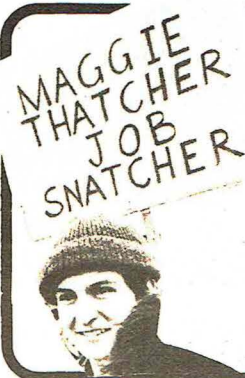


Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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15p



TUC
1980

Pages 7-10

2,001,208 jobless. Highest since 1933.

FIGHT FOR JOBS!

The worst fears of workers throughout the country have been confirmed by the latest unemployment figures.

The jobless total has soared by over a hundred thousand to 2,001,208. These are official figures which as always underestimate the real position.

The government admit that the dole queues have not yet reached their peak. In other words, we are only beginning the misery as the grim days of the 'thirties threaten to return.

Every day sees yet another major employer announcing redundancies, laying off workers in their hundreds.

The latest major firm to go is the giant Bowaters paper mill at Ellesmere Port in the already devastated Mer-

seyside area. This means 1600 jobs, not to mention the 1500 jobs in the mill's supply industries will disappear.

But the plight of the paper industry is a grim example of the fate of the British manufacturing industry—throughout the country comes the news of closures, redundancies and short time working.

John Dickenson Stationery has announced 650 redundancies despite a 16% rise in profits this year to nearly £28 million. Thames Board Mills owned by the giant

Unilever firm, is slashing jobs throughout its network. Hendon paper works, Sunderland, is to close after 100 years of existence, ending 400 jobs.

In fact, 31 paper producing companies have announced closures—and there's worse to come. SOGAT has warned its 56,000 members in the industry of the danger of a further 3,000 to 4,000 lay-offs in the next eight weeks. There's the possibility of 10,000 direct redundancies by Christmas, plus 20,000 jobs to go in related industries.

Who is to blame? Unusually, the bosses have kept very quiet about the crisis in the paper industry.

They have delighted in the past in telling everyone that all the ills of the British economy are the fault of the workers they demanded "too high" wages and were a "lazy" bunch who didn't work hard enough.

CONTINUED ON
PAGE TWO

By
Bob Wade



"KEEP BACK, KEEP BACK.
YOU KNOW HOW FIRES CAN
SPREAD"

Poland - workers show their power

The magnificent general strike of the workers of Gdansk, and the strikes now gripping Lodz, Wroclaw, Rzesow, and other Polish cities, have shaken the ruling bureaucracy to its foundations.

The workers power has left the bureaucratic leaders suspended in a vacuum. In a desperate effort to gain time and save their enormous privileges and totalitarian power, the bureaucracy has agreed to talk, and promised concessions.

But Poland is at a crossroads. Either the workers will carry through their struggle for

By Jim Chrystie

workers' democracy to the end, or the state will reimpose its power.

At first the bureaucrats refused to talk to the Gdansk inter-factory Strike Committee. This committee is, in effect, a Soviet representing 150,000 workers in over 400 plants.

The committee decides what will move in Gdansk and what will not move, where food will be supplied, and so on.

There is a situation of dual power in Poland: the power of the organised workers against that

of the bureaucracy's totalitarian state. But this cannot last long.

One or other power will emerge victorious. Either the workers will move to the overthrow of the bureaucracy—or the bureaucracy will re-establish its power, first by concessions, later by ruthless repression.

In the last few days, Gierek has sacked his Prime Minister, other key ministers, and top party officials. He has agreed to negotiate with the Gdansk Soviet and promised the right to strike [as if he could do otherwise at present!]. Gierek has also promised

CONTINUED ON
PAGE TWO

A CALL TO THE TUC

We have to do more than merely make fine speeches and militant - sounding resolutions. Such things alone will not defeat this government.

We must mean what we say and act on the resolutions we

By

Joe Marino

(General Secretary,
Bakers' Union)

pass, not file them away for next year.

Both sections of the labour movement—political

and industrial—must give a decisive lead to workers in their fight for jobs and decent standard of living.

Such things are not possible under this government and no change of personnel will alter the basic policies they carry out: attacks on the labour movement.

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TUC MUST GIVE LEAD

FIGHT FOR JOBS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

But as the crisis deepens, the bosses realise that they cannot peddle these lies all the time—in the paper industry for example, production over the past two years has increased by an incredible 80%! Yet the British paper workers have wage levels lower than their North American and Scandinavian counterparts.

The real reason for the collapse of industry is the world recession, symptom of a diseased capitalism internationally, and the special crisis of backward British capitalism.

More intensive competition between the giant multinationals, all fighting to preserve their markets and profit margins, has exposed the weakness of British firms. During the boom period when the going was good, they raked in their profits and failed to reinvest in modern plant and equipment.

This was clearly admitted

by big business's own paper, the 'Financial Times' (22 July) when commenting on the British paper manufacturers, who, they said, "are not investing anywhere near as much as their continental rivals."

The chief executive of Bowaters himself had the cheek to inform the workforce: "While the efficiency and productivity of the Ellesmere Port mills are high, the machines are only in the 'second division'." ('The Times', 25 July)

So the bosses admit that they can't even function in their own capitalist system! And as usual it is the workers who have to pay the price through unemployment or low wages and long working hours.

The Tories' marvellous 'new' monetarist policies are, in reality a return to the ruthless deflationary policies of the 1930s. They are a desperate attempt to restore the profitability of big business at the expense of working people.

And far from curing the sickness, the results will be

the same as in the 1930s—stagnation, slump, and terrible poverty and suffering for the working class.

The anger of workers at the vicious policies of the Tory government is even recognised by the 'Financial Times' (26 August). As a warning to its City readers it describes the reaction of Bowater workers when the news of the closure came: "True-blue Tories vowed to become Communists. None would ever vote Tory again!"

The Tories are themselves aware of the enormous explosion of anger that they are preparing. Their anti-trade union laws and the training of special riot police for use against striking workers all are part of their plans to break the resistance of the labour movement to their disastrous policies.

The 'moderates' or 'wets' in the Tory cabinet who favour more 'liberal' policies have not real alternative to Thatcher's policies. They too, if they were in the leadership, would try to save the profit system at the expense of the working class.

But they fear the explosive repercussions of Thatcher's policies. So they are in favour of a slightly more 'tactical' approach.

There is no way out for the workers under this bankrupt capitalist system—longer and longer dole queues are all that is offered by the bosses' class. There is only one solution—taking over the economy and putting it in the hands of the workers.

The top 200 or so big monopolies must be nationalised (with minimum compensation on the basis of need) and put under workers' control and management. Only then can the economy be planned, putting the idle machinery to use, eliminating unemployment, and gearing industry to the needs of society.

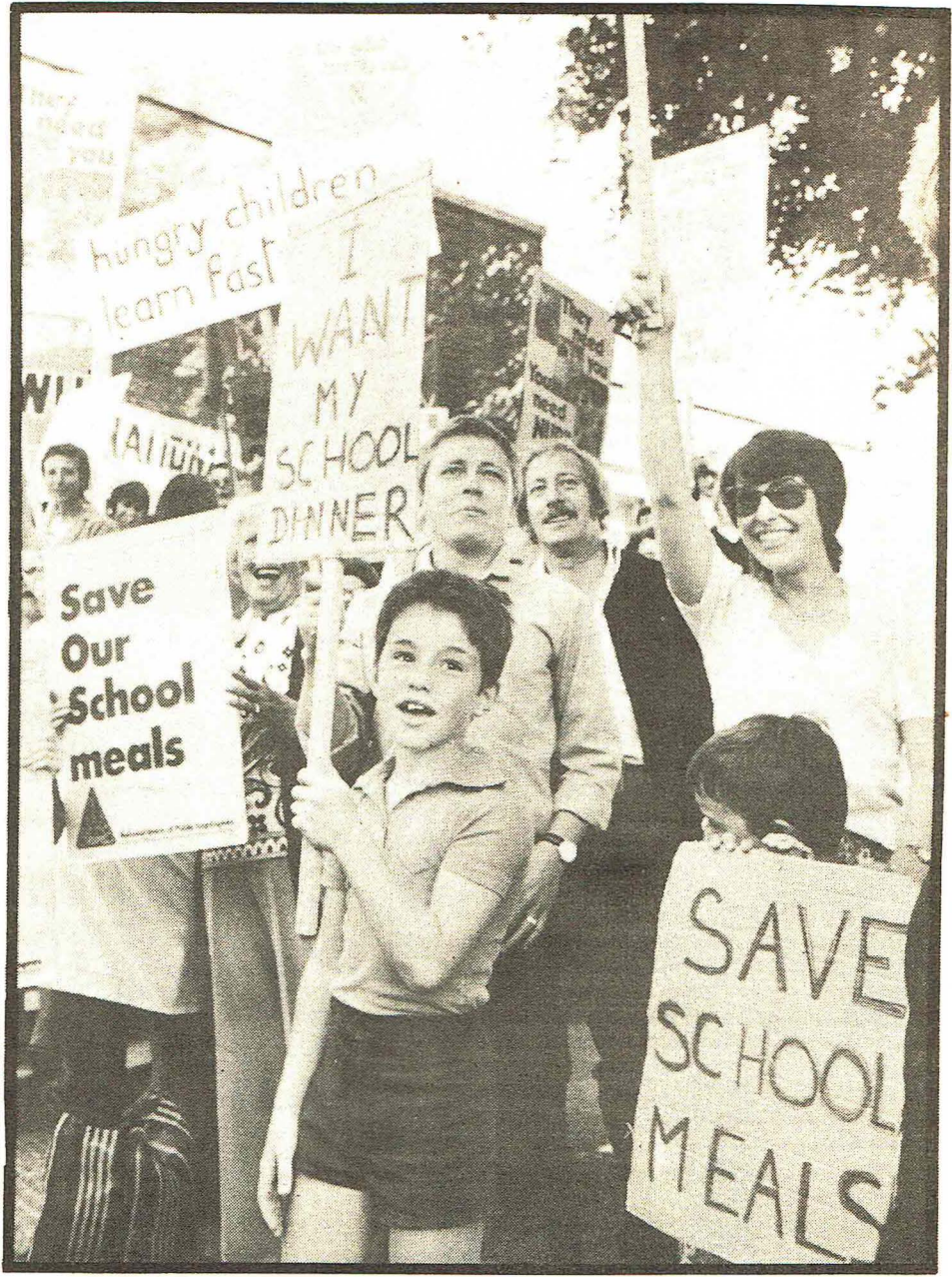


Photo: MILITANT

A mass campaign has developed in Dorset to oppose the Tory council's abolition of school meals and the sacking of 1,000 school meals staff. The labour and trade union movement must be in the vanguard of struggles to save jobs and services

Bakers Union call to TUC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

That is why our union calls for a co-ordinated campaign by the unions and the Labour Party to bring this government down. We must enter such a campaign with a well-laid out programme and a commitment that was sadly lacking on May 14.

By sending our Executive Council to this year's TUC with such a bold resolution, calling for a joint campaign between the TUC and the Labour Party to bring down the Tory government, our union conference delegates showed clearly that they understand the class bias of Thacher & Co.

Compare this to the stance of our union in 1971 over the Industrial Relations Act: in 1971 our union registered under the Act. To-day we have a policy of non-co-operation to the Employment Bill.

There can be no return to 1971 for us. Even the carrot of state payments for union ballots has been decisively rejected, despite the many ballots we have conducted in the past.

Congress must make it

abundantly clear that any union using the Employment Bill to snatch members off another union; any union taking the 30 pieces of silver for ballots; indeed any union using any section of the Bill, will be immediately expelled from the TUC.

Unions that find themselves in trouble because of their refusal to implement any of the provisions of the Bill should be assured of the active support of the movement as a whole. There can be no half-measures in our response. That would be taken as a sign of weakness and the government will act accordingly.

Only by putting a viable alternative to the discredited policies of the Thatcherites will our campaign be understood. The basis has been laid in the Campaign for Economic and Social Advance, but that should be built on in the light of experience. Similarly, the policies outlined in the Labour Party Draft Manifesto put forward useful alternatives.

Both Congress and the Labour Party conference must fully debate the economic alternative to the present

policies of this government. We must inscribe on our banners the implementation of Clause IV Party 4 of the Labour Party constitution.

It is not good enough merely to replace the Thatcherite bandits with the same discredited policies of the Labour right. We must insist that the next Labour government carry out the agreed policies of the movement.

We must ensure that decisions are carried out. If the present leadership of the Party can't do that, they should move over for those who will.

This year's trade union conferences mark an important step along the road to a just society; we now have the chance to lay the foundations of a counter-attack by the labour movement against the lies, distortions and economic madness of the Tories.

We must grasp this opportunity with both hands, reject any compromises with the party of big business and enter the arena to defend the rights of the men and women we represent.

The TUC must take a lead in defending our National Health Service.

An Act of Parliament has just been passed by the Tories, which abolishes the restrictions on private hospitals imposed by the last Labour government. Health Authorities will now be allowed to raise cash to supplement the health service allocations so that if they overspend on their budget they can raise the funds by charitable means. We will be returning to a charity health service and the days of 'rich and poor'

POLAND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

the freedom of different candidates to contest union elections.

But these changes at the top and promises of concessions fall far short of the workers' demands. Strike leaders bluntly told the government: "We do not want to exchange old rubbish into new rubbish..."

In reality, the workers' demand for free trade union is incompatible with the continuation of the Stalinist regime. The ruling bureaucracy, which is based on a privileged caste, cannot tolerate independent workers' organisations. That would mean the end of the ruling elite, and they will not voluntarily give up power.

Significantly, the state-controlled media in Russia and Eastern Europe has carefully avoided any mention of the concessions promised by Gierek on trade union

democracy.

The other Stalinist leaders are mortally afraid of the contagious effect the whiff of workers' democracy would have on their own working class.

In the last few months, there have been strikes reported in Romania and the Soviet

For a fuller analysis of developments in Poland. See pages 6 and 11.

Union.

The whole of Eastern Europe is a potential tinderbox. Workers throughout the Stalinist states are undoubtedly looking to the Polish strikes with admiration and hope.

Not only this Stalinist elite of Eastern Europe, but the ruling class of the capitalist states fear the world-shaking consequences which could result from the Polish work-

ers' demonstration of their power.

But unless the present movement is extended into a struggle to overthrow the bureaucracy it will be defeated.

In 1956 and 1970, when Polish workers' movements shook the hard-line Stalinist regime of Wladislaw Gomulka, the bureaucracy was only able to re-establish its control by temporarily conceding workers' councils, relaxing the censorship, and promising reforms. All these concessions were withdrawn within a year, as the workers' struggle ebbed and the bureaucracy regained control.

Polish workers have learnt from their own past experiences to distrust the bureaucracy. But the present dual-power situation demands that the strike leaders recognise that free trade unions cannot exist side by side with bureaucratic rule—and draw all the necessary conclusions. They could only exist in a healthy workers' state—a workers' democracy.

The only way forward for Polish workers is to extend the strike committees throughout the country in a general strike. Their demand must be: "All power to the Strike Committees!" to lay the basis for an entirely democratic new state, which would prepare the way for a transition to socialism.

the result they have elected a president who believes that nurses should retain their right to take industrial action, to picket, to protect themselves and the patients.

With a register of 8,635 and an estimated 40,000 nurses on the dole, nurses must fight to retain the health service.

Health care services must be a planned priority. Only a planned socialist economy will give us the health service we need.

By Jane Doyle

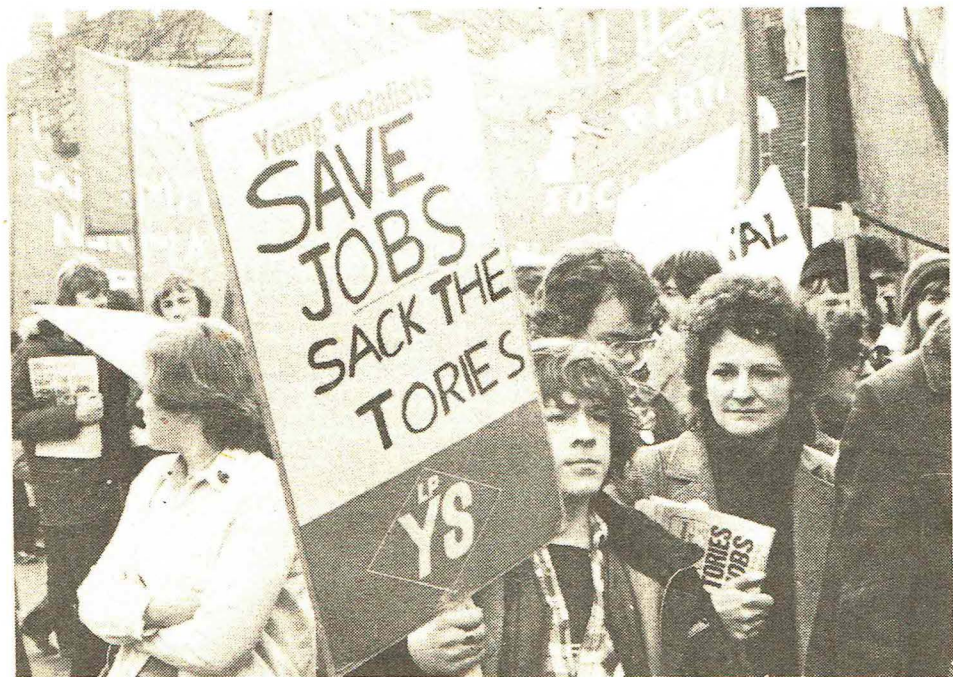
hospitals.

The Act allows for re-registration to reduce the top heavy administration. This aspect will cause so much confusion that the two previous parts will not be publicised. Therefore the majority of people will not realise exactly how the Tories are dismantling the health service.

Nurses are beginning to make their voices heard. The RCN, the most conservative of the nurses' organisations, has for the first time allowed student nurses to vote, with

FIGHT THE TORY JOB DESTROYERS

Join the LP demo on November 29th



Nearly 5,000 Young Socialists marched on the LPYS demo against the Tories on February 2nd. This figure must be doubled for the LPYS contingent at the Liverpool march.

Photo: Militant

The build up for the Labour Party unemployment demonstration in Liverpool on November 29th must be taken up in every section of the Labour Party and trade union movement.

It must be used to rally the workers, youth and unemployed in the struggle against the Tories.

Big business are now not even hiding the fact that unemployment could rise to 3 million by 1983. This catastrophe, for youth in particular, will become even more apparent as 20% at least of this year's school leavers discover that they are condemned to long term unemployment.

The LPYS National Committee meeting in August concentrated discussion on the build up for the march and set a target of 10,000 for a youth contingent.

The LPYS also pointed to the need for the labour movement to use the march to unite all sections of the workers by advancing the need for a 35-hour working week without loss of pay, a massive scheme of useful public works, an £80 national

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS National Chairman)

minimum wage, no redundancies—work or full pay!

LPYS branches, local committees and regional committees have been called upon to prepare plans immediately to secure the maximum turnout. Now that the TUC Economic Committee is supporting the demonstration, the LPYS will be requesting the trade unions to provide cheap tickets on the coaches and trains for the unemployed—places which the LPYS can guarantee to fill by campaigning down at the dole queues.

The LPYS branches are urged to press for the establishment of local party campaign committees (preferably with the trades councils also involved) to build up the contingents for Liverpool by holding factory gate and tenants meetings, days of action and local rallies.

As part of this work the LPYS branches should secure the maximum delegations of young workers, and for shop stewards committees to adopt unemployed youth onto their delegations.

Already the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment are producing a leaflet for use

at the dole queues. Also, an LPYS leaflet will be available shortly, plus a badge 'Save Jobs...Sack the Tories', as well as LPYS collectors' cards to raise finance.

All the LPYS regional events will now be used as part of the build up to the march. On October 18th, the Southern Region LPYS's are calling three 'Young Workers Conferences'. The South West LPYS are on the march against unemployment in Bristol, where Tony Benn will address a rally. Port Talbot will be invaded by the Wales LPYS for their march, and in London, Moss Evans, General Secretary of the T&GWU will address a Young Workers Conference. On November 18th, the Eastern Region of the TUC are backing a regional LPYS demonstration and on November 15th there is another LPYS Young workers Conference this time in Scotland.

The final event for the build up to the march will be an eve of march rally called by the Merseyside LPYS with leading trade union speakers and will set the scene for a march on which every LPYS branch is expected to bring its banner.

The continued harassment of Labour Party Young Socialists and 'Militant' paper sellers by the police was marked last week with the arrest of two comrades in Newham.

Comrades John Reid and Steve Waterfield, both of Newham South Labour Party were peacefully selling 'Militant' when they were arrested by the police and charged with obstruction. They will appear in court on August 29th.

'Militant' has already reported of how 5 Southall LPYS members face charges of obstruction. But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

Last week in Shepherd's Bush market, where the LPYS has sold papers for years without trouble, two

LPYS members were threatened with arrest, questioned about LPYS activity and asked for names of LPYS members. In recent months there have also been 'Militant' paper sellers arrested in Islington and Gillingham and police harassment of sellers in Bristol.

Police activities have not been confined to the south. In Birmingham two weeks ago, when LPYS members were distributing anti-racist material in Handsworth, the police threatened to arrest them under the Race Relations Act!

A similar story comes from Salford. At first when the police started to harass LPYS paper sellers they told the LPYS members they had to get the permission of the shopping precinct owners.

NF MARCH DESPITE BANS

The National Front failed in their recent attempts at a show of strength in the West Midlands.

On August 17th, two separate events organised by the NF met with strong opposition from anti-fascist demonstrators.

In a contemptuous gesture aimed at the immigrant community, Martin Webster, the fascists' national organiser, had planned to march through West Bromwich flanked by two unemployed white youths as a protest, blaming the blacks for the area's crippling unemployment.

As expected, Webster provoked a response—over 500 black and white youth, turned out to 'welcome' him. There was a large LPYS contingent on the counter demonstration and more than 100 copies of 'Militant' were sold.

When Webster arrived the police decided not to give him protection as they had previ-

By Bill Doggett

ously done in Manchester.

Faced with mass opposition he was forced to turn with his tail between his legs and scarper.

Coaches carrying anti-fascists were subjected to persistent stoppages by motor cycle police as they travelled to Leamington to oppose the national mobilisation of the NF on the same day as Webster's fiasco.

Almost 1,000 converged on Leamington to express their disgust at the racist policies of the NF. But the fascists decided they could not face this display of opposition and were diverted to Nuneaton where the police were content to allow a paucity 400 or so NF supporters to march, whilst continuing to harass the counter demonstrators by turning away coaches travel-

ling from Leamington to Nuneaton.

Despite these attempts to keep the two sides apart, most of the anti-fascists arrived in Nuneaton to protest at the NF march.

At a time when unemployment is almost 2 million it is not only the NF, but also the Tories who are looking for a scape goat. In Birmingham alone 30,000 jobs have been lost in the first six months of this year.

It's not the blacks, but the capitalist class and their crazy profit-making system who are to blame for high unemployment, squalid housing and bad living conditions.

It is vitally important for the labour movement to hammer down the fascists by continuing to mobilise wherever the NF rear their ugly heads, and counter their lies with socialist policies.

Fighting the Front in Manchester

In the last month Manchester LPYS and Labour Party members have organised successful days of action against the fascists. When Martin Webster came up to try to establish his hold on the disintegrating fragments of the National Front, he and his thugs were easily outnumbered by members of the labour movement.

Passers-by gave LPYS members enthusiastic support, and after a while the fascists left. One of them was overheard saying he was off to the pub "to settle up," which suggests some of the thugs were paid.

Previously the racists had tried to intimidate paper sellers. So Manchester LPYS together with the Party's anti-racist Committee had mobilised support on successive Saturdays. Despite threats of violence and an attack on one Salford LPYS member, the LPYS is determined to continue to vigorously campaign against the fascists and the social conditions which bring these movements into existence.



An NF'er skulks around Manchester trying to peddle his fascist filth.

Photo: Colin Wolvenden

STOP POLICE HARASSMENT

Following the recent arrest and harassment of LPYS members all over the country, the LPYS National Committee are asking for all information on harassment of paper sellers to be sent to the National Youth Officer, Andy Bevan, so that the matter can be raised in the labour movement and a protest organised by MPs in the House of Commons.

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Police activities have not been confined to the south. In Birmingham two weeks ago, when LPYS members were distributing anti-racist material in Handsworth, the police threatened to arrest them under the Race Relations Act!

A similar story comes from Salford. At first when the police started to harass LPYS paper sellers they told the LPYS members they had to get the permission of the shopping precinct owners.

The LPYS got their verbal permission and for good measure the local Council told them there were no local by-laws prohibiting paper sales. That didn't stop the police though, who still threatened obstruction.

It is vital that the labour movement resists these attacks on its democratic rights. The Tories and big business have their newspapers and dominate the media with their propaganda.

Yet clearly they are scared of the impact labour movement papers are having. The trade union and labour movement must not allow its democratic rights to be suppressed. Both locally and nationally, the movement must be mobilised to resist these attacks.

Defend Chilean Socialists

The Labour Party Young Socialist National Committee have protested at the arrest of five members of the Almeida wing of the Socialist Party in Chile.

They have been charged with being members of the Socialist Party and holding clandestine meetings with the Christian Democrats. Their arrests come as a new wave of repression is sweeping Chile, as a result of an assassination of a top military leader.

While the military regime of Pinochet maintains its brutal repression of the working class, the Tory government have begun openly flirting with the dictatorship. An ambassador having been sent to Chile, the Tories have declared the willingness to back the regime with arms.

Now a recent visit by Tory minister of Trade, Cecil Parkinson, has revealed that GEC, Plessey and the Post Office are trying to expand their trade with Chile. The LPYS National Committee have reiterated their call for the TUC to black all projects for, and trade with, Chile.

The Dutch Young Socialists alerted the LPYS officers to the visit of the Blanca Estrella, a Chilean Navy training ship to Britain. The ship which received a hostile reception in Holland was reported heading for Britain for repairs. It is rumoured to be sailing for Plymouth where the LPYS have contacted the docks shop stewards and prepared a campaign against its docking.

Northern Ireland



A soldier on the streets of Belfast. The toll of unarmed civilians shot by the army and RUC is mounting. Photo: Militant

EXECUTION ON THE STREETS

Since January alone, 18 young people not involved in any paramilitary organisation have been shot by the security forces in Northern Ireland. Five of them have been shot dead.

In August, Michael Donnelly 21, and James McCarron, 20, have been added to this list. Michael was killed by a plastic bullet, and James was shot by an 'unknown gunman', although local residents swear he was shot at from a passing army vehicle.

Recently, 16 year old Michael McCartan from the Ormeau Road, was shot dead by the RUC. His crime? He was daubing 'Provos' on a wall.

Michael's family have suffered heavily during the last ten years. Four years ago, his father was severely injured in a pub explosion, in which his best friend lost his life. He now draws invalidity benefit. A few months ago, Michael's uncle was assassinated in a random killing.

Dennis Tourish, from 'Militant Irish Monthly', spoke to his mother, Mollie McCartan, about what happened to her son.

"I last saw Michael on Wednesday night, around 10.15. He took a sandwich, said he'd be back in a minute and went out. Him and his friends sometimes played cards near the Ormeau Bridge—there's plenty of light, and there's not much else for them.

"Soon after that my other son aged 14 came running in

Reports by
Dennis Tourish
(Belfast YS)
George McAlear
(Kelvingrove LP)

asking for his daddy and saying that something had happened to Michael. We rushed out and around the corner. The place was full of policemen and soldiers. My neighbours had asked whether they should get us, and been told no. They wouldn't let us see him or go with him in the ambulance. I went hysterical....

"What happened is that they played cards for a while and then Michael ran out of money. Someone went off and came back with paint and a brush. Michael was never involved in any group—I know that. But they were really bored. As he began to paint that slogan, his three friends noticed an unmarked, green and blue van coming towards them. They had been watched for a few minutes. They recognised the people in it as a policeman and rushed round the corner, shouting to Michael to come on. He stopped to throw away the paint and brush, the next thing they heard was a shot and that was it.

"The police have claimed that they thought my son had a gun rather than a brush.

But I don't believe them. Michael was shot from around, I think, 15 yards. As I say, the place was flooded with lights from the bridge. The police had also been watching them anyway—they must have known they had no guns. They knew all right what they were doing.

"The sad thing is, too, that Michael had just left school and was mad for a job. We'd got on to his uncle about an apprenticeship, but didn't tell Michael so as not to raise his hopes. When we rang the uncle to tell him the news, we found out that he'd got Michael a job from the following Monday.

"Well, after the funeral a couple of detectives came round to apologise for what had happened, but that doesn't do much good. I've other children, so there's nothing for it but to pick up the pieces. Sean is talking about going to America in a year or two's time. Maybe he will. At least Michael didn't have a long, painful death. I couldn't stand it if he had...."

The case of Michael McCartan shows the two things on offer to working class youth in Northern Ireland—poverty and repression. Despite all the deaths, no policeman or soldier has ever been successfully prosecuted.

In the words of a police statement, "a thorough investigation is taking place." The labour movement in Britain and Ireland can have no faith in such an "investigation," but must instead inquire into this and all aspects of repression in Northern Ireland.

In July, repression claimed the life of Michael McCartan. Unless it is taken up by the labour movement, he will not be the last.

Belfast Young Socialist tours Scotland

The four Scottish LPYS meetings that Mickey Duffy of Belfast YS addressed earlier this month proved a considerable success.

The four meetings were attended by about 120 people and raised over £150, for the LTUG, who organised the tour.

In his talks, Mickey quoted from some of the statistics contained in the LTUG pamphlet 'Common Misery, Common Struggle' to show that Northern Ireland was now one of the poorest and most depressed areas of Western Europe.

Mickey went on to speak of the magnificent display of trade union strength and working class solidarity shown during the half-day strike on April 2nd. He told the story of a union official waiting on a bridge in Derry to speak to workers who were marching to this traditional rallying point.

But there were two marches converging on the bridge, one from a Catholic area and the other from a Protestant area. The union official was extremely worried, clearly expecting trouble.

But as they marched one group took up the chant "Maggie, Maggie Maggie," and the other group replied with "Out, Out, Out." All over the North on April 2nd, this mood of unity was there.

This unity needed its own political expression, and so loomed on the horizon is a party of Labour, based on the trade unions. The TU movement must call a conference of Labour in the North with the objective of setting up such a party.

Mickey expressed gratitude to the British labour movement, particularly the LPYS and supporters of 'Militant' for the support they had given the LTUG and YS.

Rally support for George Peake

The gutter press and their Tory friends are carrying out a nasty smear campaign against comrade George Peake, a Labour councillor in Slough.

By Bob Wade

George, now a 'Militant' supporter who previously spent three years in prison in South Africa for his brave anti-apartheid work, and later fled to England, has been lambasted by the Tories for daring to criticise the police.

While in Kenya recently, comrade George wrote to a national newspaper, the 'Kenyan Daily Nation', protesting at a tour of the country by a Metropolitan Police force rugby team. He explained, quite correctly, some of the examples of police brutality and harassment of black immigrants in this country, and said Kenyan workers should protest at this rugby tour.

This letter did not come out of the blue, as some of the local Tory rags later suggested. As George wrote in his letter, "I noticed through the columns of your newspaper ('The Daily Nation') that the proposed tour of Kenya by the Met. Police rugby team was generating increasing resentment and opposition to it in the ranks of the Kenyan citizens." He went on to add his voice, as a representative of immigrants in Britain, to the protests.

The final match of the Met. rugby team was met by heavy protests from Kenyan workers. By this time, George had returned home. This gave a cue for the 'Daily Telegraph' to begin an orchestrated campaign against comrade George, claiming that his letter alone 'had its effect.'

What the 'Telegraph' was

insidiously hinting at was put into more blunt terms by the local Slough 'Observer' whose headlines screamed 'Slough councillor's letter incites Kenya violence'. This libelous remark insinuated that comrade George was totally responsible for the events in Kenya—from 6,000 miles away, by letter, he had manipulated a whole demonstration!

Not that the press were really concerned for the welfare of the Kenyan people. They were more upset that this councillor, had "rub-bish(ed) the country which has sheltered him and given him far greater freedoms than he has known before" ('Windsor, Slough and Eton Express' editorial—August 15).

In their story, the Slough 'Observer' published the following statement from the leader of the Tory council, Richard Stephenson: "He (George) is one...of the several vipers we harbour in our midst. They are bent on disrupting our society. If they think our police who protect it are so brutal why don't they clear off back to where they come from." George has been told quite openly by some of the Tory councillors he comes into contact with that they vote National Front.

George was also hauled onto 'Thames at Six' and given what even the 'Windsor Express' described as a 'grilling', by the class-biased interviewer.

This attitude is to be expected from the Tory media—but more importantly the 'Slough Observer' printed George's home address (in total contravention of the National Union of Journalists code of conduct on reporting race relations). This has put George in danger and he has since had, besides welcome messages of support for his stand, many obscene and threatening letters and phone calls.

His wife, who fought alongside him during his time as a political prisoner and during his underground work in South Africa, has even felt the strain and has moved out of the area temporarily.

George, who is also a trade union convenor, is a brave class fighter. Every member of the trade unions and the Labour Party must rally around him, joining him in his condemnation of police brutality against immigrant workers, and defending him against the smears and lies put out by the capitalist press and their Tory friends.

Organise F.E. Students now

The majority of further education and technical colleges begin registration of new students next week. This is an excellent opportunity for Labour students to build new Labour Clubs in this sector.

The cuts in education have severely hit this sector, with many course closures, reductions in lecturing staff and no improvement in facilities. Full-time students, the vast majority receiving no grant, will find themselves studying in overcrowded class rooms with very few facilities.

Their justifiable anger against the Tories must be channelled into a campaign not only to get rid of the Tories but also the system they represent. These students can be won to the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS) if a bold lead is given.

Part-time students face even worse conditions. Many day-release students, such as apprentices and young clerical workers, will face a 12 hour day, in overcrowded

conditions, with only minimum breaks.

Unfortunately, the NOLS Officers' still do not see the necessity to recruit these students into NOLS. Therefore the LPYS must recruit them and involve them in the Labour movement.

LPYS branches should now contact any Labour students in their area to have a joint campaign to build new Labour Clubs and membership of the LPYS. Special leaflets should be produced and used in conjunction with sales of "Socialist Youth" and "Militant" at the registrations and lunch-times. Special LPYS meetings geared towards education and the problems of further education students would receive an echo and help to recruit these young workers and students into the labour movement.

By Alan Watson

(NOLS NC)
(personal capacity)



■ Leaving home and finding a place of one's own is always an expensive business. If one happens to be the Prince of Wales it is likely to cost one in excess of a million pounds! The Royal equivalent to a bedsit turns out to be a nine-bedroomed Georgian mansion called Highgrove in Doughton, currently owned by the famous Tory Macmillan family. Unlike the average bedsit it also has a garden—a 347 acre estate to be precise. This move was announced on the same day as Maggie Thatcher said that there would be no let up in the government's policy which has led to the 'temporary' rise in unemployment [in reality it's about as temporary as the prefabs that were put up after the war to house East Enders—many of whom are still there!] If the Royal Family intended deliberately to insult the unemployed and the homeless by flaunting their wealth, they could not have done better. Her Majesty's government can't afford new schools or hospitals, can't afford to maintain the present inadequate social services, can't afford to build more council houses, but apparently the heir to the throne can afford this extravagance. The plain fact is that we can't afford the upkeep of these Right Royal parasites any longer.

■ Were you always given the advice at school and by your doctors that you should eat a good breakfast before you start the day? Someone who has certainly taken this advice to heart is Queen Silvia of Sweden. But no bolting down a bowl of cornflakes before dashing off to work for her. Queen Silvia likes her food. On a recent visit to Germany, here breakfast menu read as follows: for starters yoghurt mixed with nuts; then canapé [that's fried bread to you plebs] with eels, salmon and sturgeon, turkey breast with dried fruits, lobster with caviar, advocados with shrimps, smoked oysters, kiwis [!] apples and celery, and cheese, fresh fruit and various breads and rolls to finish off with. We wonder what she has for dinner! But then when you're a parasite living off the taxes paid by working people you can afford such a banquet, and for that matter have all the time of day to stuff it down your throat.

■ Workers are well aware of the rabid anti-labour movement rantings of the 'Daily Mail', whatever day they look at it. So it must have been with wide eyes and dropping chins that labour activists read the paper's editorial on August 12. It spoke of a 'tyrant' "being undermined by trade unions wanting to act like real trade unions, responding to genuine pressure from below, and not dominated by party stooges imposed from above." Eek! The world is turning upside down—here is the 'Mail' praising unions for acting like 'real trade unions' and going on strike. And what is this stand by the unions against 'stooges' in the leadership that the 'Mail' was full of the joys of spring about? Had the right of recall gone through and the rank and file had bombed out Duffy, Chapple and co? Had the Mail gone soft on British trade unionism? But no. The 'Mail' was in fact talking about the Polish trade unionists who are struggling against the Stalinist bureaucracy for decent living conditions. The 'Mail' obviously felt they could support this 'real trade unionism' because it did not directly affect the profits and workings of the capitalist system they so adore. Not that the 'Mail' saw the struggle of the Polish workers as a class struggle, and a step towards a return to the ideas of Lenin and Trotsky. To them it was merely a plea by the mass of workers for 'national destiny' and the Catholic church. Oh well, back to normal.

WHEN PROFITS COME FIRST

By Tim Lewis

(Coventry NW Labour Party)

The wind was still bitter as he climbed the metal staircase to the rotation tank. His face was bright purple with the cold and he was certain only his woolly pom-pom hat kept his ears from falling off.

He had just come onto the neutralisation plant after changing into his work clothes—not that they were much. They definitely didn't keep him warm.

He looked in the rotation tank. The scum on top of the liquid was building up, so he reached for a long stick and broke it up. He tore off a piece of litmus paper and dipped it in. It registered neutral, so that was alright.

The rotation tank separated the solids and liquids from each other after lime had been added to the acid in the neutralisation tank. The liquid part was sent straight down the drain.

"That's not all that goes straight down the drain," he thought. A few months ago, a foreman brought round two half-filled, unmarked drums. These, he had explained, contained Xylene.

"We can't legally get rid of these. Xylene can't be neutralised and we can't burn it. A minute amount is enough to kill someone."

He banged a nail hole into one of the drums. Taking it, he rolled it over an open drain. The liquid inside slowly dripped down the

A motor oil company in Birmingham where—in 1978 hydrochloric and sulphuric acid accidentally mixed together to create poisonous gas fumes. The life expectancy of a chemical worker is 54.

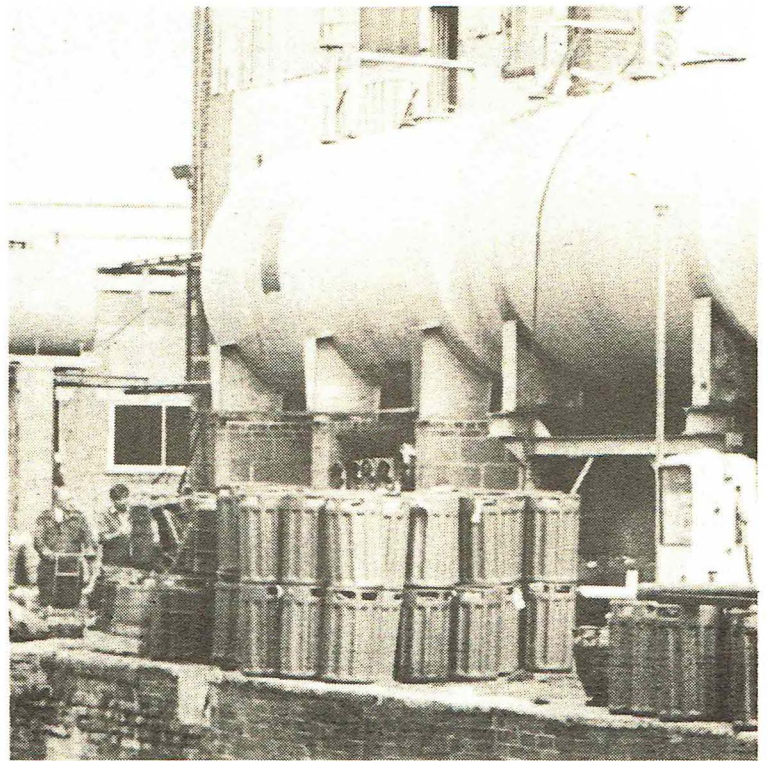


Photo: Mark Rusher IFL

drain: drip, drip...

"We had to do this about six months ago," the foreman casually informed him. "The damn river authority were round claiming we'd killed off all their bugs. We were fined, of course, but it's worth it, just to get rid of the stuff."

Drip, drip, drip...

Next, he was required to climb up the lime storage holder. With frozen hands and heavy boots he desperately clung onto the vertical ladder which shot up the side of the fifty foot holder.

At the windswept top he banged off the catches on the inspection hatch and peered in. He held his breath as lime dust billowed around him. It was no good. The wind was buffeting the holder so much that he couldn't see the level.

"It'll be all right until Monday," he thought.

The lime holder had a gauge, but it had long since broken. Rather than repair it the firm had decided to risk his life every day to see the holder wasn't empty. He ticked off the appropriate space on his inspection sheet.

He clambered clumsily down the holder, clinging courageously, until he was safely at the bottom. The floor always came as a surprise to him, since he

never dared to open his eyes at all on the way down. And what a relief it was.

Then down the icy stairs to the ground; on, dodging between the pipes and the pumps scattered around the plant, to another stairway leading up to the vats. He peered in. The acidic fumes were too much and he nearly fainted.

He threw a measuring stick down the vat, held his breath, and measured the liquid against it. Plenty there to be getting on with, so he returned to the panel room, the centre of operations.

He sat down at his table and filled in his daily time sheet. It recorded when the process started and when it finished.

Good. It would be a busy morning. Nothing was worse than a day with nothing to do. He had a book stashed away for those days. But he had to be very careful about when he read it. He usually took it up to a little niche above the acid vats.

Later, he checked the vacuum drum. It wasn't working. "It probably needs a clean," he thought with dread. This was the one job he really hated, the one which made him swear at the bosses and all their system.

The drum had to be cleaned by pouring in the most concentrated hydrochloric acid in commercial use. It lets of a vapour which turns back into an acid when it mixes with water. That day, as he unscrewed the lid on the plastic container, the rain had started again.

The vapours mixed with it, producing the highly corros-

ive acid. He was breathing the fumes in. As he did, the sharp paid made him reach and splutter.

Eyes watering, with only a pair of rubber gloves as protection, he poured the acid into a bucket. The deadly fumes wafted in the stiff wind as it flowed over the drum. One splash would have burnt a hole in his flesh down to the bone before he could do anything about it. Some one once told him the life expectancy of a chemical worker was 54.

He remembered the time a vat had exploded. It went up through two more stories and the roof. One worker was blown off his feet, through a solid wood door.

These were the hazards of the job. So long as it was done, and a profit made, that was fine. The money involved was enormous. A small vat of special dye for Russia fetched £80,000.

The morning flew past. At 12 o'clock he clocked off and wandered over to the canteen. Subsidised meals were the only 'fringe benefits' he got. As he queued for his fish, chips, and mushy peas (always on a Friday) he could see through to the other canteen—the management canteen where they had chairs instead of benches and the tables were smarter. He had to wait whilst a suited gentleman was served first even though he hadn't been queuing as long.

Angry at this privilege, he took a place on a bench to eat his meal. "Ah well," he thought to himself, "at least it's pay day this afternoon."

Dont let the Bosses Divide and Rule

At a recent pop festival at Loch Lomond I saw a striking example of how big business manipulates and exploits the youth through the music business.

People who arrived at the entrance gate were refused admittance if they were carrying bottles.

I thought 'great, the likelihood of any alcohol-induced trouble will be minimal.' I should have known better! On entering the festival site there was a massive refreshment tent, provided by the site owner, selling over-priced cans of beer, food etc.

So we were left with a situation of people drinking all their beer that they had

By Paul Holmes

(Wakefield LPYS)

brought with them in a short time so that they could gain admittance. They then spent eight hours drinking over-priced beer inside the site (there are long periods of inactivity between bands).

Once the concert began it became obvious that it had attracted various types of music styles—skinheads, mods and punks; all encouraged by big business to spend their wages and unemployment benefits pursuing fashions and music trends to provide money for the record companies and fashion shop

owners.

So instead of people enjoying the music we had the artificially induced divisions created by big business.

The youth began intimidating each other, instead of directing their feelings towards the class that condemns them to such drudgery and boredom, their only escapes from reality being beer, music and football. The pent-up frustration that the dead-end capitalist system creates, was released with youths attacking each other.

Of course in the press the following day the newspapers were condemning what took place. What hypocrisy! The newspapers, the mouthpieces of big business, condemning an event that big business had created.

Big business provides fashions and trends, which en-

courage sections of working class youth to believe that they are greatly different from other sections. Divide and rule is the bosses' aim.

Tolerance, dignity and mutual respect are all socialist aims that capitalism tries to deny us. In music, as in football (the other chief recreational activity of working class youth), big business promotes the idea of supporting different trends, teams etc, as though there is some difference between various business ventures.

In the 1980s it is the duty of socialists to make sure that sport and recreation are run in the interests of the class that finances them, and not the class that benefits from them.

POLAND

THERE CAN BE NO MIDDLE ROAD



The crisis of Stalinism in Poland is expressed in the strike movement of the working class, which began in July. The bus workers have been on strike in Warsaw, and in the case of the dustmen they have gained an increase of £12 per month. According to reports in the capitalist press, there is a threat of a general strike in Warsaw.

This is following the movement of the workers on the Baltic coast, beginning with the shipyards of Gdansk. Engineering workers and other sections of the working class have followed the example of the shipyard workers, which started in the same shipyard that began the struggle in 1970 which brought Gierk, the President of Poland into power.

Now, over 400 enterprises, shipyards and factories are on strike involving hundreds of thousands of Polish workers. Steel workers and miners have also come out on strike. The seriousness of the Gdansk strikers, where there is a virtual general strike, can be seen by their strike committee's ban on alcohol in the city.

This strike reflects unbearable tensions in Polish society, due to the incompetence, inefficiency and stupidity of the privileged layers in Polish society. It is a blow against the entire bureaucratic system in Eastern Europe, in Russia and in Poland itself.

By Ted Grant

This magnificent movement of Polish workers is once again an indication of the power, tenacity and willingness to struggle of the working class. Under very difficult conditions, without trade unions, without rights, the Polish workers have shown once again the capacity of the working class, throughout the world whether under capitalism or the Stalinist bureaucracies, to struggle in the interests of their class and for socialism.

It is also an annihilating blow against the scepticism and the cynicism of those who doubt the capacity of the working class to fight to change society.

The demands of the Polish workers involve a series of economic demands, but also a series of fundamental changes in the bureaucratic Stalinist regime.

It is significant that the struggle began with the victimisation of three workers in the main shipyard of Gdansk. A spontaneous strike followed and then they put forward economic and political demands. This in turn has spread throughout the country. The strikes now affect other parts of Poland.

The demand for the reinstatement of the three victimised workers, who tried to initiate a Baltic free trade union movement, has been granted by the authorities who understand the charged situation that exists in Poland at the present time. Now the workers demand pay rises of 2,000 zloty a month (which amounts to £30).

In addition the workers are demanding increased family allowances and increased pensions. They are also demanding the closure of commercial shops where food is sold above the officially set, heavily subsidised prices. They are demanding publication of all these demands on the Polish radio, TV and press.

At no stage have the workers in their hatred of the Stalinist regime even raised a whisper of an idea of going back to capitalism. They want a fundamental change in the system which would allow participation and control by the working class.

The workers are demanding the right to strike, freedom of speech and the press (as they are guaranteed by the fake 'constitution'), the end of censorship, and no reprisals against independent publications. They are demanding the release of political prisoners, and respect for the 87th International Labour convention, ratified by Poland, concerning freedom of unions. They are demanding the opening of the mass media to all religious denominations, and publication of information about the crisis that is affecting Poland at the present time. They are demanding the curtailment of all bureaucratic privileges in managerial, state and party positions, calling for equalisation of family allowances and closing the special shops

open only to the bureaucracy. In order to get a fair distribution of meat, which is usually scarce, they are demanding the rationing of meat with coupons. The days on which they have been on strike should be paid for. At the same time, because of the increase in prices that is taking place, they are demanding a relative sliding scale of wages and prices to compensate for the increase in the cost of living.

Soviets Established

The strike has had large echoes throughout Poland. Significantly peasants and farmworkers south of Warsaw have refused to sell their products to the government purchasing agency and are sending food free of charge to the strikers.

As in Hungary where the demand for freedom from censorship prepared the way for the general strike, and later insurrection, so the strikers are demanding an end to censorship in Poland. Instinctively the workers have understood the need for solidarity on a regional scale, and no doubt at a later stage on a national scale.

The strike committees, which would play the same role as the soviets in Russia in 1905 and in 1917, have already been set up. These strike committees have delegates from all the plants that are on strike, with a central strike committee. Now the strike has spread to the ports of Szczecin and Elblag, one on the border of East Germany, the other near the border of the Soviet Union.

Probably an even more significant incident was that the mayor of Gdansk had leaflets printed in a printing plant in the town for the purpose of distributing hundreds of thousands of leaflets by plane over the town and the striking shipyards and plants. After printing the leaflet, and obviously this provoked discussions among the print workers, the printing plant itself came out on strike in full support of the demands of the strikers.

This movement has struck fear into the hearts of the

bureaucrats of Russia and the rest of Eastern Europe; and also the bankers, industrialists and the capitalists of the West.

Of course the Western capitalist class are utilising the strikes in Poland for the purpose of throwing mud against the ideas of socialism and of communism.

But they have shown their worry about the growth of this movement by immediately offering loans to Gierk. They understand that if a movement should take place throughout Eastern Europe, with the workers victorious, it would prepare the way for the socialist revolution sweeping through Western Europe and the rest of the world.

That is why the capitalists, who understand clearly that there cannot be a return to capitalism in Poland under the present conditions, are against the movement for more democracy.

Of course, the movement of the Polish workers has, given 35 years of totalitarian Stalinist control, mixed some clear ideas with primitive ideas. For example the workers in the shipyards are very religious. This is an expression of their opposition to the regime.

The movement of the workers in Poland has a great tradition. The Polish Communist Party, which was dissolved by Stalin because of opposition to his ideas, did have a great history in the eyes of Polish workers. That is why the first movement of the working class in 1956, unlike that of Hungary which resulted in a complete overthrow of the regime, was switched onto national Stalinist lines under Gomulka. Gomulka's coming to power marked a victory for the 'liberal' faction of the bureaucracy. In 1970 again the movement of the workers brought down Gomulka and brought Gierk to power.

But now all the illusions in the Communist Party have been completely destroyed in the course of the development of Polish society.

The corruption, the nepotism and the incapacity of the bureaucracy has become clear

for all to see. A workers' state can never be run on the basis of privilege and without the participation and management of both industry and state by the working class. As a result of the inefficiency of the bureaucracy there was an actual fall of 2% in production last year. So long as living standards were going up the workers would grit their teeth and tolerate the crimes and privileges of the bureaucracy. But now it has clearly landed Poland in political and economic crisis, the workers find this regime unbearable.

The demand of the workers strike a blow at the heart of the one-party totalitarian state which has been set up by the Russian and Polish Stalinists. The right to strike and the right for independent trade unions which can act as a check on the management and on the state, cannot be tolerated by any Stalinist regime. Yet they are an absolute necessity for even the beginning of the workers' revolution, for a beginning of the transformation of society, for the setting up of a workers' state.

Thus the demands of the workers are utterly incompatible with the existence of a privileged bureaucratic layer in society. But Poland cannot remain half a totalitarian state, and half with free rights for the working class; that is impossible.

The workers' demands can only be realised by the overthrow of the regime. Unfortunately the workers in Poland have been advised, sincerely no doubt, by the dissidents from Warsaw to avoid a confrontation with the authorities. This could prove fatal. A political revolution, like a social revolution, can only be victorious if it moves from one victory to another. It cannot stand still. At each new stage new layers of the workers and peasant population must be won to the side of the working class. This can only be obtained by an active movement of the workers in expanding and extending the strikes by sending delegates to different plants all over the

TRADES UNION CONGRESS 1980

TUC MUST GIVE A LEAD

“The TUC should give a lead to all unions by mounting a campaign with the Labour Party against cuts in spending, against anti-union legislation and massive unemployment, and for a shorter working week without loss of pay.

“This campaign should aim to bring down the Tory government and bring to office a Labour government pledged to socialist policies.”

Bakers' Union resolution to conference.

Workers throughout Britain are looking to the 1980 Trades Union Congress for a fighting lead against the nightmare attacks of the Tory government.

The Tories, and the bosses' they represent are condemning millions to an indefinite future of enforced idleness on the dole; to the poverty, misery, humiliation and deep despair that long periods of unemployment bring.

Youth have been hit especially hard: it has been estimated, for instance, that the odds are now a thousand to one against any young unemployed worker finding a job on Merseyside!

Every sphere of working class life is under attack. Health, education, housing and the social services are all reeling under an unprece-

By
Brian Ingham

ted onslaught.

The Tories are determined to dramatically erode living standards. Workers in the public sector have been singled out through the rigid use of cash limits, with the intention of imposing wage increases way beneath the current level of inflation.

The Tories intend to strip away all the rights and conditions which the British labour and trade union movement has won, painfully, through generations of stru-

gle.

At the very heart of the Tory strategy lies their attack on the trade unions through their new Employment Act, 1980, and the new codes of practice on trade union activity. By making the Act law on the very eve of Congress, the Tories have arrogantly thrown down the gauntlet to the trades union movement. Never was a fighting response and a clear socialist programme more vital!

The anger and outrage of the labour and trade union movement at the Tory government is imprinted on almost every resolution on the 1980 Congress agenda. More importantly, those resolutions contain a whole series of demands which together provide the basis of a clear socialist alternative to the Tory nightmare.

The debate on unemployment will be one of the most important. Significantly, there are no demands for increased redundancy payments. The fighting mood developing in the trade unions is for action to defend all jobs, and this has found an echo in

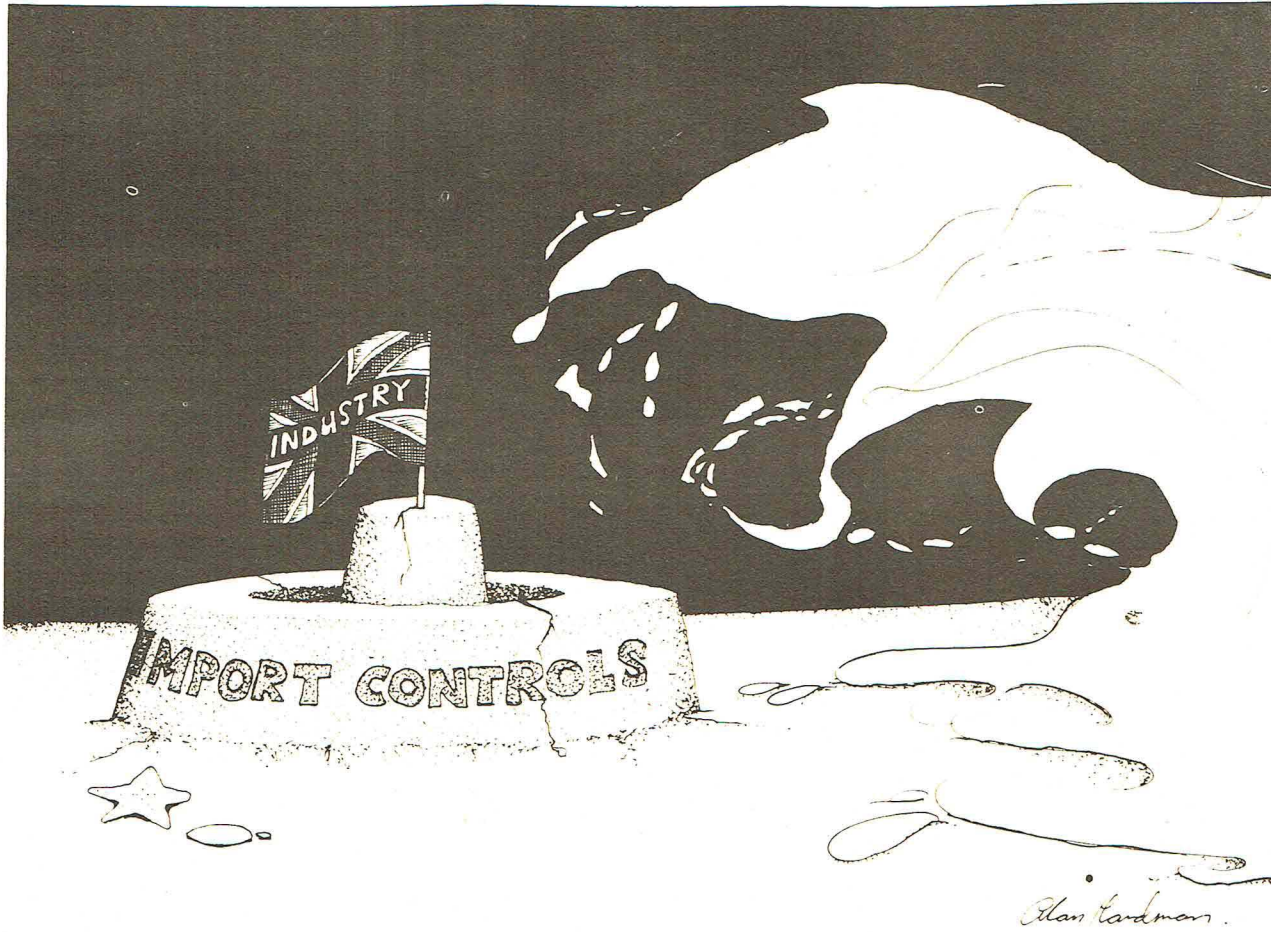
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Printworkers on the march on May 14th Day of Action

PHOTO: Militant

IMPORT CONTROLS



a danger not a solution

Mass unemployment and the constant fear of redundancy has returned to all of Britain. Working people everywhere are searching for the answer—how can jobs be protected?

Decades of wilful neglect by the employing class, refusing to reinvest their profits at the same rate as their main rivals, have left British industry internationally uncompetitive.

The British share of world trade in manufactured goods slumped from 12.7% to 7% from 1961 to 1978, while Japan's share doubled, overtaking Britain in the process. Even at home, outdated British industry has lost out. If the level of imports and exports of finished manufactures were taken as 100 in 1963, by 1978 imports had topped 600, and exports just 200.

The steady stream of imported goods has led many workers to look towards import controls as a solution.

This view is being fed from various sources. Some employers, usually those with the worst record of investment, and so suffering particularly from competition, are swelling the import controls' chorus. Even some right wing Tories have taken it up.

In the labour movement, however, it is the left—the Tribune Group of MPs and less importantly the Communist Party—which has helped fix the slogan in many workers' minds. For want of any other alternative the right in the Labour party and the unions have also taken it up.

These supporters of import controls in the working class movement, sensitive to the inevitable criticism of a call for a 'siege economy', consider they are eminently reasonable in merely demanding 'selective import

By Jeremy Birch

controls'. But which industries are to be selected? Now its advocates have sown the protectionist seed, for every new industry that faces redundancies, the call goes up—"import controls".

Tariffs are demanded against Japanese cars and electrical goods, US chemicals and carpets, Polish shoes, East European suits. The list is endless. Washroom towel companies have added their weight to the demand!

Even the apple growers are waging a campaign against French 'Golden Delicious'. Here too 'The Times' highlighted the reality—"The English are inferior in advertising, packaging, quality control, and in capital investment (over 30% of English orchards are over 25 years old, and only

Townhead Mill in Rochdale, demolished due to chronic under-investment. How could import controls save this mill?



10% of French)."

Imports are entering Britain from every sector of the world. Some in the import controls' lobby want to exempt Third World countries, in other words, concentrate the fire against the stronger nations, precisely those in the best position to hit back.

Anyone who dismisses the inevitable retaliation against any industrialised country imposing serious controls (and if they are to have any effect here, where industrial decline has gone so far, they would have to be very serious and extensive) must be unaware of the protectionist pressures building up in many countries, and the dire situation facing the world economy.

International recession means that world trade is contracting, markets shrinking, and as in all crises, it is every capitalist economy for itself. With every country suffering lengthening dole queues, workers' organisations around the world are pushing for tariffs against products made by other workers abroad. In America the United Auto Workers Union is arguing just as vociferously as the T&GWU for protection of the home car industry.

The demand for import controls cuts right across the instinctive internationalism of working people, demonstrated recently by foreign

steel workers in their active support for the ISTC strike.

Nationalist anti-import feeling is running so high that UAW members have been vandalising Toyotas. A Detroit firm selling replicas of old MGs has replaced the Union Jack radiator badge with the Stars and Stripes. "We don't want our cars wrecked, scratched or vandalised," said the spokesman.

Once import controls really started, retaliation and a trade war would inexorably follow. No country, nor its working class, would benefit. Britain, one of the most dependent on trade (30% of production is exported), would be especially vulnerable.

What the supporters of import controls seem to ignore totally, however, is that it was the freeing of world trade from controls after the last war which helped create exceptional 'prosperity' and virtual full employment in the capitalist world in the early 'seventies. Conversely, it was the slide into protectionism that deepened the slump of the 'thirties.

Accentuating the world economic crisis, the real curse of British industry is underinvestment. Britain has 200 industrial robots. The Fiat company alone has more, and Japan has 4,000 in operation. So what difference would import con-

trols make?

Big business is not interested in developing production or full employment for its own sake, but merely in maximising profit. The record of British capitalists indicates that shielded from competition they would be still less likely to invest, sitting back on their archaic machines and enjoying the captive market.

Freed from foreign rivalry, prices could be raised more easily, helping profits but giving another twist to inflation. British goods are often dearer than rival products. Restricting imports or raising their price would reduce the amount of goods bought. This itself would destroy jobs, probably cancelling out any saved by import controls.

The motor industry, where the clamour for controls is underway, provides a good example of the real problems. Edwardes and the union leaders are demanding protectionist measures. Clearly, import controls can actually blunt the class conflict in favour of a joint 'national interest' and consequently let the employers off the hook. And it is they who bear the entire responsibility for industry's plight.

In Leyland the finger of guilt has been pointed at Japan with demands that they be restricted to a 10% quota of the market. This has, in fact, been implemented since 1976. But as a result the European share of the British market has risen from 25.1% to 38.33% in those four years.

Protection is prescribed to alleviate the problems of the British motor industry. But Leyland is the country's largest exporter. The prestige cars are designed with the US market particularly in mind. In fact TR7s are clearly being 'dumped' in America, at £2,000 below their British price.

Import controls would only exacerbate the problems of the automotive industry. Nationalisation of all the motor manufacturers, combining them in one corporation, alone could provide the necessary scale of resources to generate sufficient investment to make British cars competitive. Any idea of import controls would then be superfluous.

But the demand for import controls is gaining a

foothold in the labour movement. It is included in the TUC-Labour Party document to be debated at this Congress.

The real danger is that the more it is taken up by the leaders, the more it could distract ordinary workers from the need to fight for their jobs. Rather than confronting redundancies, organise a trip to lobby Whitehall for import controls. By the time the coach gets back the factory could be closed! Jobs at UCS were not saved by urging protectionism, but by militant trade unionism.

TUC Congress has a responsibility to head the campaign against unemployment, against all redundancies, for shorter hours and to oppose the Tories' deliberate use of unemployment to cover unions. But most of all it must show that inside the strait-jacket of diseased capitalism, there is no solution. Import controls are just one aspect of an approach that believes that answers can be found within this system.

The steady demise of industry can only be stemmed, and full employment created, within a nationalised, planned economy. Not as some distant utopian ideal, but as the first step of an incoming Labour government, the introduction of a plan of production represents the one genuinely realistic alternative.

Giving work to the jobless, running the economy at full capacity and planning investment could transform British industry, and the prospects facing millions of workers. The necessities of life could be produced cheaply and efficiently, and dramatically increased living standards guaranteed. New techniques could be fully utilised to alleviate the burden of labour, and allow a drastically reduced working week for all.

The TUC, with 12 million workers behind it, linked to the Labour Party, is the force to bring this about. It must as a duty explain to the membership the urgency of the struggle for socialism, and not divert their attention towards dangerous illusions such as import controls..

LAGGERS' DISPUTE - UNITY IS STRENGTH



The thermal insulation engineers' dispute exploded on the Isle of Grain picket lines on May 27th

The bitter dispute at the Isle of Grain power station construction site has seriously endangered trade union solidarity. Two key unions, the AUEW and the EETPU, face the threat of suspension from the TUC.

They have so far refused to accept the TUC recommendation for a settlement, under which the G&MWU thermal insulation engineers—lagers—return to their jobs on the site to work under a site bonus agreement, replacing the 57 trainee lagers.

To expect GMWU members to work with those who crossed their picket lines and took over their job during the year-long strike is clearly unacceptable to trade unionists. 600 workers have been made redundant on the Isle of Grain site, and the unions must, as a priority, fight for jobs for them.

The trainees have been put in an invidious position, for which their trade union leaders bear full responsibility.

By Colin Campbell

(AUEW engineering)

ity. The trainees must be withdrawn, and the AUEW, EETPU and Boilermakers' unions must ensure that they are found other work.

Unity on the Isle of Grain site is essential, in face of the CEGB's attempts to undermine pay and jobs, against a background of crippling recession in the construction industry.

The lagers job is to insulate piping and equipment to maintain the temperature of steam from the boilers to the generator: this keeps the amount of oil or coal used to the minimum and the cost of electricity down.

There are only a few, so they were in a very strong bargaining position. They are the last workers on the power station sites; that is when there is the greatest concentration of lagers on site and even this is for a very short time.

Traditionally they have had high wages because of doing a

lousy job, although the knowledge that the job was dangerous due to asbestos etc. came quite recently.

Since the 1960s, power station construction has boomed. The management have blackmailed workers with bonus productivity payments—they make up half the men's money. Management can use and withhold these payments in a dispute and they don't have to make the payments when the men aren't working. That suits the firms.

Basic payments are settled nationally but the bonuses are settled within individual firms. You have the absurd situation of father and son earning different money for the same job, in different firms.

In 1970 all power station sites were riddled with bonus disputes, due to leapfrogging of bonus payments. Bonus linked to productivity went out the window and in came comparison bonus: "I want the same as the other men on the site." It soon became obvious not only to the management but also to the site shop stewards that the only way out was a bonus norm.

In 1971, Isle of Grain, Littlebrook, Ince B, Peterhead, Heysham, Hartlepool and Dungeness power stations were being constructed, with

thousands employed.

Then the Central Electricity Generating Board (CEGB) became closely involved with site construction management, because fixed cost contracts had been abandoned and replaced by agreements to meet time and labour costs. With the slump in the demand for electricity and the rise in the price of oil, the CEGB realised how much the bonus schemes were costing. They saw the chance to remedy the chaotic payments.

They thought they had taught the concerned unions a lesson when they closed down the oil-fired Ince B generator site for a year. At that stage the political decision had been taken to build a series of reactors and also the Drax B station, the largest coal-fired station in Europe.

Ince B was to be the industrial relations showcase, with canteens etc. But it broke down—even though a psychiatrist was called in to analyse construction workers' minds, to find out why they were so troublesome!

The AUEW construction section (the senior union representing the Mechanical Construction Engineering Agreement unions on site) and the CEGB decided to negotiate a new agreement. The stumbling block was the vastly differing bonus payments on different sites. Some way had to be found to take away from bonus payments and put it on the hourly rate.

The problem was obvious: to increase the hourly rate on this pretext would result in sites on lower bonus getting a real increase in earnings while sites on large bonus would suffer a drastic reduction in earnings when the bonus was removed.

The CEGB realised that they could use the ultimate threat on the Isle of Grain—closing down on Ince B, this time permanently. The project was now an oil-fired white elephant. The site had the highest number of workers—1,700—and the CEGB felt the settlement of bonus payments would remove the main obstacle to industrial harmony.

The MCEA companies and unions—AUEW construction and engineering, EETPU, Boilermakers and Heating & Domestic Engineers, plus some sections of the T&GWU and G&MWU—fell in line with the CEGB proposals on maximum payments. The lagers and the consortium of lager companies, covered by a different agreement, did not. The result was that the lagers withdrew their labour in September 1979.

Initially the G&MWU executive agreed with the CEGB proposals and instructed their members to go back to work. The G&MWU had a closed shop agreement with the thermal insulation industry, which suited the employers and the union.

The other craft trades were not pleased with the superior payments made to the lagers. At key decisions the lagers didn't allow the handymen and labourers to vote.

In this interview, Colin Campbell, a senior shop steward [AUEW engineering] at the Dungeness 'B' construction site, explains how throughout the construction industry, bonus payments have created divisions, exploited by employers to cut across vital site unity.

Of the 104 workers who went on strike at the Isle of Grain, the labourers and semi-skilled seem to have been forgotten. The G&MWU are only asking for reinstatement of the 27 lagers.

Construction continued after the lagers walked out until the CEGB informed the companies and unions that they intended to close the site. Redundancy notices were issued. The lagers were blamed but there is very strong evidence to suggest that rocketing oil prices meant that they had no intentions of completing the station anyway.

About 600 men were made redundant, with the remainder of the 1,700 to go later this year.

Meeting after meeting at TUC level failed to resolve the dispute, so the MCEA unions led by John Baldwin (AUEW construction) informed the G&MWU that unless the lagers returned to work they would supply the necessary labour for lagging contracts to save the jeopardised jobs. The threat was carried out and the AUEW construction and engineering sections, the EETPU and the Boilermakers recruited for trainee lagers.

Although the men on the Isle of Grain were resigned to the fact that the site was to be closed down, meetings were held to discuss and vote on the proposal and they reluctantly agreed that they would work with trainee lagers brought on to the site.

The effect on the shop stewards at Dungeness was traumatic. They were deeply torn between loyalty to the

code of no scab labour and the need to protect their members' jobs.

At the moment 90% of the peace formula is agreed between the unions. The outstanding problem is what to do with the trainee lagers if the G&MWU lagers return. The MCEA unions insist that they are not to be thrown on the scrap heap and want the G&MWU to take them on, but the G&MWU refuse. What conclusion can be drawn from this?

Productivity bonuses of any type, while attractive in some ways, can easily be used as a weapon by management. The ultimate result of the difference in bonus payments is to set worker against worker, until the fundamental law of trade unionism is broken.

The workers endure a nomadic life because the jobs are not permanent. Therefore we deserve a bigger reward, but if the payments are paid through bonuses, this situation will repeat itself. It's about time the construction workers sat down and had a hard look at the situation and demanded a high basic rate of pay.

If it hadn't been the lagers it could have been anyone. At Dungeness it was the scaffolders who were made the victims of bonus parity. It's time the MCEA unions and workers told the CEGB that this vicious bonus war is to end.

Those who argue that site bonus would deprive individual site cabins (shops) of the right to free collective bargaining should remember the maxim 'strength through unity'. Individual workforces would be set against one another, with the CEGB awarding work to those earning the lowest bonus. A whole site on an equal bonus could demand their money with no fear of this.

Too many unions pay lip service to site unity. While they represent small groups of workers, delegates must and will put their men and unions first.

Unity is strength of numbers. Unity of the site as a whole is preferable to bargaining by small groups of workers. If the whole site acts as one there is no danger of one group being picked off.

There is greater anger and hatred felt by the mass of workers at this Tory government than under any government in living memory.

This mood should be used by the TUC to launch a campaign of real opposition to the Tories and their system. Organised workers know full well that the bosses understand only one thing—industrial action. No cosy chit-chat in No. 10 will solve any of our problems.

Only by removing this government and replacing it with a Labour government committed to fundamental change can the mass of workers' lives improve.

The lessons of the 1974 miners' strike are still fresh in workers' minds.

The TUC must take up the cudgel on behalf of all workers and mobilise the 13 million members to throw this government out now, not in four years' time!

By Bill Mullins

(T&GWU Shop Steward, Rover, Solihull)

TRADES UNION CONGRESS 1980

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE SEVEN

the Congress resolutions.

The Transport and General Workers Union has called for "a campaign to fight the cuts, resist closures and redundancies, establish widespread retraining facilities, reduce working hours and overtime with an immediate goal of a 35-hour week..."

The Society of Civil and Public Servants and the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers both call on the General Council to find ways of integrating the unemployed—especially the youth—through the Regional Council structure of the TUC in the campaign to create jobs, to weld together employed and unemployed workers in one united struggle.

The "Campaign" call is repeated over and over again in the resolutions before Congress, particularly in resolutions dealing with the attacks on education, health and the social services. A resolution from the National Union of Public Employees calls upon "the General Council to develop an ongoing campaign to defend the NHS and involve trades councils and the TUC Regional councils in that campaign." It further calls "for all affiliated unions to encourage their branches to actively participate in local campaigns organised by health service unions to defend the National Health Service against government attack."

Defend the NHS

NALGO, which has a large membership in the health service, reiterates "full commitment to a National Health Service which is funded by the Exchequer and which is free at the point of usage...Congress rejects as iniquitous the encouragement given to the growth of private practice in the NHS and any consideration that the service should be insurance-based. It also rejects the concept of a service reliant, to a greater or lesser extent, on voluntary fund raising projects for necessary resources..."

"Congress strongly deprecates any agreements by which employees obtain private health service treatment or facilities at their employers' expense, as it believes that such agreements are totally against the high principles on which the NHS was founded, brings shame upon the unions concerned and discredits the whole trade union movement."

"Congress also supports the efforts of trade union members in the NHS to explode the myth that the NHS is over-administered."

These resolutions are certain to get massive backing, giving encouragement and impetus to the battles raging throughout the country to defend wards, whole hospitals and other NHS establishments for the Tory axe.

Education also faces a grave crisis. The NUT, drawing on members' direct experience of the reactionary Tory education measures, speaks of "the dangerous short sightedness of a social and economic policy which makes the education and training of children and young people the foremost victim of monetarist measures. The educational opportunities which have been won by pressures of

many groups, especially the trade union and labour movement, over many years, are now in danger of being dismembered, with standards of provision for the pre-school pro-sixteen and statutory aid ranges and for the handicapped all being under attack, to the detriment of millions of children and young people and at immeasurable cost to the technological, economic and social development of Britain for many years to come."

The NUT call on the General Council "to seek to form an alliance similar to that which brought about the 1944 Education Act" with the aim of "providing nationwide comprehensive education, statutory nursery education, eliminating all selection, ensuring sufficient investment into education, to provide full educational facilities for all."

NUPE add a call for the restoration of school meal services to their level under previous governments. This is in response to the callous decision of Dorset's Tory council to end the provision of school meals, threatening incalculable damage to the health of many working class children.

The Society of Civil and Public Servants points to the punitive Tory measures against the poor, the sick, the aged and those generally least able to defend themselves from the attacks on the social services. "Pensioners will suffer" the SCPS points out "from the failure to increase pensions by the actual rate of inflation and the ending of the link with wage movements." Poor families will suffer more as a result of changes in supplementary benefit rules: "the failure to maintain the real value of child benefits; the new method of increasing children's dependency allowance; and the plan to penalise the families of strikers, which is the most vicious piece of anti-trade union legislation."

The resolution calls for a campaign to ensure the restoration of benefit levels and the restoration of services to the old, the sick, the unemployed and those in need.

As all these resolutions show, the labour and trade union movement alone has the power to repel the Tory onslaught and defend the rights and conditions of the British working class.

The Tories hope to frighten and cow the trade unions with the myth of trade union unpopularity. The opposite is true—the trade unions now encompass the vast majority of the working population.

It is the Tories and their policies that are universally detested; as David Wood, 'The Times' political commentator wrote recently, nobody voted for "misery, worry and uncertainty."

For the first time in a number of years some of the major trade unions have experienced a decline in membership. This stems directly from the massive de-industrialisation which has engulfed Britain in recent months.

Although the decline in membership is only slight, it nevertheless represents a warning of the dangers even to the labour movement itself if the run down in industry is not met and stopped by organised resistance. Once the trade unions' fight back against the Tories begins in earnest, figures for trade union membership will almost certainly again begin to

rise. The Tories dread the prospect of opposition from a united and determined trade union movement. That is why they have introduced their Employment Bill. The Tory attacks cannot be successfully repelled without taking on and defeating this latest piece of anti-trade union legislation.

No collaboration with anti-union laws

To their shame, the right wing leaders of the AUEW and the EETPU have both refused to denounce the money on offer from the Tories for conducting union ballots. The AUEW leaders have even indicated that they may well soon use this money.

To do this would give respectability to the Act as a whole and thus to the measures against picketing, the closed shop, maternity rights and the other hard won rights of the labour and trade union movement which the Tories intend to destroy.

Collaboration with any aspect of the anti-trade union drive will undermine the united intransigence of the trade unions and encourage the Tories to press on with more draconian attacks. Already Prior has suggested withdrawing legal immunity from trade unions taking sympathetic action without first conducting a secret ballot.

The bosses' union, the CBI, has gone a step further, calling for legally binding collective agreements, compulsory strike ballots, statutory control of trade unions by a registrar and loss of legal immunity where strike notice had not been given, a ballot held and all the agreed procedures exhausted.

An amendment from the Bakers', Food and Allied Workers recommended that any affiliated union taking advantage of any section of the Act should be open to expulsion from the TUC. However, now that the AUEW Foundry section has withdrawn its resolution, in favour of a composite motion on the Employment Act, the Bakers' amendment has fallen.

On seeing the Bakers' amendment, 'The Times' advised the trade unions that the time was not ripe for such sanctions! For the time being it would be sufficient, they intoned, to demand "total opposition." "This would leave open the possibility of firmer action later."

'The Times' no doubt hopes such "total opposition" will never materialise. However, in the same article they referred to the "glorious episode" when the 1971 Industrial Relations Act was destroyed; "Where the movement as a whole most effectively showed the purposeful solidarity which is too often scarcely apparent in its affairs."

That is the way to destroy the Employment Act 1980 and the codes of practice drawn up by Prior. The composite resolution on the Employment Act can still provide the backbone for a firm struggle to defeat these measures.

It calls for a "sustained and vigorous campaign of non-cooperation with the government, including, if necessary, industrial action." The TUC should mobilise the ranks of the trades unions to put this

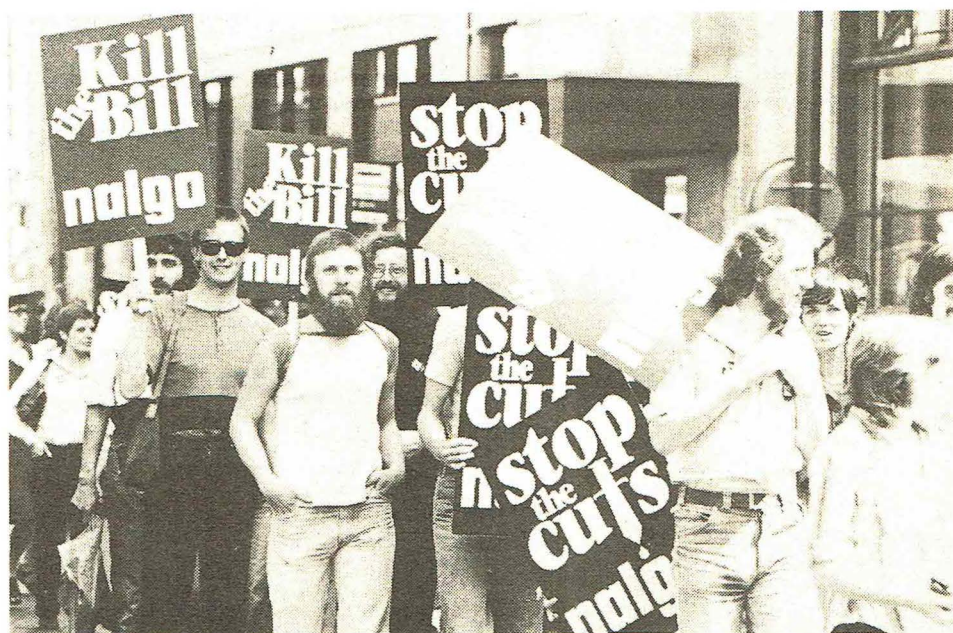


PHOTO: Militant

motion into practice. Congress should also make it clear that it will implement the demand of the Bakers for expulsion from the TUC of any union compromising this crucial struggle.

The only real alternative to Toryism—a socialist programme

In the course of the battle against the Tories the trade unions must present an alternative way forward. Such an alternative will not be found however, in any incomes policy or in polite tête-à-tête with the Tory government. There is a hint of possible support for a future incomes' policy in a resolution from the Union of Communication Workers (formerly UPW) which wants "arrangement for all forms of prices and incomes" as part of a programme for a future Labour government.

The ISTC, while it "categorically rejects any freeze or incomes policy from the Conservative government," then goes on to call for tripartite talks which would set a pay norm as part of overall planning in the economy.

In West Yorkshire, 4,500 jobs have been lost in the textile industry in the four months up to March this year. In the Batley district, where one-third of textile workers are employed in carpet-making, redundancies have been coming thick and fast.

My own factory closed down last Christmas with 200 redundancies. No wonder; I have a photograph from a 1946 newspaper showing the installation of the machine I used to work on!

Textile workers have taken wage settlements of 8½% in 1979 and 10% this year. They still average a 45-hour week. This has only put money into the bosses' pockets; it has solved none of the problems. Even investment is now being coupled with redundancies and attacks on shop floor organisation.

It is vital that the TUC mobilises the collective strength of the movement in measures to save industry. This year the Dyers and Bleachers union committed itself to fighting for a 35-hour week. The TUC should vigorously take up this campaign, linked to a national minimum wage, to force the bosses to pay decent wages and create jobs.

To fully implement this in textiles means taking up the 1979 Dyers and Bleachers conference decision for nationalisation to save the industry.

The trade union movement must be clear: it is impossible to bring planning and order into the anarchy of the capitalist market. Any attempt to do so can only be at the expense of the working class, blunting independent struggle to maintain and improve the gains of the past.

This has been demonstrated over and over again with repeated incomes policies, which have all boosted profits at the expense of the wages of the working class.

Nor will a viable alternative policy be found in fine-tuning, priming, and manipulating the capitalist economy, demands which figure prominently in many resolutions.

Import controls are demanded by several unions. This slogan has enormous dangers for the labour movement.

Import controls will not guarantee the necessary investment in industry, but they will ensure higher prices in the shops and threaten international solidarity at a time when workers all over the world are moving into action against their capitalist exploiters, to save jobs and protect living standards. The slogan of import controls diverts the trade union movement away from a clear fight to force the bosses and Tories to retreat and to bring about a socialist alternative.

The many demands for reflation of the economy, increased state aid etc, offer

no lasting answer. The capitalists have found to their cost that hyper-inflation results when paper money, not backed by real productive wealth, is thrown into the economy in the hope of boosting production.

The last Labour government tried to make the capitalist economy work. It began with a version of Keynesian pump-priming. When those policies failed it swung over to a version of monetarism, with wage controls including the disastrous 5% sizeable cuts in state expenditure on the education and social services.

The trade union movement must say: never again! The unions should campaign for the adoption by the next Labour government of a thorough-going socialist programme. The calls for reversing of the cuts, a living wage, a programme of useful public works, increased pensions and the many other demands on the agenda all deserve support. But the struggle for reforms must be linked indissolubly to the fight for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, the banks and insurance companies and the inauguration of a socialist plan of production.

Two small white collar unions argue against the TUC being 'political'. Every serious industrial struggle immediately raises political questions, however. This was realised at the beginning of the century by the trade unions when they helped to found the Labour Party.

The TUC must not only be political, it should conduct a campaign for political unity and for affiliation to the Labour Party by every single trade union.

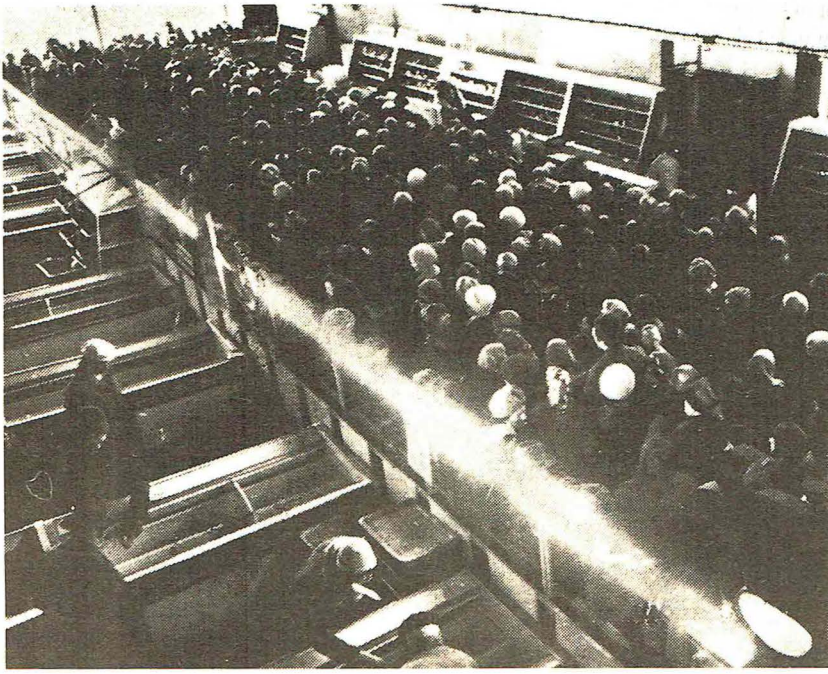
The resolution from the Bakers' union (incorporating an amendment from the Fire Brigades' Union) spells out the way forward for the trades union movement:

"Congress recognises the vicious attempts of the Tory government to make the workers pay for the capitalist crisis and agrees that the TUC should give a lead to all affiliated unions and their members by mounting a campaign jointly with the Labour Party against cuts in social spending, against anti-union legislation, against massive unemployment, for a shorter working week without loss of pay and against all forms of nuclear weapons."

"This campaign should clearly aim to bring down the Tory government and bring to office a Labour government pledged to the socialist policies contained in Clause IV part 4 of the Labour Party constitution."

John Vasey, Batley Dyers and Bleachers branch cttee [personal cap]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6



◀ Queuing for meat in a Warsaw supermarket

▼ The workers' revolt in 1970 [above] brought down the government, but concessions were later withdrawn

POLAND

country, and also by demonstrations in the town to win over the armed forces.

The weakness of the authorities is demonstrated by the fact that they are attempting to play a conciliatory role. They are playing for time; if they can succeed in getting the workers to accept only the economic demands which they are largely willing to concede, then they can maintain control once the movement has ebbed and over a period of months they can take action against the workers.

The incorrectness of the position of the dissidents is shown by the arrest of the 14 'dissidents' of the KOR in Warsaw.

The bureaucracy fears its own weakness and understands that in any confrontation with the workers they would find that they are moving a non-existent army. That is exactly what happened in Hungary in 1956—only the political police were loyal to the regime and it would be the same thing as far as Poland is concerned. The lower layers of the bureaucrats too went over to the side of the workers.

That is why the bureaucracy is conjuring up the fear of Russian intervention which was used against Czechoslovakia (and included Polish troops) in 1968.

But the situation is entirely different in Eastern Europe and in Russia at the present time. The bureaucracy in Russia is also facing a crisis. For the first time for many years, news of the strikes in the big motor car plants in Russia and perhaps in other areas of the country has leaked out, despite the tight censorship. It is no accident that for the first time for many years the Russian bureaucracy is jamming the news from the 'BBC' and the 'Voice of America'. They are afraid that the news of the strikes in Poland would have an effect on the workers, because Russia too is facing an economic and social crisis, at the present time.

It is true of course that on the basis of Poland alone it would not be possible to fully solve the economic and social problems that are facing the Polish working class. That would require the efforts of the workers of at least a few industrialised countries. But if the Polish workers came to power and established a Polish workers democracy,

then undoubtedly this would have an effect on the workers and soldiers of Russia, if the Polish workers immediately started broadcasting an appeal to the Russian working class to come over to their side. It would not be so easy to intervene in Poland as it was in Afghanistan where the conditions are entirely different.

In any event, without risks and without boldness and audacity there can be no victory on the part of the Polish workers. A half-and-half position will inevitably result in defeat. There can be no compromise with the bureaucracy, anymore than there can be a fundamental compromise with the capitalist class in the West.

The bureaucracy understands very well, through their army of informers and

Poland cannot remain half-totalitarian, half-free. The workers demands can only be realised by the overthrow of the regime

agents, the mood of the working class throughout Poland; that is why they are proceeding with such caution. Poland is a keg of dynamite and any confrontation between the workers and the authorities can explode into a political revolution.

At this moment the bureaucracy are preparing to promise to carry out the formula that was outlined at the 6th Congress of the Communist Party in 1971 after the fresh events of the overthrow of the Gomulka regime. But their perjured words are worth no more than the words of the capitalist class here. The bureaucracy is totally correct when they say that the demands that are being put forward by the workers are incompatible with the existence of the 'state', i.e. Stalinism.

The member of the Politbureau Jerzy Lukaszewicz who is in control of the 'trade unions', has declared that there can be "no reconstruction of the trade unions, they must remain fundamentally intact and must remain as they are." The Polish leadership has briefed foreign correspondents by saying that "the Polish leaders are not willing to concede far reaching political change."

Similarly, Jan Szydlak, a new entrant to the higher layers of the bureaucracy and in charge of the totalitarian bureaucracy-run trade unions reportedly told the workers: "the authorities do not intend to give up their power or to share it with anyone else."

Rakowski, editor of "Polityka" (an official organ of the bureaucracy) said: "the Party...rejects any compromise with the forces which are against the foundations of our system."

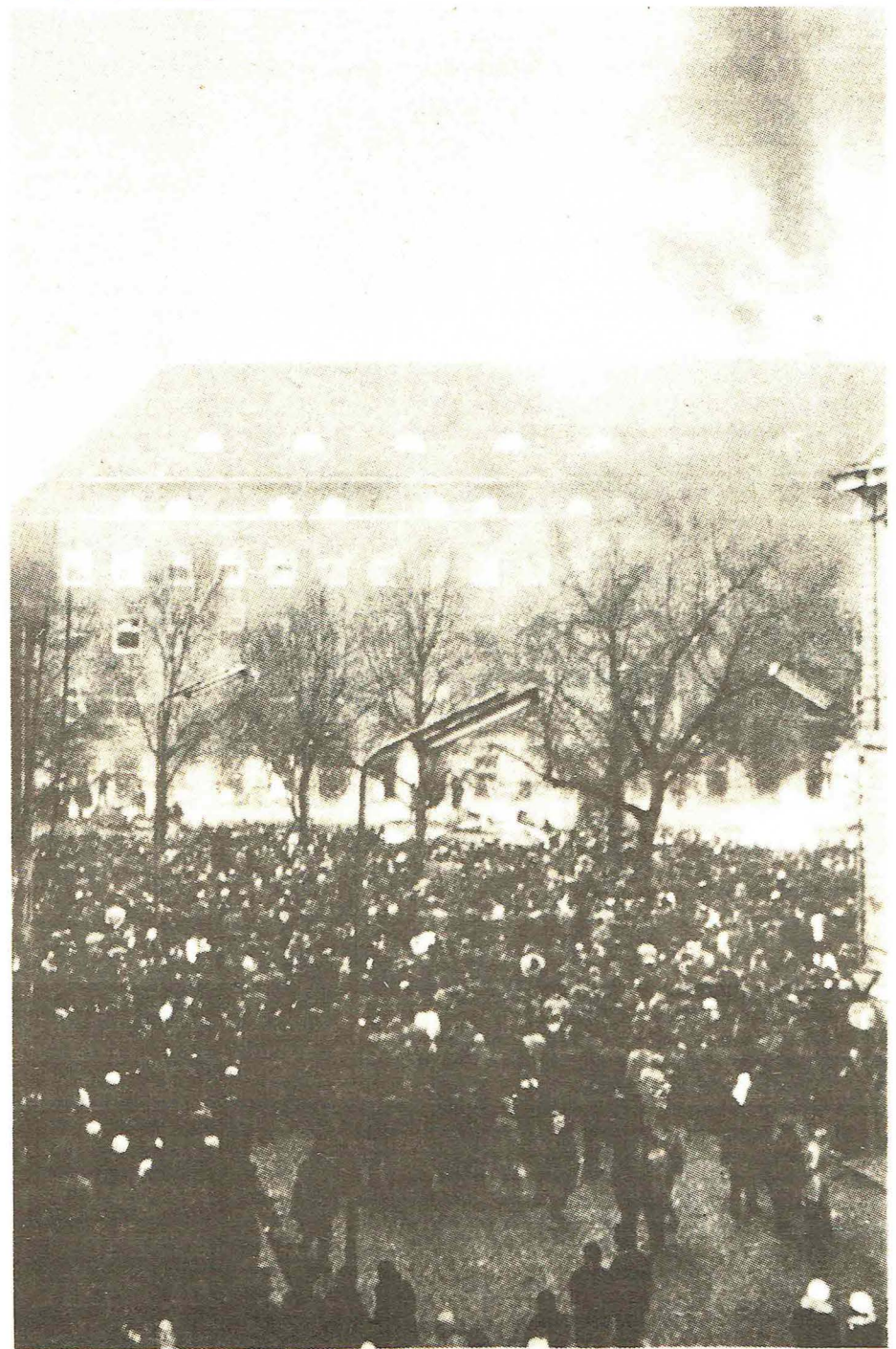
They will never agree to a disbanding of the Stalinist control of trade unions in favour of independent workers' organisations democratically elected. These would prove incompatible with the privileges possessed by the bureaucracy.

One of the demands of the

workers is that there should be an official memorial erected to the victims who were killed in the demonstrations of the workers in 1970. This demand has had to be conceded by the bureaucracy. The only demands that they are not prepared to concede are those which would alter the structure of the state and of power.

The authorities want to preserve the status quo and are trying to negotiate not with the central strike committee—which would be recognition of the strength of the workers—but separately with each plant. As the strike committee leader Florian Wieschanski declared, these attempts to divide the workers are a "capitalist policy."

Everything is in the balance in Poland; any precipitate action by the bureaucracy would ignite an explosion, shaking Poland from one end to the other, provoking an uprising like the Hungarian uprising of 1956. On the other hand, if the workers maintain the present position then inevitably the movement will ebb and the bureaucracy would be able—for a short period, perhaps of months, not more than a few years—to re-establish control throughout Poland. They would



quickly return to a much more oppressive regime than the 'liberal' Stalinist regime of the last ten years, and especially the last three or four years.

All the conditions for political revolution have been established, including a split in the ruling layers of the Polish bureaucracy and the Politburo. One set of hardliners wants to take action, another section of the bureaucracy wants to make concessions now and prepare to take their revenge on the working class later.

The workers stand clearly for the state ownership of the means of production and distribution, which is dominant in the Polish economy. There is no wish to interfere with the state ownership, especially of industry. But what they want was expressed by the workers who said that in free trade unions the "Communists"—meaning the bureaucrats—should not be allowed to be members. Trotsky worked out the same demand would be put forward by the workers in the Soviet Union. He said that after the experience of Russian Stalinism, the workers, in carrying out the political revolution would expel the bureaucrats from the new soviets that would be set up.

What the Polish workers need is a conscious programme of national and international solidarity—a programme based on the ideas of Lenin and Marx, as explained in Marx's writings on the Paris Commune and Lenin's 'State and Revolution'.

They must follow the example of the Hungarian workers who in 1956 put forward this set of demands: all committees elected by the

workers must have the right of recall of all officials who they find unsatisfactory; that officials should receive no more than the wage of skilled workers; no standing army but an armed people; for the formation of workers' committees to run the economy and the state. There should not be a privileged, bureaucratic elite; in Lenin's words, "every cook should be able to be prime minister."

To these four points upheld by the Bolsheviks, the Hungarian workers added: full freedom of all tendencies to put forward their ideas. It is significant that the Polish workers should demand access to the press for all tendencies. In order that such access would be fair, they should add that access should be in proportion to support of the population, measured by a free vote in the soviets or workers' committees.

Revolt in Eastern Europe

Under such conditions, even elements which may advocate a return to capitalism would have every right to propagate their point of view—in proportion to the support that they can get within the population, which would be infinitesimal! There should be freedom of all parties, even of capitalist parties. What is there to be afraid of, given the worldwide crisis of capitalism?

Trotsky long ago pointed out that once the Russian workers have overthrown the bureaucracy, they would never allow the existence of a one-party totalitarian state. This was strikingly proved in 1956 during the course of the Hungarian revolution, and is

again evident in the groping of the Polish workers towards a similar programme.

Either we will have the most glorious of victories in Poland, or the most crushing of defeats. But nothing would be worse than for the Polish workers to be defeated without a struggle. That is what the dissidents have not understood—it would be far worse for the Polish and the international working class if the Polish workers were to tamely concede to the bureaucrats without fundamentally challenging their rule.

In reality, the bureaucracy has been enormously weakened while the working class has been enormously strengthened, not only in numbers but in its capacity to struggle, by the post-war industrialisation of Poland. Under such circumstances, a victory could easily be gained which would spread to the rest of Eastern Europe and to the Soviet Union; and also have a decisive effect on the capitalist states of the West. That is what the bureaucracy—and the ruling class in the capitalist west—fear, and it is this that the workers have to understand.

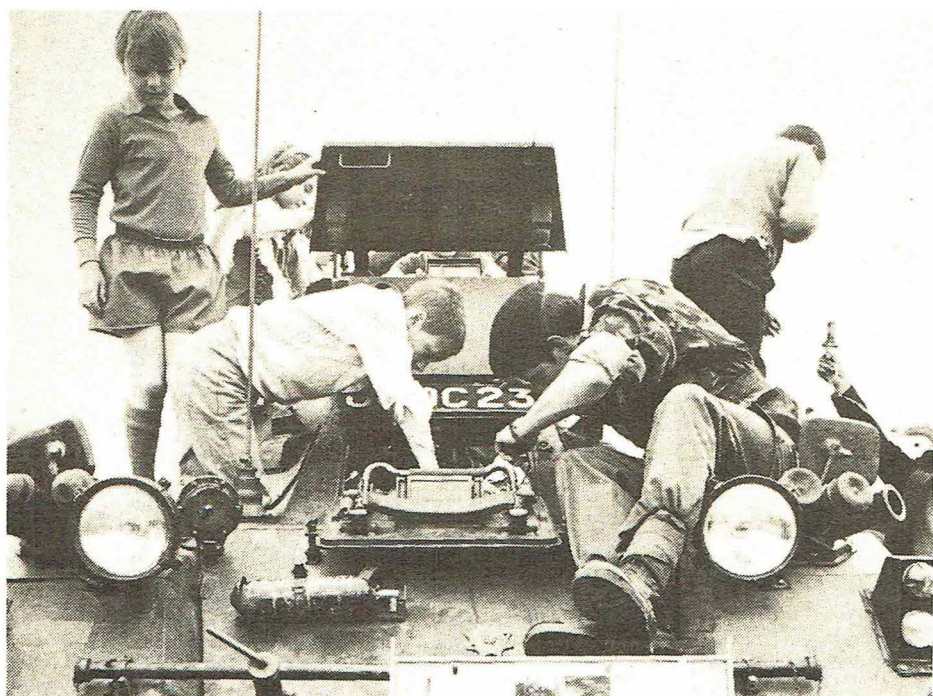
Whatever the results of the present crisis, the days of the bureaucracy in Russia and Eastern Europe are numbered, as are the days of capitalism. We see class struggle in every corner of the globe, in the undeveloped world, in the capitalist world, and also in the Stalinist world—simultaneously in the three political arenas of the world.

All the conditions are now developing which will in the foreseeable future prepare the working class to take control into their own hands on a world scale.

Letters

**VIEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
CRITICISM? WRITE ABOUT THEM TO:**

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Arms spending— Labour must lead fight

Dear Comrades

This week the RAF held a display, including military aircraft, on the seafront at Aberystwyth. Children were handed badges inscribed 'future RAF pilot'.

Our local Labour Party produced a leaflet attacking Tory increases in military expenditure and calling for the scrapping of all nuclear arms and the closing down of all nuclear bases in Britain. The leaflet urged the public to join the Labour Party to fight for a better future.

This was distributed by Party members outside the exhibition and met with an enthusiastic response from both local people and visiting holidaymakers. Despite

the rantings of the Tory Press and the 'gang of three', the response we got indicated the revulsion of many working people at the squandering of their money on useless armaments while hospitals and social services are cut to the bone.

We also distributed our leaflet and sold the 'Militant' at a film show organised by a local 'Peace Group.' The banned BBC film 'The Wargame' was shown together with a 'short' which ended with the message 'Love Your Neighbour'!

The organisers grumbled at the fact that we were giving out socialist literature and were at pains to disassociate themselves from us. However the reaction of those attending was more encouraging—the leaflets were snapped up, papers sold and new YS members recruited.

Our experience shows that if we campaign against nuclear arms boldly under the banner of Labour and socialism we can make great gains for the Party and the YS and in this way ensure that a socialist society is brought about, the only firm guarantee against the horrors of nuclear war.

The 'Love Your Neighbour' brigade must not be allowed to lead the opposition to nuclear arms as in the early '60s. It is our responsibility as socialists to take every opportunity of pointing the accusing finger at the real enemy and cause of warfare—capitalism.

Fraternally
Dave Subacchi
Aberystwyth Labour
Party

We must organise!

Dear Comrades

I work for a small computer company, and as the small companies are falling first, my company is in financial difficulties. It's doubtful they will hold out until Christmas.

The economic situation has put everyone in a tense state, and with every failure of the capitalist system to provide for the people, they must have someone for the people to point their fingers, to say "It's their fault." Like Germany chose the Jews, we are now the chosen people, and racial tension is boiling in the London population.

There is an increase in racial attacks on Asians and two weeks ago a youth was stabbed to death by four skin-heads in Newham. With the killing of Richard Campbell, the black youth of London are well agitated and aware of their position in British society.

I can see there is more trouble ahead for us in this country. The only way forward for our people is mobilising with a major political party. Our people must now be made to realise that we must get together and work for a better way forward, for the future of our children.

Yours faithfully
A reader

Thatcher's runaway train

Dear Comrades

I am sixteen and have recently left school. I decided that providing I could not find employment by September I might sign myself onto a two-year, full time college course.

This is just a possibility, but I was subjected to a barrage of forms after registering for social security. I was beginning to realise the inefficiency and trouble that so much 'red-tape' causes, not only to me but to the civil service workers.

My feelings were summed up today when I was waiting in the Department of Health and Social Security building

Asset-strippers threaten hotel workers

Dear Comrades

After reading in issue 514 your articles entitled 'Tories Strip Public Assets' and 'Railway Unions Must Fight Run-down' I felt I had to write to congratulate both writers and endorse their sentiments by adding a few of my own.

I am employed by British Transport Hotels. Under nationalisation, with a closed shop agreement with the NUR and TSSA, conditions

in Birkenhead. A man pathetically dressed in a pair of brown corduroy trousers, which only extended to his knees, and raggedly torn brown jumper proceeded to the claims desk.

He claimed they were his only clothes and he needed a grant to buy some decent-looking clothes; he could hardly leave his mother's house due to his lack of clothing.

Personally I don't think he was dressed like this to gain attention, because people were grinning and the man, aged about 18, was clearly embarrassed. This would just serve as proof of his desperation.

He also claimed his doctor was completely horrified and annoyed, because his giro-cheque had not

for our hotel workers although by no means perfect, are considerably better than in other privately-owned hotels, often part of large companies, most of which have no union to intervene to change their Victorian working conditions.

With the introduction of private enterprise and the eventual loss of our closed shop agreement, the conditions of BT hotel workers can only decline. Historically hotel workers are not active in trade unions because of the fear of losing their jobs and it infuriates me to think that after years of struggle

Our council was conned

Dear Comrades

Council approval has been given to the GEC Sting-Ray Missile Underwater Torpedo project, Neston, Wirral. However, I wrote this letter to bring home just how the Council have been conned!

The Council deputy leader Reg Chrimes, although stating that "this is a very unpleasant decision to make," willingly give his rubber-stamp to GEC on the grounds that he couldn't deny local school leavers and unemployed the slim chance of a job at the factory.

And is it slim? I'll say, because most of the jobs will go to skilled men, specially trained at Marconi's luxury training complex down in the South-East!

It must be clear to logical socialists that once again big business has manipulated well-meaning politicians.

Tory member Geoff Top, (a well-meaning politician?), replied to Councillor Chrimes, stating "without defence, there will be no jobs for anyone"—presumably the Tories are trying to create an elitist employed war-mongering class in British society! Council leader Fred Venables bravely suggests an alternative micro-ship manufacturer could yet be found. Unfortunately, his cries will go unheeded, thanks mainly to the dearth of information provided to the public by the press on this subject. Hence the need for the paper that tells it all, 'Militant'!

Yours fraternally
Alan Keating
Wirral Labour Party

come through, forcing the man to live in a deprived state. He was told he would be visited and his claim investigated on the Monday next, despite protesting for an earlier date, as he needed to get out of the house, at least to look for a job.

I ask myself, is this due to the irregular and prolonged 'red-tape', or to a shortage of staff caused by Thatcher's cuts in services?

However we look at it, it is a clear reminder that since the 2nd May 1979, the train of gloom driven by Thatcher's runaway bandits, has only accelerated in its crashing return to the conditions of the 1930s.

Yours fraternally
Colin Garland
Wirral LPYS

by BTH staff, they will now work to put profits into owners' pockets and not into re-investment in the company and their working conditions.

The next Labour government must stand firm and re-nationalise without compensation, from these money-grabbing parasites. Our company makes a profit under nationalisation which proves it can and does work. Under workers' control it would run even better.

Yours fraternally
Jacky Mitchell
TSSA Edinburgh No. 1
Branch [personal cap.]

CND— What went wrong

Dear Comrades

Martin Ryle (Letters 1/8/80) does not believe "that socialists...should have any reservations at all about working together with others—Catholics, liberals, anarchists, Methodists—in the struggle to halt the arms race...and free us all from the constant dread of mass death." Indeed, Marxists have no objection—provided it is through the labour movement and with socialist policies.

A "massive peace movement" based on amorphous, mainly middle class groupings will never change the capitalist state's policy on the fundamental question of armaments and war. Only the working class, through its mass organisations, has the power to do so. In the 1960s CND grew into a massive movement, but because it was separate from the labour movement, it soon evaporated without achieving any of its aims.

Martin Ryle, like many members of CND, implies that the clock is already at ten minutes to midnight, and the seconds tick by with every warhead added to the nuclear stockpile. But the accumulation of arms in itself does not inevitably lead to war.

The capitalist class arms itself to defend its wealth and power, and will not lightly throw away everything in a totally destructive nuclear war. The build-up of arms by western Imperialism is primarily through fear of the Soviet union's overwhelming superiority in conventional armaments; inevitably, the Soviet bureaucracy has reacted by building up its own nuclear arsenal.

Polish workers— The first stirrings

Dear Comrades

From time to time while scanning the capitalist press one comes upon unusually honest reports of political developments in other areas of the world.

Recently I happened upon an article about Poland in the 'Financial Times.' It explains how the recent strikes over the introduction of food price rises are merely "symbolic of a much deeper malaise, and what is really at issue is the credibility of the party and its ability to solve Poland's problems."

In a hazy way the 'FT' has come to within inches of a correct explanation of the situation. It goes on to say in relation to the growth of working class organisations outside the party channels:

"The most important group is the Workers' Self-defence League (KOR) set up after the 1976 food riots to defend workers jailed and harassed by the regime. Many of its leaders, like Jacek Kuron, are of Marxist conviction, but firm believers in workers' democracy and opposed to what they see as the bureaucratic police-state structure of the

In the future, with the crisis internationally, world war is certainly a danger. But this could only arise with the emergence of bonapartist military dictatorships, which like the fascist regimes in the past, would no longer be under the direct control of the capitalist class—and would be quite capable of a crazy attempt to find a way out through nuclear attack.

Such regimes could only emerge in advanced capitalist countries, however, as a result of a series of catastrophic defeats for the working class and the smashing of their organisations. Before that happens, the working class will be presented with many opportunities of changing society on socialist lines.

The outrage of many religious and radical middle class groups at the grotesque waste of arms spending and the perversion of science and technology for destructive aims, is an indication of a widespread rejection of the rotten values of capitalist society. This presents socialists with the opportunity of winning enormous support among these sections. But arms and the threat of war are a class issue, just as much as the control of the economy. The people referred to by Martin Ryle will only be won to a lasting, effective movement if it is based on the labour movement and armed with socialist ideas.

The threat of war is not an "exceptional" question which can be solved separately from the other problems of society, with socialism postponed until afterwards. On the contrary, the ultimate threat of world war and nuclear destruction is, in reality, the most urgent impetus for mobilising the labour movement for the socialist transformation of society.

Yours fraternally
Dave Farrar
Isle of Dogs Labour Party

present regime."

Unfortunately owing to its position as mouthpiece for capital, the 'FT' is totally incapable of offering any solution, even if it wanted to, the problems facing Polish workers.

For years the Polish Stalinist bureaucracy, perched on the backs of the working class, have milked the wealth created by the efforts of the workers. But their actions will seal their own fate.

Failing to get any response from the official trade unions, which are firmly harnessed to the bureaucracy, the working class are now throwing up their own independent organisations. The recent developments in Poland are the first stirrings of the working class—the only class capable of transforming Polish society—feeling its way, discovering its strength, testing its leadership.

They set the scene for future more explosive struggles bringing in sections of the working class not yet involved, posing more and more clearly the need to remove the bureaucratic elite, to carry through a further political revolution and establish a true workers' democracy.

Yours fraternally
Peter D Marsden
Newcastle North LPYS

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 TEACHER WEEKEND SCHOOL September 13th and 14th. Venue: Newtown Community Centre, Newtown Row, Birmingham. Speakers on Saturday:—Trade Union Perspectives—Jon Ingham; Education and the Labour Movement—Roy Davies (President Chesterfield NUT); A Socialist Education Policy for the Labour Party—Julie Taylor; Evening—Social. Sunday:—Launching a left programme for the NUT—Felicity Dowling. Cost £3 including lunch on Saturday and accommodation, for further details contact: Jane McVeigh, 53 Bayswater Row, Leeds 8.

SOO NORRIS and **STEVE JONES** would like to send thanks and comradesly greetings to all who gave us presents and greetings for our wedding. Spurs for the cup—forward to socialism!

ROCHDALE LP ANTI-RACIALISM SUB COMMITTEE DEMONSTRATION Saturday 6th September. Set off 12 noon from Mere St, Rochdale. In support of Anwar Ditta—End Immigration Controls!

SUNDERLAND LPYS Young Workers' Conference; sessions on 'The Shop Stewards movement' and 'The trade unions and the unemployed.' Speakers: Ron Brown MP and Andy Bevan—October 17th, 10.30am at East Community Centre, Moor Terrace, Hendon, Sunderland.

PLUNDER WOMAN IS BACK!

[As seen on TV]
Alan Hardman's popular cartoon reproduced as a striking red and black poster (approx 2ft x 1½ft), now available again. Single copies 50p post free, orders of 4 or more to be sold for Militant Fighting Fund 25p each, cash with order please. Make all cheques, POs, out to 'MILITANT' and send to Steve Cawley, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

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Get your Labour Party or LPYS branch, trade union or shop stewards' committee to place their greetings to Labour Party Conference in the pages of 'Militant'. Support the paper that fights for socialism.

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3 column centimetres...£2
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one-sixteenth page...£7
one-eighth page...£14
one-quarter page...£25

Closing date for copy is Saturday 13 September, but send your greetings as early as possible to: the Circulation Department, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

'Militant' Weekend School

Come to the Danville Hotel (on sea-front) in sunny Margate On Saturday/Sunday August 30/31
Saturday 11—1: 'An introduction to Marxist economics'. Ted Grant.
2.30—5.00. 'The Socialist Way Forward for Labour'. Ray Apps. 8.30...Social at hotel (with food)
Sunday 10.00—1.00. 'Chile—Lessons of '70-'73 and the Way Forward'. Sunday afternoon...sunbathe on beach.
Bookings and queries to K Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Margate, Kent. Tel. (0843) 291293. Cost: only £7.50 (including bed & breakfast at Danville Hotel). Children: half-price.

ST. HELENS Militant Readers Meeting 'Policies of Tory Madhouse,' which way for trade unions. At the Sefton Arms Hotel, Baldwin St, Town Centre St. Helens. Tony Mulhearn (Vice President Liverpool District Labour Party); Gerry Caughey (SOGAT Convenor); 7.30pm; 9th September.

MANCHESTER MILITANT READERS MEETING "Poland: Bureaucratisation or workers power." Speaker: Gerry Lerner (Eccles Labour Party) Sunday, August 31, 7.30pm 'The Star and Garter', Fairfield Street, (Behind Piccadilly BR Station).

RANK AND FILE MOBILISING COMMITTEE FOR LABOUR DEMOCRACY RALLIES:
EDINBURGH Sunday 31st August 7.30pm Trades Council, Picardy Place. Chair: Alex Wood, cllr. Speakers: Reg Race, MP Sandy Smeaton [AUEW-shop steward, No. 2 Divisional Council, personal capacity] Val Woodward, cllr. John Bloxam [Mobilising Committee].

TUC RALLY Monday 1st September 5.15pm, Preston Room, The Royal Albion Hotel, Brighton. Chair: Tony Banks [Mobilising Committee]. Speakers: Tony Benn MP. Ron Todd [National Organiser, T&GWU, personal capacity]. John Bloxam [Mobilising Committee].

BASINGSTOKE Tuesday, 2nd September 7.30pm Chute House, Church Street. Speakers: Michael Meacher MP, John Bloxam [SCLV].

TOWER HAMLETS Wednesday, 3rd September 7.30pm Town Hall, Patriot Square, E2. Speakers: Arthur Latham [Chairman GLR LP] Ted Knight [leader, Lambeth Council]; Frances Morrell [CLPD]; John Bloxam [SCLV].

Labour and Trade Union Group Change of Address: Now at: 4 Waring Street, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Build Militant

Area	Received	% of 3rd qtr target achieved	Target 3rd qtr	Target for year
Eastern	2,584		3500	5,000
East Midlands	2,336		2660	3,800
Hants & IOW	2,262		2730	3,900
Humberside	1,071		1750	2,500
London East	3,903		4340	6,200
London West	2,206		3290	4,700
London South	3,577		3290	4,700
Manchester & Lancs	1,903		3570	5,100
Merseyside	2,921		4200	6,000
Northern	3,143		5110	7,300
Scotland East	1,207		2240	3,200
Scotland West	2,437		3500	5,000
Southern	3,056		4130	5,900
South West	1,631		2240	3,200
Wales East	1,140		1960	2,800
Wales West	1,277		2170	3,100
West Midlands	4,568		6300	9,000
Yorkshire	2,902		5110	7,300
Others	8,676		7910	12,000
Total received	52,800		70,000	100,000

TARGET FOR OCTOBER 11th £70,000

FOR YEAR-£100,000

DON'T FALL BACK!

The good start we made with the Fighting Fund has unfortunately been almost fully compensated for by the holiday period—this week's collection was the lowest for over a year. So we now need at least £12,000 during the month of September in order to get within striking distance of the £70,000 by October 11th!

THIS WEEK £592

September is the ideal month to approach all readers who are members of the Labour Party for donations to ensure our extended coverage of the vital debates within the party. And, of course, in the weeks before the Labour Party Conference we are coming to the 'open season' for libel and slander against the 'Militant'—the more grotesque the lie, the bigger the coverage.

We appeal to all readers to use this opportunity to open new avenues for the sale of 'Militant', and to appeal for

financial help on our behalf. If you compare our resources with those of the mass media—it's Tom Thumb versus Goliath! When it's David v. Goliath they won't stand a chance—but we'll only reach that size with your help.

Readers can copy these examples: a party appeal for the fund raised £87 in Brighton, and jumble sales in Barking and Peterborough were good for £66 and £40.

£20 from Dalkeith Marxist Discussion Group, £16 from a Gateshead curry night together with £12 from sale of pontoon cards in Glasgow.

We also got £75 from "jobs done for us" as the comrades put it. We haven't got any details, except the assurance that the whole thing is perfectly legal.

Welsh supporters have campaigned for us, with cash in from Blackwood, Gwent, Rhondda, Swansea, Llanelli, and Aberystwyth, where readers S Jones, J Bound and A Watson gave us £1 each.

Brentwood supporters donated £1, and fivers were sent from Scunthorpes readers

and trade union expenses (Leeds). Birmingham comrades' sponsored walk was another £4.50 credit for us, and a similar amount came in from Merseyside in appreciation of 'haircuts at LPYS camp'.

Thanks also to London supporters L Levane (£7.35), A Herbert (£5), and B Delaney (£2) and to Nottingham comrades B Buchanan (£1 twice), A Horne and M Hunt (£1 each). Finally A Antill (Wigan) and R Riddle (Manchester) are two readers helping along the Manchester & Lancs line on the chart.

How is your area doing? Is your black line in need of a push? Or is it close to 100%

for the ¾-year, which means that your donations will start the last (hardest) quarter?

Have you asked your workmates to not only buy 'Militant' each week, but consider selling the paper to their mates and families? Have you asked them to make a regular contribution to our finances (pointing out our lack of subsidy from the usual monopolies by way of advertising)?

Have you thought about a small (or large) discussion group after work to discuss and explain the issues in 'Militant'? How much of the £12,000 in September will you take responsibility for raising?

'MILITANT' trade union pamphlets

A Militant programme for NUPE 20p
Militant Teacher: Summer 1980 25p
The way forward for NALGO 20p
Militant GMWU Review 20p
POEU—The way forward 30p
Socialist policies for UPW 20p
UPW: Democracy and socialism 10p
A fighting socialist programme for USDAW 20p
A fighting programme for firemen 20p

NOW AVAILABLE! Tapes from Militant Marxist Weekend School

Introduction to Marxism

The Theory of Marxism: John Pickard; Marxism and Internationalism: John Pickard; Marxist Perspectives for Britain: Bryan Beckingham.

Marxism and the Trade Unions

Perspectives for the Trade Unions: Brian Ingham; General Strike: Brian Ingham; Role of a Marxist as a Shop Steward: Bob Faulkes.

Marxist Economics

Wage, Labour and Capital: Bryan Beckingham; Will there be a slump?: Rob Jones; The 'Alternative Economic Strategy', a Marxist Analysis: Rob Jones.

Cost: £1.50 each. Set of three: £4. All 16 tapes: £20
Cheques payable to 'Militant' (All prices include postage)
Write to: Marxist Weekend School Tapes,
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN
Allow 14 days for delivery

China: History and Perspectives

The Chinese Revolution 1925-27: Peter Taaffe; the Chinese Revolution 1944-49: Peter Taaffe; China: perspectives for today: Lynn Walsh

The Life of Trotsky

The Rise of Bolshevism: Alan Woods; The Russian Revolution and the struggle against Stalinism: Alan Woods; The Nineteen-thirties: Ted Grant

Debate: The Lessons of Chile 1970-73: Lynn Walsh and Mike Gatehouse [Communist Party]



FIREMEN WARN TORIES

On public sector pay limit

When the government declared its aim of limiting public sector pay increases to 9.6%, the Fire Brigades Union, whose pay settlement is due in early November, responded immediately with a statement setting out their opposition.

Terry Fields, a member of the FBU executive, explained the union's position to Mike Lawson, a Merseyside fireman.

The nine-week strike in 1977/78 was the first in 60 years of the FBU's history. We returned to work without achieving our instant demand but on the understanding that in two stages, over a two-year period, firemen's average earnings would fully equate to the average earnings of male manual workers.

The Labour government's pay policy, restricting settlements to 10%, was the stumbling block to us obtaining in 1977 what was rightfully ours. We had been through enquiries and arbitration which made recommendations in our favour in this respect.

The two-year staging was therefore a face-saving compromise, which took cognisance of the tremendously serious implications that repeated industrial action by firemen would have.

There was a paragraph in the agreement which pledged, roughly, 'thereafter to main-

tain firemen at that appropriate level in the pay scales.' The FBU hold that formula as the key to stability and peace in the fire service as far as wages are concerned.

Whatever figure is thrown up through the various calculations, that pay rate for those in the 'upper quartile' will be legitimately ours as a right. It was fought for and won after nine hard weeks on strike. Interference with that formula should be met with fierce opposition by firemen.

To be kidded into believing that sacrifice by firemen this year would be met by a redress in that imbalance in later years, would be lunacy. To give up the formula this year would be to say goodbye to it forever.

With this in mind and carrying out its responsibility to show leadership, the National Executive of the Fire Brigades Union are serving notice on the Tory govern-

ment and the employers of the possible serious consequences such interference would cause.

More importantly from the rank and file point of view, this should give warning of the need to maintain the formula this year, or by default slip once again into the pre-strike situation where firemen's families were eligible for social security benefits etc, as our living standards slumped because we refused to fight for what is legitimately ours.

To show any weakness now would give the green light to the government and employers for further savage attacks.

Reviewing the present political scene we discussed how we could call a halt to the pernicious assault on the working class by the Tories.

I was delighted to hear that the FBU is supporting the Bakers Union' resolution at the TUC, with an amendment. This resolution, calling for organised joint action by the TUC and the Labour Party, correctly points the way forward to the working class by initiating a movement to bring down the Tories.

It clearly identifies the need to couple the day to day struggles of workers with the need to change society. The call for a Labour government committed to clause IV part 4 is also essential, and the trade union movement, having learnt the lessons of past struggles and the current Tory attack, should rally to support the Bakers Union resolution as the only way forward for us all.

BELFAST DOCK STRIKE

Already in Liverpool and Southampton mass meetings of dockers have pledged resistance to attempts to expand the Temporary Unattached Register.

For dockers throughout the British Isles the experience of Belfast's deep sea dock workers gives a clear warning of what lies in store.

Belfast dockers, though not those in other Northern Ireland ports, won decasualisation in 1972. On August 8th of this year the deep sea dockers, the majority of Belfast's dockers, were made redundant.

They were told that with the exception of about 100 men, they could be re-employed—on a casual ba-

By Peter Hadden

(Belfast Labour and Trade Union Group)

sis. This resulted in a strike by IT&GWU members, the closure of the deep sea docks and the picketing of other ports.

Bobbie Dickie, chairman of the Belfast branch of the IT&GWU, spoke to 'Militant' about the issues involved:

"We are the first people in the British Isles to be forced out. Our plight to-day could be everybody's plight tomorrow. For us the return to casual work is a return to the hungry 'thirties."

"We lose a guaranteed wage of £86 per week plus bonus and are offered instead £17 a day. With work as it is

we would be lucky to work two days a week.

"Our rights as workers go with casual work. Then there is the stigma. What company would lend a young docker the money to buy a house when he puts down that he is casual?"

"Ten years ago there were 1,170 deep sea dockers. Today there are 340. Now another 100 jobs are to go. An unemployed docker has no future.

"The Dock Employers Pay Organisation (DEPO), our employer, was formed in 1951, yet the severance money they are offering only covers from 1972. I have been a docker for 30 years and they are offering me severance pay based on service of 8 years. The government has flatly refused to fund any severance scheme.

"We say that whoever runs the docks the work must be decasualised. As an interim we have demanded that the daily rate being offered be increased to £25.

"We are picketing other ports and ask other unions and dockers to black goods diverted from Belfast as well as goods coming in through other ports for Belfast."

It is a scandal that the Northern Ireland Ports have been excluded from dock nationalisation. Casual labour is a means of assuring higher profits for the private employers, at the dockers' expense.

Nationalisation of all the NI ports and the introduction of a register of ports must be the demand taken up by the labour movement in Britain and Ireland. In the meantime full support, especially through blacking of goods, must go to these workers. A defeat in Belfast would be a defeat for dockers throughout the British Isles.

SOUTHAMPTON CALL FOR NATIONAL DOCK STRIKE

By Henry Williams, Southampton docks T&GWU shop steward (personal cap.)

Southampton dockers held a mass meeting on Tuesday 12th August, to discuss the attacks being mounted by the National Port Employers on the rights and conditions of registered dock workers.

The attack, backed of course by the Tories, is being launched on three fronts. The employers want to re-introduce private investment into the nationalised ports, in an attempt at back-door de-nationalisation. They are also trying to change the National Dock Labour scheme in a way detrimental to dockers.

But the mass meeting was concerned with the most immediate threat—an attempt to force through

another round of large-scale redundancies on the docks.

The labour force on the docks has shrunk massively in the last decade or so. Now the bosses and the Tories want more.

They are going to offer severance pay, in barter for jobs belonging to working people. It seems very likely that there will be very few takers here. If so, 'surplus' dockers will be put on the Temporary Unattached Register on a wage of £53 per week.

The employers it seems, are thinking of thousands of jobs going. Even a 'boom' port like Southampton would be affected.

After this was explained,

a vote was taken on the shop stewards' recommendation. The meeting voted unanimously that if any docker is returned to the TUR, except for disciplinary reasons, an official national dock strike should be called.

This vote was a great step forward for dockers in Southampton. It shows that we are not prepared to give up hard-won rights and conditions.

It is to be hoped that every other port will also follow this lead, in time for the T&GWU National Dock Group's meeting in September, where this issue should be discussed.

A&S fight blacklist

Two trade union activists have been blacklisted by A&S Henry, Aintree. Both were active SOGAT members—convenor and chapel treasurer—at their former factory, Tillotsons, which has since closed.

A & S refused to employ them because of their trade union activities, as they admitted to union branch officials. A & S workers responded by withdrawing co-operation on a flexibility agreement, refusing to move to any machine other than their own.

As a result three men were sent home and told not to come back. When they were seen on the premises, a high court injunction was served on them.

The workers were in favour

of coming out in support of the two trade union activists at the start. The injunction provoked an official strike, now in its fourth week.

Hull dockers have agreed to black paper imported from the Swedish parent firm, Kornas. The Folkstone and Fleetwood dockers have also promised support. All the workers are at present outside the factory and there are 1½ million paper sacks inside which management cannot move.

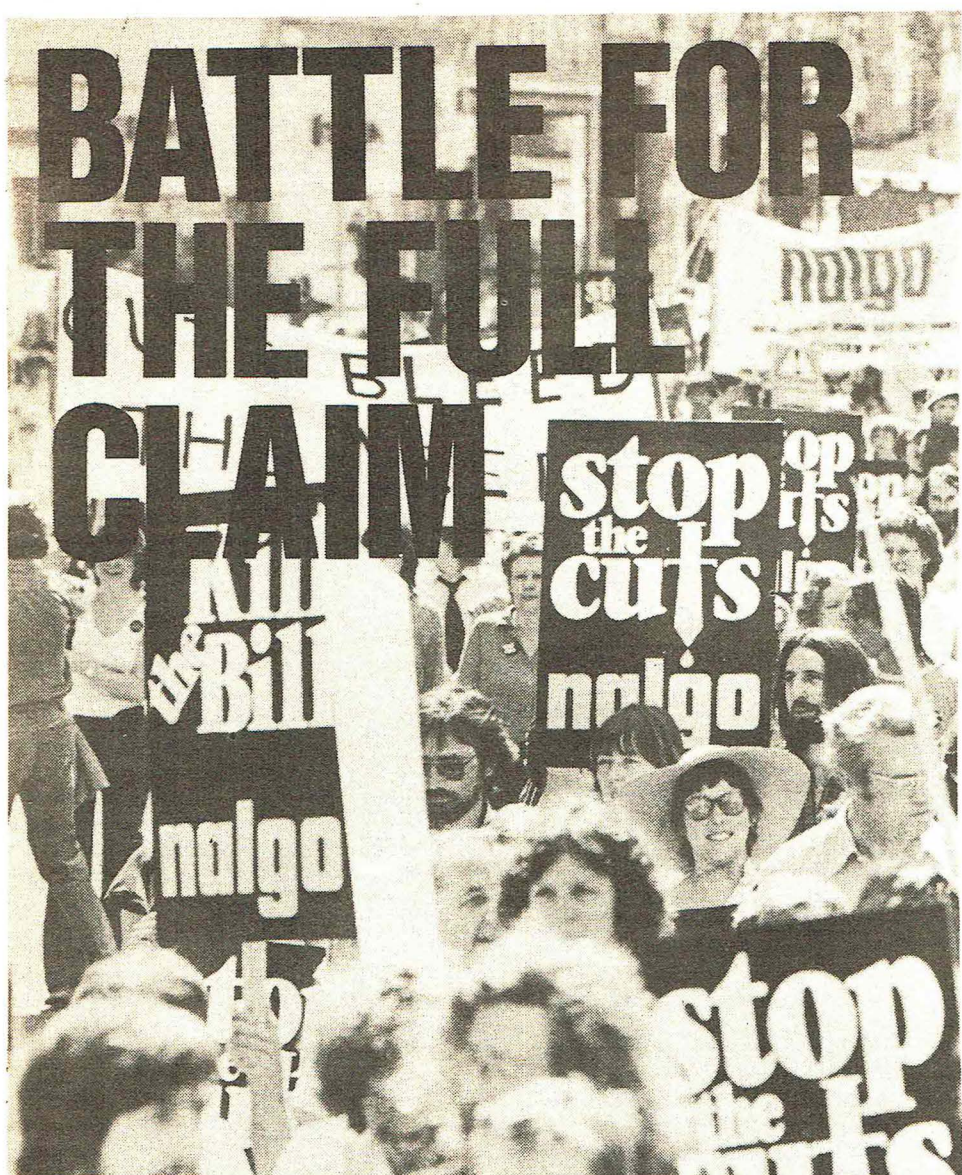
A & S is only a small firm, employing approximately 100 mainly young workers. An invitation has been sent to them to speak at local Labour Party Young Socialist meetings, which we hope will be taken up.

As the union's leaflet says "the closed shop is under attack and the right to picket is under attack. In fact the whole of the trade union movement is under attack by the present government. But if discriminations are allowed to continue against trade unionists, then they are destroying the very roots of our organisation."

Steve Baines, chapel secretary, summed up the feeling of the workers when he said: "The members are solid in their support and we know if we lose this one we all might as well turn our cards in."

Messages of support and financial assistance should be sent to SOGAT branch office, 254-256 County Road, Walton, Liverpool L4 5PW. Tel. 051 525 7489.

Pauline Dunlop, Liverpool Walton Councillor, Edgell CLP spoke to Steve Baines and other A & S workers.



NALGO members on the march, during the May 14th protests in Bristol

Photo: MILITANT

THE FIGHTING TRADITIONS OF THE AUEW

By David Bayle

(AUEW, Heathrow)

"The struggle of the AUEW is synonymous with the struggle of the whole working class," was how Bob Wright, the Broad Left candidate for September's presidential election, concluded his contribution at a recent public meeting in Slough. Forty-five people were there to discuss methods for fighting the Tory attacks on workers' living standards.

Bob spoke of the urgent need to re-establish the strong fighting traditions of our union, and to re-equip it with a socialist leadership, capable and willing to defend the rights of its members. The right wing clique at present in command need ousting, for totally abdicating their responsibilities in defending jobs, living standards, social services and in defending shop stewards and activists against victimisation.

Bob explained at length that on the basis of capitalism there is no way out of the present economic crisis and the de-industrialisation of British industry. He called for a socialist solution to the problems of our industry by bringing about the historic aim of our union: "The control of the industry in the hands of the community."

John Cantwell, LPYS National Committee member, spoke next, on the need for AUEW members to give active support to the struggle taking place within the Labour Party for a socialist

programme, for democratic accountability and to defend all the reforms agreed at the last Labour Party conference.

On the issue of postal balloting for AUEW officials, John pointed out the only alternative should be to transfer the voting to the present day centre of gravity of the union, the shop floor. Let voting take place at the point of production where members are to be found.

John concluded by saying that only a socialist transformation of society can guarantee even the most modest reforms. He called for the nationalisation of the major parts of industry and finance as the only way to safeguard jobs and living standards.

AUEW Engineering pamphlets and 'Militants' were on sale and a collection raised over £15.

The National and Local government Association's 1980 local government pay claim for a 20% increase, a minimum wage of £70 per week, a 35-hour week and a holiday entitlement of 25 days has been given short shift by the national employers.

Their derisory 13% offer has left many NALGO members wondering what exactly they can do to improve their living conditions or even safeguard them in the coming months.

A national delegate meeting of local government branches representing over 500,000 members, will be held on 29th August to decide whether to accept the offer. The national leadership will recommend rejection of the 13%—they have been firm about this all along. Unfortunately by a majority of one vote, the NEC have decided to advise the members to go for arbitration as a means of improving the offer.

This is despite the overwhelming evidence that a 13% settlement would erode last year's comparability settlement. With price increases still averaging 22%, despite Tory attempts to juggle the figures, this offer represents a cut back on our living standards.

For the many low-paid members in our union the demands for a £70 minimum wage is absolutely crucial. A reduced percentage settlement offers only pennies in comparison to the relatively higher paid.

A 35-hour week is also an integral part of our wage claim and should be pursued vigorously. These demands would go a long way to creating jobs rather than losing them as the Tories would have us believe.

The prospect of arbitration may in the first instance attract many members, believing that we could repeat

By David Churchley

(Strathclyde branch exec, personal capacity)

the outcome of last year's claim.

The teachers' recent arbitration settlement did not improve their situation by any means. As with comparability we would have very little control of the negotiations. Crudely, the government will get the result it wants.

The NEC have stated that other pay settlements, for instance in the civil service, have reached 19%. Does anyone believe by arbitration we would obtain this sort of settlement?

The NEC should note that over 75% of the branches who responded to their recent circular rejected a 13% offer. Over 60% would not accept an offer less than 16%.

There is a strong wish to reject the offer, but this is coupled with an apprehension about taking industrial action to achieve it.

The arbitration offer will confuse the membership, and dissipate any possible fight to accomplish the claim in full.

Many branches are wary after the distinct lack of campaigning leadership on the claim by the National Executive Committee. Bulletins have been few and far between and no real attempt has been made, except at local level, to involve the members in the debate on why this claim should be fought for.

This is crucial, particularly at a time when the press are daily praising the attempts of Thatcher and the Tory government to keep wages down, urging workers to accept cuts in their living standards. Many of my own members think that an offer of 13% in the present economic climate is in fact a good one.

There is a clear need to raise the whole campaign to a new level. The lessons of the 1979 comparability dispute show that with a clear lead, the body of the union would respond.

Many members are prepared to fight and are keen to follow the same route as last year's dispute. This must be explained in sharp, determined terms, however, to instil confidence that the full weight of the union will be behind any fight. Secondly, just as our members understand the tactics of selective industrial action, so too do our employers. We must be wary of using up and burning out key sections of the membership in fighting for the claim.

What is needed now is a clear rejection of the 13% offer, and a campaign within the union, explaining the Tories' uncompromising strategy to attack our living standards. In a confidential letter the CBI, the bosses' organisation, have already offered every assistance to our employers in the fight to keep our wages down.

We cannot duck this issue. The Tories are attempting to restore the insane economic system they represent at our members' expense.

- ★ Reject 13%
- ★ Reject arbitration
- ★ Fight for the full claim
- ★ For a one-day authorised national strike.

ENGINEERING WORKERS' RALLIES

HUDDERSFIELD: Hear Bob Wright (Candidate, AUEW Presidential election); Jon Ingham (national campaign convenor). 7.30 pm. 3 September, Friendly and Trades Club.

HULL: Hear Bob Wright; Jon Ingham; Barry Fleetwood (Hull City Councillor). 7.30 pm, Monday 1 September, Spencer Arms, Ferensway, Hull.

BRADFORD: Hear Bob Wright. 7.30 pm. Tuesday 2 September, Bradford City Library.

SOUTHALL: Hear Bob Wright; Ernie Roberts MP; Jon Ingham. 7.30 pm. Wednesday 10 September. Southall Town Hall, The Broadway.

LEEDS Labour Movement Rally: Hear Bob Wright; Tony Benn MP. 7.30 pm. Thursday 4 September, Leeds Town Hall.

West London support

Engineering workers throughout the country have a heavy responsibility on their shoulders when they cast their votes in next month's postal ballots for the presidency and other leading position within the Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers.

A socialist fighting leadership in this, the second-largest union in the country and the largest section of the Confed, is absolutely vital. A fighting leadership in the AUEW will need to take up the cudgels against the avalanche of factory closures, redundancies and short time working now afflicting every

By Tim Higgins

(AUEW Shepherds Bush)

region.

As part of the national campaign, an engineering workers' rally has been organised in Southall on Wednesday 10 September, to be addressed by Bob Wright, Ernie Roberts MP and Jon Ingham.

Visiting factories in the areas, many shop stewards, convenors and AUEW activists expressed widespread dissatisfaction and anger with their present union leadership.

Many are still bitter at the handling of the Confed strike last year. Although a victory, many feel the one-day stoppages were a bad tactic and that an all-out strike would have won more.

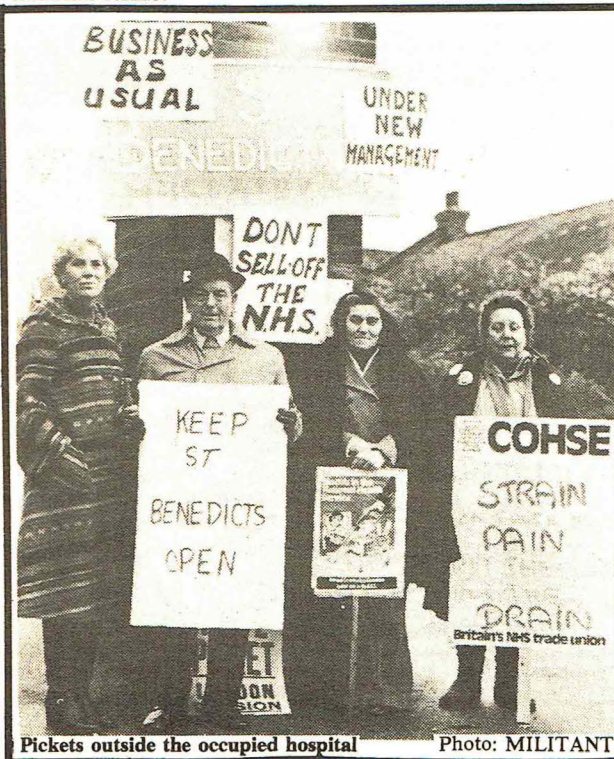
As the convenor at United Biscuits in Isleworth pointed out in relation to the Employment Bill, "the AUEW spear-headed the fight against Heath's Industrial Relations Act. Now the leadership want to accept some of the Tories' latest proposals. That is going backwards, and the union must only go forward."

Help make up Tory minds— Join the mass Picket!

After eight months of occupation the workers of St Benedicts hospital still need your active support. It is the intention of the Area Health Authority to close the hospital by September 30th. To date we still have a hundred patients in the hospital—they themselves have made it clear in statements to the press that they want to stay in St Benedicts. And a majority of the patients' relatives agree with this too. Having met Mr. Vaughan, the Tory minister for Health; having stated our opposition to the closure, we are still waiting for a definite decision from him. That is why we are calling a mass picket, because if he cannot make up his mind, we will make it up for him. Please join us at this picket; we have all paid for these services and we need the jobs. Join the picket on:

Tuesday, September 2nd, 6-8pm at St Benedicts Hospital, Church Lane, Tooting SW17 [nearest tube Tooting Broadway]. Refreshments will be available

By the St. Benedicts Occupation & Supporters Committees



Pickets outside the occupied hospital

Photo: MILITANT

SRI LANKA

DEFEND VICTIMISED WORKERS

Photo: Militant

At its peak the tremendous Sri Lankan general strike has involved half of the urban workers organised in trade unions, a quarter of the total workforce in the towns. Despite this, the workers have not won their demands.

This was the result of the refusal by the majority of the key Joint Trade Union Action Committee (JTUAC) to provide a bold political lead for the spontaneous wave of protest action against J.R. Jayawardene's reactionary United National Party government.

The JTUAC majority limited the strike's demands to economic and trade union issues. But a general strike is a political strike: it unavoidably poses the question of power. A general strike raises the issue of who will run society: the working class or the ruling class?

It was precisely for this reason that the Jayawardene government took the offensive against this strike by declaring a state of emergency, imposing press censorship and freezing union funds. The JTUAC majority refused to meet this offensive head-on and hesitated, effectively breaking the strike's momentum.

The JTUAC's majority's failure was added to by the refusal of the self-proclaimed 'revolutionary' leader of the Ceylon Mercantile Union, Bala Tampoe, to support the strike, even though sections of the CMU membership wanted to join it. It is noteworthy that Tampoe's co-thinkers in Professor Ernest Mandel's so-called 'United Secretariat of the Fourth International' have effectively covered up Tampoe's strike breaking role by not publishing any news of the general strike!

At the same time, the 'revolutionary' JVP movement in Sri Lanka, while publicly supporting the strike, was secretly telling its members not actively to build the struggle. This attitude was

By Bob Labi

denounced by the formerly pro-JVP leadership of the Ceylon Teachers' Union in a special leaflet and pamphlet.

It was only the Nava Sama Samaja Party (as 'Militant' has previously reported) which put forward a clear political strategy both for waging the strike and for defeating the UNP government. This is why the NSSP has borne the brunt of the UNP government's harsh repression.

Three leading members of the NSSP, Vasudeva Nanayakkara (President of the NSSP-led United Federation of Labour), Vickramabahu Karunaratne (NSSP General Secretary) and Gunasena Mahanama (General Secretary of the NSSP-led Government Clerical Services Union) were among the opposition leaders arrested on 8 August. Unlike most of the others arrested, they have not been released on bail.

This is a clear attempt to behead both the NSSP and the most militant section of the JTUAC.

Despite these arrests, however, the struggle is continuing, a struggle to win the full re-instatement of the nearly 100,000 workers who have been sacked for striking. These have mainly been from the government sector, although some belong to private firms like the Bata Shoe Company, a big multi-national.

While the NSSP has advised those workers who have secured full re-instatement to return to work, it is not prepared to abandon the remaining 100,000 who have lost their jobs.

Within the JTUAC three

different lines have emerged into the open.

A group of five parties led by the SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party led by Mrs Bandaranaike), and including the old LSSP (the rump of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party which remained after the party's Marxists adopted the fresh banner, Nava ('New') Sama Samaja Party), are running a campaign, separate from the JTUAC, which is aimed at winning a majority in the 1983 election. They are telling workers that they will be getting their jobs back after the elections!

The pro-Moscow 'Communist' Party, while making leftist speeches, has no concrete proposals to put forward, although in the JTUAC it has called for a picketing campaign against sackings.

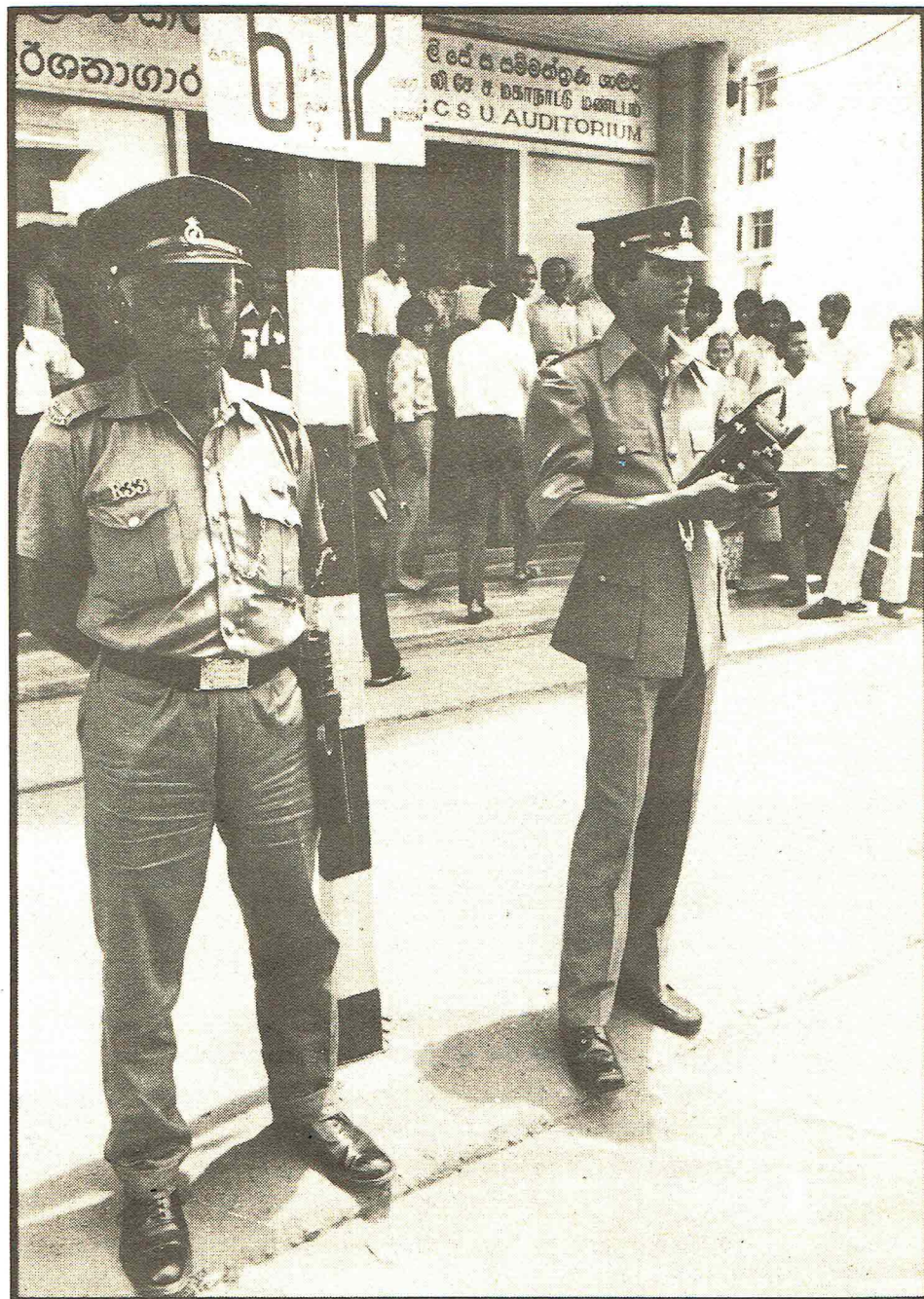
The NSSP is calling for the JTUAC to organise an island-wide satyagraha (day of civil disobedience) as a means of winning support for the locked-out workers, a proposal which the JTUAC majority has rejected. At the same time, the NSSP has pointed out that it not just a question of removing the UNP government and replacing it with another capitalist government but of struggling for a "revolutionary left government" of the workers' parties.

On August 27th, the government sent the sacked workers a questionnaire which they had to fill in if they wanted to receive pay for the first 17 days of July.

The questionnaire asked if workers had participated in violent activities, demonstrations or protest meetings and if they will continue to be trade union members. Against bitter opposition from the NSSP, the JTUAC told its supporters to fill in the form with prepared answers. The NSSP counterposed its policy of developing a mass struggle to secure re-instatement.

The depth of support which the victimised workers still have was shown on the first day of the JTUAC's picketing campaign, when hour-long picket lines in Colombo were joined by bank workers who had not taken part in the general strike itself! This reinforces the NSSP's position that the JTUAC could still lead a successful struggle to win the strikers' jobs back on the basis of the widespread sympathy which the workers have.

Furthermore, in the countryside "solidarity commit-



tees" are now collecting gifts of food from the peasants to the locked-out workers, a clear sign of growing opposition to the UNP outside the towns.

In Britain, a special Campaign to Defend Trade Union Rights in Sri Lanka is being launched to co-ordinate the protests from the British labour movement for:

- 1) Unconditional release of all those arrested during the general strike;
- 2) Full re-instatement of all the strikers;
- 3) Repeal of all anti-trade union and repressive laws.

The protests which have come already from organisations like the TUC, T&GWU, NUR, FBU, BFAWU and NUAAW and leading members of the British labour movement have already rattled 'JR' and his government. At a speech in Kandy on 23rd August, JR said that he had received letters from British MPs and trade unions...but he could not believe that they were genuine! Only by using such a dishonest trick could JR try to play down the protests.

We can be sure that JR will be receiving even more protests as wider sections of the British labour movement realise what is really happening in Sri Lanka.

Protests should continue to be sent to President JR Jayawardene, Presidential Office, Queen Street, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka. Copies of any protests, together with details of solidarity measures and donations to the UFL or GCSU, should be sent to Wesley Muthiah, 19 Hawthorn Avenue, London N.13 (not no. 13 Hawthorn Av. as incorrectly printed in the last issue).

Sri Lankan police stand guard outside the offices of the NSSP-led Government Clerical Services Union in Colombo. The British labour movement must protest at the repressive measures of the reactionary Jayawardene government



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