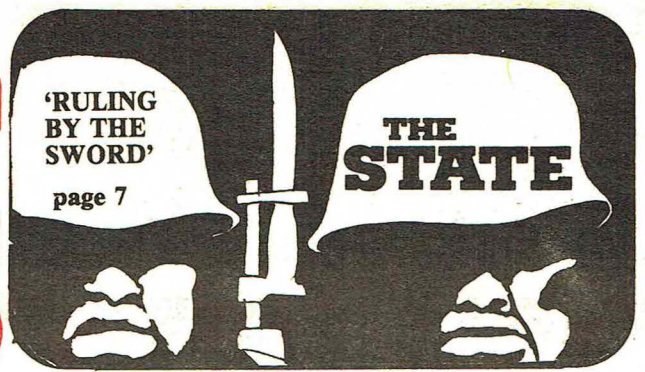


Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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15p



17 Months of Thatcher is more than enough

Anger At Two Faced Tories

By Theresa Wrack
(Dulwich LPYS)

When Thatcher ventured into the inner-city area of Southwark on 30 September, over 500 angry people turned out to voice their opposition in a demonstration organised by Dulwich Labour Party.

In a hypocritical publicity stunt, Thatcher was opening special accommodation for the disabled. Just how two-faced this was could be judged when a speaker from the National League for the Blind and Disabled pointed out that Tory cuts had led to 800 disabled people losing their jobs.

He personally had had to pay £75 for special glasses no longer available on the National Health.

Nick Wrack, one of many LPYS members who turned out, showed the desperate unemployment in the area. He was one of 10,000 forced on the dole in Southwark.

The anger of the crowd could be felt whenever Thatcher came into view, with cries of "Thatcher Out!" rending the air. One 84-year-old woman was warned by police to behave herself after she told Thatcher what a cheek she had in coming!

Nick Wrack stressed the need to use that anger through demonstrations like that organised by the Labour Party on 29 November to mobilise to kick out Thatcher, as Heath had been booted out in 1974.

For the Labour Party and the LPYS it was a great success. Names were collected of people who decided to join on the spot.

As for Thatcher—well, as one woman put it, "After the reception she got here she won't be rushing to come back."



Thatcher received a welcome she didn't want in Southwark

Photo: Tessa Howland (FL)

BOOT TORIES

What a tally of devastation and suffering the Tories will be able to gloat over in Brighton this week!

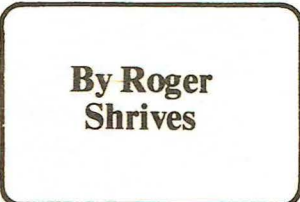
Eighteen months of Thatcher's rule have had catastrophic effects on workers and their families. But the Tories will be planning worse to come.

The Tory press blew a fuse over Labour's conference in Blackpool. They are terrified at the prospect of a mass, democratic, socialist Labour Party capable of winning the support of millions of workers.

But Fleet Street have few complaints about the destructive policies and lunatic ideas of the true-blue Party of Plunder. The hacks will be working overtime to dress up and sell the Tories and their policies.

The Transport and General Workers' Union have organised a lobby of the conference to show the anger of trade unionists at closed factories, redundancies, short-time working, and all the other miseries of life under the Tories.

By Roger Shrivs



Government minister Nigel Lawson boasted recently of the "peaceful counter-revolution" achieved under the Tories. Two million workers would dispute the "peaceful" bit. But there are plenty of Tory backwoodsmen who believe Thatcher has been far too "moderate"!

The Conference church service at Brighton has two prayers, one for mankind and the other for conference. The distinction is quite justified.

Tory "solutions" to unemployment in conference resolutions include ditching the Employment Protection Act to allow employers to sack "inefficient" workers.

Other "humane" ideas include reviewing [i.e.

OUT

Labour Must Fight on Socialist Policies

jettisoning] wages councils which set [often unenforced] minimum wages for the lowest paid—because they are "pricing workers out of the market."

They also suggest new

methods of "improving" unemployment figures—by fiddling them to leave out voluntary redundancies, school leavers, and the "unemployable".

To undermine workers' ability to fight back, they want new legal shackles for trade unions. They think Prior's anti-union legislation is far too soft!

Already contemplating their own electoral defeat—and preparing to sabotage a socialist Labour government, the Tories want to strengthen the House of Lords as a bulwark against a

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Militant

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LABOUR'S CONFERENCE 1980

AN IRREVERSIBLE CHANGE

The decisions at Blackpool on Party democracy represent an historic step forward for the Labour Party.

The crucial, unresolved issues of re-selection, control of the manifesto, and the election of Party leader were inevitably to the forefront.

But underlying the demand for a thorough democratisation is an awareness on the part of Labour's ranks of the need to work out socialist policies and fight for their implementation.

The capitalist media undoubtedly sank to new depths of distortion and abuse as far as this conference is concerned. "Torn Apart!" ["Sun"], "Labour Anarchy!" ["Express"], and "Here Comes 1984!" ["Express"]. These headlines were typical of the gutter press last week. And the serious press of big business was not much better.

Their hysteria reflects their despair at developments within the Labour Party. Were they not witnessing, asked the 'Observer', "the end of the old-established order [under which, that is, the Parliamentary Labour Party could be regarded as a more or less reliable 'second eleven' to the Tories' first, with the constituency parties simply as loyal election machines—Ed.] and the founding of an overtly socialist party?"

The hostility of the press to the conference's decisions, in fact, is the best indication that they represented a great victory for the labour movement, and for the working class generally. If our class enemies were congratulating the Labour Party, then there would really be cause for concern!

The passing of the NEC's constitutional amendment giving effect to automatic, mandatory re-selection was in itself an important step forward. This will open the way to a vital process of transformation of the party.

Many MPs who have seen the party primarily as a vehicle for their own parliamentary careers and who are in reality opposed to the basic socialist aims of the party, will in the next period be replaced by MPs who are prepared to fight for the interests of the labour movement and who will use parliament as a platform and lever for the implementation of socialist policies adopted by conference.

Acceptance of the principle that the constituency parties and the trade unions,

as well as the PLP, should be involved in the election of the party leader, was also a great advance. This decision was not the result of Machiavellian manoeuvres by the National Executive or the cunning manipulation of block votes. It was a long over-due democratic reform which has come about as the result of long and intense pressure from Labour's ranks.

The constitutional amendment giving the NEC the final say on Labour's election manifesto—accepted in principle last week—was narrowly defeated. But this, too, remains unfinished business which must soon be placed on the agenda again.

These conference decisions, which were carried after a full and intense debate in the conference, have shattered all the carefully laid schemes of Labour's right wing. They had calculated that, with the help of a number of union delegations controlled by the right, they would be able to block the reform and allow the Parliamentary Labour Party to go ahead with the election of its own leader.

Report on debate, pages 8 & 9

The right—and the capitalist media—hoped that with an early election with the PLP they would secure the election of Denis Healey—the candidate of the 'The Times', 'Guardian', the 'gang of three' and 'the dirty dozen.'

Now their plans are in ruins. "The left's victories on the constitutional issues are irreversible," commented the 'Observer'. "Even if, at some later date, they can be modified, there is no chance of reverting to the status quo...This will be fundamentally alter the way in which the party operates."

With a feigned concern for the prospects of the Labour Party's electoral success, the capitalist press has hysterically denounced this change, trying to portray a move towards a much more democratic party as a step towards a "totalitarian society."

Their real concern is not that the Labour Party will never return of power, but that it will return to power with Labour MPs and a Labour leader committed to socialist policies.

The capitalist press, reflecting the views of their big-business paymasters, are furious that they have now lost the ability to influence decisively the parliamentary representatives and the party leader—and potential Labour prime minister.

But it was clear from conference that the constituency Labour Parties overwhelmingly support mandatory re-selection and the need for a wider franchise in the leadership elections. There is also a substantial minority, probably of about a hundred MPs, within the PLP who also support a wider franchise.

The trade union delegations were split down the middle on these issues, but there can be no doubt that those who voted in favour of reform are the ones who really represent the overwhelming feeling of rank and file trade unionists.

Some commentators have tried to claim that it was some unions, such as the Boilermakers, voting against their own conference's policy which swung the vote in favour of the election of the leader. But they say nothing about other delegations, like UCATT, where the conference delegation voted against the widening of the franchise, or the NEC's election procedure's proposal—against the clear policy of their own conference.

The protest of a majority [18] of the 35-strong AUEW delegation against the way the union's block vote was cast, was in itself one sign of the growing opposition to the right-wing leadership of John Boyd and Terry Duffy. Dougie Knott [previously regarded as a right-winger by the leadership] did not vote "the way he was told" [as John Boyd put it] on the NEC elections, because he was clearly convinced by the arguments that he should vote for the left. Thus the right's plan to replace a number of left-wingers, particularly in the women's section of the NEC, were foiled.

There are other unions, like the National Union of Miners, whose members are undoubtedly sympathetic to democratisation. If the NUM's votes were not cast for the widening of the franchise, it was as a result of oversight on the part of the left in the union, who omitted to put down the necessary resolutions at the NUM's own conference.

Although the principle of a wider franchise for the election of leader was passed [see pages 8&9], the three proposed constitutional amendments which would have established one or the

other system of electoral college, were all voted down, primarily as a result of the block votes of a number of big unions.

Trade union leaders like David Basnett and John Boyd argued that they must be allowed "more time" for consultation with their members. There has, however, been debate within both the Labour Party and the unions for several years on these issues, and some of the right clearly used this argument of consultation as a means of delaying a decision—hoping that they will be able to work out some arithmetical form for the electoral college which will ensure the party leadership remains in the hands of the right.

But now that decision has been delayed, there should really be a full debate within the unions. The outstanding issues of party democracy should be raised and fully discussed in every union branch, shop stewards' committee, as well as in every Labour Party and Young Socialists branch.

The decisive effect of the union's block vote at Blackpool, has led to some questioning of the role of the unions in the Labour Party. Now that the big unions are no longer entirely dominated by the right and their votes are no longer "reliable," the capitalist press, echoed by the Parliamentary Labour Party, are now hypocritically denouncing the "undemocratic" character of the block vote. This was the main thrust of the recent statement from Mike Thomas and eleven other right-wing MPs.

It should never be forgotten that the Labour Party was created by the trade unions as the political arm of the labour movement. It is entirely correct that the unions should have a dominant influence in the Labour Party at every level.

This influence, however, and the way in which the block vote is used, must be exerted democratically, in a way that reflects the real views of the union ranks.

Recognising the key role of the unions, on the question of the widening of the franchise for the election of party leader, "Militant" supports the proposal put forward by the National Executive on Thursday afternoon. This was to give the trade unions 40% of the votes cast for leader in conference, with 30% being allocated to the constituency Labour Parties and 30% to the Parliamentary Labour Party.

This proposal should now be taken to the rank and file and fully debated in every section of the movement, to



ensure that this vital reform is decisively carried at the special conference to be held early next year.

The sharp clashes at Blackpool, with a polarisation between right and left, have been presented in the media as factional manoeuvres—or simply a power struggle between personalities, notably Denis Healey and Tony Benn.

But the struggle in the party is a reflection of the crisis in British capitalism, and the sharpening of class tensions in society.

The right have been devastatingly defeated because they have no solutions for millions of workers who face mass unemployment and poverty. William Rodgers himself admitted "I don't know how to run the mixed economy."

The "mixed economy"—i.e. capitalism—can no longer deliver the goods. On such a basis the reformists can no longer offer reforms, only counter-reforms, which is why they will never gain a majority among politically active workers.

Special Conference

Their proposals on party "democracy" amount to an attempt to dissolve the Labour Party into the labour voters, in the hope that this will maintain the supremacy of the right in the Parliamentary Labour Party. But this will never be accepted when, in search of solutions, more and more workers are turning to the trade unions on the industrial front, and the Labour Party on the political front.

The fundamental reason for the defeat of Labour's right wing was admitted by Ronald Butt, writing in the 'Sunday Times' [5 October]: "When the Labour left talks about a crisis in capitalism, it is talking a kind of truth. If the Tory Party has not performed better by 1984 than it has so far, the leftism of the Labour Party will not necessarily stop the electorate from turning in despair to the only alternatives they will then have."

The "despair" is really the despair of big business

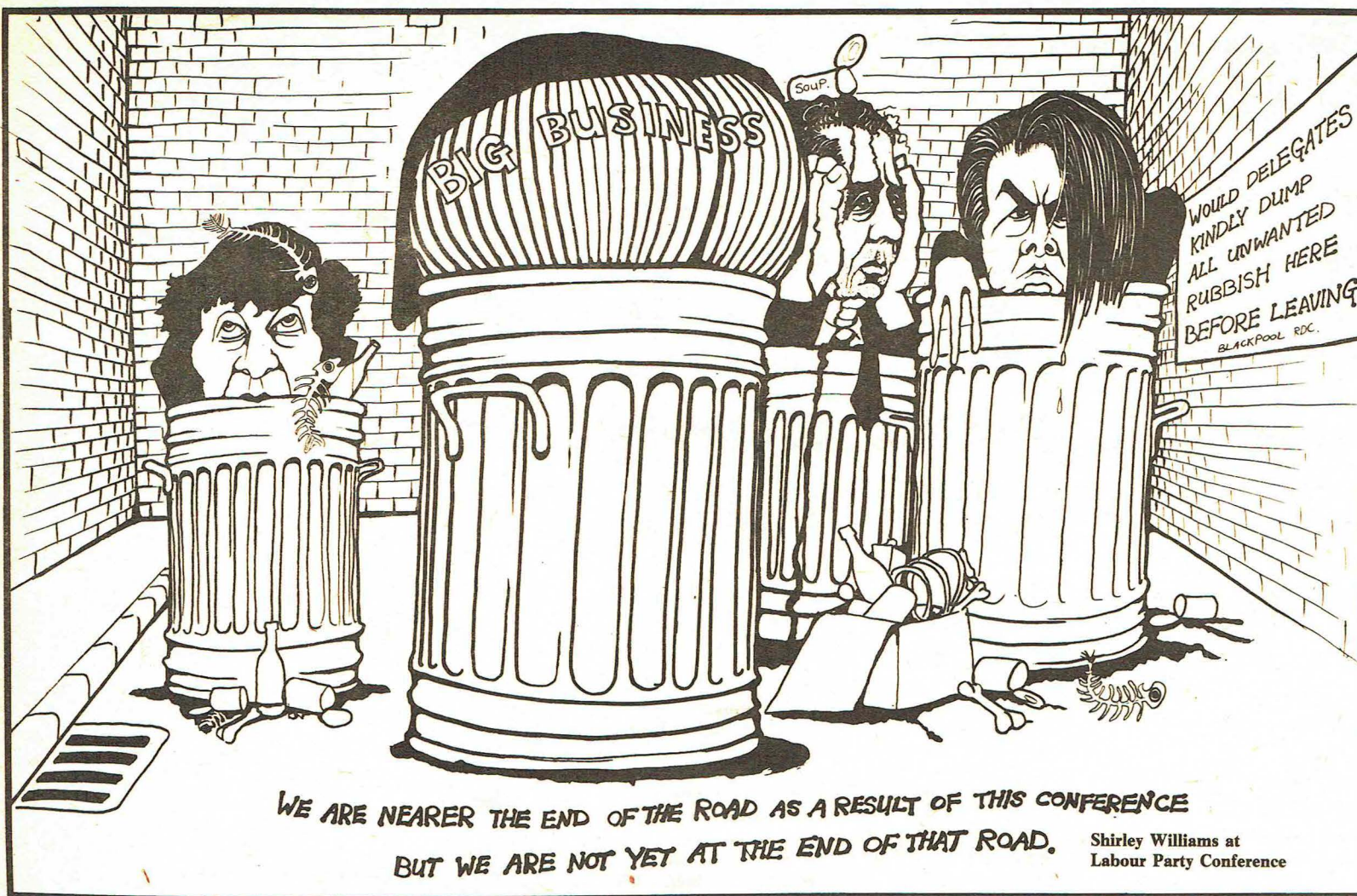
and their Tory spokesmen. The Labour Party, armed with socialist policies, will provide the only hope for the workers. It is awareness of the urgency of arming the party with bold socialist policies which underlines the enormous pressure for the democratisation of the party.

Although democracy was to the fore, this year's policy decisions mark a complete rejection of right-wing policies. "Who would have thought to have heard the general secretary of the G&MWU, Mr David Basnett," asked 'The Guardian' [30 September], "referring with a sneer in his voice to the 'so-called mixed economy.' Mr Basnett was, and perhaps still is, a so-called moderate, and yet it was he yesterday who proposed the key economic resolution, with its call for immediate expansion of public ownership, increased public spending, import controls and shorter working hours."

The overwhelming support for withdrawal from the EEC and rejection of any defence policy based on nuclear arms marked a further move to the left by the party, although these decisions fall short of a rounded-out socialist programme. But the conference clearly showed that the workers in the ranks of the movement are groping towards a programme that would enable the labour movement to carry through the socialist transformation of society.

In this process of change, the Marxist wing of the labour movement around the 'Militant' has played a decisive role. [The claim of the 'Morning Star' that the move to the left is the work of the Communist Party, which has suffered a dramatic decline in membership and influence in recent years, is ludicrous].

In the next period, the 'Militant' will be to the fore in the fight to ensure that the democratisation of the party is carried through and that the labour movement is armed with the programme it needs.



BOOT TORIES OUT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

"Marxist state."

Tory conferences are always well stage-manged with no real debate. But then they are all agreed on the need to slash workers' living standards and attack trade union rights.

The more "moderate" Tories, the so-called "wets" like Prior, are simply more adept at hiding their fangs. They want to tread carefully because they fear the enormously powerful trade union movement.

Many workers are stunned by mass redundancies. But Tories like Prior know this will change. They are terrified. What will happen when the anger boils over? They especially fear the power and energy the labour movement would have if it were mobilised with a clear lead from the top!

No gains whatsoever can be made by talks with this government, or Tories of any ilk. This bosses' government will be stopped in its tracks only by resolute class action. As 'Militant's' leaflet for Friday's lobby makes clear, "No amount of talking inside No. 10 will shift the Tories. It is not malice or vindictiveness that drives the Tories to smash the organs of the working class and drive down living standards: it is the inevitable decline of British capitalism."

But the Tories' Robin-Hood-in-reverse, robbing the workers more to swell the booty of rich financiers and speculators, has done nothing to revive the paralysed British economy.

Quite the reverse! Investment in manufacturing has slumped. This year industrial production is down 5¼% on last year.

There is no future for working people if this diseased system continues. The dole queues will get longer, millions of workers will be forced into poverty, and there will be untold suffering.

Only a fundamental change will work. No Labour government which tries to work within this system will be able to solve the problems.

Industry, transport, services and finance must be taken out of the hands of the handful of bosses who now run them purely for benefit.

Nationalise the big monopolies and banks with minimum compensation. Replace the anarchy of the market with a socialist plan of production under democratic workers' control and management.

Explain to millions of workers what this would mean: a job for all, dramatically reduced working hours, decent homes, better schools and hospitals—above all, a bright future for workers and their children.

Then the Tories, the defenders of the present rotten system, would stand no chance in a general election. They would be swept aside by a Labour government with mass working-class support.

The Right's Despair

The debates in Blackpool were exciting this year, because for the first time in most delegates' memory the key issues were being openly and honestly discussed.

Hostility to socialist ideas, however, led the press to portray the debates as "frighteningly ugly" [*Sunday Times*] and try to dismiss left-wing delegates as "fanatical" and "intolerant".

Most of the Fleet Street hacks quoted Andrew Faulds' histrionic remark: "the baying of the beast betrays its presence." But Faulds, egged on by right-wing parliamentarians who booed and jeered other speeches like school-

boys, was ruled "out of order" by the chair because of the vituperative personal attack on Tony Benn.

The *Sunday Times*, which says it was given the text of Faulds' speech, reports that he was going on to say: "Is the man unbalanced? Or does the adulation you and the media give him, which he wallows in, addle his judgement? If that nutter gets the leadership, there will never again be a Labour government, and you know that as well as I."

Who is it who is supposed to be intolerant? Indulge in personal attacks?

At the fringe meeting of the mis-named 'Campaign for Labour Victory,' Shirley Williams claimed that in many CLPs the right-wing were not allowed to put their case. Again, the press publicised her attack on "the fascism of the left."

Shirley Williams has apparently forgotten what the Labour Party was like under Gaitskell, the leader she and William Rodgers and others nostalgically lament.

Expressing his hatred for the Left-wing 'Bevanites' in 1953, Roy Jenkins (then one of Gaitskell's lieutenants) told Richard Crossman: "Before it [i.e. Bevanism] began, one could have free speech. Now one can't afford to." Gaitskell himself asserted that there were "extraordinary parallels between Nye [Bevan] and Adolf Hitler."

Clearly, Shirley Williams and her friends are trying to keep up a long tradition!

The attack on the left has particularly been focused on the 'Militant.' But when it comes to explaining the

massive support that 'Militant' now has within the ranks of the Party and the trade unions, they are at a loss to explain it. Never have the right's sweeping allegations of "intimidation" been backed up with evidence.

If 'Militant' has wide support it is because for years, even when 'Militant' supporters were in a tiny minority, we were always prepared to argue patiently for our ideas and programme.

Attempting his usual 'humorous' commentary on the conference in *The Guardian*, Simon Hoggart, who has certainly fulfilled his own quota of 'Militant'-bashing, actually undermined his own accusation of "intolerance."

"Mr William Rodgers," Hoggart wrote (4 October), "deliberately went for a stroll the other day in a part of the hall occupied by 'Militant' supporters." Why "deliberately"? Was this a provocative stunt, purposefully laid on for the press and the television?

If so, they were utterly disappointed. "Instead of

tearing him limb from limb," Hoggart admits "they ignored him altogether..."

No it is not the left who are intolerant and undemocratic. As the *Economist* (4 October) unkindly commented on its right-wing friends: "The right-wing has taken on all the bitterness and determination that used [so they claim] to be the prerogative of the extreme left."

The Marxists value the democracy of the movement, we are prepared to argue our case—because we are confident that our ideas will be proved to be correct and that they will win increasing support.

It is the right who are lashing out, because in the debate on Party democracy, and especially in the debate on policy and programme, they have lost the argument. That is why they have suffered a devastating defeat!

GIVE EVERY WORKER THE CHANCE TO GET MILITANT

By Dave Farrar

What a boost! Not only was the Left's victory at Labour Party Conference a lift to the labour movement as a whole, but it boosted the start of our sales campaign as well. A record number of 'Militant's' were sold of the first issue at conference.

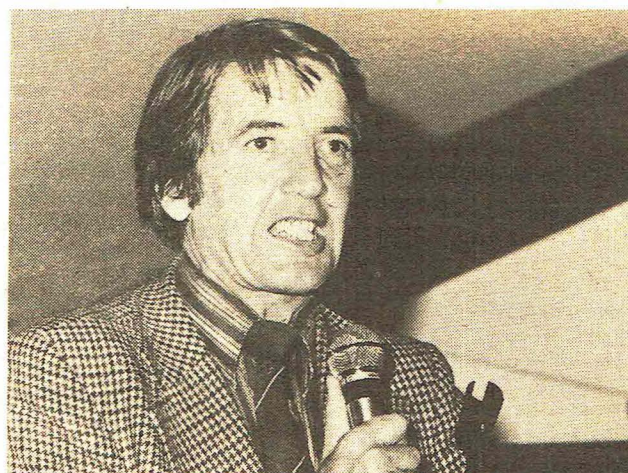
Not to be out-done though, Swansea are breaking all records, and are selling papers faster than we can send them. Here are just some examples of the way that the South Wales super sellers are blazing the

trail.

57 papers were sold at one pit in one day! 67 papers sold on a sale in Swansea shopping centre in one morning! 25 papers sold at the dole... it's almost as sensational as Labour Party Conference, but the best is yet to come—one comrade sold 153 in one week!

Swansea have now set the tone, let's hear from your sales drive and see if you can beat the Swansea super sellers and give the biggest boost ever to the sales of 'Militant'!

LPYS IN FRONT LINE



Dennis Skinner was well received by delegates at the LPYS meeting in Blackpool

"What do the 1980s offer but mass unemployment, growing misery?" Over 300 attending the LPYS meeting at Blackpool heard Tony Saunois, Labour Party

Young Socialists' representative on Labour's National Executive, pose the alternative starkly. He outlined the proud record of the YS in the fight for party

democracy and socialist policies.

Dougie Knott, a member of the AUEW engineering delegation, came along to hear what the LPYS had to say at this historic conference—and to add his own comments on the antics of those right-wingers opposed to democratic changes.

The Party's youth are the front-line troops in the fight for socialism. That is the view of many, evidenced by the big sales of 'Socialist Youth' at conference and the large turn-out of older delegates at the meeting. But there's no time for complacency, as Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, told the meeting: the task now is to organise for the national unemployment demonstration on 29 November, and help build a mass party of labour.

Organise for November 29th!

Once again, the National Organisation of Labour Students' National Committee spent a day in Labour Party headquarters dealing with countless sets of minutes and constitutional wrangles.

They failed to give a clear lead to Labour students' activity for the coming year. And the crisis of the NOLS leadership continued with the resignation of the editor of 'Labour Student.'

The Labour Party unemployment demonstration on November 29th in Liverpool is an excellent opportunity for

By Alan Watson

NOLS NC, personal capacity)

Labour students to show our anger at the policies of this Tory government.

Unemployment affects every student's future! Every Labour Club should have a maximum turn out for the demo, and organise a campaign around the demonstration.

Yet the NOLS leadership seemed to have little enthusiasm for the demo; they refused to set a target of NOLS members to attend, or

to produce a leaflet for the demo. Labour Clubs should use the LPYS material for their campaign on this crucial issue.

Following an appeal to the LPYS for aid from the Chile Socialist Party of the Interior, struggling against the junta, the LPYS set up the Chile Socialist Defence Campaign.

Yet the NOLS NC felt they could not back the campaign, supposedly because of the splits in the Chilean Socialist Party!

This disgraceful attitude should not restrain Labour Clubs from giving full support to this campaign; which has been sanctioned by the Labour Party National Executive.

Similarly, the NOLS NC refused to support the Labour

Committee on Prison Conditions in Northern Ireland despite the fact that a number Tribune MPs have backed it. Again, Labour Clubs should take up this urgent question. The dispute at Stirling ULC (see 'Militant' 522) was discussed, with the action of the former Labour Party Student Organiser, Mike Gapes, (who arbitrarily disaffiliated the Club) being approved. It is a disgrace that the NOLS NC, who are so 'meticulous' about enforcing the constitution when it suits them, allow it to be ignored in such a blatant manner when it is in their interests!

A number of Labour Clubs (who support 'Militant') received letters from Mike Gapes alleging they were inactive; despite the fact that most met regularly. It was admitted that 35 Clubs were written to—the NOLS leaders consider that one third of their Clubs are inactive! Any Labour Club concerned to defend what democracy does exist must protest at such arbitrary actions.

Because of the resignation of Mike Gapes as Labour Party Student Organiser, the NOLS Conference has been postponed until Easter. A new timetable has been drawn up. Labour students wanting to set up a new Labour Club should contact the Chief Youth Officer, Walter Brown, or their regional Labour Party office. This will mean Clubs will have more time to organise campaigns, and build a genuine active membership. With the anti-Tory mood, this opportunity must not be missed.

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The socialist solution

"If the present job destruction rate of over 80,000 per month is 'peaceful', let's hope Mrs Thatcher doesn't get tough!"

So Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant', slammed the Tories after pointing out that Tory MP Nigel Lawson had claimed "the government is carrying out a phase of peaceful counter-revolution."

Peter was speaking at a 'Militant Readers' Meeting in Mansfield on 'Which Way for Labour?' at which over 30 people attended.

Peter then went on to explain the reasons for the Tories' devastating policies, and the inability of Labour's right wing to come to terms with the crisis of capitalism. He then outlined the fallibility of the left reformists' alternative strategy and stressed the need for a socialist plan of production.

Sunday 28 September saw the first ever 'Militant' Readers' Meeting in Sale. The subject, 'What Prospects for Labour?', was particularly relevant with the run-up to Labour Party conference, and the tasks which face the local Labour Parties in the face of the reactionary attacks of the Tory controlled Trafford council.

Matthew Wrack (Farnworth LPYS) went on to show that the bankrupt ideas of the right wing and the reformist



Peter Taaffe

By Andy Scally (Mansfield LPYS) & Maurice Phillips (Stretford YS)

policies of the Tribune wing were both totally insufficient to defend the working class. Only the ideas of the 'Militant' offered a solution on the basis of a socialist planned economy.

In the lively discussion that followed it was stressed that party democracy was the oxygen for a socialist Labour

Party. The point was also made that the labour movement needed to draw into its ranks the most oppressed sections of society, such as the unemployed, women and black workers, in particular black youth.

£10 was raised for the Fighting Fund which added to the £33 raised at the Mansfield meeting will help in the fight to build the 'Marxist paper for Labour and Youth.'

Panorama: the old myth

By Steve Davies

Last week Panorama broadcast a special programme about the Labour Party. As one of their sample constituencies they chose Ladywood—a run down, inner city area in Birmingham.

It was not really made clear whether the left or the right were the majority on the management committee, but the sitting MP seemed to be worried about being ousted by left-wing "extremists" who had moved into the constituency.

The MP in question was given a great deal of time to explain his case, as was one of the right-wing members of the management committee.

She was built up as a lifelong party stalwart who claimed that the left were putting people off the party, if not actually driving them out altogether!

In contrast to the generous treatment given to the right wing, Pete McNally, a 'Militant' supporter, was given a derisory amount of time to explain the case for the left.

Not only this, but also the programme made a point of mentioning that one of the left-wingers had formerly been a member of Newham North East Constituency Labour Party.

This totally irrelevant piece of information had the dual

effect of bolstering the myth of 'infiltrators' plots' in Ladywood, and also devaluing the incredible struggle that party members waged in Newham to get rid of the Tory Prentice.

Unfortunately for the right, however, anyone who has been in the party for more than a few years will recall that the previous member for Ladywood was one Brian Waldon [the right winger who left Parliament for television]. He was also a great one for seeing left-wing plots and conspiracies all over the place.

With such "sensible, practical" leadership surely the party should have had a mass membership? But three years ago the 'London Evening Standard' revealed a report by the Labour Party National Agent which showed that "34 CLPs are not affiliated to the Party nationally. Of these, nine are in Labour-held seats. It would appear that Ladywood is one of these." [15/8/77].

The only plausible reason for this could have been that the CLP did not have enough

members to afford to pay affiliation fees.

But if we're looking for a reason for the low membership figures in certain CLPs then we need look no further than the policies of the right wing of the party. It is hardly surprising then, that more and more party members are turning to socialist ideas as a solution to the problems they face in society.

The "Gang of Three" and other right wingers continually go on about being 'practical' and being more 'in tune with the voters'.

The 'practical' policies of the 1964-70 Labour government led to the biggest drop in party membership in the entire post-war period.

Today representatives of the 'practical' right wing are reduced to inventing lies about 'left-wing intimidation' in meetings, and disgusting slurs of 'red fascism.' There are also those on the right wing who have continually argued for dropping Clause IV!

We can only echo Eric Heffer when he said, "...if some feel that they can no longer accept Labour's policies and socialist constitution, then they should do the honourable thing and join another party more suited to their political concepts."

Edinburgh rent protest

By Tam Burke
(Edinburgh Central LPYS)

Three hundred representatives from the Edinburgh Tenants' Group demonstrated recently against the Tory District Council's new policy of charging tenants for repairs and maintenance.

Over 40 tenants' and community groups in Edinburgh have joined forces to defeat the high-handed position of the Tory District Council on maintenance charges.

At a recent 'Militant' public meeting, Councillor Eleanor McLaughlin (Labour housing spokesman) stated that Edinburgh already had the country's highest council house rent. About 25% of the tenants are pensioners and 75% of old tenants are already on some form of rent rebate or free rent because

they are long term sick or retired.

The tenants' group, covering local associations, maintains that these extra charges are causing anxiety and financial hardship, and releases the council from their legal responsibility to keep their property wind and watertight. Tenants all over the city are asking, "What are we paying rent for?"

Denis Canavan MP told the rally that he was born and brought up in a council house, lives in a council house, but doubted that he would die in one as there

might be none left due to the Tories selling them off.

Leith MP Ron Brown and Jimmy Reid both declared the assault on tenants by local Tories to be part of the wider attack by the government on workers' social and civil rights.

At the District Council meeting on 2 October fourteen deputations were refused permission by the Tory Lord Provost (Lord Mayor) to put their case. The city chambers were swarming with police who had orders to arrest any tenant who might object to this typical display of Tory democracy.

The tenants' next step is a lobby of the Housing Committee in two weeks' time.

Decent housing now!

Eldon Square in Newcastle is supposedly one of Europe's best indoor shopping centres. On Wednesday its elegance was somewhat disturbed by a demonstration through the main concourse.

A march and rally of over 100 tenants had assembled earlier in the day and spontaneously decided to

By Dave Cotterill

march through Newcastle. The rally was part of a national day of action on housing by tenants associations.

Stopping at the entrance of Eldon Square they attracted passers-by with songs against Thatcher and poor housing. Verses composed by a tenant from Gateshead had an electrifying effect.

The march then moved into Eldon Square, much to the consternation of the police inspector, who was approached by shop owners wanting to know if the march was legal—"surely it's against the by-laws" commented one irate shop manager. The shoppers, however, snapped up the leaflets eagerly and encouraged the marchers.

Because of a lively and bold approach this march equalled the effect of many larger demonstrations which have taken place recently.



An Oxford University researcher is to spend the next few months closely examining the video tapes of Labour Party Conference. Is this learned man analysing the discussions to write yet another refutation of Marxism? No! He is trying to analyse applause. Do certain words or phrases cause the delegates to clap and cheer? Do some speakers deliberately look for applause? Do others speak over applause to show how popular they are? These are the crucial issues that will be examined. Readers of 'Militant' could tell him which speakers get applause—those who advocate socialist policies and democracy for the Labour Party!

How was it possible for the former dictator of Nicaragua to be assassinated in Paraguay, previously one of the safest places for Nazi war criminals, crooks and ex-presidents? Somoza was shot within 300 yards of the Paraguayan dictator's residence and none of Somoza's seven bodyguards fired back at the assassins; it was even reported that the security chief knew that a hit squad was in the country but did nothing to have them expelled. The reason perhaps might lie in the resentment of the Paraguayan elite of Somoza's attempt to muscle in on their drug smuggling racket. This is the most profitable business in the country with revenue from contraband and drugs far exceeding the legal exports. And when he stole the mistress of the contraband boss, who is also the son-in-law of the Paraguayan President, he may well have helped sign his own death warrant.

Freshers at the London School of Economics have been amused by stories told to them by new fellow students from the USA. Apparently, the LSE, no doubt hard up for a bit of cash, has been really pushing its facilities in America to attract US students, and the money they can bring in. One advert on television makes great play of the Victorian buildings of the LSE, and then pans down onto the nearby 'Old Curiosity Shop' [the famous London antique shop] with the commentator proudly announcing, "Yes, come and study in the atmosphere of Dickens." Now the American students are here and witnessing the vicious Tory cut-backs in educational facilities, the pitiously low student grants and the dire shortage of student accommodation, they are beginning to understand what the commentator really meant!

The Tory government's denationalisation of the National Freight Corporation took place smoothly on October 1st, with all the existing directors, together with the managing directors of the main groups, becoming directors of the new companies. Among the part-time directors are Sir Ronald Swayne, chairman of Overseas Containers Ltd. and Mr P.H. Spriddell, a director of Marks and Spencers. The latter is particularly interesting as one complete company [Fashionflow Ltd.] was set up solely to deal with Marks and Sparks' traffic. Workers in the road haulage industry can draw their own conclusions about who benefits from the denationalisation and who the National Freight Corporation was run for, in the 11 years 9 months of its existence.



'Selling the paper outside the Job centre is the only thing that keeps me sane...'

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

ONE OF THE MANY

There goes the alarm, ringing with a vengeance that seems maliciously directed at you, so you switch it off.

You turn the hands to give you another hour's grace and drift back into the obscurity of a dream about winning the pools or the 'Militant' Winter Draw.

Last night, in a bout of temporary insanity, you managed to convince yourself to get up at half past seven. But now, in the early hours of a chilly October morning, you convince yourself you must have had a screw loose. The family on the Weetabix advert somehow seem a million miles from the cold and dark of downtown 'reality'.

Suddenly, there's the alarm again. Was that really an hour that just flew by? It's at times like these that your heart goes out to the countless millions of ordinary folk who endure a lifetime of nine-till-five work, and who get hardly a mention in the thousands of column inches spewed out by Fleet Street each day.

You make yourself some tea, only to realise when it's too late that there is no milk left. You use a tin of evaporated that's hiding away in the back of the cupboard... you know how revolting that always tastes in tea.

Then you discover that only the really little bits are left in the cornflakes box, so you make yourself some toast.

Good news, as your Giro pops through the door. Suddenly the world takes on a different meaning, as you're financially solvent once again. Now you can pay back the fiver you borrowed off your mate last Sunday night, so you could buy a round

By Paul Etherington

(Sedgefield LPYS)

(there's something really obscene about having to pay for a round of drinks four days after they've already disappeared down the drain).

That leaves you £27.70, except that there's your board for your mother. You pay £6 a week, and feel a louse, but what more can you give her?

So that leaves you, what, £15 say. Then you owe two quid a week on that bracelet you recklessly bought your girlfriend from a catalogue four months ago (who would be in love?).

80p a day

Your total disposable income is therefore reduced to eleven pounds. That grand sum has to last you till a fortnight today, remember. And don't be going reckless, like last week, when you spent a quid in a Wimpy just so's you could talk to someone you hadn't seen for a long time.

You've been working out the permutations of how to spend your money on the back of your dole envelope.

Selling in Caerphilly

One Saturday recently I, with other 'Militant' supporters from Caerphilly, attended a demonstration in Pontypridd organised by the Trades Council. The march was against unemployment in Wales.

As we arrived we started selling the paper and leafletting amongst the young workers. To my surprise a young worker with his friends came up and said that they had been looking for 'Militant' supporters.

Not only did they buy

the paper, they started helping us to sell it, and with leafletting as well.

We collected over a dozen names, and with these we will hopefully be setting up a YS branch in Pontypridd as soon as possible.

After a good morning's work, we went to the local park and played 'miniature golf'. It just goes to show that 'Militant' supporters can mix business with pleasure, as the ruling class say!

By a 'Militant' reporter

You always spend half an hour doing this, knowing full well that it's invalid as soon as you put your pen down... you'll always end up borrowing off your mate, John.

It's a good job these fortnightly cheques are staggered, so that he gets his one week, and you the next. In that way you're able to pay him back when he needs it most, and he can lend it to you when you need it most—or is it you lending it to him? It all started so far back that neither of you can really remember.

You'll have 80p today. What are you going to do, when you've cashed the cheque? Why did you get up early...or at least try to? You think a while until the cause of your lapse last night comes back to you. That's right. Someone had told you that the important thing about being on the dole is that you shouldn't get demoralised, that you should get up early every morning and pretend you've got a job, go to the library every day, get in a routine. So much for great ideas!

Anyway, there's always the paper sale this afternoon. You wonder, should you go to the dole and admit you're doing unpaid work for a Marxist paper, just to see what the clerk says? Then you recall the clerk buys the paper off you every week, so the joke falls flat.

It's selling the 'Militant' that keeps you sane. If you didn't have that piece of constructive work to do every

week, selling outside the Job centre you'd crack up.

After all, you're 19, you're qualified to do a lot of jobs, and you're physically capable of doing most. Yet you feel handicapped—more mentally than anything else. Then you get to thinking you're not realising your true potential. Then you get to thinking maybe you don't have a potential...you're worth £16 a week if you keep quiet.

Sell 'Militant'

But you're there, selling the paper, and an old man comes up, tells you how he used to be a Communist in the thirties, how the bosses gave him the sack, and how they made him feel worthless. He says, "If it wasn't for you, I'd have cracked up years ago," and he's not talking to you personally, but to you the institution, a fellow comrade in life's bitter struggle.

He buys a paper and shakes your hand: "Keep up the good work!" he says, and walks off. It's now that you don't feel worthless. Now you feel you want to get back at the parasites who keep you on the dole, the men with the money who are loathe to invest it.

You don't need to get up at 7.30 to keep sane on the dole—you just have to sell the 'Militant'! Forward to the day when the paper has two million sellers, but let's hope that by then we achieve the society we want, and those two million won't have to be on the dole!

"BREAKING GLASS"

By Dave Farrar (NATSOPA)

Despite the fact that 'Breaking Glass' will make a mint for one film monopoly and will no doubt make the 'star', Hazel O'Connor, a name for herself, its message is completely anti-business.

It exposes what a rip-off capitalism is. The story itself is banal, of a talented pub group making the 'big time'. But they are alienated from their roots and eventually themselves.

The film shows in a graphic way how the bosses not only rip off the youth who buy records, or how they rig the

charts, but also control what goes on the air and stifle creative music.

It is an entertaining film and shows vividly all the aspects of today's society that strangle leisure and entertainment. It also exposes the police and the state.

Although the film shows no way out of the stranglehold of capitalism, there are worse ways of spending a night out!



Photo: Militant

Private 'enterprise' wants to take the juicy profitable parts of BR —and leave unprofitable, but vital, services in public hands

BREAKING UP BRITISH RAIL

British Rail is paying a top merchant bank, Morgan Grenfell, about £500,000 to prepare papers for offers for tender to buy the British Transport Hotels chain which will be put on the market in January.

The money from the sale of the 29 hotels—worth £60 million—is intended to offset BR's expected £80m overstepping of government cash limits this year.

BR's real aim, though, is to try to make the government realise that they can only be sold way below market value—and that BR cannot meet this year's cash limits without uncommercial and potentially damaging sales. The tenders are a bluff, supposed to demonstrate to the Tories the pointlessness of the sale.

The only way BR could sell the 29 hotels at a profit would be to demolish many of them and sell the sites. The board cannot do this without becoming subject to development land tax, but it is possible that the chain could be sold cheaply for development.

The railway hotels were to have gone into a new Bill which Norman Fowler, the Transport Minister, is to introduce in the next session of Parliament, but they may have been sold before the Bill goes through.

Fowler's intention was that the shipping, hotels, hovercraft and property interests of

By Jacky Mitchell

(TSSA Edinburgh No 1 branch personal capacity)

BR would go into a new holding company. Private "enterprise" would get a controlling share in them for a cash injection to develop them.

Sidney Weighell (NUR) has made threats to barricade Gleneagles Hotel. Unfortunately, Gleneagles is closed from October to April. We need real solutions from our union leaders.

The TSSA and NUR should now be issuing statements to their members making them aware of the danger that could lie ahead for them. If BR can sell the hotels to solve short term cash problems, which other BR assets, many very profitable, will be the next in line?

The two unions involved should make hotel staff aware that trade union rights that they enjoy at present cannot be guaranteed under private ownership, which in hotels is notoriously anti-trade unions, neglecting working conditions and paying low wages for irregular hours.

The BR board is foolish if they believe that threatening

British Transport Hotels under threat

to sell hotels under market price will make this reactionary government change its attitude to nationalised industries. They are playing right into the hands of the Tories by selling profitable parts of the railway system.

The plans to denationalise BR subsidiaries could have long term disastrous effects on the industry and its employees. They are motivated not by any desire for improvements in the railways—or indeed the affected companies—but only to transfer British Rail's money into private pockets.

It is Conservative philosophy in its narrowest, most blatant form. They are prepared to break up British Rail and put future rail operation at risk for the benefit of a few—and to the detriment of many.

Admittedly, BR desperately needs investment money but any capital from a quick sale now will not help future prospects. On the contrary, the assets will not be there to bring in the constant income. Fowler is proving as bigoted a Transport Minister as a Tory predecessor, Marples, who had a background in the road construction industry and was allied to Lord Beeching in the demolition of the railway system.

As each year goes by, the policies of that era prove more costly to the country's economic and social life.

History will doubtless judge the current proposal for

wrecking British Rail as a tragic mistake too. Fowler has given no good reason for the disposal of subsidiaries. He claimed that BT Hotels had only built one new hotel since the war, apparently to demonstrate the company's "lack of enterprise".

What he forgot was that when BT Hotels wanted to build a 500 bedroom hotel at Gatwick Airport in 1971, the then Conservative government refused them permission to do so, handing the project to a private owner instead.

The Tories are spending £5,000m over the next 15 years on four nuclear submarines which will no doubt be outdated by the time of their completion, yet higher rail subsidies are refused.

Higher subsidies are available on the continent to maintain a vital transport system. Horror stories of the "inefficiency" of nationalised industries which the Tories have hammered home for years, could reduce public outcry at denationalisation.

There is a section of the community, however, which is concerned—the staffs of the undertaking involved. Whatever happened to the assurances the trade union leaders gave us back in July?

The silence of the TSSA and NUR leadership at this time of crisis in BR is far removed from the feelings of desperation amongst the staff—more than ever before a clear union stand is needed.

PICKING OUR BRAINS POCKETING THE PROFITS

Marxists have always maintained that workers should run industry rather than the small short-sighted clique who at present control both private and national industries.

Obviously the bosses throw up their hands in horror at the idea of workers' management with planning of industrial production in the hands of the working class and run in our interests, not for profit.

Even the controllers of the monopolies, though, have been forced to admit shamefacedly that workers' control of day-to-day production is by far the most efficient method.

Years ago, it was calculated that suggestion boxes in factories were one of the best investments going. Stealing the imaginative ideas of employees on the shop floor was calculated to have an 800% return on the small rewards given to the workers!

Now we see a new 'convert' in the form of the General Electric Company, headed by the well known hero of thousands of redundant workers, Sir Arnold Weinstock.

GEC recently conducted a live experiment which they hoped would prove industry organised and run in the traditional way was the most profitable. They split workers into three groups, "hierarchical", "participative", and "anarchical" and set them to work producing and binding books.

The hierarchical group in which the managers managed and workers laboured immediately ran into difficulties. The managers produced masses of charts, diagrams and production targets without consulting the workers.

Subsequently, production was slow and shoddy and the customer returned the finished samples saying he wasn't satisfied with the quality.

One of the participants in this group said, "Relations between employers and management were non-existent." Even at lunch

By Fiona Winders

(Wanstead and Woodford LPYS)

time the managers and workers ate separately.

The participative group had similar problems and although they reached their targets, they then slackened off. However, the successes of the third group surprised GEC management, not least of all because the workers were told that the work was voluntary and they could if they wished go straight home and still be paid.

All the employees elected to work on, and then proceeded to organise production targets and even their tea breaks. The anarchic group maintained an excellent standard of quality throughout the experiment; achieved the target they had set themselves, and then set themselves yet another target.

As GEC remarked with surprise, "They were as keen to make profits as the management!" And make profits they did—twice as much as the participative group and ten times as much profit as the hierarchical group.

Not surprisingly it is management who have made capital from this scheme not the workers. GEC say they are now "trying to encourage some sort of participation scheme."

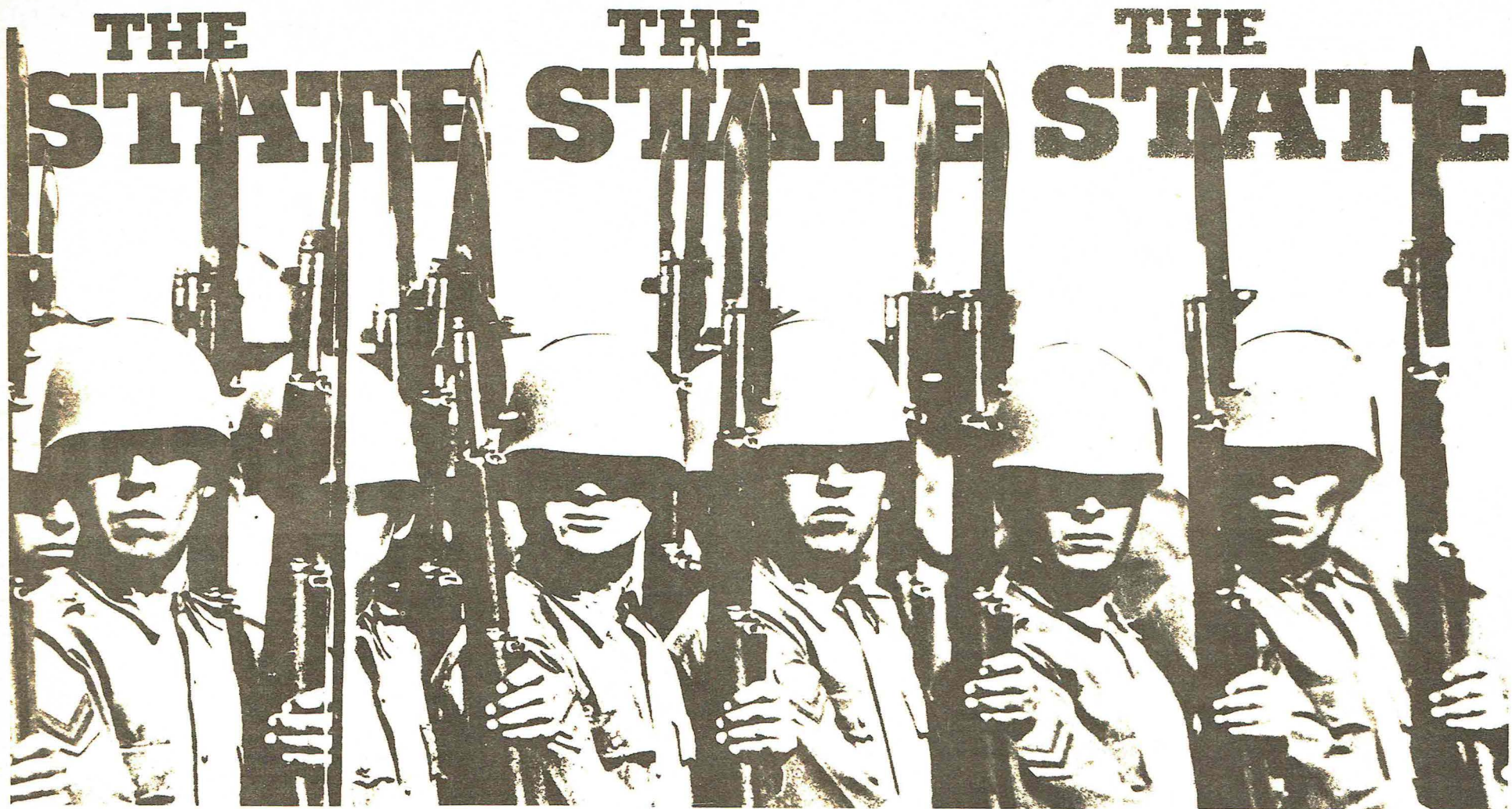
In other words they are going to pick the brains of the workers in order to boost the bosses' profits. Doubtless though some of the workers have also drawn conclusions from the experiment and will prove more useful allies than GEC in the battle for nationalisation under workers' control!

A growing employer

One sector of the Civil Service to escape the axe on public services has been the Home Office. Home Secretary Whitelaw, in reply to a question from Labour MP for Leith Ron Brown said "On 1st July 1980 the number of staff employed in the Home Office was 34,568. The corresponding figure for 1 July 1979 was 33,489.

"The main growth was in prison establishments where staff numbers increased by about 900—650 of them in prison service grades—ab-

out 140 in police support services including...the Police National Computer Unit and about 80 on work relating to immigration control. These are all areas of work to which the government attaches importance." In view of the dreadful conditions still pertaining in the prisons, it is clear that the main reason for extra spending is not to alleviate overcrowding but in anticipation of future class conflict.



RULING BY THE SWORD

In the words of Frederick Engels, the state "is as a rule the state of the most powerful, economically dominant class which through the medium of the state becomes also the politically dominant class."

There are periods in history and in the development of society, however, when the struggle between the classes reaches such a pitch that they almost balance each other out.

In this situation, as Engels explained, the state "acquires for the moment a certain degree of independence of both of the warring classes."

Such regimes are characterised by Marxists as Bonapartist regimes, or military police dictatorships.

Such were the regimes of the absolute monarchies at the end of the feudal era. The struggle between the old feudal classes and the rising capitalist class reached such an intensity that the monarchies were able to play off one against the other, thereby attaining a certain independence and only in the last analysis representing the interests of the dominant feudal class.

Similar features were possessed by Napoleon Bonaparte's regime in France, from which the term 'Bonapartism' derives. Karl Marx wrote that "rule by the sword" was one of the essential features of Bonapartism. The mutual antagonism and the struggles between the classes that had made the French revolution resulted in the exhaustion of the classes and a virtual stalemate which allowed the bonapartist regime of Napoleon to take

Second article in a series of three by Peter Taaffe

form.

Napoleon himself allied with the dominant capitalist class and in particular with the banks which represented the most decisive section of the ruling class.

The idea of bonapartism is a closed book so far as capitalist commentators are concerned. Workers can also be confused by the nature of bonapartism. There appear to be a dizzying array of bonapartist regimes.

For instance, there were the bonapartist regimes, military-police dictatorships, which took shape in the era of the ascendancy of capitalism throughout the 19th century. Such regimes were those of Napoleon himself, and of his nephew, Louis Bonaparte in the middle of the 19th century. Bismarck's state in Germany also possessed some features of bonapartism. Despite the fact that these regimes ruled by the sword, they were relatively tranquil in character in comparison to the bloody bonapartist regimes that we have witnessed in capitalism's decline.

Compare, for instance, the violence of Napoleon or even of Louis Napoleon to the present military-police dictatorship in Chile, which waded through the blood of more than 50,000 workers in order to consolidate its position.

Another feature of bona-

partism which can sometimes confuse workers is the fact that a bonapartist regime, in rising above the classes can attain a certain independence and even strike blows against the class which it represents. Thus Marx himself pointed out that in France in 1851 the "drunken soldiery" of Louis Bonaparte went on the rampage shooting down some of the capitalists. Yet they had brought to an end the revolution, on behalf of those same capitalists.

At the same time, Chiang-Kai-Shek, having crushed the insurrection of the Shanghai working class in April 1927, then immediately turned on the bankers, arrested them, placed them in jail—only freeing them on payment of a ransom of \$12 million.

They must have ruminated on the fact, while languishing in jail, that they paid a heavy price to Chiang and his state which was 'defending' them. Nevertheless, his state was a capitalist state, a bonapartist regime, which had just defeated the Shanghai working class on behalf of the bankers.

Bonapartism and fascism

In the modern era we have witnessed all kinds of peculiar variants of bonapartist regimes, particularly in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Take for instance the bonapartist regime of Peron which was in power in Argentina from 1945 to 1955. Peron was a capitalist bonapartist: in the final analysis he represented the capitalists and the big landowners. Nevertheless, he came to power by leaning on the powerful Argentinian working class and granting them big concessions such as the formation of powerful trade unions, wage increases, and other reforms.

Peron was able to do this because of the favourable market in Europe for Argentinian beef with the beginning of the post-war boom. Resting on the working class he also

struck against the class upon which his regime ultimately rested, the big ranchers and capitalists. Despite the balancing between the classes—a feature of all bonapartist states—and the support enjoyed by Peron amongst the working class right up to his return from exile—his regime defended Argentinian capitalism.

Superficial capitalist commentators—and echoing them some on the periphery of the labour movement too—have used examples like this and that of Nazi Germany or Mussolini's Italy to try and show that bonapartist and fascist regimes were not capitalist in character, but were new types of states.

After all, in Hitler's Germany the capitalists were "politically expropriated," i.e. they did not exercise direct control over the state machine which was in the iron grip of the Nazis. Moreover, individual capitalists were imprisoned and in some cases murdered.

By pointing to these actions of the Nazis the capitalists hope to throw dust in the eyes of the advanced workers on the nature of fascism and Bonapartism. It is also an attempt to absolve the capitalists from their responsibility for the financing and support of Mussolini, Hitler and Franco in the pre-war period.

Fascism differs from bonapartism in the sense that it represents the complete triumph of the counter-revolution, the destruction of all the democratic rights and organisations of the working class, and the atomisation of the working class in the face of the power of capital. But it retains some of the features of bonapartism, and once in power it quickly undermines its support amongst the middle class. It therefore loses its mass basis and becomes a bonapartist regime.

Throughout the post-war period, threats of military-police dictatorships at least in the advanced capitalist countries seemed very remote

indeed. But with the onset of the world economic crisis, some within the labour movement, particularly the ultra-left sects, and even some of the Tribune left have raised the possibility of the imminent establishment of "the corporate state."

Such a perspective is entirely false at the present time. The relationship between the classes in Britain and indeed throughout the whole of the advanced capitalist world is decisively weighted in favour of the working class. This is reflected in the contraction of the peasantry throughout the whole of the capitalist world and its absorption into the ranks of the working class.

Moreover, the former middle layers in society—civil servants, teachers, technicians etc—have been drawn more and more towards the trade unions and the labour movement itself. Membership of the trade unions in Britain is more than 50% of the working population, and is even higher in some of the other countries of Western Europe.

For the first time in history, there are no outright military police dictatorships in Western Europe. In Spain, in Greece and Portugal, the 1970s witnessed the dismantling of the last remnants of military-police dictatorships. And this is not a reflection of the strength of the capitalists.

Normally the capitalists prefer to rule through 'democracy.' It is the cheapest form of rule as far as they are concerned, without the overheads of a bloated military and civilian bureaucracy—at least not to the same extent as military-police dictatorships.

Capitalism can also afford the 'luxury' of democracy when the system is going ahead. Such was the case towards the end of the 19th century, the beginning of this century, and since the end of the second world war, at least in the advanced capitalist world.

In any capitalist country, the real power in society is exercised not by parliament nor by the cabinet, but in the

board-rooms of the big monopolies. To paraphrase Trotsky, capitalist democracy is where everyone can say what they want...so long as the monopolies decide.

Revolutionary explosion

But the fact that the capitalists have been forced to dismantle the European military-police dictatorships is a sign of weakness and not of strength. Failure to end the Franco regime threatened them with an insurrection of the Spanish working class. So too in Greece, an inordinate delay, given the fact that support for the military-police dictatorship of the Colonels had completely evaporated, meant that that dictatorship was suspended in mid-air...

This was dramatically shown in July 1974 when representatives of the Greek Junta themselves described their government as "ridiculous." If the Greek capitalists had not moved then to remove the dictatorship, a revolutionary explosion of the Greek working class threatened. It is false to argue, therefore, as some in the labour movement have done in the past, that military dictatorships are on the horizon.

The Communist Party on the other hand commit the mistake of an opposite and worse character. In so far as they recognise the danger of bonapartist states being established, this is relegated to the dim and distant future. Moreover, as the example of Chile has demonstrated, they are utterly incapable of arming the working class and the labour movement with a programme and a perspective capable of eliminating such a danger.

In the next issue, Peter Taaffe will continue the analysis of the state today.

Labour Conference '80

Party Democracy:

A VICTORY TO LABOUR'S RANKS

Reports by Lynn Walsh
Photos by Julian McKittrick

A historic step forward was taken at this year's conference, when the constitution was amended to provide for the automatic, mandatory re-selection of MPs, and when conference voted for the principle of a wider franchise for election of the party leader.

The debates on party democracy put most of the other issues in the shade. With the outcome in the balance until the votes were counted, there was an electric atmosphere during the intense debates on this issue.

Conference demonstrated the extreme isolation of the right wing of the parliamentary party, and the enormous enthusiasm among the rank and file, including the ranks of the union delegations, for constitutional changes in the direction of a mass socialist party.

Mandatory re-selection implemented

The passing of the NEC's constitutional amendment establishing mandatory re-selection was enthusiastically acclaimed by conference as a great victory.

Even if both the other democracy issues had been

defeated, this would have been a great step forward.

The debate had been opened by Dennis Howell (APEX) and Brian Stanley (POEU) moving a motion based on the so-called 'Mikardo' procedure, based on a two-stage, optional re-selection procedure.

"No self respecting MP wants to be dragged to a selection conference," Howell said, "if he knows the constituency is happy with him."

"Parties do not want to endure the ludicrous prospect of a selection conference, bringing candidates from all parts of the country when they know that the constituency party is quite happy with its MP's work."

Howell wanted a "sensible" and "civilised" procedure, he claimed; the people demanding mandatory re-selection, "were the high priests of theology" and these people wanted "confessionals, and penance and absolutions."

Bryan Stanley claimed that mandatory re-selection had been proposed on a wave of emotion which had arisen as a result of Prentice and one or two others. Optional re-selection was infinitely preferable.

Opposing mandatory re-selection, Joe Ashton, MP for Bassetlaw, spoke out against "compulsory democracy," putting forward the familiar argument that mandatory re-selection would lead to over 25 Labour MPs standing against the Labour Party.

In a forceful reply on behalf of the executive, Sam MacCluskie of the National Union of Seamen, lambasted Joe Ashton; "Why don't you join them?", he asked to resounding applause from the delegates.

The trade union delegations were evenly split either way on this issue, but the overwhelming support of the constituencies ensured that it was carried by 3,789,000 to 3,341,000 and the motion moved by Howell fell.

NEC control of manifesto lost

The debate on the NEC's constitutional amendment to give the Executive the final say on the manifesto, was one of the tensest and most charged of conference.

There was no doubt who won the argument, though the division of trade union votes brought a narrow defeat (3,625,000 to 3,508,000) for the amendment.

"We have the right to demand," said Patricia Hewitt (St Pancras North), "that the next Labour government will implement the policies the party decides, and not the policies of a handful of cabinet ministers and civil servants."

The bitterness and passion some former cabinet ministers were directing against the NEC's constitutional reforms, should have been used for fighting for decent policies on civil liberties, economic policy and unemployment when they were in power.

Dave Nellist (Coventry South East), said the passing of mandatory re-selection was a historic step, long overdue: "now conference should carry on and democratise the position on the manifesto and the party leader."

"The 1973 programme, one of the most radical adopted by Labour, had been abandoned by the Labour government. The right wing defended the 'mixed economy,'

rather than conference policies.

"Canvassing on the door step, the most common response was 'you're all the same.' We must be able to answer: 'You join the party, you decide the policy—and it will be carried out.' That is the way we will be able to recruit mass support to the Labour Party."

David Warburton, (GM-WU) denounced the NEC's amendment as illogical and impractical, a ludicrous proposal which should be rejected.

"It was the height of arrogance for the NEC to assume the mantle of ultimate wisdom. It had never had it, it did not have it, and would not have it."

In the most hard-hitting speech heard from the platform for years, frequently interrupted by massive applause from delegates, Tony Benn came back with devastating answers to the right-wing's arguments.

"This is not an arid constitutional wrangle," he said, "but a vital democratic issue. The Labour Party is not just an election machine, but a campaigning organisation, and the manifesto is the buckle which links the Labour Party to the PLP and the Labour government."

Rejecting the attack on the executive, he pointed out that 18 of its 26 members are elected by the unions, so "those who attack the National Executive are attacking the unions."

A succession of party leaders had arbitrarily killed conference policies when it came to the manifesto.

"They do not argue a policy at conference, but kill it secretly, privately, without debate."

"Before the 'Clause V' meeting which drew up the last manifesto, not a single back bench had seen the draft. If this amendment were passed, the party, the PLP, and the trade unions would, for the first time, have the chance to see the manifesto. It was too late to wait until the cacophony of the election

campaign."

Tony Benn pointed to the way in which the decision made by conference to abolish the House of Lords had been secretly vetoed by the parliamentary leadership. He warned that the present parliamentary committee would not carry out the policy of withdrawal from the EEC if the manifesto were left to them.

Taking up David Warburton, Tony Benn said that the policies in the G&M's economic resolution passed on Monday had all been adopted before, but had been vetoed from going in the last manifesto.

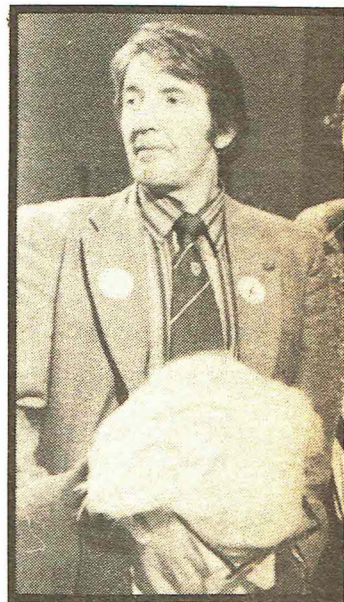
With clear signs of anger from David Bassnett and Jim Callaghan on the platform, Tony Benn again turned to the union leaders and said: "There's no point coming with big block votes and demanding policies and then using the same block vote in the way that permits the policies that you demand to be vetoed by parliamentarians."

Popular support, he said, could only be won if the party was campaigning on the policies adopted by conference long before the general election campaign began.

Tony Benn's speech, which clearly stung right wing MPs and trade union leaders, received massive and sustained applause from the great majority of delegates, including many in the trade union delegations whose block vote was cast against the NEC's proposals.

Election of Party leader accepted

Disappointment that NEC control of the manifesto (passed in principle last year) was defeated was quickly overtaken by joy—and surprise on the part of many delegates—that the principle of widening the franchise for the election of party leader (defeated last year) was carried



by a small majority, 3,609,000 to 3,511,000.

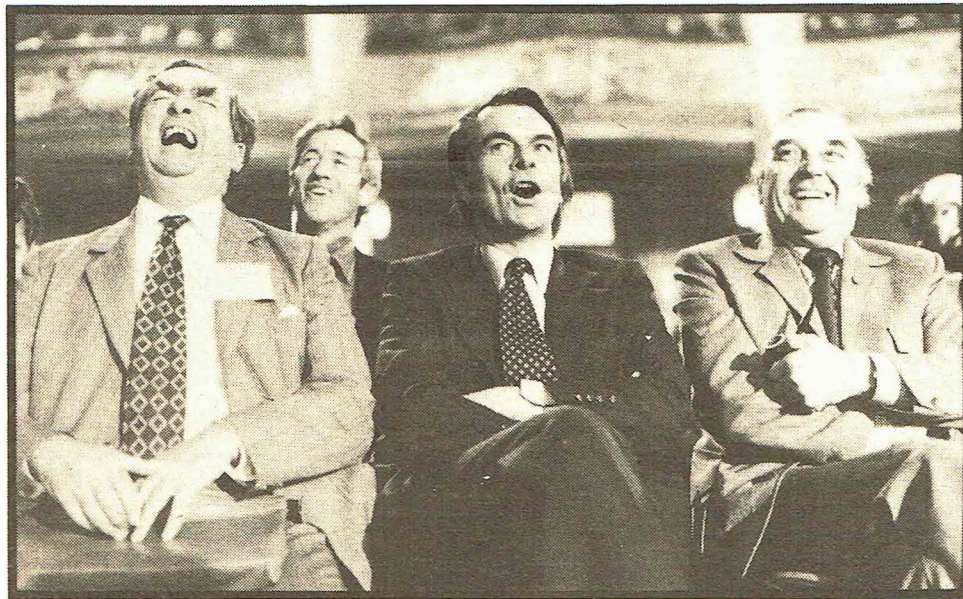
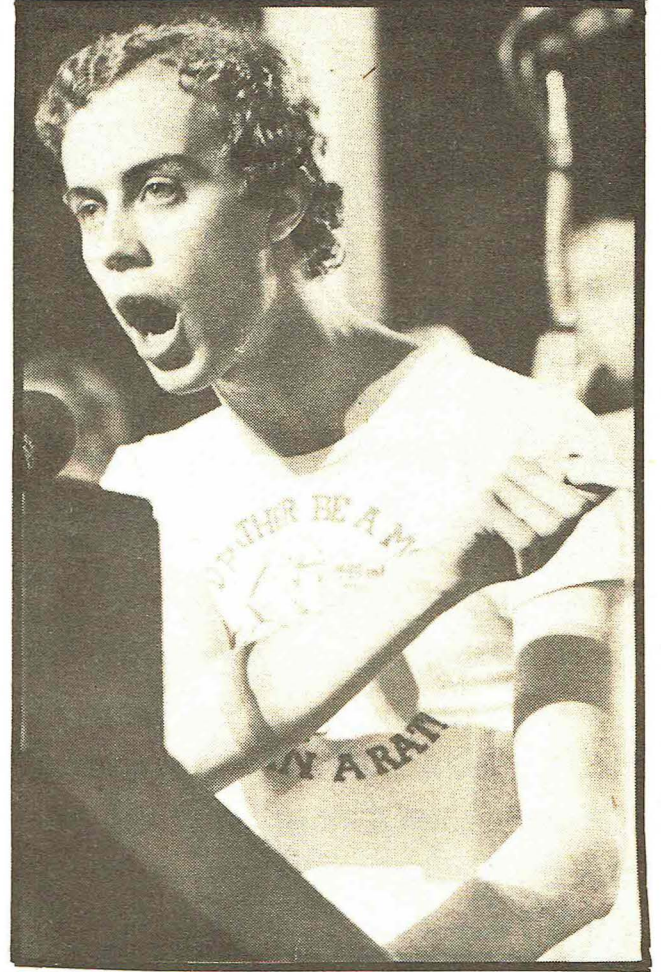
There was only a short debate before this vote, but an unanswerable case was put for wider election of leader by a number of constituency delegates, by Gavin Strang MP and by Eric Heffer in his reply to the NEC.

However, both the constitutional amendments proposing different procedures for the election of party were voted down, once again reflecting the marginal right wing dominance of the trade union votes.

Supporting the first amendment—favoured by the NEC—which proposed that conference votes for the leadership should be split one third for the Parliamentary Labour Party, one third for the constituency parties, and one third for unions.

Pat Wall (Shipley Labour Party) said that this demand had not been dreamed up by a tiny group of conspirators but arose from the experience of the workers of the vital need for democracy.

If it was voted down by the trade union leaders because there were different options posed, they would not be forgiven by the labour movement. The proposal enfranchised the CLPs and enfranchised the trade unions. Only a mass party rooted in the



PHOTOS:

Top left: Delegates cheer the passing of mandatory re-selection

Top right: Andy Allenby speaking on the election of leader

Bottom left: Dennis Skinner, Tony Saunois, Michael Foot, Tony Benn and Jo Richardson

Bottom right: Healey, Owen and Mason scoff at Labour's conference

unions, and rooted in the working class could lead to success.

You could lead a horse to water, went the old saying, said Pat Wall, "but it would be entirely wrong to lead the horse to water and then deny it the right to drink."

"The decision in principle to widen the franchise should be backed up with a decision to adopt this amendment."

The amendment recommended by the NEC was rejected by 3,737,000 to 3,322,000. Following that, a second constitutional amendment, which proposed that conference vote should be divided 50% for the unions and 25% each from the CLPs and the parliamentary party, was also defeated by 3,557,000 to 3,495,000.

As the votes were being counted, a huge row broke out in the middle of the conference hall centring on the AUEW delegation. Eighteen of the thirty-five delegates had demanded a recalled meeting of the delegation to discuss which way they should vote, given the fact that the decision to widen had been taken.

This was refused by John Boyd and Terry Duffy, to the anger of a majority of AUEW delegates. There were clearly similar rows in other delegations, where the block vote had

been cast against the constitutional amendments.

Conference broke up in a mood of great tension, with delegates wondering what the next step would be, with unprecedented argument and discussion within the delegations.

Next morning it was announced that the NEC, which had met both on Wednesday evening and at Thursday breakfast time, was proposing a new procedure for the leadership elections which would be debated in the afternoon. This proposed that conference votes should be divided 40% for the unions, and 30% each for the PLP and the constituency parties.

Moving the NEC's new proposal, Eric Heffer argued that the constitutional issue should be settled now. This was applauded enthusiastically, but Tom Jackson, (UCW) opposed the amendment putting the arguments of a number of trade union leaders that "they had not had time to consult their members" and therefore wanted to postpone a decision. The standing orders committee had also accepted an emergency resolution from the G&MWU proposing that the system of electing the leader should be considered at a special conference meeting in three months' time.

Andrew Faulds, MP for

Smethwick, was unable to finish his contribution. Even before it was ruled out of order by the Chairman, Lena Jeger, he was drowned by the angry shouts of delegates.

The party had "a great leader in Jim, and he had been chosen by the PLP" asserted Faulds, and the demand for the election of the leadership came not from the true Labour Party but from 'militant Trots'.

"People like Shirley Williams, William Rodgers and other former ministers were being attacked. But they had not welched on the Labour government. But what about the Right Honourable Anthony Wedgwood Benn?" This was as far as Andrew Faulds got.

Decision on college postponed

Andy Allenby (Havant & Waterloo) caught the mood of conference when he begged delegates, on behalf of the thousands of young people without jobs who wanted a socialist Labour Party fighting for a socialist society, to vote in favour of electing the leader now.

He drew great applause when he referred to the people who were appealing for unity a few days ago: "Let's have unity today, on the basis of a leader we've all elected."

Moss Evans (Transport & General Workers Union) was also applauded when he announced that the T&G delegation, made up of individual Labour Party members had decided in favour of supporting the NEC's new proposal.

However, the proposal was opposed by David Basnett (G&MWU) who also argued that there must be time allowed for the union leaders to consult the membership; and by John Boyd (AUEW) who said that his union accepted the decision in principle, but could not vote in favour of the NEC's proposal, as no policy decision had been taken by the union's executive council.

He angrily replied to Martin Flannery MP, who, to loud applause, had said that the AUEW should be "ashamed of itself" for refusing to consult its delegation about the various methods proposed for electing the leader.

Replying for the NEC, Eric Heffer said that the AUEW should, at the very least abstain, on the issue, as the principle of election had been accepted and the conference had decided that a method should be worked out at this conference. The Young Socialist speaker (Andy Allenby) had caught the mood of the party, Eric Heffer said, and a decision should be

carried through now.

However, the NEC's proposal was defeated, by 3,235,000 votes to 3,910,000 votes.

In the discussion on the G&MWU's emergency resolution proposing postponement of decision to a special conference, a number of delegates expressed their frustration and anger that the decision had been put off, but the majority of delegates by this time accepted the inevitable and this motion was carried.

Three-year rule revived

Significantly, in the discussion, Jim Callaghan, in response to calls from the conference to make his position clear, had said that, although the parliamentary party would have to elect a new leader at the beginning of the new session in November, "the PLP clearly had to take into account what had happened at the conference."

The special conference at the beginning of next year "would be able to take a different decision. I do not think that the parliamentary party should take any steps that would appear to contradict that in any way."

The G&M's motion was carried by 6,004,000 to 985,

000. Despite frustration at the postponement, this in itself confirmed that conference had taken another great step forward.

On Friday morning, the trade union's votes ensured that the Commission of Enquiry's proposal to restore the three-year rule for constitutional issues was passed by 5,882,000 to 1,160,000.

Moss Evans spoke for the proposal, arguing that constitutional charges had to be implemented "right down the line," and the three-year limitation was necessary to ensure this.

Speaking for the NEC, Tony Benn said that rigid implementation of the three-year rule in the past had delayed mandatory re-selection; the issue could have been settled five years ago. To re-impose the rule would now be "screwing the top on the pressure cooker at the moment when there will be coming forward a number of important changes for consideration."

The vote on the Commission's proposal, however, was a vote on the principle, and for the three-year rule to be put into effect would require a constitutional amendment next year.

As this year's conference proved, however, a lot can change in a year!

USA Support declines for the two Tory parties

By Dave Cotterill

The razzamataz of the Democratic and Republican convention has now passed but there's little popular enthusiasm for either of the two main parties.

At this stage Carter and Reagan are neck and neck in the polls. Nevertheless the Democrats are looking nervously to November and the election.

The main hope of the Democrats is that the electorate will judge Reagan by his gaffes or that they will benefit from events like the possible release of the hostages in Iran.

However, whilst neither of these could be ruled out as having an influence the likelihood is that the outcome will be decided on the main issue—the economy i.e. inflation and jobs. At this stage a prediction of who will win the election is very difficult; the outcome could hinge around a hundred thousand votes.

For the Democratic party the old aura of confidence has been broken. Nor is this entirely surprising when you consider that they are saddled with a Presidential candidate who has the lowest rating of any President. The latest polls show that only 22% think that Carter is competent—which is a lower rating than even Nixon!

Even the half-hearted reconciliation with Kennedy has done little to dispel their worries and doubts. The split at the convention was a reflection of the crisis affecting the whole of American society. Beset by inflation, rising unemployment, falling investment and productivity the old confidence of the American ruling class is rapidly disintegrating.

The Democrats were formerly regarded as the party which spent its way out of the crisis. The dispute with Kennedy has now shown that

Carter and his advisers have rejected this policy and instead have accepted the need for deflation.

Carter's acceptance of Kennedy's \$12bn jobs programme was only "in spirit." Even the package announced recently of a \$27bn tax cut was only a sleight of hand trick. The Senate finance committee had already approved a \$39bn tax cut for next year—so Carter cut this by a third.

Neither will this package benefit those most in need of assistance. Most of the tax reduction goes to industry. For those who do receive tax rebates it will only offset increases in social security contributions.

It has been this policy of deflation which has particularly hit at the living standards of industrial workers and has resulted in mounting unemployment. The consequence has been the alienation of many traditional Democratic activists—particularly those who rallied behind the banner of Kennedy.

But the disenchantment goes much further than the delegates to the Democratic convention, and also goes further than the issues of jobs and prices. In the last four years the Democratic President and Congress have shown that they are incapable of supporting the interests of the people most responsible for their election.

In the last election the black vote was decisive. Yet despite the riots in Miami there still has been no real action to resolve the problems of unemployment, discrimination, slum housing or inner city development.

On the labour front it is the same question. Despite having control of most state legislatures, the Congress and the White House they have not passed one piece of

pro-labour legislation.

With rising unemployment and cuts in city budgets the Democrats have attacked their traditional supporters. The wave of redundancies that have hit the traditional industries—steel, car and construction have been concentrated in the North East—the main centre of Democratic support.

States such as Ohio and Michigan are states which Carter must carry to win the election. Yet it is here that unemployment runs at levels of 10% and in some towns such as Detroit and Youngstown it is 15% to 20%. Many of the unemployed here are car workers who have been out of work for over a year and whose unemployment benefits have expired.

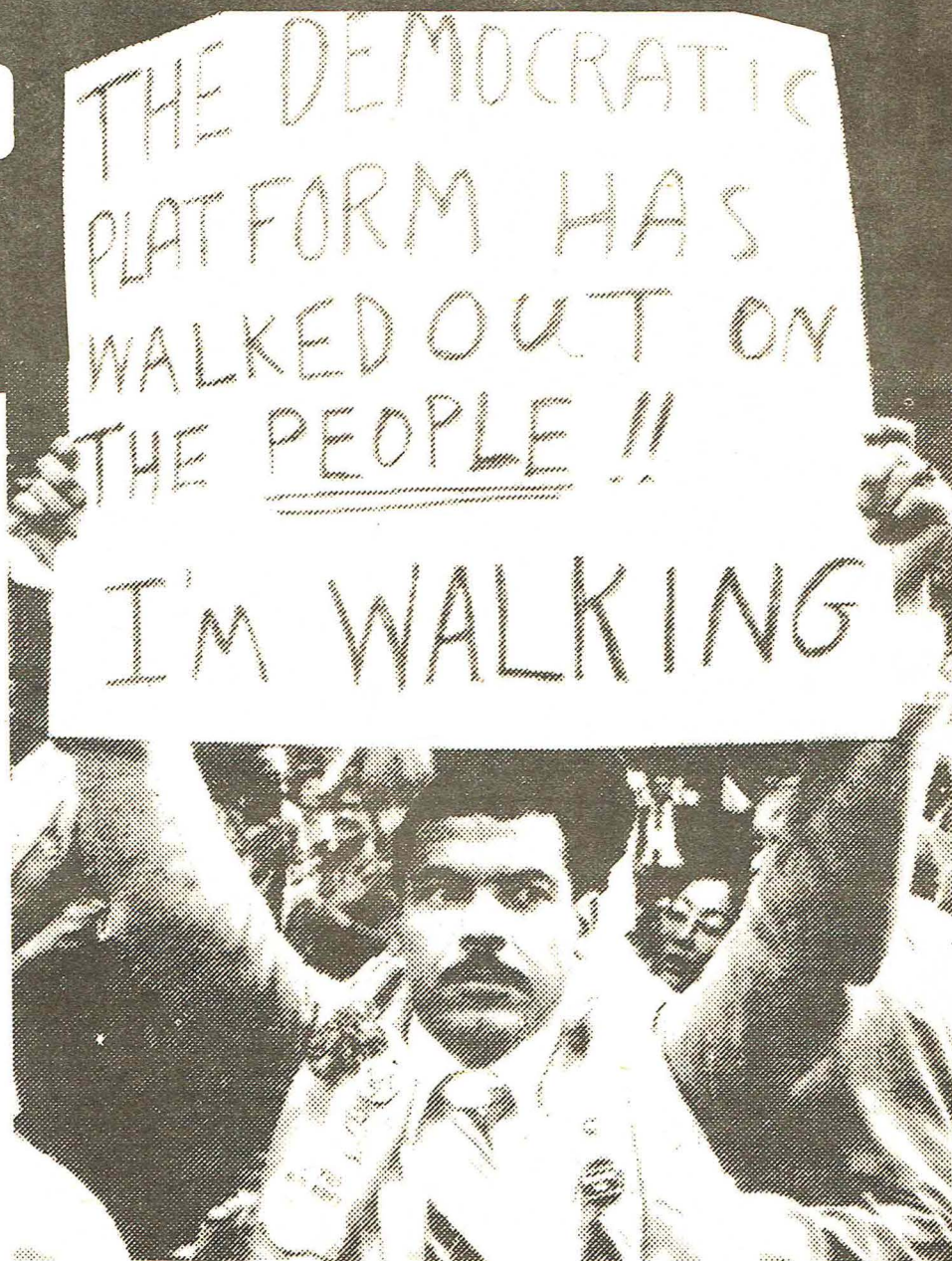
They face real hardship; for them especially the American ideal must seem like a sick joke.

This is bound to undermine the support for the Democrats. Additionally many workers who have been involved in strike action in the past years have found themselves confronted by hostile Democratic administrations. Many of the trade union leaders have been luke warm towards supporting Carter and his campaign and this must only be a pale reflection of the attitude amongst the rank and file.

At last week's 'Militant' report from America showed, two trade unions at their annual conferences in September called for a break with the Democratic party and the establishment of an independent Labour party. A policy of abstention or indecision on the part of the activists will have an effect on the less committed workers.

The unprecedented example of Carter being booed during his acceptance speech shows the depth of feeling and the lack of support there is for his policies. His re-establishment of the military draft has also managed to open the old wounds of the Vietnam period. Half a million men failed to register despite the propaganda and maximum penalty of up to five years in prison and a \$10,000 fine.

The only saving grace from the point of view of the



Democrats is the leadership of the Republican party. Having booted out a criminal the Republicans have found their best representative in a second rate actor.

The Republican programme is more overtly right wing than that of Goldwater in 1964, but there are attempts to tone it down. Reagan's appeals to black and white workers have been on the need for cuts, but he has also promised jobs, tax cuts and the improvement of social conditions.

"Strict monetarism"

Reagan has the support of big business—in a recent survey more than 8 out of 10 executives at large companies backed him, though only one in five executives had a great deal of confidence in Reagan's ability to deal with the problems of the economy.

In many ways his campaign will be similar to the Tories' election campaign. Tax cuts are promised across the board, which will primarily benefit the rich. In the sphere

of government spending there will be 'strict monetarism'—but with immediate increases in defence spending.

The limited welfare state is apparently "festering dependency" and must therefore be dismantled. In foreign policy Reagan promises 'toughness' and even the 'New York Times' was forced to point out that it was "some of the most alarmist rhetoric either major party has used against the Soviet Union in a decade or so."

Behind these main planks are more vicious right wing ideas—the abolition of the Equal Rights Amendment, outlawing of abortion and attacks on blacks and other minorities.

Reagan's reactionary ideas have so far been kept in the background. The only problem which might upset the apple cart is Reagan's penchant for making unscripted remarks.

Recent examples are his insistence on proclaiming the Vietnam war a just war. There are also his views on evolution (which he does not accept), though on this point he is on par with Carter who

in 1976 declared that he considered the Bible to be the literal truth. Perhaps these leaders of the most powerful state on earth, a nation which has managed to put a man on the moon, are also sceptical about the earth being round.

Low poll expected

At this stage the most likely possibility seems to be a victory for the Republicans. Disenchantment among black and white workers, leading to abstentions and the possibility of Anderson taking some votes from Carter would be the main factors. The Republican's victory will not be due to mass approval of Reagan and his policies but because there is no suitable mass alternative.

Thus the likelihood is that the poll will be one of the lowest in America's history—further underlining the mass disillusionment with the political system. The total vote in the last presidential election was only 54%. Thus the basis of support would be very narrow indeed.

CHILE

Details are coming to light of how the Chilean junta fixed the recent referendum. Firstly they counted all those who abstained or spoilt their ballot papers as being votes in favour of the military's plans. Even votes which had 'Death to Pinochet' on them were counted in the dictator's favour.

If these votes are transferred to the 'No' vote they only

leave the military with a slim 'majority', 3.2m to 2.8m. But even that figure is unreliable. Many people voted twice.

Over 11 million ballot papers were printed, although the electorate is only just over 6 million. One witness told reporters that he voted 14 times—the 'indelible ink' on the voters thumb easily washed off.

According to the 'Observer' 21 September, Christian Democratic invigilators saw blank ballots being stuffed into the boxes by or with the

connivance of the polling officers.

The 'Washington Post' reported that in one Santiago polling station the public were forced to leave for half an hour.

When they returned the ballot boxes had been opened. The TV cameras from Peru which were recording the vote were ordered to stop when the vote was going 2 to 1 against the regime. The official final result from this station was declared to be 2 to 1 in favour of the junta.

The plebiscite has settled nothing. The American government has cast doubt on the result as it knows the extent of the real mounting opposition to the junta. It fears that unless the junta goes it will in time be brought down.

INDIA

With opposition mounting to Mrs Gandhi's eight-month old regime, she has responded in the only way she knows how

—repression. In Maharashtra state the chief minister banned all strikes.

And last week she introduced a midnight order which allowed to detain anyone, Indian or foreign who she considers is a threat to "national security." They can be detained for up to a year without trial if they are thought to be acting against national security or endangering public order or the maintenance of public supplies.

The troops and para-military have also been given the right to shoot without warning. Undoubtedly by these means Mrs Gandhi hopes to restore 'order' to a fast deteriorating situation. But she will find that the workers, oppressed strata and peoples of India will not be able to be kept down by bullets and repressive laws.

Recession deepens in Europe

Where in Europe is the model for socialists to follow? During the 1950s and '60s socialists were told by the right wing in the labour movement that the basic economic problems had been solved.

They said that countries such as Sweden had developed a mixed economy, which combined capitalist growth with social reforms.

But where are these utopian dreams now, as recession hits all the advanced capitalist countries. None of the basic problems of capitalism have been solved. Private ownership of the means of production within the narrow boundaries of the nation state is unable to provide permanent growth.

Even West Germany, one of the stronger capitalist economies in Europe last month reported that industrial production had fallen in the second half of this year and that the Gross National Product had declined by 1%. Unemployment in the country is 865,000 and rising.

Last month also the Swedish government announced that there would have to be a decade of austerity. Announcing Budget cuts of £630 million, the Prime Minister proclaimed that the economy was moving in the wrong direction.

£400 million would be cut in rent, food subsidies and in pensions. The pension cut is directly related to the decline in the economy. Previously pensions had been linked to the increase in the cost of living.

Now with inflation, but little growth, capitalism can not afford these concessions. So they are withdrawing oil prices and VAT from the index to which pensions are linked. It has been estimated that if this had been implemented a year ago pensions would be 10% below their present levels.

Other cuts will be made in education £30 million, housing £43 million, and food subsidies £55 million. Increased charges will be made for medical treatment and for medicine. So much for the Swedish model that the labour movement in the West was supposed to follow.

The situation is just as bleak in the rest of Europe. On the same day (September 16) that the Swedish Tories were announcing their plans, their Dutch counterparts proclaimed their Budget for 1981.

It was unsurprisingly one of cuts all round, except in defence which would have an

By Jim Christie

increase of 1½%. But the cuts of £775 million would effect all section of the "Welfare State"—cuts in social services, health, public workers' wages, housing and transport.

Workers would have to pay a greater proportion of social security premiums and employers less. In what was proclaimed as the "toughest budget of decade" it was estimated that the average Dutch family would have to pay £3 a week extra. And again true to form the government called on workers to moderate their wage claims.

Government falls

Elsewhere in Europe the capitalist crisis takes even sharper forms. Italy in June had its worst ever monthly trade deficit of £875 million. Its total trade deficit this year is already a staggering £4,750 million, which is more than five times the same period last year.

And the response of Italian capitalists is the same as their counterparts in the rest of Europe—cutback until the recession is over. So Fiat this month announced a reduction in output of 30% for the second part of this year, which means laying off 24,000 of their 140,000 workforce. Already strikes have broken out at the Fiat plants as workers resist these plans.

But if they can't save their system by these means the capitalists have other plans at their disposal. In no way have they changed their spots from those of the 1930s, no matter how much right wing labour leaders sing lullabies to this effect.

All that stands in their way is the organised strength of the working class.

They would like to remove the rights workers have won but they are scared of the explosive consequences.

French capitalists have recently given an indication of their wishes. In a plan drawn up by French Civil Servants

and under the direction of the Chief Minister, who is appointed by France, Monaco has announced that in effect all strikes would be virtually illegal.

They could be allowed: if they were limited to one factory, if all in the factory (including management) participated in the ballot, that a minimum manning level continued during the dispute, and that five days' notice of strike action is given. Even after all that it could still be forbidden

by the Chief Minister. And if any worker broke any of these conditions or tried to 'influence' any colleague, s/he could be jailed for a month.

The only reason why the capitalists are able to get away with these attacks on democratic rights in Monaco is that the labour movement there is weak. Where the workers' organisations are strong, the capitalists are more wary.

But as their system continues its general downward

slide, they will resort to increased attacks upon the working class. The recent cuts in the social wage are just a foretaste of what is to come. Mighty class battles lie ahead, and in those struggles European workers will have posed before them the possibility of the socialist transformation of society.

The hopes of right-wing labour leaders of reforms and a compromise with capitalism, are being shown for the utopian pipedreams,

which they are. The only realistic road ahead for workers throughout Europe is to get rid of capitalism and to link up in a common struggle for a Socialist Federation of Europe.



Italian metalworkers protest against cuts in their living standards

GUYANA - BURNHAM FACES GROWING REVOLT

The brutal car-bomb assassination of Dr Walter Rodney earlier this year gave an indication of the growing crisis in Guyana and the Caribbean.

Dr Rodney, was the leader of the left wing Working People's Alliance and a vociferous critic of the Burnham regime.

Within the country, the murder precipitated a wave of industrial unrest and acts of sabotage which is having serious repercussions on the economy. That unrest has not died down.

A 'national disobedience campaign' brought the country to a standstill and shook the Burnham regime. More importantly, it united for the first time all the strands of opposition.

Since Burnham came to power in 1964 in collusion with the CIA he has used the veneer of constitutionality in order to mast his corrupt and repressive policies. He has maintained his government in office by all manner of electoral frauds—which have included the votes of children and nationals from other countries in the West Indies.

In the recent period he has cancelled all elections and changed the constitution to safeguard his position and ensure his rule for life! He has also had an increasing reliance on thugs, pseudo religious groups and reactionary forces.

When the crisis of capitalism in the period 1973-75 devastated the fragile Guyanese economy, Burnham was

compelled by the pressure of the masses to nationalise the foreign-owned sugar and bauxite monopolies—80% of the economy is now in the hands of the government.

Declaring his policies as Burnham-Leninist and his party as Marxist-Christian this former stooge of imperialism resorts to demagogic slogans in order to hide the mounting chaos of his economic policies.

But only a genuine workers' state with complete nationalisation of the remaining big firms together with a plan of production based on workers' control and management could have begun to eliminate the bureaucracy and chaos that is stultifying the economy.

A plan of production, of workers and small farmers' councils management of the economy, right of recall with regular rotation and controlled wage differentials would not only have abolished the racial divisions but provided the basis for better living standards in the region.

The present economic crisis highlights the dangers of not implementing socialist policies. The country's principal foreign exchange earners, sugar and bauxite have both declined dramatically due to a combination of strikes, mismanagement, adverse weather conditions and the slump on the world market.

For the second year run-

ing the government has had to scale down its sugar targets from 360,000 tons to 300,000 tons. Similarly, the 27% drop in bauxite production has been responsible for the massive foreign exchange deficit of £50m.

The government desperate for aid for an economy already bankrupt through paying for the huge oil price increase and foreign goods have negotiated loans from the world bank, West Germany and the IMF.

The repayments on these loans are now higher than the new loans being sought. The IMF continues to exert a stranglehold on the economy.

The government was compelled to carry through savage cuts in public expenditure and adopt deflationary policies in order to curb the spiralling inflation. As a consequence unemployment has rocketed to over 50% with a further 30% underemployed.

Food, fuel costs and other

essential commodities have all increased astronomically whilst wages have been held down to 5%. This savage cutback in living standards is fuelling an explosion from below.

The enormous discontent within the country is reflected in the growth of the Working People's Alliance. They have managed to form an alliance against Burnham which has cut across the racial divide.

In the past this racial divide helped to consolidate the unpopular Burnham regime. Burnham, unable to contain the explosive situation has now turned back to the USA and has given an assurance to open up the country to private capital.

The murder of Dr Rodney and subsequent mass imprisonments will not stop the movement against the Burnham regime. The growth of the WPA indicates that Guyana is bound to face further and more serious upheavals in the next period.

By Ronnie Sookhdeo

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Letters

VIEWS? COMMENTS? EXPERIENCES?
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Songs without politics

Dear Comrades

Many would be forgiven for thinking that the world of pop music is free from censorship—after all, we do live in a democracy don't we?

We did see, of course, the BBC ban on the Sex Pistols' "God Save the Queen" which was released (and a hit to boot) during the Jubilee year of our gracious monarch. But there is an even more subtle censorship than that—conspiracy of silence!

Those interested in pop music will probably know that Peter Gabriel had a massive hit earlier this year with "Games Without Frontiers," followed by another hit, "No Self Control." Both received massive air-time on Radio 1 and both were hits.

However, Peter Gabriel's third release, may have gone unnoticed by many listeners to Radio 1 even though it has been released for some months now!

The record is called "Biko" and the lyrics describe the tragic death of the black South African civil rights campaigner at the hands of the white racist police regime in Soweto. All royalties from the sales of this record are to go to the Steve Biko campaign fund.

The deafening indifference shown by Radio 1 to this record compared to the previous two is a glaring example of the British media's indifference to the plight of people like Biko. The subtle censorship of the British media is a match for the ham-fisted censorship of the Stalinist states any day of the week!

Yours fraternally
Rob Morton
Brighton

Give them something they want

Dear Comrades

The next time somebody knocks at your door, trying to sell you something you don't want, don't just say 'no thanks' and 'goodbye'. Give them something they want—the 'Militant'.

Two lads just came round and asked if I wanted to join a book and record club. I said 'no,' but wondering what they thought of the job and how much they got from it, I asked them. One was a trained chef but didn't have all the qualifications the bosses are demanding. Their wages depend on how many people they sign up for the club. For each one they get £3 commission. With things as they are under the Tories, they don't get many joining.

So I told them how the Labour Party Young Socialists are fighting for a decent wage for all young workers and against unemployment which forces youth to take jobs like these. They both took a copy of 'Militant' and went away with my phone number so they find out about future YS meetings. Which goes to show it should have been me knocking on their door!

Fraternally
Chris Ridge
West Nottingham CLP

Civil defence no defence for workers

Dear Comrades

Lothian Regional Labour Group must be congratulated for its opposition to the current 'civil defence' exercise and I hope other Labour controlled local authorities will follow this example.

After all, there can be no real defence against nuclear weapons for the vast majority of the population and Labour representatives on Lothian Regional Council are simply pointing out this obvious fact.

Tories, on the other hand, try to justify massive public spending locally and nationally on war games, but since there have been vicious cuts in the services which maintain and improve the quality of life, this emphasises their 'guns before butter' strategy.

No doubt Mrs Thatcher



No defence against nuclear weapons

and her cohorts want to condition people into thinking that a war is likely, suggesting that Britain must guard against the 'red menace.' Such a tactic is handy for the Tories in an effort to divert attention from record unemployment and attacks on living standards in this country as a result of government poli-

cies. I believe that so-called civil defence exercises have another purpose—to prepare for future actions against working people and their unions, proving that the Tories and capitalism are the real enemy.

Sincerely
Ron Brown
MP for Leith

Postal blackmail

Dear Comrades

I'm a postman and during the last pay round we were asked to go to a mass meeting. There we were advised to accept a 15% pay rise. Not only was it way below the inflation rate, (which in effect is a cut in pay) but there are a lot of strings attached.

One of them is to bring in what they call Postal Cadets. Now I would like to see all school-leavers get a job, but in this case they are being used as a source of cheap labour.

What used to take 10 weeks' training to be a postman now takes 2 years. After a few weeks of being employed they are already taking a delivery out or sorting letters without supervision. In other words doing the work of a fully-trained postman. The only reason the Post Office are employing school-leavers is because they can do the same work at half the price.

The reasoning the union gave for advising its membership to accept, was that Sir Keith (mad monk) Joseph has a stranglehold on us and if we don't accept we lose our monopoly and profitable parts of the Post Office will be sold.

Does this mean that we should sit back and let them blackmail us? No, with the right leadership and with true socialist policies we could combat these people who tell us to accept 15% or else, then give 30% plus to management.

We will not sit back and see our living standards fall, while the few at the top rise. The Tories have made a mistake if they think we are going to take it without a fight. Where used to be apathy there is now anger.

Events have shown us what capitalism has to offer. Only socialism has the alternative. Forward to a socialist UCW.

Yours fraternally
J Estella
North Nottingham LPYS
& Union of Communication Workers

Nuneaton anti-racists' appeal

Dear Brothers/Sisters

After being banned from six towns in the West Midlands the National Front, with an escort of 2,000 police, marched in Nuneaton on Sunday 17th August. Despite the secret arrangements for the march and the efforts of the police to prevent anti-fascist demonstrators reaching Nuneaton—only 3 out of a total of over twenty coaches got through—700 anti-fascists opposed the march by 250 National Front supporters.

Eight anti-fascists were arrested and charged with a

variety of offences. One has already been convicted and fined; the remaining 7 are to appear in court on October 2nd.

We cannot afford to ignore the lessons of history. Fascism will not go away if ignored, as some in the labour movement argue. It was the street struggles of workers confronting Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists that turned the tide against fascism in the '30s. The same struggle is being fought today against the same background circumstances.

It is the Tory government, not the working class, black or white, which is responsible for more than 2 million

We have a world to save

Dear Comrades

"If a 4 minute siren happened now. Think!" This message, painted on the walls of a Hull shopping centre, was followed by the doomsday sign.

This graffiti clearly illustrates the fear of a nuclear holocaust that is held by many people. Indeed the "Nuclear War" is very much a talking point amongst workers at this time.

The threats that nuclear weapons pose are too great to be placed in the hands of individual governments. Only international co-operation between the masses of each country can be successful in achieving disarmament.

After all, multi-lateral disarmament must be a wish of all the sane members of each society. Unfortunately, such international co-operation is not yet possible. Only when we are released

from the bonds of nationalism and enter the realms of internationalism can disarmament be successful.

Unfortunately individual governments have national interests. The bureaucracy of Russia is viciously competing with the capitalists of the USA. Therefore, internationalism would not be possible with these two countries, as each has a privileged class that reaps benefits from their economic advantages. And nuclear weapons are needed to secure these advantages.

So the fight against war is not only one against nuclear weapons. It is also a fight for internationalism against the privileged 'rulers' of societies and their policies.

Indeed, it is a fight that can only be carried out by the masses of each and every country, during the struggle for their interests: socialism. Workers of the world unite, we have a world to save!

Yours sincerely
Ray Duffill
Hull Central LPYS

Old enemy, new weapons

Dear Comrades

Socialists have frequently pointed to the fact that the British government is using Northern Ireland as a testing ground for developing its techniques of repression, of improving its weaponry and so on.

The growing use of riot shields, plastic bullets and other riot control techniques developed in Northern Ireland, throughout Britain, is one aspect of this, as is the growing sophistication of police intelligence operations in the UK (there are security files on over 40 million people already!).

A recent television interview confirmed this for me, when I heard a police inspector from Manchester, in N Ireland for six months' training, describe his stay here.

While he emphasised the low level of political events that concerned him, he thought the experience of riot control would be useful back in Manchester, in the light of the riots at Grunwicks and the St Pauls district of Bristol.

These short comments by the Manchester police inspector should be taken to heart by all activists in the labour and trade union movement as a warning for the future, a warning borne out by the recent revelations



Photo: Eamonn O'Dwyer (IFL) about the number of British police given arms training and the wider authority given to ban marches.

These developments are important because they highlight the need for socialists, not only in N Ireland but in Britain as well, to fight back against the repressive apparatus of the state. We know that these weapons will be used by the state against its biggest enemy, the working class.

Yours fraternally
Ciaron Crossey
Belfast Young Socialists

A loss of freedom?

Dear Sir

I have just lost one of my freedoms. In a notice attached to my salary advice form which I received in August, I am informed that from 31 July '80 I am required to remain a member of my union or lose my job.

Apart from five years when I served in the Infantry, and for one or two short spells, I have been a member of a union from when I started work at 14 to the present time. The unions being NUDAW, FBU,

NAFO, NUPE and now NALGO. So it is evident that I do believe in union membership. What I do not believe in is being pressurised from any direction to belong to a union or lose my job.

My advice to any of my fellow workers who were non-members has always been to join the union. But I would not give that advice so readily now. Surely it is better to encourage people to join the ranks of the unions, rather than bring this sort of pressure to bear?

Yours sincerely
Norman Marsh
Birmingham

Bosses' plan —'20s version

Dear Comrades

My uncle recently handed to me a copy of a 1924 local socialist monthly paper from Devon. On an inside page there was an article on a private member's bill which I quote: "To provide that when a ballot of trade union members is taken on questions relating to strikes, it shall be conducted by

independent officials and under a system of secrecy."

That could have been lifted straight out of Farmer Prior's so-called 'Employment Bill'—it just goes to show how little things change—the bosses' attacks, and our demands. They want profits, and we want socialism!

Yours fraternally
Owen Tudor
Oxford LPYS

Write to Militant

ads

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

BLYTH Militant Readers Meetings every Wed. in the Buffalo Community Centre Blyth at 7.30pm. Further details, contact Joe Cox, Tel. Cramlington 712035

STRATHCLYDE 'Militant' Trade Union Day School scheduled for 18 October now postponed due to pressure of other events.

BURY Militant Readers' Meetings: 'The Crisis in the Paper Industry'

1. Speaker: Eddie Fury (SOGAT Manchester—personal capacity). Thursday 9 October, 8 pm. Venue: George Hotel, Bury.

2. Speaker: Dave Power (SOGAT Merseyside—personal capacity). Friday 10 October, 12.30 pm, venue: George Hotel, Bury

LEYTON LABOUR PARTY Maternity care cuts campaign public meeting. 'Maternity care in E.10. now!' Speakers include members of Area Health Authority and members of medical profession. Venue: Leyton Manor Girls' School, Capworth Street, Leyton, E.10. Friday 10 October, 8 pm.

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.

EAST KILBRIDE Militant Readers' Meeting Tuesday 21 October, 7.45 pm. 'The Fight against the Tories and the struggle for socialism'. Peter Taaffe—Editor of 'Militant'. Ballerup Hall, Town Centre, East Kilbride

MERSEYSIDE Militant Readers Meeting. 'Which Way for labour after the Conference' Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant) Tony Mulhearn (NGA Delegate) Chairman: Councilor Derek Hatton. AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool. Sunday October 12, 7.30pm.

LEEDS Militant 50 Club Winning number: 13, Mr P Lazenby

HULL WEST CLP Fight back against the Tories. Speaker: Dennis Skinner MP. Friday 24 October, 7.30 pm, Bevin House, George Street, Hull.

BLACKBURN Militant Readers' Meeting 'Which way forward for Labour? Fight racism! Fight unemployment!' Union House (formerly the old nursing home), Bethany House, St Peters St, Blackburn. Speakers: Gerry Lerner (Militant), Javed Iqbal (Manchester LPYS). Wednesday 15 October, 7.45pm

SHEFFIELD PARK LPYS presents Super Red Star Disco-Stars

Nightclub, Queens Rd, S2 8-midnight, Wed Oct 29th Tickets £1. Be there!

Mobilising Committee Pamphlet

Price 20p. From John Lansman, 10 Park Drive, London NW 11

Build Militant

Area	Received	% of 3rd qtr target achieved	Target 3rd qtr	Target for year
Eastern	3060		3500	5,000
East Midlands	2522		2660	3,800
Hants & IOW	2497		2730	3,900
Humberside	1190		1750	2,500
London East	4229		4340	6,200
London West	2420		3290	4,700
London South	3965		3290	4,700
Manchester & Lancs	2200		3570	5,100
Merseyside	3033		4200	6,000
Northern	3604		5110	7,300
Scotland East	1567		2240	3,200
Scotland West	3005		3500	5,000
Southern	3615		4130	5,900
South West	1802		2240	3,200
Wales East	1210		1960	2,800
Wales West	2495		2170	3,100
West Midlands	5284		6300	9,000
Yorkshire	3166		5110	7,300
Others	9956		7910	12,000
Total received	60820		70,000	100,000

TARGET FOR OCTOBER 11th £70,000

FOR YEAR- £100,000

Deadline Saturday.... KEEP THE MONEY ROLLING IN

**THIS WEEK
£1,480**

Photo: Militant



The right wing [and mis-named] Campaign for Labour Victory collect money in a champagne bucket! We don't worry how you collect it—your money is needed in the fight for socialism.

WORLD BOOKS The book service for the labour movement

- ★ Militant International Review 40p
 - ★ Grant—Socialism and German re-armament 30p
 - ★ Grant—Rise of De Gaulle and the class struggle 30p
 - History of the Labour Party: articles reprinted from MILITANT 30p
 - Trotsky, Grant and Tzafe—General Strike 1926 30p
- Please add 10p postage and packing for each pamphlet. Send for free comprehensive booklist to World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Hackney LPYS Youth Rally

Saturday 11 October

MARCH: March against unemployment. Starts 2pm at Arcola St; N16. March to Hackney Labour & Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane E8. where there will be a film show and disco.

FILM: "Divide and Rule, Never." Starts 3pm. Entrance 20p.

DISCO: Reggae disco. Starts 8pm. Entrance 50p.

EAST KILBRIDE LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS DEMONSTRATION AND RALLY—Saturday 11 October
No to millions on the dole!
Tories out!

Labour to power on a socialist programme!
Demonstration—assemble 10 am, Civic Centre Car Park Rally—Murray Hall, 11.30 am

Speakers:
Maurice Miller MP
Ken McMillan [East Kilbride Trades Council]
Colin Robb [East Kilbride Labour Group]
Willie Griffin [LPYS]
Bob Wylie [Militant]

Further details: Clare McGinley
33 Capelrie Drive, East Kilbride. East Kilbride 26496

By **Derrick McClelland**

Times are tough, and money is short. Many workers are facing short time work or redundancy. But we have to convince everybody that their best hope for a better future is to give money to build their paper, 'Militant'.

The ¼ year Target deadline for the fighting fund is second post, Saturday 11th October. We are still a long way short of our target, so send us whatever you have collected, now!

We have done better than ever before, but if we are going to make the full year's target, we must make sure we don't miss any opportunity of raising money.

We would especially ask students, who have just received their grants, to give us a large donation now. (You won't have any money left by Christmas, one way or another.) But the same applies to all our supporters. Send us what you can now!

Included in this week's total is the money raised at Labour Party Conference. All told this came to £900, but let us have the cash for those IOUs as soon as possible.

The Conference Readers Meeting raised £612.15, while some of the many individual donations included: Bob Wright, AUEW £5.00; J Collingswood, M Loydon, J McPherson-Quinn, A Keery, P Carron, O Lloyd, G Berry, P Salter, M Cobb, D Knott, J Dingwall, G McDonald, T Mitchell, D

Bohanna, all AUEW, who each gave £1; Alun Rees, President NUR £1; Ann Clwyd, Euro MP for West Wales £5.00; J Thakoordin, Secretary Luton Trades Council £1; D Merrett Yorkshire REC LP £1; Sid Tierney, President USDAW £1; A Wise USDAW £1.

Thanks also to all those throughout the country who have sent us donations this week. Especially to Pat and Norma Craven, Dundee £100; and J Noble, Newcastle for £10.00 from his leek show! Also to Reg Stein, Cardiff SE CLP £1.50; Andrew Price, Cardiff SE CLP for radio fees £7.50; B Grist Dagenham LPYS £1; Lancaster LPYS £1; £5.77 from Public Authority workers in East Mersey; J Hall Glasgow £3; A Marshall Glasgow £3; May Martindale Glasgow NALGO £5; Davy Dick POEU £2; Pollock LPYS £7.05.

Pete and Margaret Dinsdale of Camberley gave £3.50; Joe Kreft, Handsworth LPYS £9.20; R Killick, Nottingham ASTMS £2.30; R Buchanan Gedling unemployed £1; A Jones Gedling T&GWU £2; A Home, Nottingham NUR £1; Frank and Joyce Thompson, Bradford £1; Karen Sims, Wood Green LPYS £0.85; Lyn and Steve Macavoy, Wood Green LPYS £5; Carol Buxton, Enfield North LPYS £1; J Barratt UCATT £5.70; B Williams, NATSOPA £1 and J Leigh,

Wigan CLP £3.
A Marshall of Barrhead LPYS gave £2; J Edwards Glasgow CPSA £1.20; N McQuat, Erskine NUPE £1; E Brown, Glasgow NALGO £2.20; M Gillespie, Paisley LPYS £1; J Hill, Paisley LPYS £1; Ann Jones, Brighton LP £40; and Steve O'Neil, Selly Oak £5.
Further evidence that our ideas are getting to people that other papers cannot reach, are the collections

raised at Militant Readers Meetings throughout the country. This week these include; Salford £6; Wakefield £9; Chester-le-Street 10.68 and £3.29; Sale £10; Rochdale £3.19; Leeds £5; all after expenses.
Finally, thanks to some German supporters who donated £4.44 surplus from exchanging money. If you've got any foreign money left over from your last trip abroad, let us have it.

DEFEND NEWSHAM HOSPITAL

The determined stand by Newsham Hospital workers has forced a climb-down by management and the Area Health Authority; but the war is still on.

On Tuesday 30 September (see last week's "Militant"), management agreed not to move geriatric patients to a surgical ward. The risk of infection would have meant compulsory euthanasia for the old.

An SEN on 'H' ward explained that to the old ladies 'this is their home'. Some of them had lived there for ten years; they'd become upset and agitated just moving down one floor.

Newsham does not admit after 5 pm. This cut means

Jimmy Hackett (Kirkdale Labour Party) spoke to members of the Action Committee, staff, patients, and Labour councillor Terry Harrison, a member of the AHA

that old people cannot receive services just when they need them—at night.

Management now say Newsham is a fire and safety risk, and this is after money has been spent on fire doors; but why wasn't it 'unsafe' for the last 35 years?

Newsham is essential for the community; without it,



Patients join staff at Newsham Hospital in the fight against Tory cut-backs

there would be no hospital provision in Merseyside's Eastern sector for geriatrics. The nearest remaining geriatric hospital will be Sefton, nearly a 50p bus ride away—and overlooking a cemetery!

Newsham also takes old people on short stays to relieve families of the strain of caring constantly for the incontinent and infirm.

Another climb-down by the Area Health Authority (AHA) was over dermatology beds. A consultant from St Helens wrote that if C ward closed there would

be no proper skin unit on Merseyside. Now the AHA say they will keep C ward open.

The threat to the hospital has not been removed, however, and closures have crept up the main corridor. The 12 geriatric beds are still threatened. Further cuts are being linked up by the AHA. Even on Friday afternoon, while stewards were lobbying the AHA, management attempted to sack two porters for refusing to move a geriatric patient. The staff threatened a walk-out and the sackings

were withdrawn.

Any further run down of the hospital will put pressure on the waiting lists. For a hernia or varicose veins you have to wait two years. For general surgery there are 2,116 cases, 31% are urgent.

At the same time over £¼ million was overspent at the Royal Liverpool, mainly on agency nurses, while there are 760 qualified and unqualified nurses registered unemployed.

Unity of all the staff, including NALGO health, who are not backing the

action, is essential. All the other unions, namely NUPE, G&MWU and COHSE have declared they are together. Mass meetings are taking place every Friday to keep everyone informed. A table has been set up in the corridor to watch any moves of management.

The action committee are planning to visit the major trade unions. Every trade unionist and their family are potential patients. Local authority and industrial trade unions must unite against the Tory cuts.

STEWARDS THANK 'MILITANT'

We the ex-shop stewards of the Alan Smin Group, Nottingham, would like to thank the 'Militant' in the coverage of our dispute and to all 'Militant' supporters, trade unionists and Labour Party members who gave support in the longest strike in Nottingham's engineering history.

When you consider that the factory only became organised in April 1978 the loyalty shown by the workers to their sacked convenor was beyond reproach.

The reason for this is that at all times the workers were consulted and asked for directives which were always carried out by the stewards.

The workers returned to work on 9 July suffering a defeat; not just for them but for the workers in the Nottingham area as a whole.

The decision was taken by the ASG strike committee that the convenor stand down and take his case to an industrial tribunal. This decision was not taken lightly, taking a week to reach.

The reasons were purely financial—after a six-month strike the workers' bills of mortgages, electricity, gas etc. were too great to bear.

The forces of the employers' federation, the parent group (Newman Tanks Ltd, Birmingham), the amount of money poured into ASG to keep them viable, all showed how determined they were to break the union at the factory. It was a pity that the AUEW executive leadership did not show the same determination.

There is no doubt at

present that a certain amount of demoralisation exists but it is still union organised. They weren't able to smash it, and even though it is beheaded, a new leadership will emerge and the struggle will carry on.

The respect that the ASG workers gained was tremendous—the ex-convenor, R Bennett, has workers ringing him from different factories asking him how to organise their factory.

There is no doubt that workers in Nottingham with massive redundancies being carried out in the engineering and hosiery industry, are awakening. There are going to be a lot more struggles.

Where there were once two wages coming in, now in lots of homes there are none, only unemployment benefit. The Labour Party and trade union leaders in this area must take a lead and call for a 'day of action' in Nottingham.

We believe that our dispute could and should have been won. The will to fight was there. The workers organised themselves brilliantly. The fought a lone battle in an area which is not noted for militancy.

The lessons have been learnt and will be passed on and the leadership will be transformed by the pressure of workers in struggle.

We again thank our paper, the 'Militant', the workers' paper, and all who gave in donations and support in our struggle.

**By R Bennett
I Carrington
and
D Wilkenson**

WORKING IN THE SHETLANDS

The oil boom has changed the tranquil islands of the Shetlands into the centre of the biggest 'black gold' race Britain has seen for years.

While the rest of the economy produces less goods in 1979, British capitalism has been resting on oil produced profits. There were no holds barred when it came to extracting this super-profit; thousands of construction workers found a temporary escape from rising unemployment at Sullum Voe, Europe's biggest construction site.

But what is the situation facing the workers torn away from their homes for long periods of time? I interviewed a shop steward from the site:

About 6,000 work here. The majority of production workers are in the Construction Section of the AUEW.

The hourly rate for a skilled worker is £2.45 plus £1.45 enhanced payment for site conditions (ie. working in the open air). The semi-skilled worker gets £2.11½ and the labourers £1.88 plus their corresponding enhanced payment.

The wages aren't really good for what we do, it's only the fact that we work long hours that we get a good wage.

We work four weeks on and one week off, and every-time I'm at home with the wife and kids I hate going back, but when there's so much unemployment I can't really choose.

Union procedures are drawn out. If there is a grievance the stewards take it up with the management. If that doesn't resolve it the full time official negotiates.

Then the FT officials negotiate with a management team on the site and if the conflict is still unresolved the national leadership of the union steps in.

The recent stage four which was taken through the union failed failed to reach an acceptable agreement. But the stewards on site refused to read the report back to the members until such time as the FT official was present to answer the members. We've been waiting 2½ months to get the FT official on site.

This is over the firm wanting to work a 65-hour week, and they had been threatening disciplinary procedure.

They tried to implement the warnings procedure but the stewards refused to accept this until the firms guaranteed the members 65 hours leave pay for their week off and holiday credits based on the 65-hour week. If it's good enough to have a 65-hour week for working then it should be the same for resting and for our holidays.

At site level we won't accept the management warnings and we'll fight against any sacking. Now that the site is going to be run down with men being paid off, the management will try to use the time-keeping question to pick off workers instead of using the straight 'last in first out' rule which operates generally in the construction industry."

By Pat Bonner

Workers occupy L. Gardner's

By
Matthew Wrack
(Farnworth LPYS)

Amid a tidal wave of redundancies, short time working and closures, workers at L Gardner and Sons, Eccles, have said, "enough is enough."

They've gone on strike and have occupied the factory's canteen in a fight to save 590 jobs. Many of the workforce were already on short time.

L Gardner and Sons, a diesel engine manufacturer, are part of the Hawker Siddley Group, and want the 590 jobs to go at Christmas.

The occupation followed a meeting of the 2,500 workforce last Friday which voted for action—they are demanding worksharing in order to save jobs. The sit-in will continue until the redundancy notices are withdrawn and new talks opened.

A rota has been organised and the occupation will continue day and night.

The majority are AUEW members but many white-collar union members are also supporting the action.

The factory will be well looked after. Mr Tom Williamson, the chairman of the Joint Shop Stewards' Committee, said, "It is our factory and we will look after it. The place is being kept spotlessly clean. There will be no vandalism."

The workers are prepared for a long struggle if necessary. One worker I spoke to said the occupation should continue "until we win."

The labour movement should give full support to the Gardner workers as part of the fight against unemployment. Workers eagerly expect the dispute to be made official by the Executive Council of the AUEW on Tuesday 7 October. Support is already coming in from other factories and from local people.

Send messages of support and donations to Dave Marsden, 187 Barton Lane, Eccles, Manchester M30 OHM. Cheques should be made payable to Gardner's Workers Shop Stewards No. 2 A/C.

'Militant' trade union pamphlets

Militant 1980 GMWU Review 20p
Socialist policies for the UPW 20p
CPSA—The major issues 30p
A fighting programme for firemen 20p
A fighting socialist programme for USDAW 20p
Please add 10p for postage. Order from World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Save Bowaters!

in brief

Nobody should assume that the Bowaters jobs are already lost. With a determined fight, involving the whole of the trade union and labour movement the Tories and their paymasters in the boardrooms can be stopped.

Bowaters must be saved and the tide of redundancies reversed.

By Richard Venton

But there is absolutely no time to lose. Every day lost will endanger the fight by demoralising and confusing the workforce. A clear strategy needs to be implemented by the union leadership.

The first point that has to be clearly understood is that the Tories and the employers are not going to do us any favours. Bill Keys, General Secretary of SOG-AT, recently went with paper industry bosses to meet Thatcher; the outcome was entirely predictable, and nothing was achieved.

The Bowaters company attitude to jobs is already clear. They now plan to build a £70 million tissue mill in Grimsby, where fat subsidies will come their way.

Paddy Dunne, a member of SOGAT in Bowaters and Ellesmere Port LPYS summed it up to me: "I blame Bowaters as well as the

prepared to modernise the government. They're not Ellesmere Port branch where they already have a site. Instead they are going to Grimsby because of subsidies of about 20%. Their only concern is profit not our jobs."

"It's about time action was taken to save our jobs. Just recently we saw Consett where a union spokesman said that it was too late to do anything on the 89th day of a 90 day redundancy notice, because the work-force was demoralised. The work-force should be led in industrial action now.

"If the Bowater workers stay and fight, we would get big support locally. Joint campaigns with the bosses have been tried before and they have always failed."

Workers in Ellesmere and especially in Bowaters have ^{to} avoid the pitfalls in the

previous campaigns against redundancies. Consett workers tried to prove the viability of that plant to convince the government and the employers to take a change of mind. Various rumours of buyers were spread, 'faint rays of hope' kept appearing.

The Tories and Bowaters management tend to use the same delaying tactics—endless discussions are arranged, company spokesmen blame the government whilst the Tory government blame the company.

But the two of them are tied together by hard cash. For example, Bowaters gave £10,000 last year to the Tory Party.

The only language capable of convincing these people is the fight with industrial action, uniting all sections of workers around a clear strategy.

This can be done. Under the Heath Tory government the workers of Upper Clyde shipbuilders forced a retreat on redundancies and saved jobs; they did this by occupying the yards and appealing to the wider labour movement for support.

Occupation is a tactic which needs to be seriously prepared for, with full involvement by the workforce. Merseyside SOGAT Branch have already adopted a policy which points the way forward.

At a meeting recently, it called for regular mass



Bowaters at Ellesmere Port—jobs here must be defended

meetings on the Bowaters site, and a members' rally with Bill Keys invited to spell out opposition to redundancies: nationalisation of the industry under democratic workers' control and management by the trade union and labour

movement; and support for a factory occupation.

This urgently needs to be implemented by the leadership of all unions, with the active support of the local trades council and local Labour parties.

Dockers defend jobs

By Paul Spooner (Hull Port Shop Steward), Neil Hammond & Neil Barker (Louth LPYS)

The dockers this week are again in the forefront of the fight to save jobs.

As we go to press, it appears the seven Grimsby dockers who had been refused work have now been re-allocated jobs after the Grimsby, Immingham and Hull dockers walked out in support.

The seven men had been earlier allocated work with the Grimsby Landing Company by the local dock labour board, but this company refused to take them on.

This is contrary to an earlier agreement between the union and the National Association of Port Employers agreed two weeks earlier after the swift action

of the Liverpool dockers over a similar issue.

Grimsby docks came to a standstill as dockers and lumpers (workers dealing with fish) came out in support of the seven men, and the strike action spread to Immingham docks. On Wednesday morning a mass meeting was held at Hull docks, where 1,800 dockers work.

The stewards told the meeting that if the employers got away with it at Grimsby there was nothing to stop them doing it anywhere else. They saw it as an attack on the dockers, and on the dock labour scheme itself.

The strike call was overwhelmingly supported, with only four workers disagreeing.

Picket lines were set up, and similar calls sent out to Southampton and Liverpool docks, but by Wednesday afternoon it appeared the seven men had been found work via the dock labour board.

As we go to press, the dockers are holding mass meetings to decide on whether to accept the situation.

However, the dockers know this is not an end to the fight to save jobs, but saw this incident as a 'skirmish with a rogue employer'. There will be greater struggles to come.

On the 27th September the National Ports shop Stew-

ards Committee held a meeting in Liverpool.

Stewards from Liverpool, London, Hull, Southampton, Bristol, Manchester and Scotland met to decide on the next course of action following the magnificent victory over the Port Employers attempts to use the Temporary Unattached Register as a means of cutting wages and sacking dockers.

One of the major decisions to come out of the meeting was to continue talking with the unregistered ports.

It was felt that now was the time to build on the support shown by these ports over their readiness to take part in the struggle to eliminate TUR.

Also accepted by the committee was a resolution

from Liverpool which stated that "we the registered dockworkers, will oppose any attempt by any government to alter the National Dock Labour Scheme to the detriment of registered dockworkers by demanding an official national all-out withdrawal of labour."

It is now imperative to consolidate resistance to any attempt by the Tories to amend the proposed new Dock Labour Scheme to the detriment of our present conditions.

Dockers won a resounding victory over the TUR, but the fight goes on until dockers control their own industry through the full nationalisation of all ports under democratic workers control.

Leaders of the agricultural workers union are putting in for a £30 a week rise for its members, when it meets farm employers at the end of this month. The union say this figure would fill the gap that has increased between their members' pay and that of the average industrial wage.

Workers at Ayrshire Marine in West Scotland have said that they will occupy the site if management carry out a threat to close it down. The 900 workers are presently on strike over health and safety regulations—they were having to work with 12 ton weights suspended from cranes, which is against the Health and Safety Act. The management have threatened to sack anyone who holds a shop steward position should the men return to work. The workers are holding a 24 hour picket to stop any machinery being moved out.

The massive ICI group have been found guilty of breaking the Asbestos Regulations at its factory in Grangemouth. They had failed to keep a shed floor free of asbestos during the removal of insulation. The punishment for this multinational company? A £100 fine!

An unemployed UCATT member reported to Glasgow Trades Council that when he went to sign on at the dole, a newspaper cutting was found in his records. It was report of a strike he had previously been involved in as a steward. The case is being taken up by UCATT District Officials, and CPSA have asked their members to assist in checking if this is happening on a wider scale.

GKN Sankey have announced a further 644 jobs must be lost in their group, adding to the 1200 redundancies already announced this year. GKN bosses blame the 'aggravated state of the vehicle industry', but although their profits have dropped, the group managed to make a massive £22.4 million pre-tax profit last year.

The Kilmacolm railway line in Scotland is to close affecting about 30 jobs at the Corkerhill Depot. This is due to the Labour controlled Regional Council stopping the 'section 20' grant—this may also affect Barrhead, East Kilbride, Cumbernauld, and the Edinburgh/Shotts lines to Glasgow. In all 500 railway jobs are under threat in the Scottish region, and ASLE&F and NUR District Councils are holding a joint mass meeting to discuss a campaign to fight job losses.

NALGO members in Newcastle have refused to handle applications to buy council houses. The new Tory law which allows council homes to be sold off, regardless of the mammoth waiting lists, came into force last Friday. The same day, the Newcastle NALGO members refused to process about 50 applications.

Southall AUEW

By Martin Elvin (London Chairman LPYS) and Tim Higgins (Shepherds Bush AUEW)

The Labour Party Young Socialists are as aware as the labour movement of the need for a fighting socialist leadership in the AUEW.

That's why North West London LPYS branches recently organised a meeting jointly with the Southall District of the AUEW, titled 'Campaign for a Fighting AUEW Leadership.'

About sixty engineers and Young Socialists attended to hear Bob Wright (AUEW Presidential candidate), Ernie Roberts (AUEW spon-

sored MP) and Harry Hewitt-Dutton (AUEW and Labour councillor).

The meeting expressed the real urgent need for a campaign to be waged to reverse the Tory avalanche of redundancies, closures and short time working.

During the months prior to the meeting, the LPYS

visited factories throughout the area, speaking to shop stewards, and leafleting factory gates and canteens. The response was tremendous, with one member after another showing interest, making criticisms of the present AUEW leadership, and seeing the need for participation in the run up to the elections.

Two shop stewards donated to the campaign fund, without being asked. Every factory visited was being affected in some way by the

Engineering workers —get 'Militant's' case for socialist leadership of the AUEW

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crisis in the engineering industry—either on short-time working, facing closure or redundancies.

It is the responsibility of every shop steward and

activist within the AUEW to inspire the membership (the 70% who didn't vote last time) to go out and vote this time for a fighting AUEW leadership.

SRI LANKA

DROP CHARGES AGAINST WORKERS LEADERS

Charges were finally laid on 30 September against twelve Sri Lankan trade union and opposition leaders in connection with the riots in central Colombo on 8 August, although no new trial date has been set.

Most of the fourteen charges are general 'catch-all' ones, like "unlawful assembly with the common object of causing damage to public and private property."

By Bob Labi

aja Party General Secretary). With the exception of Dharmasekera and Moulana (who is a Sri Lanka Freedom Party leader), all the accused are NSSP members. After six weeks' detention before any charges were laid, ten of the accused were released on bail, but Dharmasekera and J De Silva (Government Sector United Workers Federation President) are still in prison on remand. All the charges relate to the 8 August rioting in central Colombo which occurred during a "satyagraha" (peaceful

civil disobedience campaign) organised to support the general strike then taking place. The government is alleging that the rioting was organised by the opposition. The evidence, however, strongly points to the work of agent provocateurs. While the government took steps to limit the size of the "satyagraha" by closing down the railway station at which it was meant to start, even the London 'Sunday Telegraph' asked why, in view of the steps which had been taken to meet the demonstration, "security forces took nearly forty minutes to appear on the scene." (10 August 1980) At the same time, however, the right-wing Lankan government of J.R. Jayawardene



Vickramabahu Karunarathne

has been forced to retreat on its earlier decision to sack all workers who took part in the general strike. From 1 October, government departments began taking workers back. While the government will clearly try to keep out known union activists, union leaders are confident that most of their members will be able to get their jobs back. J.R. Jayawardene's policy

of attacking democratic rights whenever he can is also being shown by the attempt to behead the main capitalist opposition party, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, by stripping its leader, Mrs Sirimavo Bandaranaike, of her civil rights for seven years and forcing her out of parliament. Hypocritically, in view of his own record, J.R. Jayawar-

dene is accusing Mrs Bandaranaike of six charges of misuse or abuse of power during her premiership between 1970-7. While we in no way defend the policies of the SLFP-led coalition government, it is clear that J.R. Jayawardene is once again trying to set new precedents in suppressing opposition. What has so far stayed the repressive arm of the Lankan government, has been the strength of internal opposition and international protest. That is why it is still important to keep up the pressure to force the Lankan government to drop the charges against the twelve trade union and opposition leaders, re-instate all the sacked strikers without victimisation, and stop attacking democratic rights. Protests should continue to go to the Sri Lanka High Commission, 13 Hyde Park Gardens, London W2. Copies of protests and donations to help the 'Campaign to Defend Trade Union Rights in Sri Lanka' should be sent to: 32 Hollydown Way, London E11. Messages of support and donations to the NSSP and UFL should be sent to: Wesley Muthiah, 19 Hawthorn Avenue, London N13.

Irish tanker drivers defy army scabs



Photo: MILITANT

Lorries used as scab fuel delivery service

The tanker drivers' dispute in the Republic of Ireland has now entered its fourth week. Arrayed against them are the multinational oil companies, the federated union of employers and the Fianna Fail government.

By Dermot O'Connell in Dublin

For the last two weeks the army and the police have also been moved in to take over the filling plants and to operate a scab fuel delivery service. An unprecedented campaign of lies and slanders has been mounted in the

capitalist press to whip up feeling against the oil workers. The other capitalist party in the Republic, Fine Gael, have backed Fianna Fail and the bosses in their attempt to defeat the workers, fully supporting the use of the army and police and criticising Fianna Fail for the concession they made by negotiating in the Labour court with workers who had taken unofficial action. Against all this the oil workers are standing firm for the central demands of a substantial increase to a £68 per week basic wage, and a yearly review of the existing productivity scheme. On Monday morning, solidarity action was taken by workers at Calor Kosangas against the use of the army and police. After the shop stewards called a mass meeting to discuss a request for support from the oil workers strike committee, members of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union no. 1 branch, Calor Kosangas, the same union and branch as the oilmen voted overwhelmingly to stop work until the army and police were removed from the oil depot.

Once again the capitalist class in the republic has been shown clearly that organised workers will fight back against attempts to unload the responsibility for the crisis of capitalism onto their backs.

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