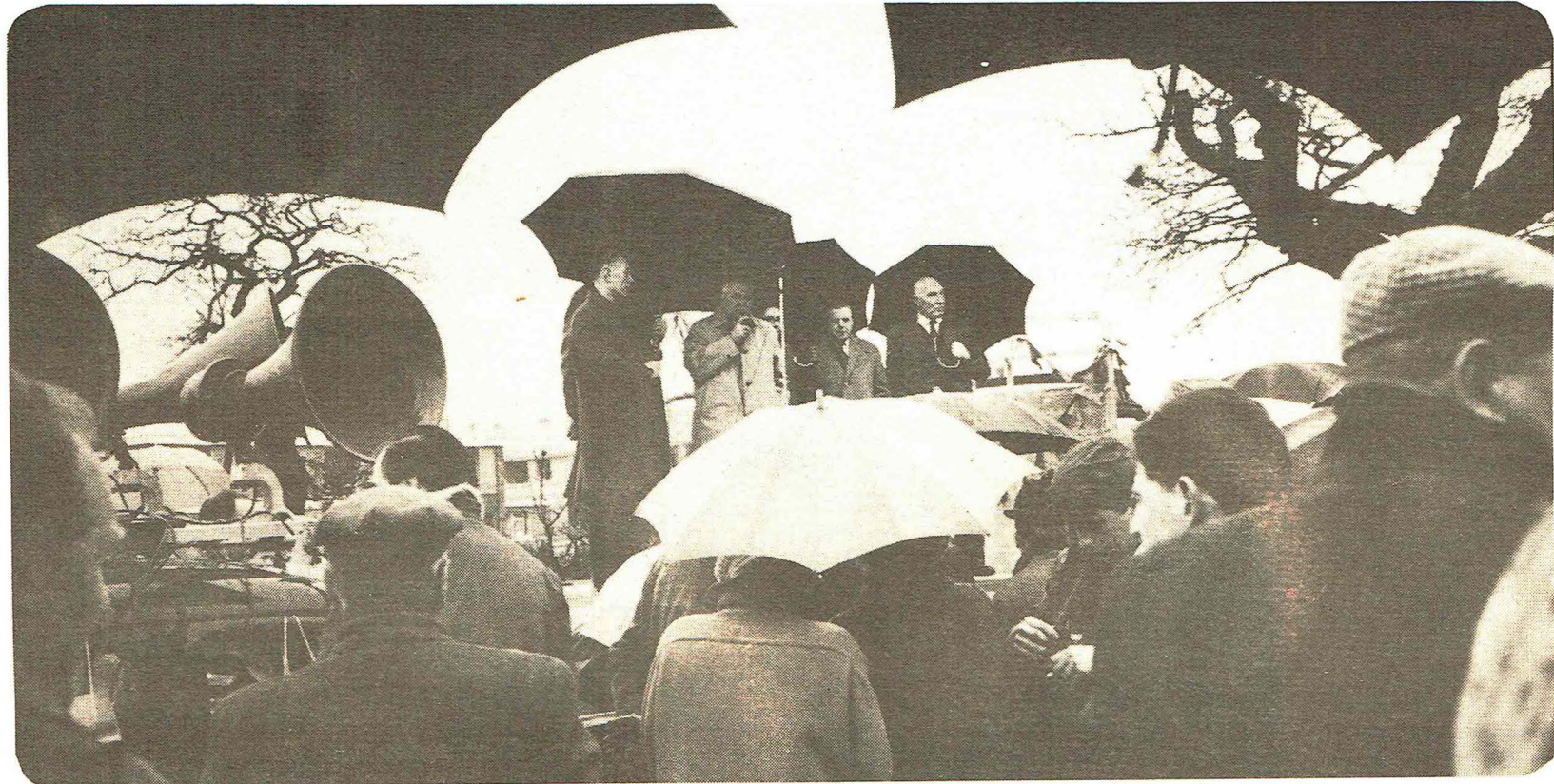


Photo: Popperfoto

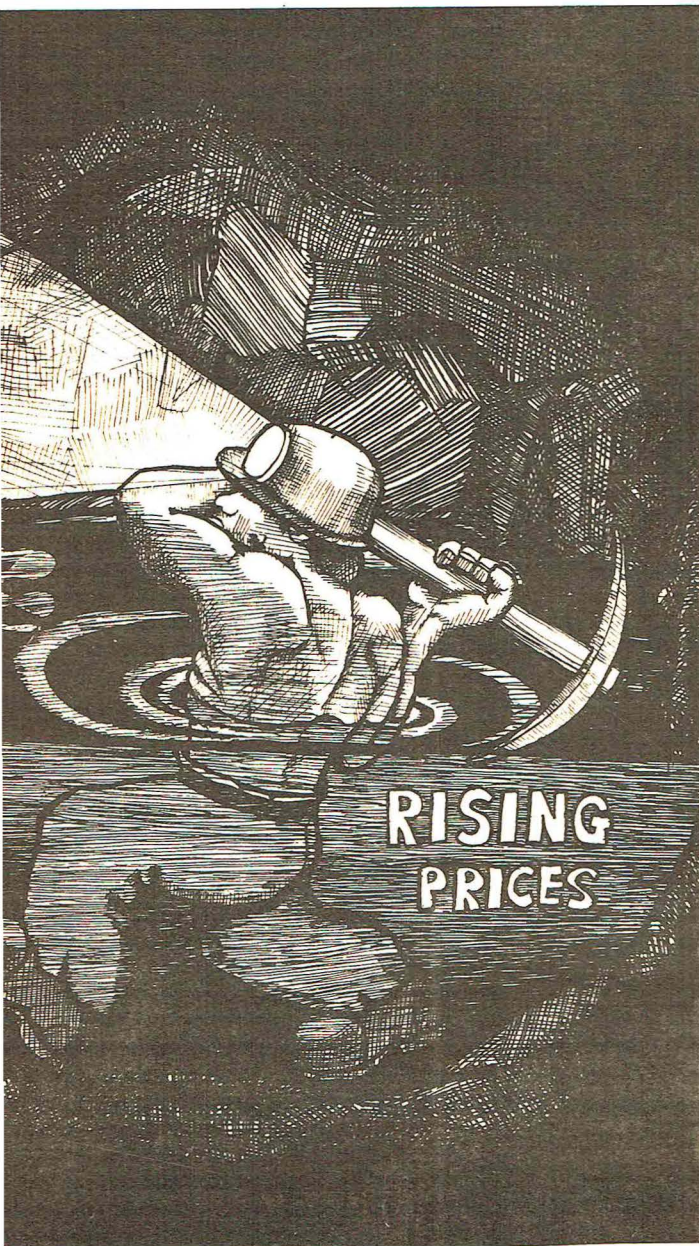


Photo: Popperfoto

The battles of the 1960s and early '70s

Above: Wilson in 1964 election campaign.

Top left: December 1970 demonstration against Tories' Industrial Relations Act.

Left: Anti-Vietnam War demo, Grosvenor Square, 1968.

Cartoon: Miners resist Tories' Income Policy in 1973/74.

“We wish to tell the truth to the working class against the lies of the capitalist class and the half-truths of Labour’s officialdom.”

‘Militant’ No 1

wealth in favour of working people. The week before the election, ‘Militant’ warned:

“Without changing the basic economic structure of society they (i.e. the promised reforms—JP) cannot be achieved. That is why it is not a question of ‘doctrinaire’ or ‘extreme’ policies. It is a question of the fate of the entire trade union and labour movement. We will fight side by side with our trade union brothers and Labour Party comrades to get rid of the Tories and carry out to the letter the Labour Programme. “But history demon-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

publication of ‘Militant’, which by January 1972 was a weekly paper. The paper was now more able than ever before to carry reports news and analysis of the explosive industrial events of those years of Tory rule.

In 1972 alone, there was the magnificent miners’ strike, the docks strike and the arrest of the ‘Pentonville Five’, hurriedly released within days as the trade unions moved towards a general strike in

protest. Right up to the miners’ strike of 1974, which brought about the downfall of the Tory government, the struggles and problems of the working class were reflected in the pages of ‘Militant’.

The supporters of ‘Militant’ were in the forefront of all these battles against the Tories and worked energetically for the return of Labour in 1974. But once again, the paper warned against illusions in

the policy of reforming capitalism.

The Labour election manifesto of February 1974 put forward the promise of a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and

'Militant has articulated the socialist ideas being demanded by rank and file activists'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

strates, as the fate of the 1964-70 Labour government shows, this will not be possible unless the left Labour leaders are prepared to take crisis measures. An Enabling Act to take over the 250 monopolies, banks and insurance companies which control 85 per cent of the economy, with minimum compensation on the basis of need, is a vital necessity.

"Then with workers' control and management of industry and the state, it would be possible to abolish poverty, insecurity and want and prepare the way for a planned, fully democratic and really civilised society." (Issue 194/22 February 1974)

The election of October quickly followed on. 'Militant' again repeated its warning, which was unhappily borne out five years later:

"If the Labour leaders take the road of trying to compromise with the capitalist system, they will quickly find themselves at

the mercy of the monopolies, forced to do their bidding and then to carry the blame for it, thus preparing the way of disappointment in their own ranks and a new Tory victory with all the horrors that it would mean." (Issue 226, 11 October 1974).

The 1979 election defeat has ushered in a Tory government that is far worse than the government of Heath nine years earlier: the disappointment of 1964-70 was repeated in the years from 1974-79. But there is an important difference, and that lies in the outlook of the Labour Party members themselves.

More and more, the rank and file of the Labour Party are questioning the right of the Parliamentary leadership to dictate policy; the NEC with the backing of conference is trying now to reassert its own authority and at constituency level, party members are demanding the right to re-select their MPs where the MPs are out of line with Party policy.

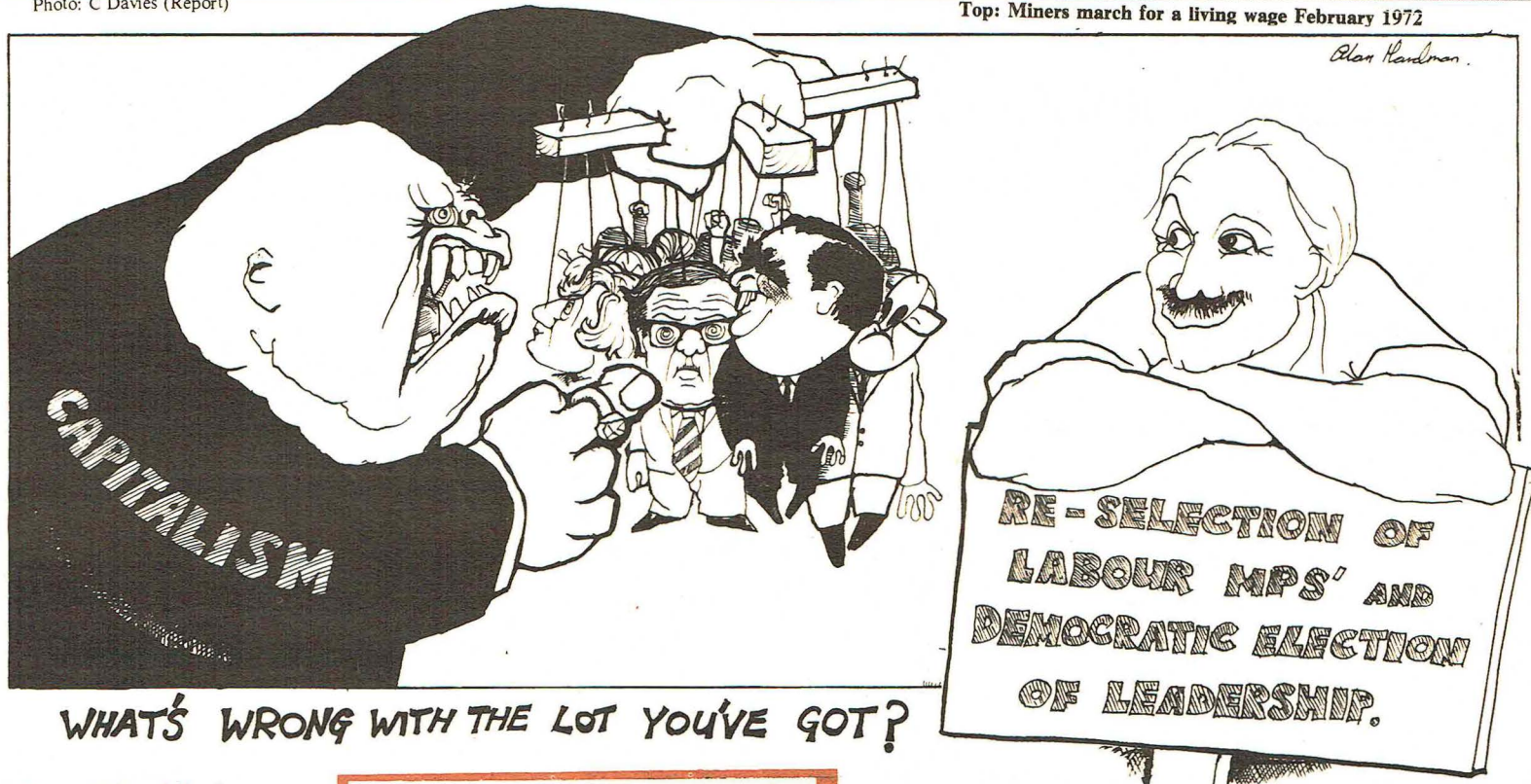
It has been the swing to the left in the Labour Party in the past few years that has finally stemmed the flow of workers away from the party and has begun to build up its membership again. The size and influence of 'Militant' has increased enormously over these years, step by step with the movement to the left inside the party.

By 1978 'Militant' had become a 16-page paper with a readership and support in every region of the country and in almost every major city and town. It would be wrong to exaggerate the influence that the paper has, but there cannot be any doubt that its influence has grown tremendously as a



Photo: C Davies (Report)

Top: Miners march for a living wage February 1972



Right: 'Militant' No. 1

result of the disappointment of the last Labour government.

'Militant' supporters have been in the forefront in demanding the democratisation of the Labour Party: in 1978 it was a 'Militant' supporter who moved the successful party conference motion against the 5% and incomes policies. In 1979 it was a 'Militant' supporter at party conference who made an outstanding speech in moving the motion for the mandatory re-selection of MPs.

Many other examples could be given where the resolutions and speeches of other supporters have articulated the demands of active party members and trade unionists demanding changes. Indeed, to the extreme right wing of the party, the main crime of the 'Militant' lies in the fact that it has successfully articulated the socialist ideas now being demanded by rank-and-file activists, whereas their own ideas are miserably bankrupt.

It would be wrong to overlook the difficulties of sixteen years of publication: the sweat and effort that went into the publication of the 'Militant'. Because the ideas of Marx and Lenin and other socialists are priceless in a historical sense, it is often easy to overlook the dire

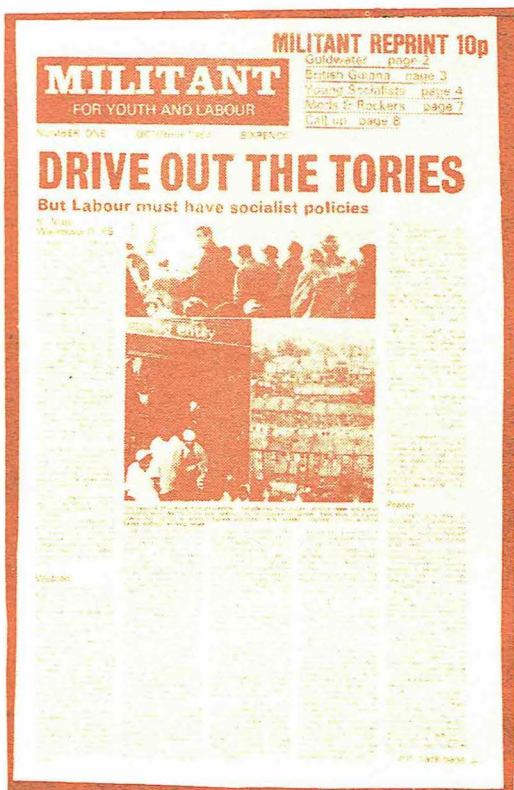
financial straits that these people sometimes found themselves in.

By the same token, the consistency, the clarity and the depth of the ideas in 'Militant' should not blind anyone to the serious need for cash to help it grow and evelop. Despite the scurrilous innuendos of the press, the 'Militant' has never had any large or sinister sources of finance. The first issue pointed out:

"The sacrifice and collection of money among militant workers and Young Socialists has made

possible the production of the paper. It is your paper. Write for it, sell it, criticise it to make it a better paper, send reports to it, collect money for it."

As in other aspects, 'Militant' has shown a consistency in its attitude to finance. The Fighting Fund was launched as a 'Weekly Militant Fund' at the time when the paper was only monthly. The January 1971 issue (No 71) explained: "Starting on 1st January we are launching a Weekly Militant Fund. £1,000 and a weekly paper



in 1971 are our aims."

In fact, £1,000 was collected by May and the paper was fortnightly by September. The Fighting Fund remained after the weekly paper was established in early 1972, and the now famous Fighting Fund chart first showed itself in April of that year.

In 1972 £4,680 was reached out of a target of £5,000; in 1973 the £10,000 target was exceeded by £49; the 1974 target of £15,000 was passed by £137. In 1975, the target started the year a £26,000, increased to £30,000 and in the event £27,378 was raised. The next four years raised £32,600, £47,000, £66,200 and £80,100 respectively.

These figures are themselves milestones in the growth of Marxist ideas. They represent the pennies, pounds and fivers of thousands of ordinary workers.

The 'Militant' is the best paper in the labour movement. In its international analysis, in its industrial reports and in its news of the labour movement, it is second to none. The paper also boasts the best political cartoonist in the labour movement, whose posters and cartoons are being used by sections of the labour movement in their own publications and leaflets.

But the real strength of the paper lies in its thousands of supporters. Without its 'worker correspondents' writing about their own jobs, their own lives and problems, their own labour movement activity, and in their own language—without these the paper would be poor indeed.

The newspaper is more than paper and print and photographers. It is an expression of what is now a vibrantly Marxist current inside the working class.

The changes in the consciousness and outlook of workers in the last sixteen years have been tremendous, on the basis of events and experience. But the changes that will take place in the next sixteen years will be even more shattering. The movement of hundreds of thousands of workers towards the ideas of Marxism will not leave the paper untouched; neither will it by-pass the influence of the paper.

It has taken over seven years to produce the first 100 issues; it has taken fifteen-and-a-half years to produce the first 500 issues.

We will be celebrating the 1,000th issue well before the end of this decade, and that one will certainly be a daily!

Issue 500

MAY DAY GREETINGS



SOGAT
Scottish
Graphical
Division
West Branch

sends May Day greetings
to workers everywhere

**We demand the
implementation of
Labour Party
Conference decisions
For a general strike
on May 14th**

'Vorán', German Marxist paper
Greetings to 'Militant'
After many years of sacrifice, we applaud
all your supporters on reaching the
500th edition of your paper
Forward to international socialism!

**"Arrabest" on May Day
from EAST
EDINBURGH LPYS**
Best wishes to 'Militant'
on your 500th issue

SWANSEA LPYS May Day greetings
from HAREHILLS/
Stop steel ROUNDHAY
closure! LABOUR PARTY
Kick out **No cuts, no**
the Tories! **rate increases**

**HAPPY
DEMI-MILLENIUM
KEEP DIGGING
Royton and Wardle
Labour Party
Women's Section**

**NUNEATON &
BEDWORTH
LABOUR PARTY
YOUNG SOCIALISTS**

send May Day greetings

**Stop the rot at BL—
no to 5 per cent
Defend the unions
Kick out Edwardes
and his plan
All out on 14th May!**

FROM SRI LANKA

The role of the Marxist paper for
labour and youth was never felt more
necessary than at this moment of
intense crisis in British capitalism

**Greetings and good wishes
from**

'Vama Satama' (Sinhala)
(Struggle of the left)
'Idathasavi (Tamil)
(The leftist)
'Lanka left review' (English)
to 'Militant'
on its 500th edition

CHILDWALL VALLEY BRANCH, LIVERPOOL LABOUR PARTY

**Fraternal greetings to Militant
Congratulations on reaching
your 500th edition
Forward to a daily paper
as an instrument in the struggle
for party democracy
and socialism**

Congratulations to 'Militant'
on your 500th edition
Old Swan Ward sends all
workers fraternal greetings

**ASTMS Liverpool Shipping and
Freight branch sends May Day
greetings to the labour
and trade union movement**

Hanover Caerphilly LPYS say:
Branch **Save steel**
of Brighton Labour **Save pits**
Party sends May Day **Sack the**
greetings to all **Tories now!**
comrades in struggle

**Congratulations on
reaching 500 issues—
a milestone for socialism
Forward to the
1,000th 'Militant' and a
socialist Britain
Stevenage
'Militant' supporters**

**Birmingham PNP supporters
greet the labour movement
Black youth fight back—
Forward with socialism**

**Rover Solihull 5/908 branch
TGWU send fraternal greetings
to all our friends
in the labour movement**

**GREATER MANCHESTER LPYS
LIAISON COMMITTEE
SENDS GREETINGS TO
WORKING CLASS YOUTH
OF THE WORLD
FORWARD TO A MASS LPYS!**

**Newtongrange Labour Party sends
May Day greetings to the labour movement
FOR A SOCIALIST
HOUSING PROGRAMME
NO TO THE SALE OF COUNCIL HOUSES**

Provan LPYS
sends international
fraternal greetings
**End repression
in Sri Lanka!
Victory to
the NSSP!**

CPSA NSB
'Militant'
supporters
send May Day
greetings to the
workers of the world

The Brighton Labour Party

greet all kindred organisations and
comrades with the spirit of May Day,
Labour Day:
WORKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

**Congratulations to ZANU
Forward to a socialist Zimbabwe**

Pier Branch,
Brighton
Labour Party

VORWARTS

Congratulations and best wishes
to all the supporters of 'Militant'
from the Dutch Marxist paper

**Socialism and internationalism
our answer to capitalism's crisis**

LPYS and Newport, Ryde, Freshwater,
East Cowes branches,
Isle of Wight Labour Party

May Day greetings from
Bradford College Labour Club

**BRIGHTON
HOVE
EASTBOURNE
LITTLEHAMPTON**

LABOUR PARTY
YOUNG SOCIALISTS

**May Day greetings
to the workers of the
world**

**Forward to the
proletarian revolution**

Congratulations on the 500th
edition of 'Militant'
Forward to the daily socialist paper

Northern Ireland

What Militant has said

On April 2nd, a half-day general strike in protest at the Tory government brought industry to a halt in Northern Ireland. The possibilities have never been greater for the unity of the working class. The main need is for a party of labour to be formed, based on the trade unions and fighting for socialist policies.

During the darkest years of Army attacks and sectarian murders in Northern Ireland, 'Militant' was often derided for its consistent campaign for workers' unity.

The parliamentary leaders of the Labour Party put their faith in the repressive power of the Army. The sects around the labour movement extolled the virtues of the Provisional IRA.

'Militant' on the other hand stressed that none of the problems—repression, sectarian violence or the atrocious living conditions faced by both Protestant and Catholic workers—could be solved outside of a struggle to unite the working class around a socialist banner.

Excerpts from 'Militant'

August 1969. British troops sent into Northern Ireland. 'Militant' in September 1969, still a four-page monthly, commented:

- ★ Withdraw British Troops
- ★ Disband B Specials and police thugs
- ★ Catholic and Protestant workers fight for a united socialist Ireland.

The bloody clashes in Derry, Belfast and other towns has meant that the Catholic population is no longer prepared to accept the writ of a government which rules by police and Paisleyite terror. Forced to defend their area of the Bogside the Catholic workers have taken over the running, policing and organisation of the area through the establishment of defence committees.

At the same time—and it is this more than anything which will strike terror in the hearts of the capitalists—an increasing section have begun to see their fight not in a religious form but as a class issue.

The call made for the entry of British troops will turn to vinegar in the mouths of some of the Civil Rights leaders. The troops have been sent to impose a solution in the



Army action in Derry, August 1971, just after internment was introduced

interests of British and Ulster big business.

The Northern Irish workers, both Catholic and Protestant, must rely on their own forces. Only common action through a joint defence committee can begin to defeat the grip of Tory Unionism. The vehicle for this is the Labour and Trade Union organisations themselves.

Those so-called Marxists who write off the Protestant population as one reactionary mass criminally ignore the vital lessons of Irish history. Only the binding together of the movement of Catholic and Protestant workers can bring about a defeat of Unionism, Fianna Fail in the South and the hold of British Imperialism.

Any concession to sectarianism will only serve to drive sections of the Protestant and Catholic workers into the arms of reaction.

August 9th, 1971. Heath government introduces internment. The next issue of 'Militant' September 3rd, 1971 reported:

For the fourth time in 50 years the government has had to resort to internment. As the detainees were hauled none too gently out of their beds and placed behind bars Faulkner explained that the use of the Special Powers Act was "...in this case, not to suppress but to 'uphold' freedom."

This it does through the right to impose curfews, ban public meetings and parades, close public thoroughfares, examine bank accounts and suspend inquests. Under its provision it is possible to intern anyone suspected of "...acting or being about to act in a manner prejudicial to the preservation of peace."

The Army is now used against the ghetto population with greater ferocity than ever. The new language of the troops is spelt out in terms of more powerful CS gas, rubber bullets with a greater velocity and, according to accounts of

their tactics in the Falls Road, rubber bullets tipped with pins and coins, capable of causing severe and lasting damage to any victim.

Internment is not a religious but a class issue. The criterion by which internees are arrested is not their religion but the extent to which they threaten the ruling class.

Brian Faulkner when introducing the measure spelt this out. "They (the IRA) are the main threat but we will not hesitate to take strong action against any other individual or organisation who present such a threat in the future."

Today it is the Catholics who present the problem. Tomorrow it may be members of the Protestant nuisance groups and the day after that it will be members of the labour movement.

The labour and trade union movement must take note of this. At present they are the only non-sectarian movement in the country. They are the only body capable of converting the present struggle into a class struggle against the

Army on night patrol in Belfast 1971



Tory government.

★ January 30th 1972. Bloody Sunday. 13 unarmed demonstrators shot in Derry. 'Militant' on 4 February demanded 'Withdraw the troops' 'Replace with armed trade union force.'

The murder of 13 unarmed demonstrators in Derry on Sunday, 30th January 1972, will go down in history as the North of Ireland's Bloody Sunday. It is to be compared to the Croke Park massacre of 1920 when 'Black and Tans' shot down 12 civilians.

The modern 'Black and Tans' are the thug detachments of British Paratroopers who, despite the lying accounts which first appeared in the British Press, in an orgy of terror indiscriminately shot defenceless men and boys, some of them in the back.

But the responsibility lies not just with the paratroopers who are candidates for the

role of the praetorian guards of British imperialism, but the Tory government, finance capital which backs them and the system they represent.

The terrible bloodletting in Northern Ireland is the legacy of centuries of domination by the British ruling classes. Their rule has traditionally been one of blood and iron. This massacre is just the latest in a chapter of horrors as far as the Irish people are concerned.

The outraged Catholic youths have flooded towards the Provisional and Official IRA. Thus, the very calculations of British imperialism, of carefully suppressing the IRA and attempting to isolate them from the mass of the Catholic population, has blown up in their faces. There will now be a new influx of Catholic youth into the ranks of the IRA.

The rage of the Catholic population is entirely understandable. They feel like striking back, with arms, against those responsible for this massacre. But to propose a new campaign of terror and reprisals is no way to avenge the dead and will only reproduce the bloody events in Derry on a larger scale later.

The British ruling class can be made to pay for these events only if a strategy for an attack on the whole capitalist system is worked out by the leadership of these organisations.

A campaign of individual assassinations of British soldiers can only provide excuse for further repression. Also, it can only reinforce the hostility of the ordinary soldier to the Catholic population.

British imperialism, although it has suffered an upset in its calculations, at the same time is prepared to wade through more blood to carry through its policy. It cannot afford an all-out military defeat in Northern Ireland.

If necessary, it will pour in arms and men in order to maintain their position. Nor will the Protestant population be coerced into a capitalist united Ireland. They have a

reported 300,000 guns and they will fight if necessary.

There is no way to bring about the withdrawal of British troops and British imperialist domination except on a class basis.

May 1974. The reactionary Protestant extremist Ulster Workers' Council locked out workers in Northern Ireland in support of sectarian demands. Militant 24th May 1974 commented:

It is clear that the strike is against the wishes of the overwhelming majority of trade unionists of both religions. It was only enforced by mass intimidation organised by the UDA and other para-military groups.

Only an armed Trade Union Defence Force would be capable of providing... defence (for the working class—eds). In the first place the leaders of the unions should take the initiative in calling for conferences of shop stewards, union branches, tenants' associations, Labour Parties and Trades Councils to discuss the question of defence against sectarian violence.

An objection is often raised that this would increase the number of arms in circulation, but a section of the working class already have arms—the problem is that they are turned in the wrong direction and that they are in no way under the control of democratic working class organisations.

But to those who oppose the demand for the trade unions to arm themselves, the "Back to Work" marches should provide an object lesson. You cannot make placatory speeches or offer a bunch of flowers to sectarian madmen intent on shooting workers going to and from work!

Issue 500

MAY DAY GREETINGS

Bakers, Food and Allied Workers' Union

send fraternal greetings
to all workers for May Day

**Defend union organisation!
Defeat the Employment Bill!**

**May Day
greetings to all
fighters
for peace
and socialism
T LUCAS
'MILITANT'
readers**

Kingswood, Bristol



Merseyside Trade Unionists and Retired Members' Union

a broad based TGWU No. 6 organisation for all OAPs present and future

sends greetings to all trade unionists and retired members
Our task this May Day is more urgent than ever; the people
urgently need an alternative policy to the present
bankrupt Tory one (making the rich richer and the poor poorer)
The Labour Party must re-call Conference now and state:
It will on being elected implement manifesto and
conference decisions, which must be headed by:

**QUIT THE EEC NOW, NO IFS OR BUTS, GET OUT
STOP THE MAD DRIVE TO WAR:
PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP TO ALL PEOPLES
REVERSE THE CUTS IN PUBLIC SPENDING
ALL LABOUR ELECTED MPS TO COMPLY**

Birmingham May Day Festival at Digbeth Civic Hall

Monday May 5th, 10.30 am-12 midnight
11.30 am Procession
1.00 pm Rally and Workshop Discussions
8.00 pm Rock and Folk

Children's Festival (next door)
Creche (qualified staff)
Bars and food all day

Birmingham Joint Labour
Demonstration Committee

Wavertree Labour Party

sends May Day greetings
to all workers fighting for jobs

**Support the
Massey-Ferguson
occupation
Read the 'Militant'—
the workers' paper**

**MAY DAY
GREETINGS
FORWARD TO
SOCIALISM IN THE
1980s
South East Essex,
Southend and Basildon
LPYS**

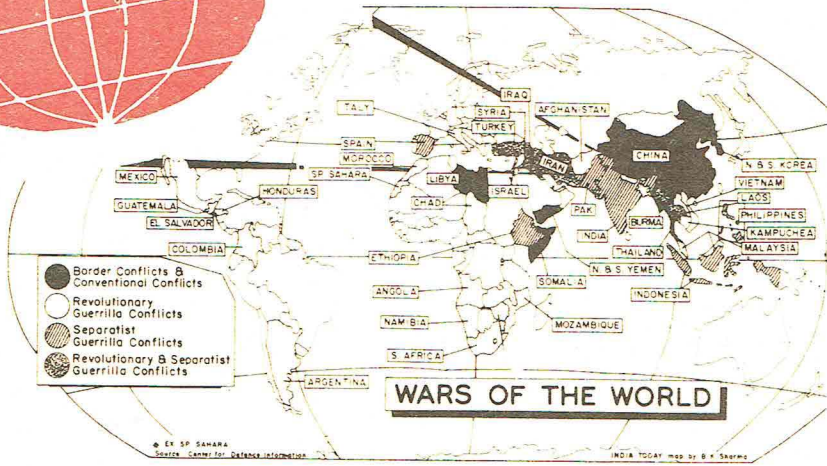
Greetings from:

Dave Robbins AUEW Bristol
Marcus Rattray Bristol
John Fotheringay Stirling West
Liz Scath Stirling West
Gordon Dickson Falkirk LPYS
Peter Lush Vauxhall LPYS
Nick and Teresa Wrack
Vauxhall LPYS
Kim Waddington Basildon LPYS
Chris Pool AUEW Bristol
John Sharpe TASS Bristol
Harriet Stevens CPSA Bristol
John Kelly SLADE Bristol
Andy Bernasconi GMWU Gloucester
Gareth Tudor APEX S Gloucester
Mick Whale Exeter
Sue Beckingham Bristol
Martin Hill CPSA Plymouth
Tom Kenning Eastleigh
Steve Pear Salisbury
Terry Baynton, David Ward, Linda
Ward, Amanda Congdon, David
Sambrooks, Exmouth
Catherine Bryant Bristol
Beverly Dunsford Bristol
Mike Sheaff COHSE Plymouth
Ben Baynton Exmouth
Anne Spiller NUPE Bath
Jane Dobson SOGAT Bath
Roger Thomas NUPE Bristol
Jonathan Bailey Kingswood LPYS
Bryan Beckingham Bristol
Sean Sweeney NUFLAT Bath LPYS
Peter Redfarn E Lewisham CLP
Ritchie Phelan Pollock LPYS
Robin Clapp Bristol LPYS
Ros Burns NALGO Bedwellty
Chris Viv and Phillip Burns
Cardiff
Linda Ropke NALGO Cardiff N LPYS
Terry Burns Bedwellty LP
Dave Reid Paddington LPYS
Brian George Cardiff N LP
Chris George Cardiff N LP
Frank Cuthbert Caerphilly CLP

Lynne Cuthbert Caerphilly LPYS
Helen Erasmus Caerphilly LPYS
Alan Kinnoch MATSA shop steward
Bedwas Bodyworks Caerphilly
Mike Markey NUPE steward
Ben-Y-Fal Hopspital Abergavenny
Michael Sutton Caerphilly LPYS
Mark Darley Brighton
Jeffrey Riley Brighton
Eddie Phillips Glasgow
Pat Galacher East Kilbride
Maureen Lilly East Kilbride
Robin Mitchell Barrhead
George Jardine Barrhead
Kenny McKay Barrhead
Angela O'Neill Glasgow
Eddie McGeaghan Glasgow
Bob Dick Paisley
Margaret Gillespie Paisley
Keith McIntyre Glasgow
Val Maxwell Glasgow
Richard Lewis Birmingham
Martin Allen Birmingham
Mark Chesney Birmingham
Maureen Hinks Erdington Birmingham
Nigel Walshe Ladywood Birmingham
Y Hay Edgbaston LPYS
Paul Rogan Croydon Central LP
Denise Taylor Birmingham
Steve Lee Cheltenham
M Iqbal Hackney, Central CLP
L Castle Harrow LPYS
C Williamson Fareham LPYS
Christine Murray West Stirlingshire
Ian Thomson Perth LPYS
John Edwards Hackney
Alexis Edwards Hackney
Don Veal West Hull LPYS
Steve Fricker Southampton LPYS
Terry Crow Southampton LPYS
Jennie Sandle Southampton LPYS
James M Brown Southampton LPYS
Lanchester Polytechnic
Labour Club send greetings.
Dave Webb Hackney South YS
John Ewers Gloucester CLP
Paul Barton Corby, N'Hants
Josie Bell Southampton

Nick Brooks Southampton
Andrew Tinsley Welwyn and Hatfield
Jo Cook Welwyn and Hatfield
Gary Hawes Rotherham
Pete Humphries Rotherham
Steve Reid Rotherham
Clive Joke Books now available:
North West Leeds LPYS
Stuart Todhunter Chipping Barnet YS
Alan Betts Wood Green LPYS
Martin Shipp Wood Green LPYS
Tony Craggs Cramlington LPYS
Keith Mahoney Bristol South
Matias Ramirez London
Ben Rayner Reading
Chris Newby Reading
George McAlear CPSA Glasgow
Andrea Hughes West Derby LPYS
Paul Moorhouse S Gloucester LPYS
Brendan Kelly S Gloucester LPYS
Dave Moscrop Kingswood LPYS:
Ditch the Bitch, Kill the Bill!
John Long Cork City Ireland
Greetings from CQLPYS
Simon Swinnerton:
Forward to socialism in the '80s!
Bob Sulatycki Bristol LPYS
Richard Pennington Wirral LPYS
Ruth Parry Lliw Valley NUT
Carol Bennett Aberystwyth LPYS
Dave Warren Swansea LPYS
Cathryn Sherrington Bangor LPYS
Brychan Davies Bangor LPYS
Gerry Lerner Eccles CLP
Maggie Lerner Eccles CLP
Kathleen Stock Jarrow LPYS
Peter McKeown Jarrow LPYS
May Day greetings from:
Garry & Sue Horne Doncaster LPYS
Mick Flynn Dublin ITGWU No 9
Mick Carbin Dublin POWU
Hugh Henry Erskine NALGO
Pat Atkinson ATGWU Hackney
Mark Wooster Swindon
Julie Morgan Swansea
Margaret Ritchie Llanelli
James MacHael Dublin
Dave Braithwaite Hartlepool LPYS

Peter Jarvis Hackney
John Wilson Easington LPYS
Peter Wharton Newham NE CLP
Pete Skerrett Coventry AUEW
Joe Cox Cramlington LPYS
Karryn Cox Cramlington LPYS
Richard Worth Woolwich East LPYS
Mick Slater Wigan LPYS
Janice Dale Leyton CLP
Mike Cleverley Leyton CLP
Mark Forkan Middlesborough LPYS
Paul Chettle Wycombe LPYS
Dave Farrar Millwall LP
P Nugent Camborne
Neil Dike Ilkeston Central LP
Nigel Proyse Totnes LPYS
Peter Dight Aberystwyth LPYS
Brian Wright Scunthorpe
Kevin Whiting Ipswich
Bruce Wallace Dundee
Jenny O'Brien Southampton
H Mullineux and J Brierley (Havant)
send May Day greetings
Pat Blatch Southampton
David Chapman ASLEF Rail Workers'
Committee Glasgow
Dave Ryden Blackburn
Conrad Horridge South Fylde
John O'Connor South Fylde
Nigel Brewer Chelmsford
Sue Brisbane Chelmsford
Dave Corrigan Chris Thompson &
Martin Gunnon Chester-le-Street and
Washington LPYS
Frank White Glasgow
Ricky Martindale Glasgow
May Martindale Glasgow
Davey Young Glasgow
Margaret Young Glasgow
Anne Petrie Glasgow
Ian Harkness Glasgow
Martin Horney Hartlepool LPYS
Pete Crack ASTMS Bristol
Jeff Gamlin T&GWU Bristol
Matthew Mellor Vauxhall LPYS
Nicholas John Eton & Slough LPYS
Ben Eastop Bermondsey LPYS
Sue Anderson Streatham CLP



SWEDEN MIDDLE EAST CHINA WAR

Wars of the World

Whilst the capitalist press concentrates on Afghanistan and Iran, little publicity is given to 37 continuing major and minor conflicts, most of which started during the last decade in just about every corner of the globe. According to a recent survey by the American 'Center for Defence Information' more than eight million soldiers and parliamentary

troops are involved in these conflicts. Loss of life is estimated at between two and five million and wounded fifteen million. They include the vicious Indonesian military occupation of East Timor, which has resulted in 15% of the island's population being killed and half the population homeless add to the horrors of Kampuchea. The map [left] shows how these

conflicts occur throughout the world. There has been no year of peace on the planet since the end of World War II. And the vast majority of these conflicts take place in the mis-named Third World, as the people there struggle for a decent existence. As long as capitalism and the Stalinist states continue there will be armed conflict. And the price will be paid by the peoples of the world.

Palestinians fleeing the civil war in Lebanon.



SWEDEN-BIGGEST CONFRONTATION FOR 70 YEARS

Worried about provoking the biggest industrial dispute in Sweden since the 1909 general strike, the employers have twice this month postponed their threatened lock-out of 750,000 workers.

"This lockout must be seen as an investment for the future," thundered the chairman of the employers' federation (SAF). But they have temporarily drawn back now from this direct confrontation with amongst others, the country's largest union, the Metalworkers, organised in the largest factory, Volvo.

The dispute began when the SAF offered 0% in the annual wage bargaining with the Trade Union Federation representing blue-collar workers in private industry (LO). So the LO imposed an overtime ban, which proved to be very effective.

The capitalist government then intervened, proposing a price and rent freeze if workers would agree to a wage freeze. But LO refused to withdraw its overtime ban,

By
Eva Eriksson

as workers have not had a real increase in pay since 1976, although the leadership were prepared to discuss the government's proposals.

But this concession was not enough for the bosses. They threatened a lockout. Their chairman explained that wages needed to be kept down because the economy could not afford it. Two-thirds of Sweden's private workforce is in export industries.

The twice postponed lockout should not be taken

as the end of the matter. The bosses know that if they are to keep their system they have to take on the organised trade union movement.

They have now apparently decided to tackle the strongest section first. Probably relying on the absence of recent past militant struggles they thought they would have an easy victory.

They have been mistaken. Already this dispute has seen the first official strikes in Sweden for decades. When management have tried to go against the overtime ban, local official LO strikes have been declared.

Workers I visited at one Stockholm factory last week told me of their detailed preparations to combat the lockout. Meeting places, picket rotas were prepared and organised.

The 1970s saw a number of unofficial strikes. Now, though, a watershed is opening up in Swedish society. And the Swedish labour movement is preparing for the storms ahead.

Chinese leadership bans strikes

With true Orwellian 1984-style double speak the Chinese bureaucracy last week banned strikes, free speech, the right to free speech, assembly and demonstration in order they said, to "preserve democracy."

What the current ruling clique meant was that they had used the discontent of Chinese working people as a way of defeating the 'Gang of Four' clique. To do this they had had to allow wall posters, magazines etc. critical of the way the bureaucracy had misruled China.

Last July the 'Peking People's Daily' acknowledged that "If there had been normal democratic life, how could this handful of careerists, hooligans and clowns [Gang of Four] have climbed so high?"

Now, however, there is no need of wallposters denounc-

By Suri
Krishnamma

ing the 'Gang of Four' and their supporters. Teng Hsiaping and Chairman Hua have consolidated their position and the Gang of Four have been tried in secret. A year ago the wallposters were removed and dissidents arrested.

And last week they announced the forthcoming removal of Article 45 of the Chinese constitution which reads: "Citizens enjoy freedom of speech, correspondence, the press, assembly, association, procession, demonstration, and the freedom to strike, and have their right to speak out freely, air their views fully."

Article 45 was only introduced two years ago and now its removal shows the desire of the parasites who rule China to prevent any criticism of their rule.

But they will not be able indefinitely to just lean on the working people for their perks and privileges. Workers' democracy will come, but that will require a second revolution, a political revolution, to ensure that the control of society is truly in the hands of those who produce the wealth.

M. East talks ignore Palestinian rights

Worried about the revolutionary explosions throughout the Middle East, US imperialism is desperate to establish a viable peace agreement between Israel and Egypt.

In the way however stand the Palestinian people. So US imperialism is trying to get a solution on the West Bank of the Jordan which Israel occupied during the 1967 war.

Last week Carter stated that developments in the Middle East, including the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, the Iranian crisis, and the "threat to the Persian Gulf" (who from?) made it more imperative to reach a solution on Palestinian autonomy.

Carter talks of 'full autonomy' but doesn't want to see a separate Palestinian state. The reactionary Israeli regime is prepared to make 'concessions' for Palestinian rights on the West Bank, but only

By
Tony Saunois

within the framework of Israeli military domination.

In the last few months the Israeli has established new Jewish settlements in Hebron, an almost entirely Arab area, and have attacked Arab protesters and tried to sack Arab mayors. This month the Israeli military launched a new attack on southern Lebanon.

When PLO guerrillas attack Kibbutzim and children

die, they are labelled 'terrorists'. When Israeli military planes bomb Palestinian camps in Lebanon they are seen as justified reprisals by capitalist spokesmen.

Whilst totally condemning imperialism's hypocrisy, socialists cannot go along with the present tactics of the Palestinian leadership. They place their hopes on a mixture of guerrillaism (which is usually counter-productive) and pressure on Arab and Western governments.

Neither of these approaches will bring justice to the Palestinian people. To the present purely nationalist tactics of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's leadership, socialists pose the class approach of fighting for Palestinian rights as part of a struggle for a socialist Palestine, in a socialist federation of the Middle East, with the right of self-determination for both the Palestinian and Israeli people.

ZIMBABWE

BRAZIL

GERMANY

IS SOCIALISM REALISTIC NOW FOR ZIMBABWE?

After the euphoria died last week as Zimbabwe became 'legally' independent major problems lay ahead.

By
Jim Chrystie

The war for independence from white minority rule cost an estimated 27,000 lives. In addition over one million Zimbabweans fled as refugees across the border, became homeless or were herded by the Smith regime into 'protected' villages.

One of the first priorities for the regime will be to provide a decent life for these people. A recent report from the Salvation Army has warned that "if nothing is done about these people, within a year there will be widespread starvation and disease."

Throughout the rural areas there is danger of starvation. The chief economist of the agriculture marketing authority has stated that "the food situation in the tribal areas is the worst in living memory."

In the urban areas there is growing unemployment. Over 100,000 Africans lost their jobs in the past five years because of the the world and the war economy. Just to provide employment for youngsters leaving school 60-70 thousand new jobs need to be found every year.

A further problem lies in providing jobs for the up to 60,000 ex-guerilla and Rhodesian soldiers who will be

demobilised by the end of June. And the government has also spoken of the difficulty of integrating the rival armies.

Aspirations are high. In the immediate aftermath of the ZANU (PF) election victory, many workers took industrial action to rectify past grievances and improve their wages. More recently British Leyland workers have demanded the removal of their local management.

What has been the response of the Mugabe government? Its attitude has been that the situation has been too dangerous to try to implement socialist policies. This would antagonise international big business and lead to the exodus of local whites.

Instead Mugabe has spoken of building upon the existing capitalist structure. Reforms, especially on land, will be undertaken, but all within a capitalist framework. Socialism, Mugabe says, lies in the future and will come through education and persuasion.

So Walls will be the head of the Zimbabwean army. Workers who strike are told to abide by the old laws.

Crucially the old Zimbabwe

government has put its hope for the expansion of the Zimbabwean economy in international capitalism. It is relying on large financial loans and grants from Western banks and governments as a launching pad for development. And in return they will demand that nothing must be done which fundamentally threatens their interests.

But this so-called 'pragmatic' 'realistic' policy is really building on sand. International capitalism is entering recession.

Perhaps in the days of the post-war boom of the 1950s and 1960s there would have been some logic to such a policy. Even then, as can be seen in Kenya, only the rich elite benefited and the rest of the population went to the wall.

Instead of trying to consolidate a black capitalist regime, a decisive break must be made to establish a democratic socialist society.

The 20 reserved seats for whites in Parliament must be removed. The old state machine has not been decisively broken.

Instead of relying on Walls to run the army there should be trade union rights for the armed forces with the election of all officers.

To help bring about a society truly under the control of working people, workers and peasant assemblies should be established.

The large landowners should be expropriated and the land distributed to the peasants under the control of the



Can capitalist policies maintain the enthusiasm which greeted ZANU's electoral victory

peasant assemblies. Cheap credits to aid the peasantry and the introduction of voluntary collective farming would help develop food production.

But radical socialist measures cannot be limited to the countryside. There must be trade union rights and a national minimum wage. And crucially in order to plan the economy big business must be taken into public ownership

so that there is a socialist plan under workers' control and management.

Such an approach would undoubtedly arouse the opposition of international capitalism and the racist rulers of South Africa. But a "softly, softly" approach is utopian.

Instead support should be given to the South African

revolution, so that the defeats that imperialism has suffered in Angola and Mozambique are consolidated and the way opened to a new future, a Socialist Federation of Southern Africa, which could help rid the sub-continent of all the ills that imperialism has foisted upon it.

What the absence of workers democracy means

The absence of workers' democracy in the Stalinist states of USSR, Eastern Europe and China means that there is no accountability of the ruling bureaucracy to the people. And without day-to-day checks on their activities, the ruling caste in these countries can build up their privileges, perks and living standards.

But the ruling bureaucrats fear the hostility of working people to their open display of wealth. So now and then they have to sacrifice some of their lesser number and denounce them for 'corruption' 'crimes' etc. in order to preserve the system as a whole.

They have done this again recently in the USSR, Poland and China.

In the USSR over 200 people in Moscow, and hundreds more throughout Russia, have been arrested for

By Steve Amor

participating in a ten-year multi-million dollar caviar swindle. The raked involved the Minister of Fisheries, Western firms and Swiss banks.

Caviar was sold to the West in tins marked "smoked, seasoned herring." The Western firm then sold it as caviar, split the profits with the Russian officials, whose share was deposited in Swiss bank accounts.

In China the deputy secretary of the Communist Party who was also deputy director of the petro-chemical bureau in the industrial city of Anshan, has been dismissed because he gave preferential treatment to various customers in order to get good jobs and better schooling for his

three daughters. He also stole material from his workplace and sold its goods privately. He has been dismissed but the bigger parasites of course remain.

Without workers' democracy no proper planning can be undertaken. As the economy develops even the benefits of nationalisation become throttled in the hands of a ruling elite unable to cope with the sophistication required to run a modern economy.

E. Europe

The Chinese economy still has room for expansion, but for the industrialised economies of Eastern Europe they face stagnation.

Nowhere is this more the case than in Poland. Last year the economy declined by 2% and currently the ruling clique are negotiating for a

large Eurodollar credit to help pay off the existing debt of \$18,000m.

The prime minister was sacked last year in order "to encourage the others." But the basic undemocratic system remains.

Last week a Polish legal journal revealed that local officials tampered with figures so that it looked like they were fulfilling the national plan. In that way they "get a bonus, and get a good place on the promotions list."

All this corruption and criminal activity is inevitable if society is not run by the working people themselves, instead of in their names. What is happening to Poland's economy is the music of the future for all the Stalinist states, as the bureaucracies lurch from one expediency to another in order to preserve their totalitarian system.

BRAZIL

A strike by 300,000 metalworkers has hit much of Brazil's manufacturing industry hard. It is about the right to organise and for workers to elect their own shop stewards.

Multi-national car giants such as Fords and Volkswagen, who reluctantly acknowledge trade union rights in the USA and Europe, refuse them in Brazil. They work closely with the military dictatorship who took over the country in 1964.

Now the workers are demanding the right to organise, a 17% wage increase and a guarantee of keeping their jobs after a settlement is reached. In the past manage-

ment sacked workers with increased wages and recruited cheaper workers from the pool of unemployed.

Now that the economic miracle is over and workers are asserting their rights, cracks are appearing with the ruling elite. A regional labour tribunal has awarded up to 7% to the metalworkers, and uniquely has not declared the strike illegal.

Last year during a strike the government occupied the union headquarters and removed the leaders. But repression cannot indefinitely crush Brazilian workers as they begin to move against the military dictatorship.

STEELWORKERS CAMPAIGN ENDED

Last week's 'Militant' carried a report of the campaign being waged within the German labour movement to defend Brother Herbert Knapp a leading steelworker.

Unfortunately this campaign has now been ended. The vicious smear campaign conducted against Herbert Knapp has resulted in his physical and nervous breakdown and resignation from the union.

He was accused of being a thief, a strikebreaker and even a Russian spy. His support for British steelworkers was criticised. Other workers who supported Herbert were subjected to mysterious phone calls and threatening letters.

A fuller explanation will follow later, but in the meantime the defence campaign has been wound up.

MILITANT INTERNATIONAL PAMPHLETS

Rise and Fall of the Communist International, by Ted Grant. 15p
USSR and E Europe: Bureaucratism or Workers' Power,
by Roger Silverman and Ted Grant. 30p
Iranian Revolution—reprints from 'Militant'. 10p

All plus 10p p&p, from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

LETTERS

Send your views and comments on the issues that affect you to 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Photo: MILITANT

ISSUE 500 READERS' TRIBUTES:

Dear Comrades,
The publication of the 500th edition of the 'Militant' is a good opportunity to register the appreciation of my organisation for the valuable contribution the paper is making to the struggle of blacks. With the growing militancy of blacks, as evidenced by Grunwicks and the scores of other strikes involving Asian and West Indian workers, our main task now is to ensure that the 'Militant' reaches an even wider layer of blacks so that they too can be drawn into the struggle to bring about the socialist transformation of society.
Fraternally,
Bob Lee,
Secretary, PNP Youth movement.



Reading the 'Militant'—lorry drivers on picket duty at Tilbury during their strike in January 1979

Dear Comrades,
The 500th issue brought to mind one report that illustrates why 'Militant' has grown. During the bitter strike of the bakers, at the height of the media attacks, one of the bakers' wives, who until that time had been an active member of the Conservative Party, attempted to put the bakers' case. She wrote to the local

newspaper and Southern Television. Both refused to give her the time of day. So she wrote in desperation to our paper, outlining her feelings about the strike and how she had come to realise how biased the media is. This is the major reason for the growth and influence of our paper. It opens its pages for ordinary working people to express their views and

their feelings and at the same time gives support, encouragement and strength to workers when they are struggling and the whole system is brought down against them. Forward to the 1,000th edition and socialism.
Fraternally,
Rod Fitch, Brighton.
Chairman, Brighton Kemptown Labour Party.

Dear Comrades,
The 500th edition of 'Militant' is a milestone, not only for the supporters of the paper but for the working class as a whole.

Some try to make out that Marxism is alien to the traditions of the labour movement. 'Militant' shows that it isn't. Wherever workers are under attack, the paper gives our side of the story.

In Birmingham NGA we've had two big disputes in two years. Neither of them got a mention in the press (not that we wanted the 'Birmingham Evening Mail' sniffing round) but both were covered in the 'Militant'.

It means a lot to blokes who are picketing day in, day out, to read their side of the story put in a truthful way. The cuttings got pride of place in the dispute van's notice board.

'Militant' has shown me how to explain the ideas of Marxism in a practical way. I look forward to the day when I have a new issue to sell every day.

Fraternally,
Chris Newis
NGA Father of Chapel.

The price of 'economies'

Dear Comrades,
Around our school grounds there are a number of drainage gulleys without covers. When the building inspector paid a visit, the head caretaker took him out to the main drive and, showing him one of these open gulleys, made his case for a supply of replacement grids.

"All it needs is for one of these kids to put their foot down it and they could break a leg!"

"That's all very well, but we've got to make economies," replied the inspector.

Taking this to mean "No chance!", one of the blokes put a concrete block over the hole. It was a question of making the best of a bad job. Unfortunately the block was shifted for being an obstruction and a fortnight later a fifteen year-old girl tripped in the gully.

Luckily she didn't break her leg...she cut her chin open and was packed off to hospital where she needed thirteen stitches and X-rays revealed a cracked jaw. The headmaster got on the 'phone to a builder and a new grid was rushed up to the school.

Two weeks passed and back came the building inspector. We told him about the accident and argued that with the cost of an ambulance and medical attention, it would have been cheaper to pay for a new grid straight away. Another half dozen gulleys were still uncovered, we added.

"O.K.!" he said, "but where do we find the money?"

He gets his orders from Leicestershire's Tory County Council, who have discovered more than one way to make cuts—the day after this girl's 'mishap' the school nurse had her hours chopped from thirty a week to twenty.

Fraternally,
Laurence Coates,
NUPE School Caretaker.

No profit in a phone-box

Dear Comrades,
With the Tory government come the usual attacks on nationalised industries. The attacks on the Post Office are no exception. Private enterprise, with the help of their Tory friends, have singled out telecommunications for special attention.

The potential of the profitable parts of the telecomms business to reline the pockets of the private sector is enormous. It must be resisted.

THE VIRTUES OF A SHARK

Dear Comrades,
Travelling up to LPYS Conference on Good Friday I came across the so-called self-employed businessman that the Tories seem to think is so important.

Brighton YS hired a minibus from this particular individual and the whole episode was fraught with problems.

Hotel workers are union members too!

Dear Comrades,
In a recent statement to the press Sid Weighall, NUR general secretary, committed his membership to supporting the TUC day of action on May 14th, with the exception of the NUR members in British Transport Hotels Ltd.
As a member of the

The 'hiving off' of profitable parts of the industry is a threat to jobs and will also jeopardise the further expansion of the Post Office. Short-term profits for the benefit of a few will, in the long run, be to the detriment of everybody.

The track record of private enterprise in the Post Office should be proof enough of what the future would hold. The duplicating of equipment by the industries in the private sector is just one example. Lack of investment is another.

Monopolisation of the whole industry would increase its efficiency and negate the selfish, narrow-minded ideals

of private enterprise. When we picked the bus up we had difficulty getting it started; apparently there was no petrol in the tank!

We struggled down to the picking-up point, but went only a few hundred yards when the engine started stalling.

At the town centre, we had to start pushing it.

Eventually we went to the nearest garage to get it checked; they uncovered a catalogue of defects. It was untaxed, had heavy steering, suspect brakes, no hazard warning lights and the engine kept stalling. In plain words it was a death trap.

We then drove it back to get our money returned. The

average less than £40 per week. Once again they have been let down and made to feel that the only contribution they can make to their union is their weekly subscription. Is this the way to encourage trade union activity?

These workers should be encouraged to feel part of the trade union movement and be shown the meaning of solidarity.

Yours fraternally,
Jackie Mitchell,
Edinburgh North Labour Party.

If private enterprise is the panacea the Tories and their paymasters believe it to be, why don't they prove it by taking over the public kiosks and turning a £15 million loss into a profit? Of course they won't.

As far as private profiteers are concerned, an indispensable public service that makes a loss should be borne by the public. An indispensable public service that makes a profit should be taken over by private enterprise!

Fraternally
J. D. Evans,
POEU (Bradford)

bloke was very reluctant to refund our money.

When challenged about the missing tax disc he said it had been stolen. In fact, there was a notice in the tax disc's place which read 'Tax expired 31-3-80, applied for 1-4-80'.

When we mentioned the rest of the defects he said it had been serviced the previous week! After arguing for 20 minutes we finally emerged with our money refunded and walked up to the station to get a train.

Are these the virtues of private enterprise the Tories are always extolling?

Yours fraternally,
Clive Walder
Hove LPYS

C.C.O. FILMS IN COLLABORATION WITH
BIG BUSINESS
PRESENT

THATCHER

IF THIS DOESN'T SCARE YOU
YOU'RE ALREADY DEAD!

THE HORROR STORY OF THE 80s

MARTIN PEARCE '80

CALL OUT THE TROOPS

Dear Comrades,
Regarding the TUC call for a day of action on May 14th, I suggest that the labour movement appeals to the Police Federation and the armed forces to join us on that day. After all, most of them come from the ranks of the working class.

There would probably be a hysterical reaction from the capitalist media and the police and service chiefs, but

not to worry, we have good historical precedents for such an appeal.

As a former member of the Royal Navy and the Liverpool City Police, I can assure you that although many members of the police are NF sympathisers, many are not, and know deep down where their real interests lie.

Perhaps Margaret Thatcher was trying to forestall us by her recent approval for pay increases to both the police and armed forces.

Yours fraternally,
Jim Fitzmaurice,
Birkenhead Labour Party.

Have you been involved in a dispute at work recently? Write and share the lessons with other 'Militant readers.

COMBAT BOSSES FIGHTING FUND WITH CASH

Photo: MILITANT

"Employers call for fighting fund." That was the headline recently in 'Printing World' as the print bosses planned to raise £3m to take on the NGA.

Unfortunately, however, as readers will quickly realise, the 'Militant' is not expected to do well out of the latest decision of the print industry employers. It all goes to show, though, that if large firms making millions of pounds profit find it necessary to develop a 'Fighting Fund' to take on the unions, how much more essential it is for us to build ours.

We appeal to every reader of this paper—if you are not already doing so, you should contribute at least part of your income to the Fighting Fund that supports the interests of the ordinary people.

The £743.01 raised this week is in addition to just over £400 received in cash from events organised two weeks ago (including £100 from delegates and visitors to the NUT Conference) and counted towards the first quarter's target. But we are now about £200 behind where we should be after the first week of the second quarter.

We need an average of £1,937 every week to reach the half-year target of £45,000 which will enable us to make further technical improvements to the 'Militant'.

An opportunity for all supporters to help us will be at the special meetings being held to commemorate this 500th issue of 'Militant'. We will be featuring the best collections in this column over the next two to three weeks. See to it that we include the one from your area!

This week's money contained union expenses (£40 Liverpool, £2.50 South London) and £1 handed to us by a national official after a sponsored TUC course in tying knots in crisp bags.

Dunfermline LPYS sent us money from posters, and a fiver came from B Newton in Falkirk. In the Midlands, workers at Firmins, Birmingham, contributed £2.45 and R Harbidge (USDW, Nottingham) 50p. Yorkshire comrades have been wall-paper stripping (£5) and sponsoring a Bradford comrade not to drink for £33.50 (that's the way round we approve of because nothing goes to the Tories!).

Thanks also to Bradford West LPYS for their £4 donation. East Yorkshire reader Chris Higgs has sent us

By
Steve Cawley

£15, and whereas a Gateshead comrade raised £2 by means of a sponsored swim, a Stevenage supporter reached £8 by paddling at Llandudno. (There's a moral there somewhere—Trotsky used to say it's a mistake to jump in before taking the temperature of the water.)

Many thanks also to the South West readers who are now pushing their line faster across the chart, like Jo Selway (SOGAT) and Bill Martin (Brislington LP), both of Bristol.

The regular contributions from Merseyside include over £15 from NGA members (D Reid £2.90) and a fiver from Cllr L Evans of Childwall LP. From Wales, £36 from selling Lenin badges has come from a comrade in Swansea, and nearly £22 from readers in Barking, including a fiver from A Mace.

Last but not least, £85 from Paisley readers included £5 passed on from J McGregor, Kilmarnock LPYS, and £50 courtesy of Quatermass Promotions. A large proportion of the remaining £30 was raised by just one supporter using a collecting card!

Thanks to all those who've helped us to 500 issues. We believe we're just starting the job of putting a Marxist



Newspaper workers in dispute against the Tory press. [above] NGA members in solidarity action with journalists sacked from the Nottingham Evening Post. Now NGA members face attacks from the print bosses as headline [below] from 'Printing World' indicates.

Employers call for fighting fund

THE BPIF is to raise £3m as a defence fund for its members during the current wage dispute. The Bristol United... the C...

**ONLY
£743
THIS WEEK**

programme in the movement. Whether we do or not is up to you, our readers. Do you want us to stop now?

ads

CLASSIFIED: 5p per word, minimum ten words
SEMI-DISPLAY: £2 per 2 column centimetres.
All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY

Militant Readers' Meetings

MILITANT Northern camp Whit weekend, Friday 23 May to Monday 26 May. Near Heswick, Lake District.

Cost: Adults £8, children £2.50. Full details of political programme later. Further details: M Lindsay, 051 922 2318.

'A Socialist Programme for Kirklees'

Militant Public Meeting Speakers: Paul Gerrard (Huddersfield West CLP Vice Chairman), David Michael (Dept. rep, NALGO). Thursday 8th May, 7.30 pm, Friendly & Trades, Northumberland St, Huddersfield.

BLYTH Marxist Discussion Group. Every Wednesday, 7.30 pm, at Blyth YMCA.

April 30 'How a socialist society would be organised' May 7 'What is capitalism and imperialism?' May 14 'Which way now, after the TUC day of action?' Anyone interested should contact Joe Cox Tel. Cramlington 712035.

USDW 'Militant' Readers Meeting. 'Socialist Policies for USDW' Speakers: Jeff Price (Delegate, Newcastle), Tony Saunio (Labour Party NEC; LPYS Rep.). On Monday 28th April, 7.00pm at Bournemouth Town Hall. ALL WELCOME.

Classified

POOLE LPYS/TU Day School 'The Employment Bill'. At Parkstone Trades & Labour Hall, Woodlands Hall, Ashley Rd. Parkstone, Poole. 27 April 10.30 am. Speakers: Bill Mullins (Senior shop steward, Rover, Solihull), Dave Booker (GMWU Branch Secretary), John Kelly (President Southampton Trades Council)

ISLINGTON Five-a-side football. Sunday May 4, 11 am. Finsbury Park (Seven Sisters Road entrance). Islington LPYS versus all-comers. 50p entry. Proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund.

'STUFF THATCHER' badges: 2 for 45p; 5 for £1; 10 for £1.75; 50 for £7.60. Order from D. Kemp (Dept D), 114 Ladybarn Rd, Fallowfield, Manchester 14.

Two 'Militant' badges now available: 'Tories Out' (just reprinted) and 'No to Anti Union Laws'. Red and black on white. Cost: orders of 1-20 at 20p each; 21-50 at 15p each; over 50 at 13p each. Orders to N Brooks, 77 Atherley Road, Shirley, Southampton. Cheques etc. payable to N Brooks. Please include payment for postage.

NEW BADGE, 'Defend Union Rights, Imprison the Tories NOT the Workers.' 25p each (plus 12p postage) or £13 for 100 (plus £2 postage). Cheques payable to M A Pearce, 32 Worpole Road Mews, London SW 19

ON TO A 'DAILY MILITANT'

Five hundred issues of 'Militant' is a magnificent achievement. This has been done through the sacrifice of sellers regularly selling the paper in their own time knowing that every sale is one more victory on the road to socialism. The readership and support for our paper is a testimony to the work of all our contributors.

But to achieve a bigger and more frequent 'Mili-

tant', the message has to go out to every workplace, Labour Party and trade union branch, the 'Militant' is a workers' paper, make sure workers get it. Sell 'Militant' like never before so that we can all celebrate not just another 500 issues but a 'Daily Militant' in a socialist world.

By
Dave Farrar

Blackburn 'Militant' supporters are aiming to put on an "Arts Weekend" in the North West in September. We hope to organise an exhibition of works—paintings, cartoons, poetry, songs, collages etc.—together with discussions on the theme of "Marxism and Culture", and films and a folk and drama evening.

We would like to hear any ideas and comments 'Militant' readers may have, and details of photographs of work that anyone would like to contribute. The contributions do not necessarily have to be of a political nature.

Write to Peter and Rossina Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1UR.

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WORLD BOOKS OUT NOW!

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NGA MUST WIN!

Members of the NGA in general print and provincial news are engaged in industrial action for a 37½-hour week and a minimum wage of £80.

On 11 March the British Printing Industries Federation and the Newspaper Society made a final offer: a 37½-hour week by 1982 and minimum earnings of £75.

This was rejected by the NGA's negotiating panel. Unfortunately, the leaders of SOGAT and NATSOPA are recommending that their members accept the offer.

The NGA is conducting 'guerrilla' action. Individual firms are asked to concede a 1½ hour from 24 April and a further hour's reduction from 1 April 1981 with an £80 minimum wage, or a £12.79 increase, whichever is the greater.

If employers refuse, sanctions are applied. But this tactic involves many dangers, giving the employers the opportunity to lock out workers taking action.

An all-out strike would put the initiative firmly with the union. Guerrilla action also means the most progressive chapels, who have already gained a 37½ hour week, will

By Chris Newis

(Birmingham NGA branch committee, personal capacity)

not be involved in the struggle (provided their employer concedes the new money). The most militant sections of the union, and many of the leading local activists will not be involved in the dispute.

The main argument put forward against an all-out strike is that the NGA is bound by rule to pay a third of basic rate a week strike pay to each member, which would break the union in a short time.

This rule, then, is tantamount to a 'no strike' clause. But the rule could be suspended by the National Council, if they explained the necessity for an all-out struggle by the membership.

Nevertheless, the National Council is to be congratulated for 'having a go' for a 37½ hour week and £80 minimum earnings. Success will have great implications for other groups of workers, as in 1959 when the printers gained the 40-hour week.

In Cardiff, Steve Davies spoke to Stan Pieck, NGA of Cardiff North Labour Party Young Socialists Father of the Chapel at Graphic Print, Taffs Well.

Our original claim was for an £80 a week basic minimum for day workers and the introduction of a 37½-hour working week to be phased in by 24 April. On the wages, we eventually settled for £75 a week basic, but the employers refused to reduce the hours until 1981.

Considering that the difference is only 1¼ hours (we now work 38¼ hours) we feel this delay is unacceptable, and have banned overtime and adopted a policy of non-cooperation with management.

They responded with a circular to all our members (and even to SOGAT!) arguing that their offer was fair and claiming that through our action we had rendered ourselves open to dismissal without any further warnings. They've also introduced a variety of petty sanctions against us.

Neither this, nor the Tories' Budget proposals to penalise trade unionists' families during a strike, will affect the attitude of our members who are unanimous in their de-

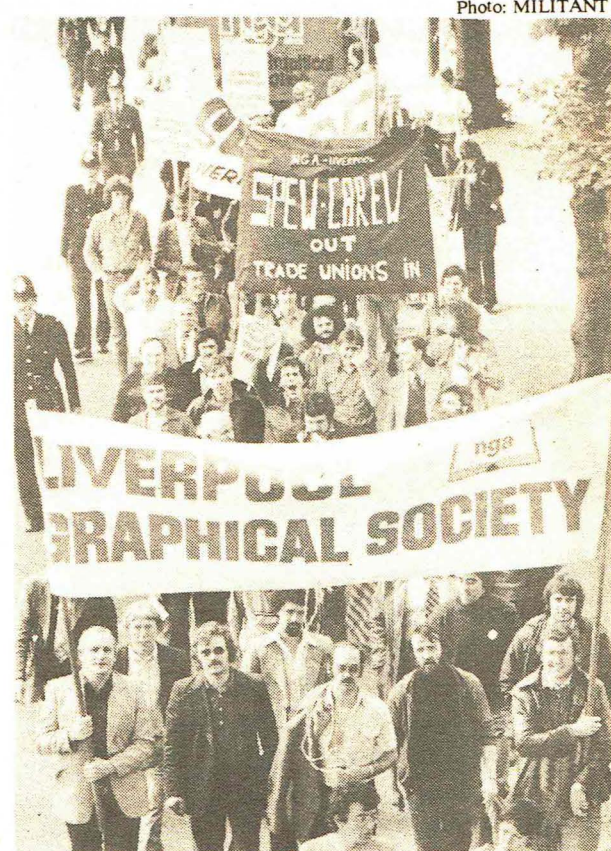
termination to win this dispute. One thing the election of a Tory government has done, however, is to give the management the confidence to move against the closed shop and this will be a vital bone of contention.

The firm says that it cannot settle until the British Printing Industry Federation says so, but already 14 firms in this area alone have accepted the NGA's demands. Our action is beginning to bit now, and with cancelled orders increasing it can only be a matter of time before the employers come round.

In an attempt to force management to resume negotiations we called (17 April) a 24-hour mandatory meeting which meant that no work was done.

The firm wanted all NGA members off the premises, but we refused and brought out the apprentices as well.

Management were furious, of course, and one of them came up to me and said: "You're getting very militant aren't you?—I did have the paper in front of me at the



The NGA at the front of the fight against the Nottingham Evening Post bosses last year.

time! As far as the TUC's Day of Action on 14 May is concerned, we haven't taken any decision yet but no doubt we will take appropriate action when the time comes.

I've recently applied to join the Labour Party because, while I've always supported Labour, it's only since I've

been involved in union work as Father of the Chapel that I've felt the need to become more involved.

I was able to get an application form from the Young Socialists who were having a street sale of the 'Militant'. I bought a copy then and I think it's a good paper.

BIFU— Lessons for the future

An unusual sight for the City of London, the heartland of British finance capital—pickets outside all the main clearing banks!

The action ended in victory this week, with Nat West promising full payment for messengers under 30, phased over the next two years.

The action of the Banking Insurance and Finance Union members began at the Nat/W West and spread to other clearing banks. It started with 68 messengers demanding parity with unskilled maintenance engineers, who recently gained a £500 annual increase.

The same increase was offered to the technical and service staff (bringing the starting salary up to £3,750 on entry after their one-day strike on 1 April—but not to staff aged 30 and under with limited service).

One picket told me: "We're not out for ourselves but for the young messengers." It is precisely those men in their late 20s who would be needing

By Bob Faulkes
(Hackney Central LP)
& Dave Spagnol
(Tower Hamlets LPYS)

decent wages for young families.

Another picket expressed disgust that there were only 64 messengers under 30, so the cost of giving them the full £500 increase would be small. The bank had just donated £1,500,000 to a cricket competition!

At the moment, a messenger starts work on £62.50 per week, and can take forty years to reach the maximum salary!

I asked the BIFU convenor Michael Duffin, about the morale of the men. He assured me it was good. No approaches had been made to the labour movement for financial help, as the dispute was not expected to go on very long. No strike pay was available, he said, "as the union needs funds to best

Maggie!" The Regional Organiser of BIFU had told the men to go back to work (in fact he arrived while I was there, about 6.30 pm) in view of the fact that management were prepared to negotiate at 11 am the following morning.

The men refused, however, and said they would return to work at 10 am so that there would be no time to catch up with work before negotiations commenced.

The dispute is now over, but holds valuable lessons. Industrially it shows the need for a campaign to draw all bank workers together into one united, effective union.

It also shows that the Tory press's lies about "greedy workers" are exposed by this group of workers who were striking without pay for just 64 of their lower-paid colleagues. The mood of workers is such that neither any employer nor the government can take liberties with groups of workers, even those without a powerful union or tradition of militancy.

action has been taken against the driver.

The fight to keep jobs goes on. Send messages of support and offers of help to Hayden Burns, 46 Kempton Park Road, Aintree, Liverpool 10. Donations to William Naylor, 1 Lyndhurst, Maghull L31 6DY—cheques payable to Massey Ferguson Combined Union Appeal.

By John Price
(Bootle LPYS)

MASSEY FERGUSON

The AUEW have finally made the dispute at Massey Ferguson official after 20 members lobbied the union offices on Tuesday April 15.

About 150 flying pickets went to two Manchester plants today (Monday 21st April). At the central parts plant, the workers held a mass meeting outside the factory. 40% of the workforce there refused to cross the picket lines, and joined the pickets on the line, but workers at the Barton Dock Road plant all went in to

work. Pickets at both plants have had success in turning away wagons and vans, and none have crossed the picket lines.

The police have been in force at both plants with full riot shield gear. Two pickets from Knowsley plant were arrested after the driver of a car had driven madly at the picket line, and had at other times tried to aggravate the pickets.

Even though this was a danger to people on the line, as far as pickets know, no

BACK TO WORK WITH A DIFFERENCE

After the steel strike. Andy Fenwick, ISTC Lackenby Quality Control, describes the return to work...

It was difficult, to say the least, to get used to shift work again after thirteen weeks on strike.

Usually the prospect of a long night shift on a Saturday night when your friends are out on the town looms oppressively at the back of your mind. But this time it was different: meeting workmates was much better than a booze up.

We talked and swapped experiences about picketing from up and down the country, and particularly that time a flying picket went to France.

These tales had us rolling on the floor with laughter—much to the displeasure of the manager present.

One of the worries we all joked about was whether we could get up at 5 am. for the 6 am. to 2 pm. shift. I personally couldn't get to sleep before my first morning shift for fear I would be late



Thirteen weeks on the picket line will not be forgotten by the steelmen.

and give the manager an excuse to sack me, which he'd so dearly love to do, as I was

active during the strike.

By the way, I made it with 12 seconds to spare after breaking every speed limit on the way.

We had been free from the burden of shift-work for so long that the many felt a new life was starting for them. A friend who is sixty said his arthritis had cleared up during the dispute, but he was sure the pain would soon recur now he was working again.

My own health undoubtedly improved during the strike. After working a shift I used to cough up phlegm that was jet black from the dust. For the moment, I now have a much healthier cough due to standing in the cold fresh air on the picket-line.

One thing that is not heard anymore is 'Load Teesside with orders,' the phrase that spelt redundancies and closures for other areas. Now, we are one national union.

The Tories provoked this strike. But like Dr Frankenstein, they messed about with a dead corpse—and produced a 'monster', a militant trade union that will turn on 'Dr' Thatcher and the big business ghouls behind her government.

'A Socialist Strategy for Steelworkers'

—a 'Militant' pamphlet, 20p from 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN (+10p p&p)

DRG—fight redundancies

The Dickenson Robinson Group will be handing out redundancy notices to the workforce employed at Kent Kraft Mills and Kent Plastic Sacks on 21 April, meaning 260 fewer jobs in the rapidly declining paper industry of the south.

With unemployment rising in this once low-unemployment area, prospects of finding a good paying job will be almost nil.

DRG are claiming that their problems are the result of the recent 12½% fall in the value of the Swedish Krone, which has given Swedish

paper manufacturers a competitive advantage over them.

The main problem at Kent Plastic Sacks was obtaining good enough plastic waste. But when KPS were offering only £80 a ton for waste, compared to other firms' £120 a ton, it was obvious that management were deliberately running the plant down.

As we know, the real problem is lack of investment in machines to do the job. In five to ten years' time the paper machine trade would fall anyway.

But DRG prefer to keep their precious profits, £18.7

million after tax in 1979, a £2.8 million increase over 1978.

DRG have asked union to show "good will" when negotiating redundancies. They may as well claim goblins have caused the intended closures, because I and my colleagues do not live in fairyland.

Let us see socialism in the '80s, with tight workers' control. Let us destroy capitalism in Britain and internationally.

By Mole Chater
(SOGAT FOC; Kent Plastic Sacks)

CPSA-VOTE FOR THE LEFT

Elections for the Presidency and the National Executive members are underway in the Civil and Public Services Association. The contest is between the two main political groupings, the 'Broad Left' and the right-wing 'moderate' group.

At present the right hold the presidency (Kate Losinska) and the left a large majority of the NEC. This has produced conflicts of which some are the subject of conference motions to be debated next month.

Whichever way the votes go on policy, the crucial question is what kind of leadership will be elected to carry them out. Already leading spokesmen of the right have brazenly declared that they will ignore conference decisions on the key issues of pay and democracy. Charlie Elliott has even stated openly that a right-wing majority would apply for Tory government aid to hold secret ballots!

The past twelve months have seen attack after attack on CPSA members. In the Civil Service we have been cut first by 60,000 posts and then

By Pat Byrne
(CPSA NEC, personal cap.)

by another 15,000 jobs as part of the price for our pay rise this year.

Another 70,000 staff are threatened for a further cutback.

In the Post Office, the business is being split in two amidst threats of an end to the monopoly and the possible hivings off to private profiteers. All our members in public sector groups are suffering under harsh cash limits and impossible profitability targets. The coming year will be crucial to the union.

It is essential that a left-wing NEC is re-elected. If the elections were again to be held on the branch ballot system existing until this year, then the left would almost certainly win comfortably. However, the ultra-left, backed by the right, proposed a new individual ballot system at 1979 conference, this was steamrollered through.

We have jettisoned a system where the branch and the



Delegates cheer victory of a left candidate in the presidency elections at the CPSA Conference in 1978

Photo: MILITANT

union had complete control over to a complicated arrangement open to right-wing press influence. The new individual ballot is cast at the workplace where possible (or otherwise by postal ballot!) Voting was originally tied in with discussion of policy, but now policy and elections have been completely separated.

'Militant' believes in collective decisions within the movement and the branch vote being decided by the majority. The idea of 'individual rights,' proposed by the ultra left and not surprisingly loudly applauded by the right in reality opens the union's elections to manipu-

lation by big business and the Tories through their press and mass media.

As a result of this new election procedure, fresh hope has flooded the right wing camp, who are predicting a swing to the right. However, it would be wrong to anticipate a right-wing victory prematurely. Several factors remain uncertain: how strong the press campaign will be for the right wing, the number of members who attend the election meetings and in which branches.

One thing is certain: if the right wing claw their way back to power through the individual ballot, the ultra-

left's blunder will be at the expense of the members' interests. Bernard Levin in an article in 'The Times' described the introduction of the new balloting system as "tactical blunders on the part of the Broad Left."

'Militant' supporters were the only group in the union to raise their voices against the new system. We favour a more democratic union, certainly, but by bringing branch structures nearer to the members so that all issues, elections and policies, are decided with maximum participation. The present state of affairs is transforming the union into an election mach-

ine.

It is now essential that every effort is made to return a left executive so that union policies, as decided by conference, are translated into reality.

For a Left Executive, and a fighting CPSA!

Stop press: CPSA, SCPS, IRSF and CSU are all coming out on a one-day strike on 14 May. The IPCS may join in as well.

Alan Smith Group—

'WE'LL GO ON INTO NEXT YEAR'

"The longer we stay out, the stronger we become." This is the feeling of the Alan Smith Group's strikers.

When we first came out on the 17th January, we thought the strike would last a few weeks, and that's how long we thought we could last out. It's now well into its fourth month, and for workers who have never been out on strike before, that takes some doing.

They've never had a defeat but they have been trodden down for years by management. Now they are battle-hardened strike veterans with a determination to win.

The strike was made official for the second time by our Executive Council, and the District Committee gave a unanimous vote for a district

By Ian Carrington
(Shop Steward AUEW, Alan Smith Group)

levy. The lads feel that with a district levy they will be able to go on till next year.

The meeting between our full time officers and Engineering Employers' Federation representatives, [Issue 499] resulted in another meeting being set up for the 28th April, but the feeling members have is that the talks will take a number of weeks, but they are more confident than ever before. The strike is affecting the company, but we sent out further details, to all districts, asking them to lock up all work still emanating from the factories.

If this is done we would be

in a very strong position for future negotiations. Our Convenor Roy Bennett went into the Sheffield district appealing for financial assistance, and met another Convenor who had just been sacked.

Sheffield District Committee have promised financial support for our lads. The tales Roy had to tell when he got back, which was related to my Sheffield members really lifted them up.

There is a social this Saturday which has been organised by the members in aid of the strike, but we won't be singing the picket line blues, because nobody has them any longer.

However, we still need as much support as we can get, there's a long way to go yet, so we appeal to all members in the labour and trade union movement for help—as our mass picket leaflet said, 'Us now, You tomorrow.'

A JUST FIGHT

Workers at Record Merchandisers in Hayes, Middlesex are fed up with poor conditions of work, a dirty working environment and low pay being steadily eaten away by inflation.

They are now fighting back with an overtime ban and work to rule, and on Wednesday 23 April will be on strike for one day to show their determination to get justice.

However, this action has not been called lightly and is only taking place because of management's intransigence. The company, which stands in the shadow of the massive EMI site of factories, used to be part of the same firm but when it separated, there was an understanding that rates of pay made would be on a par with EMI. This is no

longer so.

At present the rate of pay at Record Merchandisers is only £58.56 basic pay plus £6.44 attendance allowance per week. But every one day sickness taken, the worker forfeits two days' attendance bonus. Faced with a massive increase in the cost of living, the workers applied for a 9% cost of living rise last January, their annual pay rise not being due until July.

Management refusal to pay this just request coupled with the false argument about not being able to afford to pay the rise, forced these workers into dispute. The dispute on pay has brought to the surface a whole number of other grievances—their workplaces are filthy and covered in dust, and they are forced to do

many hours overtime to make up their pay.

The workers have pointed out because the union has been weak in the past, the management has 'always made us toe the line'. As one of the workers pointed out 'We've always gone out of our way to help the management but we receive nothing in return. We're not prepared to work under the conditions we have done in the past any longer.'

Already it is clear that EMI T&G is backing the dispute. It is now vital that the workers get full support and help from their union.

By Martin Elvin
(Chairman, Greater London LPYS)

BL anger comes to a head

By Mick Coleman
(T&GWU Swindon)

After twenty-two years without a serious strike, the assembly workers of Pressed Steel Fisher, Swindon, walked out of the gates on Thursday 15 April in a burst of spontaneous action.

Their anger spilled over to the indirect workers, who are also threatened with the infamous 92-page document, and they too followed a few hours later. With the official backing of the T&GWU, effective pickets were set up. Within an hour vital panels such as those for the Mini Metro were tightly sewn up within the plant.

Edwardes had pushed his incredible luck just that little bit too far.

He had broken through the AUEW's weak line of defence, sacked Derek Robinson, blackmailed the workforce into submission and now stood before us with the taste of blood in his mouth.

But with the workers on the TR7 ruthlessly laid off without pay, and more of us to follow 24 hours later, Swindon's T&G workers had nothing to lose and the battle-

lines were drawn.

Anger had been spreading like a bush-fire for two days before the strike. Foremen who were pushed from above tested their arm in trying to impose the new conditions. For two days total confusion reigned. Workers could find no way of channeling their anger. It was a situation that cried out for leadership.

Apart from a few notable exceptions, no such leadership emerged.

The crisis point had been reached by Tuesday morning: it was a once and for all decision for the workers, and they responded magnificently to a strike call.

A mass meeting was called at 9.30 am on the 18 April. The atmosphere at this meeting, however, had been poisoned by general secretary Moss Evans' statement on TV the night before.

After a 14-hour meeting with BL Cars' managing

director, Horriks, Evans reported that BL's management had lifted the sacking threat; that they would not impose the new conditions without consulting the unions; but the 5% still stood together with the document. On this basis, he was recommending a return to work.

Naturally, there was anger at this statement. It did sound like a betrayal, and the words "Sell out!" were predominant among the members.

But as Derek Montant, shop steward, correctly pointed out: "It would be madness for us to return to work on the strength of a two-minute interview on the media."

A resolution was put forward by the stewards, that they wait for a full report from Moss Evans before making any decision. It was put to the members that they continue the strike until a mass meeting on Tuesday 22nd, when a full report from the GNC could be given. This resolution was narrowly carried and (at the time of writing) the fight goes on.



T&G pickets outside BL Rover, Solihull—full report of this area on back page

Photo: MILITANT

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LEYLAND-

BL workers have demonstrated that their fighting spirit has not all evaporated.

The pessimistic idea that no further struggle was possible in BL was refuted by the strike action in the last two weeks.

By Bill Mullins

(Senior Steward, SD1, Rover, Solihull)

It is lack of company-wide trade union unity and bold policies and leadership to defend the workers' interests which have undermined the support for decisive action.

Management had come to believe that the workforce were easy meat to be picked off at any time. Had not Edwardes been able to close factories, declare massive redundancies, and even sack leading shop stewards—and get away with it?

Yet by Friday 18 April, almost 20,000 Leyland workers were on strike in defiance of this reactionary management and its Tory masters. Edwardes, buoyed up by his past successes, was out to impose without agreement a 5% to 10% wages deal, and a counter-revolution in working practices and conditions.

This insulting package deal was the last straw for most BL workers. If the original momentum had been maintained, every Leyland worker would have been drawn in and the whole company brought to a standstill. Not surprisingly, the strike began

among those workers building the prestige models, the most profitable products: Common Lane (Sherpa Van, Jaguar and Land Rover/Range Rover). Although the main union TGWU had not acceded to the request of the Leyland Cars Joint Negotiating Committee to call an official all-out BL strike, they did at least give official backing to any individual plant which walked out.

On this basis, the striking plant was soon joined by fellow workers at Castle Bromwich, Swindon, Rover Cars the Rover Engine and transmission plant, and Llanelli pressing plant. Plants like Cowley Assembly were also due to have mass meetings, and the stewards were confident that the members there would come out.

We had sent pickets from Rover to Longbridge and other factories armed with leaflets appealing for them to join the strike. It was at this stage that BL management produced their most dramatic



WE'LL ORGANISE AND FIGHT AGAIN

threat to date: any workers daring to stay on strike until Wednesday, 23 April, would be sacked.

But far from cowering the workforce, Edwardes' high-handed ultimatum really strengthened their feelings. "Now it is a fight to the finish. Let's smash Edwardes once and for all," was the response on the Rover picket line. As if to inflame their anger, the Rover management had rigged up a Nuremberg rally 'reception' for workers collecting their pay, with loud-speaker playing a continuous recording of why they should return to work.

The mood by now was very bitter, and more and more workers were volunteering for picket duty. The very same day, however, Edwardes was

meeting the trade union general secretaries to try and do a deal and head off what was becoming the biggest challenge to his management-by-intimidation.

BL workers have become used to the lack of support from the right-wing AUEW leaders, and have blamed them for many of the set-backs. But to many on the picket line it came as a cruel shock when Moss Evans of the T&GWU recommended a return to work.

The immediate reaction of the pickets was one of bitter disappointment, that they had been let down.

What has been gained? The threat of dismissal has been lifted...but on condition that we return to work!

As for the pay and condi-

tions package, the reason for the strike, not one concession has been achieved, except for a spurious 10-day moratorium on the implementation of its worst features. According to the 'Financial Times', moreover, this delay would only operate for major changes, such as the commissioning of new plant or models.

These events again highlight the enormous dangers for the trade union movement if it seeks to solve the problems of working people within the framework of bankrupt British capitalism. The British bosses can only hope to survive by exacting a terrible price from the working class in terms of jobs, working conditions and living standards.

The history of British

Photo: On the picket line at Rover, Solihull.

See also report page 23

Leyland, in particular, has shown that each concession by the workers to management intimidation only leads to new and more brutal attacks.

What is needed in Leyland is a determined struggle to defend the gains of the past, linked up with a fight for one nationalised car industry under democratic workers' control and management, as part of an overall socialist plan of production.

This programme will become ever more readily accepted by Leyland workers as the attacks of Edwardes and the Tories intensify.

Union democracy is also a burning question now. All officials should be elected regularly to help ensure they fully represent the views of their members.

At Rover we called on the members to continue the strike. But the workers' determination to fight had been undermined by the unwillingness of their leaders to struggle. Like the other strike-bound factories, Rover workers voted to go back to work.

The prospect for Leyland now is a bitter war of attrition, with sectional strikes breaking out as the company attempts to implement the new working practices.

Many lessons have been learnt by Leyland workers in the last two weeks, lessons which will be put to good use in the future. For the first time, we had the beginnings of a national fight-back. Leyland workers remain undefeated. They will organise and fight again.

MERSEYSIDE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

had constitutions which would prevent them responding to a general strike call.

But the delegates were not satisfied. They demanded positive leadership.

Phil Davies, secretary of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee for Manchester drivers, commented that the Tories aren't bothering about constitutions and neither should we! The steelmen had shown their response to a call for action by their leaders.

"I hope your eyes have been opened to the strength of feeling here on Merseyside," said Tony Mulhearn of the NGA. He called for an emergency resolution to be put to the forthcoming general council of the TUC calling on all unions to take strike action on the 14th.

Throughout the meeting, however, Len Murray avoided answering directly the questions put

to him. He even tried to ignore Massey Ferguson workers when they asked why the TUC was taking no action in support of workers actually fighting for their jobs.

A chorus of "Answer Massey Ferguson!" finally provoked the unsatisfactory reply that the TUC could only support workers when their union's executive requested it.

The active workers of Merseyside are not satisfied with this kind of leadership—or rather lack of it! No doubt this will add a spur to the demands for more accountability over full-time officers.

One thing is certain: May 14th will be solid on Merseyside! In the course of the meeting, union after union pledged their support for a full stoppage.

The fight-back has begun. The task is now to use this opportunity to explain the real issues to the rank and file. The

National Graphical Association on Merseyside are doing it with leaflets to every member, a full-page advert in the 'Liverpool Echo', and a pre-stoppage meeting in the city centre.

ALL OUT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

working class.

Steel workers showed for three months that they would not be bullied into accepting the bosses' divine right to sack and cut wages at will. Leyland workers at Rover, Jaguar and a number of other plants showed their determination to resist the Edwardes plan for ruining BL. But a strong lead from the tops of the labour movement is vital, as the experience at Leyland shows.

The working class will not let the bosses return us to the 1930s, with new Jarrows appearing in former steel and shipbuilding towns—areas with mass unemployment and an air of resignation.

Many unions have now given recommendations that their members

One delegate summed up the mood of the meeting when he said that organised strike action on 14 May should only be the start of a campaign to bring down the Tory government.

should not work on May 14th, the TUC Day of Action. But a bold lead from the TUC leaders would still have an enormous effect on workers.

It must make the 14th a one-day strike, with mass meetings in all areas to explain to every worker the meaning of the Tory attacks on jobs, on the "Welfare State", and on trade union rights—and put forward a clear socialist alternative.

In Northern Ireland, two unions, TGWU and AUEW TASS have instructed their members to come out on 14 May. This kind of lead will bear dividends. There is still time for the leadership of the TUC to follow their example and put their full weight behind the Day of Action.

Kick out the Tories! Return a Labour government committed to socialist policies!

All out on May 14th!

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