

UNEMPLOYED WORKER SAYS :

“Tories Treat Us Like Rubbish”



Tim White outside Brady House "re-establishment centre"

If, like me, you are "long term unemployed" you might soon have the chance to enjoy the fantastic privilege of finding out what a re-establishment centre is.

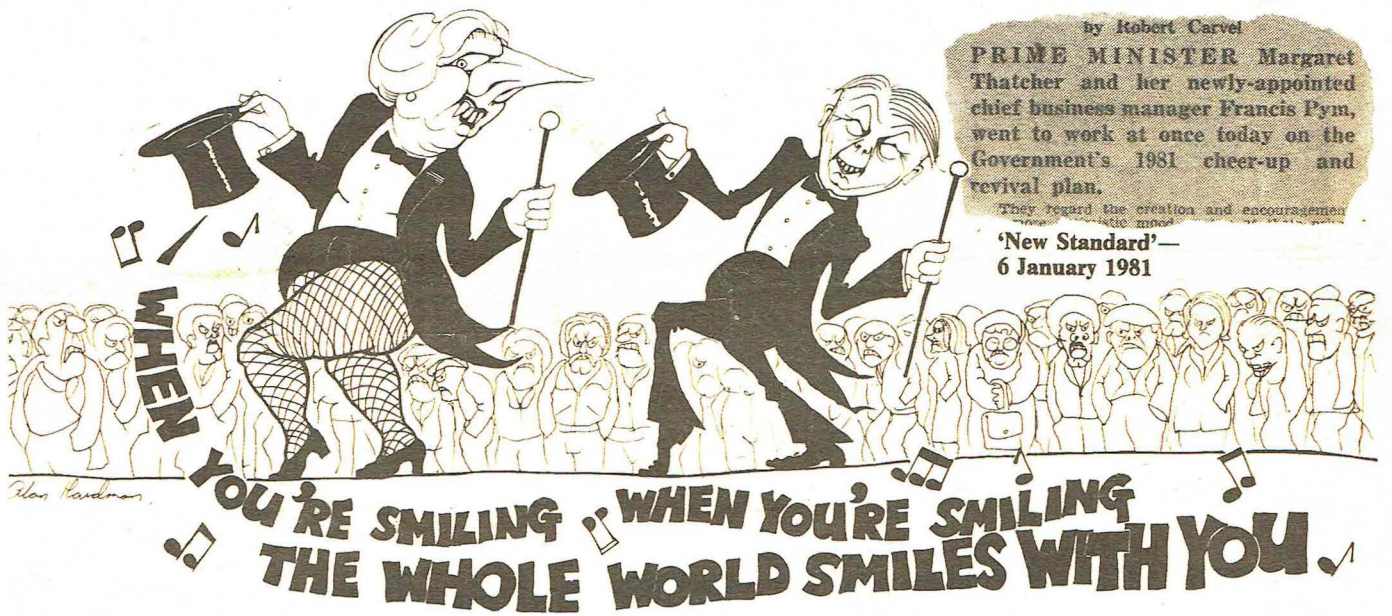
This is one of the Department of Health and Social Security's weapons against the growing army of unemployed.

I recently 'volunteered' to attend one of the country's seventeen centres. Of course, I didn't exactly volunteer, it was more of an unsaid Hobson's choice—'volunteer' or we cut your money off.

Cutting money off does happen. One man I know was without money from the SS for more than three months before he also decided to 'volunteer' or we cut your money off.

By Tim White
(Braintree Labour Party Young Socialists)

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FIGHTING FUND- THE BEST EVER Make 1981 even better

A magnificent effort by our readers and supporters in the last few days has brought in a tremendous £8,680—the biggest ever weekly total in the history of 'Militant's' Fighting Fund and 25% up on the previous record week!

Is there another paper within the labour movement which could demonstrate such support from its readers in hard cash?

We have fallen short of our 1980 target of £100,000, collecting a total of just under £94,000 [see Fighting Fund report, page 13].

Nevertheless, this is without any doubt a great achievement and 'Militant' wishes once again to thank

all our supporters who have given regular donations—and especially those who have helped the last 'big push' towards the target.

The success of our Fighting Fund gives the lie to the attacks on the 'Militant' from the millionaires' press, the bitter enemies of the labour movement. 'Militant,' they claim, is "too boring," "too unattractive" or "too extreme" to win the support of ordinary workers.

The paper that tells the truth

But it is the Tory press, despite its big business backing and its massive advertising revenue, which currently faces a dire financial crisis.

The workers want the truth about the crisis in British capitalism. They

want a paper that voices their interests, and is prepared to fight for them. They want a paper that will boldly proclaim a socialist programme and fight for its adoption and implementation by the labour movement.

'Militant' is confident that with the additional resources collected last year, and the improvements that this will enable us to make, 'Militant' will continue to play the role that has won it wider and wider support in recent years.

But we still need to progress towards our aim—a mass circulation daily paper with millions of working class readers. This is vital if we are to ensure the defeat of the Tories—and prepare the way for the

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Militant

Our Cash Comes from Workers

1 Mentmore
Terrace,
London E8 3PN

—a reply
to the
'Sunday Times'

At 5.30 pm on Friday 9 January, 'Militant' received the following telegram from the 'Sunday Times':

"Your personal appeal in today's 'Militant' raises following question:

"1. What is current amount of loans outstanding to WIR Publications?

2. Why were 1978/79 free loans of £93,000[0] bringing amount outstanding to £282,443 as reported in latest WIR company report not declared in your April 1980 statement to the Labour Party?

3. What is the source of WIR Publications donations. Please reply to Michael Jones, Political Correspondent, Sunday Times, 200 Grays Inn Road WC1."

The "personal appeal" referred to the Fighting Fund appeal on the front page of issue No. 534, urging our readers and supporters to rush in donations to give us the £14,000 needed to achieve our 1980 target. Clearly, this was being used by the 'Sunday Times' as the latest pretext for a new "investigation" into 'Militant's' finances, as the basis for a new scare campaign in the run up to Labour's special conference on the 24 January.

In reply, 'Militant' sent the following telegram to the 'Sunday Times':

"We note your interest in financial success of 'Militant'. Is this related to present financial difficulties of Times Newspapers? Perhaps you can learn something from us.

"We will answer all your questions. But protest at last minute telegram 5.30 pm Friday when administrative staff had left.

"Questions 1 and 2 will be fully answered next week. Note that WIR accounts 1978/79 not completed by our accountants until after we answered LP questionnaire and not submitted to Companies House until August 1980.

"If you proceed with comment we demand full right of reply. Question 3 has been fully answered in our statement to the Labour Party and accepted by the NEC. All our funds apart from sales come without exception from donations from rank and file of labour and trade union movement.

"Your telegram indicates you are trying to whip up a scare campaign against the Marxist wing of the LP. This is intended to help your right-wing friends in the PLP many of whom are preparing to split from the party, with promise of £15m backing from big-business.

"LP members would question your editor Harold Evans. Why does he refuse to investigate sinister financial backing for PLP right wing? Why did he suppress the investigation commissioned by ST Magazine which conclusively demonstrated right-wing LP leaders received backing from organisations funded by the CIA and big business? Our columns are open to Harold Evans to explain why he covered up for his right wing PLP friends.

"Any new attempt at a witch-hunt against the Marxists will be no more successful than previously."

Our reply apparently hit the mark. The 'Sunday Times' [11 January] carried an article by Michael Jones on the Labour Party under the heading "Steel woos Labour MPs with a pact." It commented on the latest indications that right-wing Labour MPs are preparing to split from the Party.

It also reported that a London conference of the right-wing Social Democratic Alliance on 10 January announced its intention to sponsor another 20-25 candidates in addition to the 16 already selected against left-wing MPs at the next general election. "They also set up an election fund target of more than £500,000," reports Michael Jones

—though noticeably without enquiring where this money would come from.

Most conspicuous by its absence, however, was any mention of the 'Militant.' Perhaps the 'Sunday Times' had second thoughts about launching a new attack? Or perhaps it is saving it up for next week?

Overnight on Saturday [10 January] 'Militant' received a further telegram from Michael Jones:

"Thank you for your interim reply. Your full answers are keenly awaited."

The 'Sunday Times', it seems, never gives up. But what is there to answer?

As Michael Jones could see from the latest accounts of Cambridge Heath Press Ltd filed in Companies House, a further loan, £66,966 [not the £93,000 referred to by the 'Sunday Times'] was made from WIR Ltd to CHP Ltd and 'Militant' [in 1978/79], bringing the outstanding loans to £215,466.

The figure of "over £148,000" [actually about £148,500] for outstanding loans given in our April 1980 reply to the LP's questionnaire was the latest completed accounts [in 1977/78] of WIR Publications and Cambridge Heath Press at that time.

We can now tell Michael Jones—and there is no secret about this as far as we are concerned—that in the following year [end March 1980] similar loans which will probably turn out to be a higher amount when our accounts are completed, were made from WIR Publications Ltd to the 'Militant'.

In our answer to the Labour Party Questionnaire, a reply which was accepted by the National Executive Committee, 'Mili-

tant' clearly explained that our cash comes from three sources: Firstly, from sales of the paper and a small income from commercial printing; secondly, from contributions to the Fighting Fund, which are publicised in the weekly fighting fund column; and thirdly, from a series of loans from WIR Publications Ltd to Cambridge Heath Press Ltd, our publisher and printer.

"The two separate companies [our statement explained], Cambridge Heath Press Ltd and WIR Publications Ltd, were set up on advice from lawyers and accountants. This arrangement was considered to be in the best interest of the thousands of workers who contribute their pennies and pounds from their hard-earned wages to further the cause of socialism.

"WIR Publications Ltd acts as a 'collecting box'. As its Memorandum of Association states, the company exists 'to aid and further the interests of the international working class,' and its income is derived solely from the donations of active members of the Labour Party and trade unions who, in addition to occasional donations to the 'Militant' Fighting Fund are prepared to make regular contributions to develop support for Marxist policies within the labour movement."

The accounts of Cambridge Heath Press Ltd and WIR Publications Ltd are filed in Companies House where anyone, like Michael Jones, can inspect them.

In our statement we also make it clear that "Militant has never received funds or any form of support from the American Central Intelligence Agency, from the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, from

British Intelligence Services or from their front organisations or from any other capitalist organisations opposed to the fundamental aims and aspirations of the labour movement. 'Militant' has never received any funds from Russia..."

This and other of our statements are clearly known to the 'Sunday Times.' Yet still they are "probing" our finances—with the deliberate aim of creating the impression amongst the ranks of the labour movement that there is something sinister and underhand about our financial backing.

The 'Sunday Times' has enormous resources and many well-known investigative journalists. Yet in the two or three years in which they have been trying to stir up a witch-hunt against 'Militant' on behalf of their right-wing friends in the Parliamentary Labour Party, they have produced not one shred of evidence that 'Militant' receives funds of any sort from any "sinister" or "outside" sources.

On the other hand, however, the 'Sunday Times' editor, Harold Evans, has yet to explain publicly why he suppressed a thoroughly researched investigation commissioned for the 'Sunday Times' Magazine, which revealed clear evidence of CIA backing for right-wing personalities, journals, and groupings within the Labour Party.

Since that suppressed article was written in 1972, much further evidence has emerged which clearly confirms and amplifies its conclusions. Much of this evidence has been summarised or reported in the pages of 'Militant' over the last year or so.

'Militant' keenly awaits Harold Evans' reply.

Yorkshire Ripper— Stop Violence Against Women

The people of West Yorkshire breathed a sigh of relief when it was heard that a man had been arrested in connection with the "Yorkshire Ripper" murders.

However, it should not be assumed that the suspect is guilty prior to his trial. In this case, the press, particularly the gutter press who who have sensationalised the issue, have completely ignored the normal rules of contempt. However horrendous the crime, there is no justification for casting aside the rights which provide some safeguard for those accused of serious crimes.

Bradford has had its fill of murderers and rapists, recent examples being the "Black Panther" and the "hooded rapist". But none has struck such fear into the minds of people as much as the Ripper.

From 30 October 1975 to 17 November 1980, thirteen murders of the most sickening kind have been attributed to his activities.

Since April 1979, with the murder of Josephine Whitaker in Halifax, it was seen that the Ripper had moved from the "red light" areas, and was prepared to attack any woman walking alone at night.

By Pete Watson
(Bradford West CLP)

Women have understandably been very fearful of going out in the evenings. Recently, few women have been seen unaccompanied on the streets, night clubs have been half empty, and taxi firms have suffered through people going home early.

The Ripper case has focused attention on violence against women in society.

One deranged madman can strike fear into thousands of women, disrupting their lives in many different ways. But what has particularly outraged women is the hypocritical role of the press and media.

The newspapers have sensationalised the Ripper case, expressing righteous indignation and horror at his atrocious crimes. At the same time, however, they have obviously exploited the issue, rivalling one another to print the most salacious details of the case.

Papers like the 'Sun', not to mention more blatantly pornographic magazines, publish material which must play a part in stimulating the sick minds of the unbalanced individuals responsible for brutal murders and sexual attacks.

Socialists do not share the prudish, censorious views of Mrs Mary Whitehouse and others. But the cynical, hypocritical role of the press, many magazines, and much material on television and in films—all run by big business for lucrative profits—is nevertheless clear.

In response to the conditions created by the Ripper case, a Women Against Violence Against Women was formed. This consisted mainly of feminist groups.

They organised a march, together with other activities, and picketed a cinema showing soft porn films. The Odeon in Bradford, for instance, only four hundred yards from where university student Barbara Leach was murdered, was recently showing the sex film "Violation of the Bitch". The hoarding showed a woman on her knees with a caption: "She asked for it."

The police obviously had no sympathy for these protests. One police statement reportedly criticised the demonstrations for "wasting police time", and a number of women on the cinema picket were arrested and detained for a time.

Under the circumstances, the feelings of the women involved in the campaign were understandable, and their right to march and picket has to be fully backed by the labour movement.

However, not all of their demands could be supported.

The local police chiefs, in effect, called for a curfew on women until the Ripper was caught. Such a restriction would be intolerable for women. But the demand for a curfew on men is equally unsupportable.

This would also be an intolerable restriction. In any case, how would it be enforced? Such a curfew, usually associated with military rule, would put unprecedented powers in the hands of the police to stop, search and arrest men at night-time.

The activities of the labour movement, which revolve around evening meetings, would be the first thing hit. What about shift-workers and night-workers? Would they have to be issued with identity cards and passes controlled by the police?

The demand for such a curfew is clearly one that has to be totally rejected by the whole of the labour movement.

Another demand centred around women's self-defence. The right of women to carry sprays, sirens and other weapons of defence against possible attack must be supported. Recently, a woman was arrested for carrying a dye and mustard-juice spray.

According to the police, carrying "an offensive weapon" can mean having virtually anything from an anti-mugging spray to a steel comb or a perfume spray. The police contradict themselves week by week on the issue of this basic right.

Where the police take action against women for carrying something to defend themselves the labour movement must support the women arrested.

To defend the right of women to walk and travel about in safety is really the job of the labour movement itself. A number of organisations have ensured that no women walk home by themselves from meetings, and there have been demands for meetings to take place in areas where there is less likelihood of attack.

It is to the police, however, that most people look for protection. After a period of press criticism directed at the police, and their highly publicised arrest of a suspect, the police are once again being portrayed as heroes.

However, there have been many criticisms of the police handling of the operation. Two million pounds has been spent in the course of investigations, and the police were so desperate that at a certain stage they were reportedly using information from clairvoyants and

other mystics, despite all the technical equipment available to them.

In the end, it was a chance checking of a number plate that led to the arrest of the suspect.

Now that a suspect has been spent in the course of come forward for a return to hanging or even barbaric punishments such as castration. The anger of women in the area is understandable. As socialists, however, we can never support acts of barbarism such as these which turn the clock back to the Middle Ages.

The problem of violent attacks, particularly on women and children, remains. A sick society, in which economic collapse is accompanied by the breakdown of moral norms and of family and personal relations, is bound to produce sick individuals capable of the most horrifying crimes. In some ways, the big business media insidiously foster the conditions which produce such people.

Horrifying cases like the Yorkshire Ripper also highlight the exploited position of women in capitalist society, who face special forms of oppression.

A hundred years ago Engels commented that the progress of society could generally be measured by the progress of women towards their real emancipation. By this measure, present-day capitalist society stands condemned, and cries out for social change.

14-24 FEBRUARY

Plan Now For LPYS Week of Action

Up and down the country, the most 'wanted' person in Britain, Thatcher, will be put on trial by LPYS branches.

These trials, public meetings and debates with young Tories will mark the Labour Party Young Socialists week of action, 14-24 February.

The week must be used to build the local LPYS branches, among unemployed

By Kevin Ramage

(National Chairman, LPYS)

youth, young workers, and school students. LPYS branches in South East London are organising a demonstration on 'Youth Against the Tories' for Saturday February 21st.

Comrades in Scotland and Northern England will be mobilising for the Labour Party demonstration in Glasgow on the same day. Other areas need to draw up plans NOW for local demonstrations, pickets, 'funeral marches' and other activities to protest against mass unemployment. During the week itself, Hackney Central LPYS have drawn up plans for leafletting schools in the mornings before work, youth clubs in the evenings, and a lunchtime visit to the local tech.

After all the activities on

Saturday 21st many people will want a chance to relax and enjoy themselves, so why no contact some local bands and organise a 'Youth Against the Tories' night to raise funds.

Tuesday 24 February, "National Youth Against the Tories Day", is also the day the unemployment figures come out. London Region LPYS are planning an all-night protest vigil outside No. 10.

Other areas are laying plans for daytime protests outside "Job centres", Tory party offices, factories threat-

ening redundancies, followed by street meetings with MPs, councillors and LPYS members speaking. LPYS members are already arranging to get a day off work, school or college to make sure 24 February is the biggest day of protest by youth against the Tories and their profit system.

Youth organisations, youth clubs, schools and trade union organisations should be contacted informing them of the Week of Action, and the National Youth Against the Tories Day, asking them to help publicise, invite LPYS

speakers, and come along to the events.

At the LPYS National Committee on 4 January, it was agreed to produce a whole new series of recruiting leaflets and posters, which should start becoming available early in February. All in all, 1981 promises to be a year of enormous struggles of the working class and especially youth. It will be the best ever opportunity to build the ranks of the LPYS with bold campaigning work, and clear socialist policies.

Doing the Thatcher Shuffle

By Jim Chrystie



Prayers no answer for Tory 'wets'. Stevas and Prior at conference
Photo: MILITANT

The unparalleled public divisions within the Tory government will not be ended by last week's Cabinet reshuffle.

The splits in the Tory leadership reflect the pressure of the enormous and growing discontent from the workers, and many middle-class people.

Big business, through the CBI, has voiced its concern in unusually blunt language, and as the economic problems get more desperate, the Tory leaders are divided on how to cope.

Above all, they fear a head-on collision with the labour movement.

Over the last year there have been embarrassing leaks on sensitive issues. Dissident government Ministers have even devised a new method of voicing disagreements under cover of "philosophical" talks on the meaning of Conservatism.

In last week's reshuffle a few of the dissidents, notably St-John Stevas, were thrown to the wolves. But other major opponents of Thatcher's line, such as Prior, remained. Yet what alternative do the so-called "wets" really have?

During the Tory Party Conference, St-John Stevas hawked his conscience round the cocktail circuit expressing concern at political developments. According to the 'Daily Mirror's' Diary Page (7 January), he even told Prince Charles, "I don't know what's going to happen to us all. The way things are going there could be a revolution—and that could involve you too."

When the royal Charlie demanded to know what he was doing to stop it, Stevas lamented that it was no use

as Thatcher would not listen.

In a radio interview after his sacking, Stevas explained that his dismissal was probably due to his belief in "compassionate and caring Conservatism."

But the "wets" have no fundamentally different policies from Thatcher, whatever rhetoric they may employ. The position of British capitalism is so desperate that the bosses have no choice but to try to drive down the living standards and break the power of organised workers.

The Priors and St-John Stevas are just suffering from the delusion that they can achieve the same goal by gentler, "compassionate, caring" methods.

Normally Tory governments settle their differences in private. Now, however, the economic position is so serious and the opposition to the policies so widespread, that they are displayed for all to see.

The sooner this shaky government and its disastrous policies are thrown out the better. The Labour party's 29 November national demonstration in Liverpool gave an indication of the way forward. Next month sees another demonstration in Glasgow, and in May there will be a Liverpool-London march.

All these are welcome indications of how the fighting traditions of the labour movement are being rebuilt.

But marches and rallies alone are not enough. The whole strength of the labour movement must be mobilised to bring down this government and replace it by a Labour government committed to fundamental socialist change.

New Police Powers Threaten Workers

By Roger Shrivs

The report of the Royal Commission on Police procedure last week recommended many of the increases in police powers which the Tory law-and-order brigade had been bellowing for.

If the Commission's points are accepted, the police would get wider powers to stop people in any supposedly 'urgent' search for stolen goods, drugs or arms. In these cases, they would also be able to enter premises without a search warrant.

The changes proposed would give back many of the police powers which they could lose on the abolition of the notorious 'Sus' laws.

Arrest without warrant would be extended to all offences punishable by prison, and even to many which are just finable offences. Previously, they could only do this for offences punishable by a five-year sentence, though there is already a long list of exceptions.

Those "reasonably suspected" (whatever that may mean) of such offences could be detained without charge. In "grave" cases after 24 hours, the detention could be extended another day through a private hearing by magistrates...and then for another 24 hours and so on.

There have been numerous examples in the past few years to show that the police can disregard the present "Judge's Rules", which supposedly govern the treatment of suspects. The odds are already weighted heavily against any person questioned by the police, but now the report recommends that police should have the legal right to bar access to a lawyer if it might imperil the investigation of suspected crimes.

The chance of forced confessions would obviously be greatly increased by this, and also by the recommendation that there should be no bar on the use of confessions in trials even if they are "improperly" obtained.

If there is suspicion of abuse of police powers, the commission recommend that as at present, this

should be investigated (if at all) by the police. The Chief Constable of Kent suggested on television that if torture or ill-treatment was used, a suspect could bring a criminal prosecution! In fact, a civil action is the most police can be subject to, months or even years after the offence.

Other hair-raising suggestions are that fingerprinting will no longer need a magistrate's order and that even 10-year-olds could be finger printed or photographed. Evidence from phonetapping should also be allowed in certain cases, the report suggests.

Organised crime will not be checked

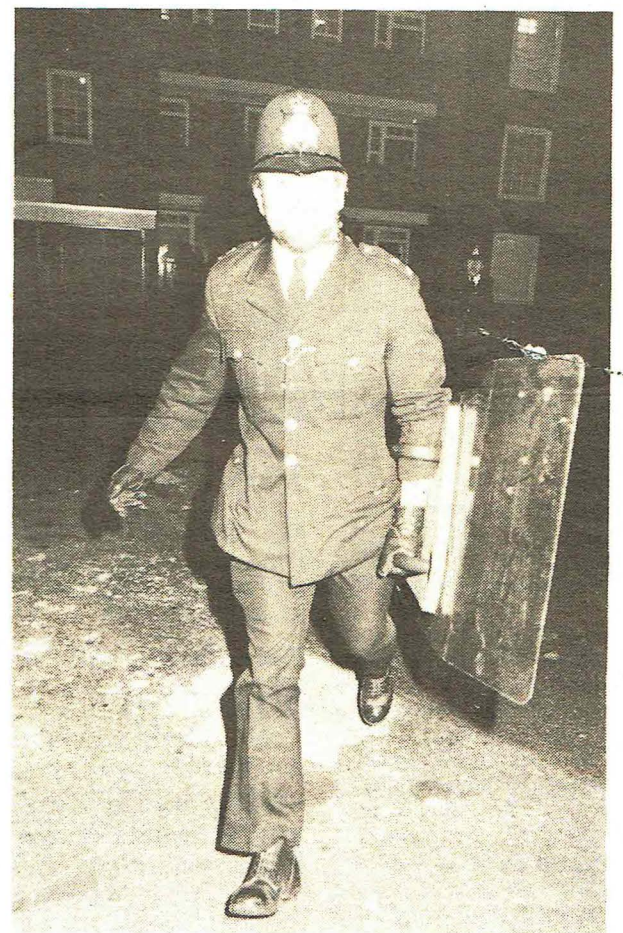
Who will suffer from these new proposals if they are accepted? The press have by and large given the impression that it would be just hardened criminals.

But there is no evidence either in Britain or internationally that this would check the rise of organised crime or violence which has increased with the crisis in a decaying capitalist society.

The powers will be used, though, as with the 'Sus' laws to harass the most oppressed sections of society, particularly black youth in a desperate plight because of growing unemployment.

But above all else they are a threat to the labour movement. In Northern Ireland laws have been introduced to legitimise systematic repression ostensibly brought in to combat para-military organisations but more and more used against the labour movement. A similar position holds for the Prevention of Terrorism Act.

As a part of systematic preparation to take on the working class, the ruling class have plans for civil emergencies, including the training of the Army to deal with insurrection. Already the bulk of police training is



The three-month organised squat of Kilner House ended after a pre-dawn assault by several hundred police in riot gear, last Friday [above]. Having smashed through the barricades the police forcibly removed the press from the scene, penning them in nearby backstreets whilst they evicted the occupants.

These South London flats are due to be sold off by the Tory-controlled Greater London Council for between £19,000 and £23,000 each. The squatters had been campaigning for the flats to be available for rent to council tenants.

The Tories preferred a show of force.

Photo: MILITANT

in dealing with civil disturbances.

The bosses know that they cannot put off for ever a show-down with the organised working class if they want to save their rotten system.

Hence the proposed new powers, which are milder than those demanded by people like Metropolitan Police chief McNee.

It is one thing though to give new powers to the police. It is another thing to use them against an aroused labour movement. Nonetheless the new powers pose a danger in particular to individual isolated groups of workers in the future struggles and should be firmly opposed.

Right-wing show their colours

Mike Thomas MP advertises 'Militant' at a CLV meeting at Labour Party Conference

Reports by Jack Rawling
(Newcastle East CLP)
& Stan Natrass

Did you hear about the Labour MP who came to a ward meeting in his constituency to give his annual talk, and never once mentioned policy or what the plan of the Party was or should be!

Right-winger Mike Thomas, a Campaign for Labour Victory stalwart, told them what Mrs Thatcher would be doing about two years from now: after clobbering the workers she would modify somewhat, and the workers would forget all about their recent sufferings and vote her back into power for a further parliamentary period, never mentioning opposition plans.

He was criticised about his failure to mention the need for socialist policies and was reminded about Clause Four of the Party constitution.

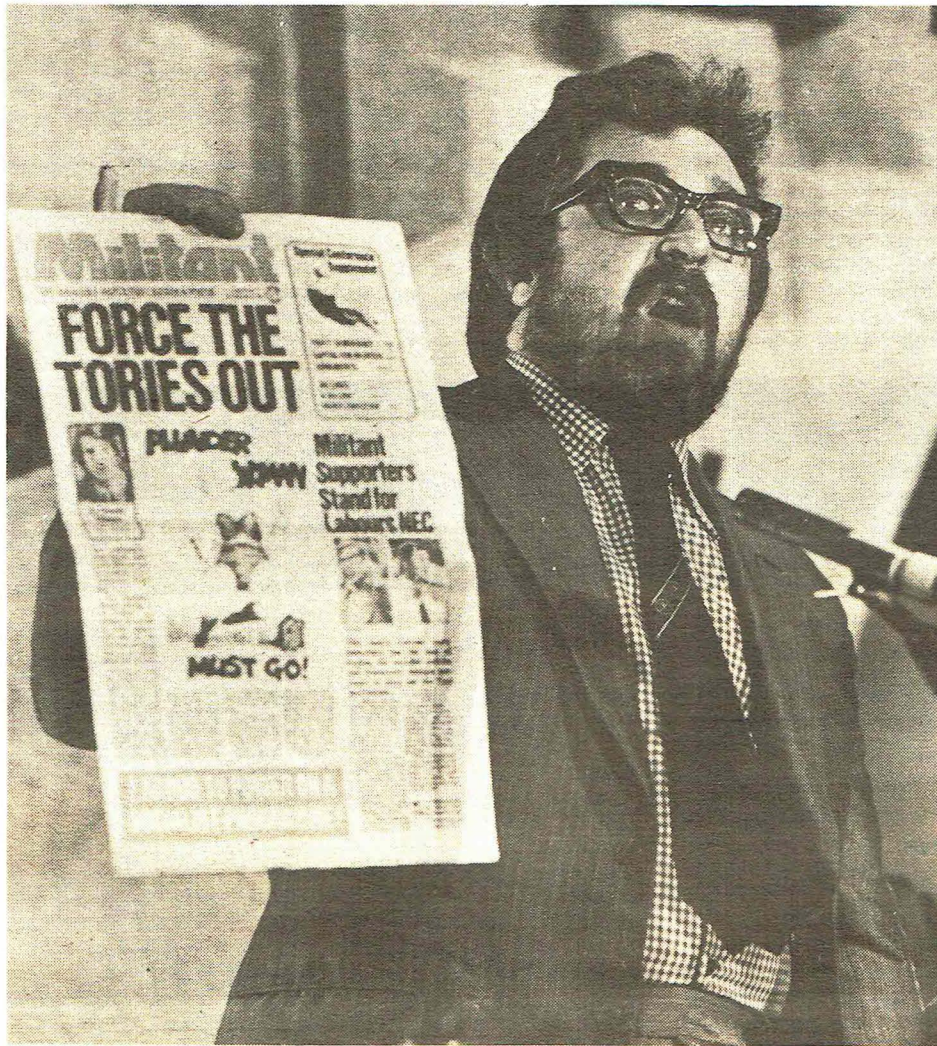
His reply was 'if we expected the Party to take over other people's property,' stressing the plight of workers who had bought their council house, it just was 'not on.'

On the question of re-selection, raised by another comrade who justified the removal of Reg Prentice at Newham N.E., he said if Arthur Scargill was selected against Roy Mason, then Mason would stand as an independent and would romp home. (A thinly veiled threat?)

The right wing lapped it up and stalled any further efforts on our behalf. Our GMC meets once a quarter. We have never had a report from our delegates and we never know when the GMC meets. There is another ward in our constituency even worse conducted.

I suppose this could be expected with such an inspirational MP!

Editors note: Jack has been a class fighter for socialism all his life. He first joined the Labour Party in 1936, previously being a member of the Independent Labour Party, and is now an active supporter of the 'Militant'.



In a constituency not known for its adherence to any particular wing of the Party, Neville Sandelson caused a walk out of some members when he spoke at a Chichester CLP meeting recently.

He made vitriolic and vituperative attacks on the NEC and members of the Party generally.

The right-wing MP for Hayes & Harlington admitted he had described his own GMC as full of Communists, Trotskyists, and young supporters of 'Militant,' and that his party's 'Labour Hall' generated the atmosphere of a snake-pit, like a non-stop Blackpool conference.

In a non-stop tirade which went on for nearly an hour and a half Mr Sandelson, calling himself a christian socialist, then proceeded to describe the NEC as outrageous creatures, untrustworthy and poisonous.

His audience, a good cross-section of the Labour Party from left to right, patiently put up with these

attacks (on practically the whole party, except the gang of three and the Manifesto Group), and then put questions, the answers to which were further attacks and ramblings about the left-wing.

Some of his replies included gems such as "The Tories are strategically not pursuing the wrong policies." He hinted that the only trouble was they were a bit too ruthless.

Another gem was that the left were the only people with policies—the wrong ones of course—and stated "I admit I have no capacity to think," and, "We on the right have no policies."

A member of the audience asked him why he was a member of the Labour Party; he replied that he might have to think in terms of a new Party! Another

member described his speech as "The best Tory speech I have ever heard."

In speaking of the unemployed he referred to the large benefits being paid out. When challenged on how he would like to keep a wife and children on the 'large amount' of £36 per week, he denied implying benefits were large, but then went on to say they were much better than in the '30s.

Neville Sandelson also turned on the trade unions and said it was just not on for them to be voting at Labour Party conferences with their block votes.

This must be altered, he said, with the widening of the franchise for the leader of the Party—with the whole of the membership having the vote, of course. As a member present pointed out, this would let the Tory press choose the leader for us.

All in all, it seemed from Mr Sandelson's speech that the whole Party was out of step, and that the only one in step was Mr Sandelson. The audience of just over 30 responded well to the speaker by purchasing over 20 copies of the 'Militant'.

STUC TURNS DOWN BLIND ALLEY

By Bob Wylie

(East Kilbride CLP)

Talbot, NCR, Massey Ferguson, Monsanto, ICI, Prestcold, Wiggins-Teape, Dunlop, Coats and Burroughs are only some of the big name companies to declare major redundancies in Scotland in the last year or so.

There are now nearly a quarter of a million Scots workers languishing on the dole and it is expected that 1980 will see a grand total of 56,000 declared redundancies.

It is correct that the Scottish working class should look to the labour movement for a lead to find a way out of the abyss that the continuation of capitalism has made for them.

But recent events demonstrate that if they are looking to the upper circles of the Scottish T.U.C. to provide a way out, they are searching in vain.

In December the Scottish T.U.C. called a convention on unemployment. It may have been expected that such a conference could have been used by Scottish workers to hammer out battle plans for a fight against sackings and the Tory government.

Bosses and churches no answer

But instead, the STUC has disasterously rushed to embrace the SNP, the Liberals, the Tories, the churches and even the Scottish C.B.I. in search for a solution.

The result of the convention was to set up a standing commission on unemployment to include, besides the trade unions, representatives from the employers, local government, the Scottish Council for Industry, social groups and the church.

At the conference the General Secretary of the STUC, Jimmy Milne, a leading member of the Communist Party, declared that the commission would not be a tool of the STUC but would be open to all people of good will to tackle the problems raised.

The aim of the commission is to approach the Prime Minister to make representation on 'behalf' of the people of Scotland. Of course, this is in the belief that Thatcher will listen!

The Scottish Communist Party apparently fully en-

dorses this approach. Speaking at the convention Jack Ashton, the secretary of the Scottish C.P. announced that the Scottish C.P. congratulates the STUC in organising such a representative gathering of Scottish people.

In the 'Morning Star' (9th December) the proceedings were praised fulsomely under the headline "Scots join forces to protest against sackings".

Yet at the convention, Michael Ancrum, chairman of the Scottish Tories, called for 'more sensible' wage agreements, acceptance of new technology (that is, the redundancies that it causes) and a 'new will to work'!

Have the churches any solution? One minister called for a jobs fund to be set up for the unemployed by each worker giving one week's wages once a year! In this call he was echoed by Bishop Devine of the Catholic diocese of Glasgow who stated that self sacrifice was necessary from the employed to create jobs for those out of work.

The illusions, misconceptions and panaceas offered by the convention can be summed up by the pleadings of Bruce Millan MP, who as secretary of state for Scotland in the last Labour Government presided over and increase in unemployment of 100,000, when he said, "somehow or other we have got to get greater co-operation from both sides of industry".

This approach to the problems of Scottish workers is bankrupt. It represents the politics of the hodge-podge of the "broad democratic alliance" which will talk plenty but produce nothing.

The lessons of even recent history, of how the last Tory Government was brought down by the miners; of how jobs were saved at U.C.C.; are lost on the present general council.

Not a single word was spoken at the convention on how to build a fight on redundancies at shop floor level. Cynically, the STUC seems to have dismissed working earnestly with the shop stewards movement to build a unity against the bosses, but instead has chosen to huddle in respectability beside the bosses' representatives.

TANDY'S STRIKE OVER BUT HELP STILL NEEDED

With the strike at Tandy's warehouse in Birmingham lost, those of us who supported the strike received an extra blow recently.

Having been arrested on the picket line, three of us were found guilty in court, although one was acquitted.

The fines altogether will cost nearly £1,000, with costs incurred during the strike.

The police, the courts and the press soon showed which

side of the fence they were on. After we were arrested on September 15th, the local paper, the 'Evening Mail', had a front page headline "Punch up on Picket Line—five held."

As none of the five [the fifth person has already been convicted] arrested punched anybody, and only one was actually charged with assault, you can only assume that editorial license had been used to distort the

facts.

On the court case itself, after the magistrates gave their verdicts, the 'Evening Mail' reported in its opening paragraph, "Three pickets were fined £100 each after violence flared on the picket line."

Seeing how these three pickets committed no violence, were not charged with violence or were accused of violence in the courts, we can be forgiven for thinking

that fantasy, not fact, rules the 'Mail's' editorial pen.

For the defence, five witnesses were able to give evidence. This evidence contradicted the prosecution case. Also a point that the 'Mail' failed to report was the fact that three of the accused were arrested for alleged offences which allegedly took place before the police even arrived!

But the magistrates were able to declare the verdicts,

obviously not coloured by the fact that this was a four month old industrial dispute, but, of course, based on a careful analysis of the case. No doubt that is why the fines and costs came to £642.

However, could it be that Tory magistrates are more likely to believe anti-union bosses, picket-smashing police, and not labour movement activists fighting for jobs and union recognition?

As the Tandy appeal sheet states "We can't change the verdicts, but you can relieve the burden, so please give generously to the Tandy defence fund".

Send donations to: J. Marsh, 3 Park Street, Wednesbury, West Midlands.

By Brian Debus



To the already high cost of the Tories' monetarist policies there must now be added £50,000. This is the annual salary for the prime minister's new personal economic advisor, just taking up his two-year post at 10 Downing Street. Professor Alan Walters, previously economics professor at Johns Hopkins University, Maryland, and an advisor to the World Bank, will be helping Mrs. Thatcher to tighten the squeeze on workers' living standards. Some people seem to think that he is actually doing her a big favour, as his current earnings are reckoned to be about £100,000. As he will get 'only' £28,500 [second permanent secretary's salary] from the government, Walters also will get an additional £21,500 from the Centre for Policy Studies, the Tory research body set up by Thatcher and the mad monetarist monk, Sir Keith Joseph. No doubt the big-businessmen who think that cuts in workers' wages mean more profit and that higher unemployment will cow the trade unions, think that professor Walters is worth every penny of his grotesquely inflated salary.

Prince and Princess Michael of Kent, according to the Tory 'Daily Express' have "long been regarded as the queen's poor relations." Last week the "poor relations" relations bought Nether Llypiatt Manor in Gloucestershire for £300,000. These not-so-well-off royal cousins will be accommodated in eight bedrooms, four bathrooms, and the usual amenities. Well, if these are the poor relations, how rich are the rest of the family?

A big crisis for the local post office in a southern Indian village last week gives a horrifying glimpse of the social crisis afflicting the Indian sub-continent. On a single day, postmen had to deliver 84,615 job applications in response to an advertisement by the public service commission for village administrative officers. This response highlights the acute unemployment problem in India, where nearly 11 million are registered out of work. This is not all. A further 15 million are believed not to have registered. Such is the bankruptcy of capitalism in a country once held up as a model of capitalist democracy and development.

Fifty-seven years after the event, a West Berlin court has just exonerated the hapless Van der Lubbe from the crime of starting the fire in the Reichstag, the German parliament, in 1933. Many school history books still blame the Dutchman for this incident—which was clearly a secret operation, carried out by Goering's storm troopers, as a pretext for Hitler to seize dictatorial powers and launch a bloody purge against the workers' parties. A number of German Communist leaders, like Torgler and Dimitroff were put on trial for conspiracy to burn the parliament. However, they were acquitted, while Van der Lubbe was found guilty and executed in 1934. By this time, Hitler had established a military police dictatorship and had begun the complete smashing of the labour movement and all democratic rights. The only real mystery is why it has taken the West German authorities so long to reveal publicly the dirty methods of the Nazis, and their show-trial frame-up of Van der Lubbe. Even when it concerns the Nazi state, it seems, the ruling class are never keen to reveal the manoeuvres and skull-duggery that goes on behind the respectable facade of the state.

LORD KAGAN'S FALL

A long saga of damaging patronage

Photo:
Romano Cagnon
(Report)

Lord Kagan, once prominent for his friendship with Harold Wilson and other Labour ministers, was last month [12 December] sentenced to 10 months imprisonment at Leeds Crown Court, after pleading guilty to charges of theft from his own company, fraud, and false accounting.

Kagan's downfall has once again aroused anger among Labour Party members at the way the Labour leaders have continually handed out ridiculous, out-moded titles and honours to businessmen, property dealers and the like.

Kagan was knighted in 1970, but—as the 'Daily Telegraph' put it, "his supreme moment was a life Peerage in Sir Harold Wilson's controversial 1976 honours list."

Kagan, however, also held an honorary position in his local Elland Labour Party, a position which did not go unchallenged by local members. Jim Wilson tells the story.

I joined the Labour Party in the winter of '72 in the small, Pennine textile town of Elland near Halifax. Elland has a population of about twenty-thousand and is one of the four principal towns of the constituency of Sowerby.

At the time, most of the party were elderly, either working in or retired from the local mills. Many were Methodists and teetotal.

Bad language was never used at meetings which were held under a portrait of the Queen left over from Royal British Legion meetings.

Ironically, the honorary president of the party was Lord Kagan, then Sir Joseph Kagan.

At my first AGM in January '73 I opposed Kagan's automatic re-election on the ground that it was wrong, morally and pragmatically, for a workers' party to adopt a capitalist president.

Harold Wilson wearing his Gannex raincoat during the 1964 election campaign

By Jim Wilson

My objections were politely swept aside by the general argument that it was somehow to the party's advantage because some of his esteem and money would rub off on the local party.

Underlying the argument in favour of his reselection was, of course, his public friendship with Harold Wilson.

I am writing now from memory but apart from a loan of £300 to repair the roof of the Labour Rooms I cannot recall any financial aid in my five years at Elland.

Inspired by the events of the winter of '73 some of us decided to nominate another candidate for the presidency at the '74 AGM.

Our candidate was an old party stalwart—who at the time was secretary and treasurer of the local 'Dyers and Bleachers' (NUDBTW)—a few years earlier he had been National President. He was a serving councillor and a staunch canvasser. He worked in a local dyehouse.

Despite our candidate's credentials and general high esteem he was defeated by about two-to-one at the AGM and Kagan retained the honorary presidency.

It is unlikely there was any conspiracy to re-elect him, but a general fear that his defeat would stir up a hornets' nest. The older members, burdened as they were with the mechanics of the running of the party, could not face the fuss and suspect this was the basis of his support.

There was also a fear of irreverence to an "important man."

Undaunted by defeat, however, our candidate ran again



at the January '75 AGM and this time there was something of a campaign. Our position was entirely political, based on the class issues involved and the contradiction of having a capitalist president of a workers' party.

There was considerable debate in the party and advice was given by the Regional Office who expressed concern at the bad publicity Kagan's removal might attract.

Now I have to point out that Kagan had two houses near Elland: one at Flixby; in Huddersfield West constituency and one at Barkisland, in Sowerby constituency, but not in the Elland Party's area, and he seemed to flit from one electoral roll to the other.

His involvement in Elland was through his Gannex mill in the town. Eventually, on assurances that Kagan would be transferring back to the Huddersfield W roll and not standing for president we withdrew our candidate as a

compromise to those members who feared a press scandal.

Kagan did stand, however, and was duly re-elected president in which office he remained until on or about the winter night in '78 when he was due to be guest of honour at Elland Labour Party's annual dinner—when he made his hasty departure for Spain.

At this juncture it was discovered that no such position as honorary president existed in the Elland constitution, and from that day on the position has ceased to exist.

It was, in truth, created for Kagan.

The lessons of this tale are all too obvious to be stated, of course. But looking back those few years and knowing how unlikely it is that such a situation occur now, it wondrously indicates what progress is being made towards the party our grandparents once set out to build.

The music moved me too, but ...

The world famous cellist Paul Tortelier and his pianist daughter Maria De La Pau recently performed a concert in Birkenhead town hall.

This prestigious concert was sponsored by Birkenhead Arts Association, with a grant from Mobil Oil.

During the interval the spokesman for BAA told us this would be the last concert held at Birkenhead Assembly Hall. It is estimated that £20,000-£30,000 worth of work needs to be done to bring it into line with fire and safety regulations.

He said he found it difficult to speak, as he was overcome with emotion to hear such beautiful music, to have such people of this calibre in Birkenhead.

Undeniably, the performances and genius of these artists moved me too, but for different reasons. My tears were for the people of nearby Woodchurch Estate shown on TV's Nationwide, and the poverty and lack of amenities available. For the young mum without gas and electricity.

By Joan Baugh
(Birkenhead Labour Party)

For Bowaters men and women who will soon lose their jobs. For Shotton, Girlings, and the soon to be trimmed off Spillers and Prices.

I thought of my youth club, where I work, to be closed in January, and all the young people without jobs. Yes, I cried and found it hard to equate that this was all happening in the same area.

"Where's it going to end?"

Saturday morning found myself, my husband (a Vauxhall worker on short-time) and sons joining a demonstration to stop the closure of livingston Street swimming pool. Ironically, a poster of Tortelier was posted on the baths, advertising the previous night's concert.

The demonstration included many women and children angry at the prospect of

having to travel to the other end of town, adding a bus ride to the already inflated price for a swim. As a woman commented to me; "I know it's old, but it's all we have until a new one is built."

"You just don't feel safe," said another lady. "Where is it going to end?"

As the demonstration moved off, it started to rain and by the time we reached Birkenhead town hall all were drenched. The sight of a demonstration of mainly women and children, babies and the Boy's Brigade, drenched to the skin made me so angry.

I am angry at Mr Tortelier and daughter who command enormous fees for their performance. In particular, I am livid at the Mobil Oil bosses who probably contribute to the polluting of the River Mersey where I swam as a child—but did not see fit to back Livingston Street swimming baths.

It is graphically clear to me just how hard we have got to fight. But we must fight. It is hard. I know so many commitments pull us one way and another, but a commitment to bring about socialism is essential if we are to enjoy a

decent life-style—a life-style that develops to the full the potential of working-class children.

We must be generous with our time, be active with our money, and I feel sure when socialism arrives we will replace Tortelier and other such artists with virtuosos from the working class who will perform their art for the love of music and not money.

'The Marxist Theory of the State'
By Ted Grant

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Steam comes to Manchester

Mosedale's always been a family firm—Dickensian style that is. Their machinery and hostility against unions is really Victorian.

Five years ago the brick works got a steam engine. Admittedly it was 70 years old at the time but the wheels of progress grind slowly for British business.

Much of the work is heavy and the machinery dangerous. There's a mixer which has huge steel blades revolving continually. If anything gets trapped in there, even a stone, you'll see it smashed into a thousand pieces.

Before a union was established, all that was guarding the machinery was a wooden fence and a gate; literally a garden gate, opening that mixer. Now we've had guards installed with interlocks on. The keys which open the locks must first go through the process of stopping the machinery.

There have been accidents. About five years ago one of the men who work on the trams which takes the bricks from the drier forgot to put on a catch. You're operating these catches sometimes 80 times a day, so it's easy to forget once.

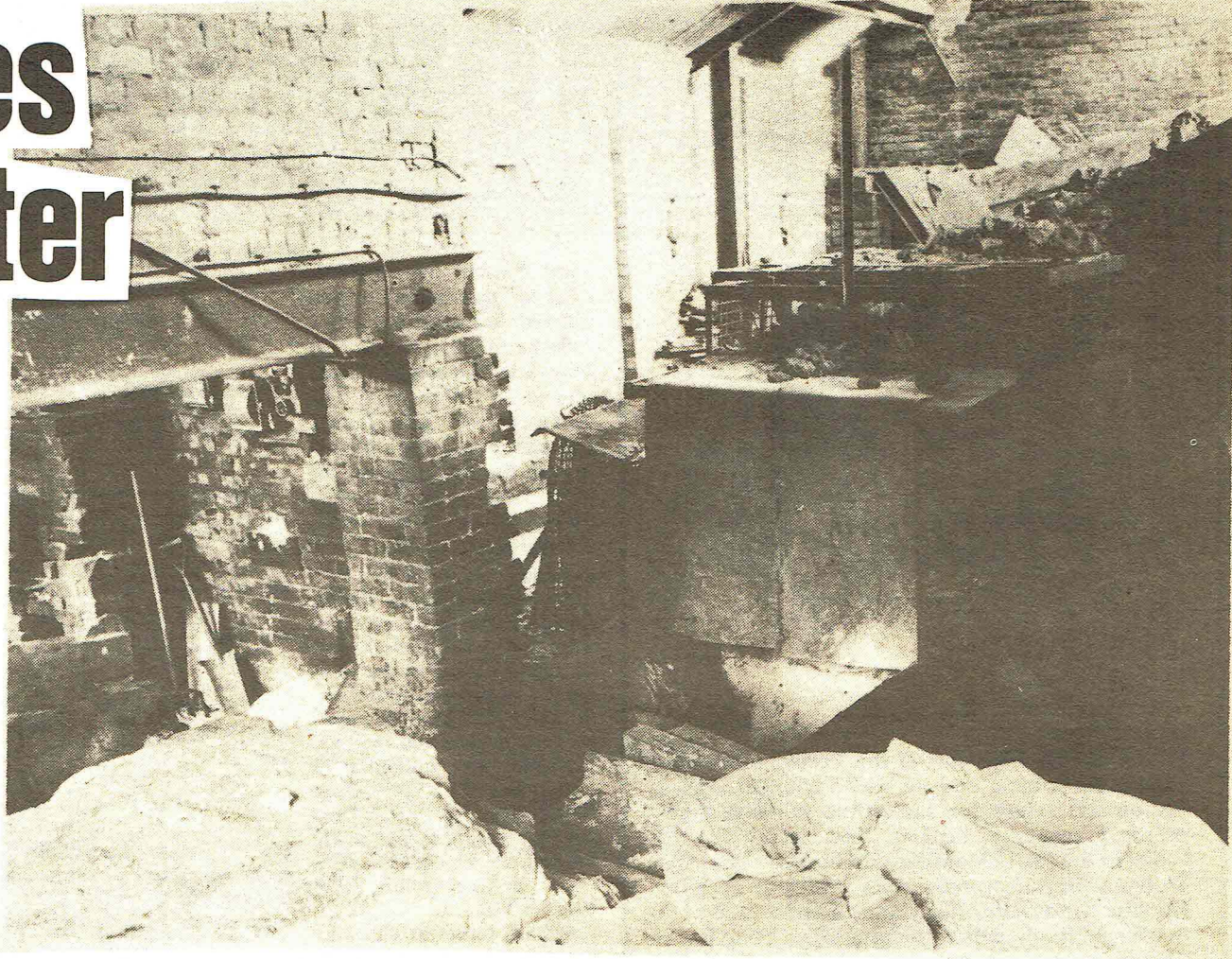
Margaret Creear talked to Alan Madigan (Shop Steward T&GWU Mosedale)

Report of current dispute at works see page 15

The car rolled off on top of him. He smashed one leg in three places and tore the ligaments in the other leg. He was trapped between two tons of brick, a steel car and a fork lift truck.

At this time we weren't unionised and the management's attitude was typical. They phoned the hospital while he was waiting to go into the operating theatre and said they'd pay him for the rest of the day. Considering this happened at two in the afternoon it wasn't so big of them in the first place.

Signs have gone up since we got the union warning people of the dangers; we've had the catches painted, the lighting in the driers has been improved and floors have been put into the general area



Part of the run-down, antiquated Mosedale brick works

Photo: Colin Wolfenden

where previously workers had to balance on lines or pipes. But we want further improvements. We want to install electronic catch buttons, so that an alarm would go off if one wasn't fastened.

There's still a lot of work to be done. We campaigned through the health and safety at work committee for safety helmets in the kiln, alarms on the fork lift trucks for reversing and various other improvements.

The kiln work is very dangerous. When the bricks are heated inside the kiln, the whole chamber goes bright

red. We allow three or four days for the chamber to cool down and then the doorway to the kiln is knocked down.

The forklift truck drivers go in while it's still hot. Sometimes it's so hot that your jeans get set alight or the wheels of the truck start to burn so that you have to reverse out quick into a puddle.

Fortunately there's always a puddle in the yard from water draining off a slag heap at the back of the works! It's a very hot job and you'll see workers on the picket line now with blue scars on their

arms like foundry workers.

It's not just the works themselves but all the facilities. Here we've made big strides forward. At one time we had a canteen or rather a shed where they kept the cement mixer and bags of cement. There was no heating or lighting or even a door.

Now we've got a proper ceiling and floor, central heating, strip lighting, a cooker and furniture. The same goes for the toilets. There was no one employed to look after them and in the hot summer of '76 the management turned off the water to

conserve it...there was quite an uproar over that! Now through the union someone has been taken on to do the cleaning etc., and they've just completed a new locker unit.

The firm is still run by the local family. One director stood for the Tory party in local elections. The company secretary, John Mosedale, sits on the local Round Table and prides himself on charity work. If he really is the dedicated charitable person he wants people to think he is, he could start by improving this works and not by trying to destroy the union.

They tell us we're useless

Who is responsible for an increase in crime and suicide?

Merseyside with a 14.2% unemployment rate has seen a 16% increase in burglaries during the first five months of 1980 compared to the same period last year.

The general secretary of the Samaritans reported that for many years they had been

receiving calls from men aged about 50 who had been made redundant and had little chance of a new job. "Many had not told their wives, but continued to go out at the same time every morning, pretending to have work, and not returning until the evening."

A conference on unemployment and mental health was recently held in Paris on the

effect of economic depression upon the health of the individual.

"According to Dr Jean Delivre, the only doctor for 3,800 patients in Longwy—a town in Lorraine which has lost its steel industry—his work load has increased five fold in recent months." He found that many people forced to join the dole queue had become depressed, while

others had developed physical disorders such as gastritis, ulcers, eczema and psoriasis.

A report prepared for the CGT trade union federation showed that the likelihood of mental disease was more than twice as high among people leaving their jobs, while a further report showed that "for France alone 800 young people a year committed suicide now through being unable to find a job, while the number of young drug, alcohol and tobacco addicts

were growing." (10 December 1980)

What greater crime is there than dumping more than 2 million on the dole? Workers, whether in middle age or leaving school are being told that they are worthless and have nothing to contribute to society, while there is a desperate need for more hospitals, schools and houses.

It is the bosses' system—they control industry and the economy. All the capitalist class offers is a stronger police

force and army along with harsher punishments for the criminals with short sharp shocks.

Only a Labour government implementing a truly socialist programme backed with the power of the trade union and labour movement can transform society so that workers can enjoy the full fruits of life instead of a continual struggle from cradle to grave.

By Keith McIntyre

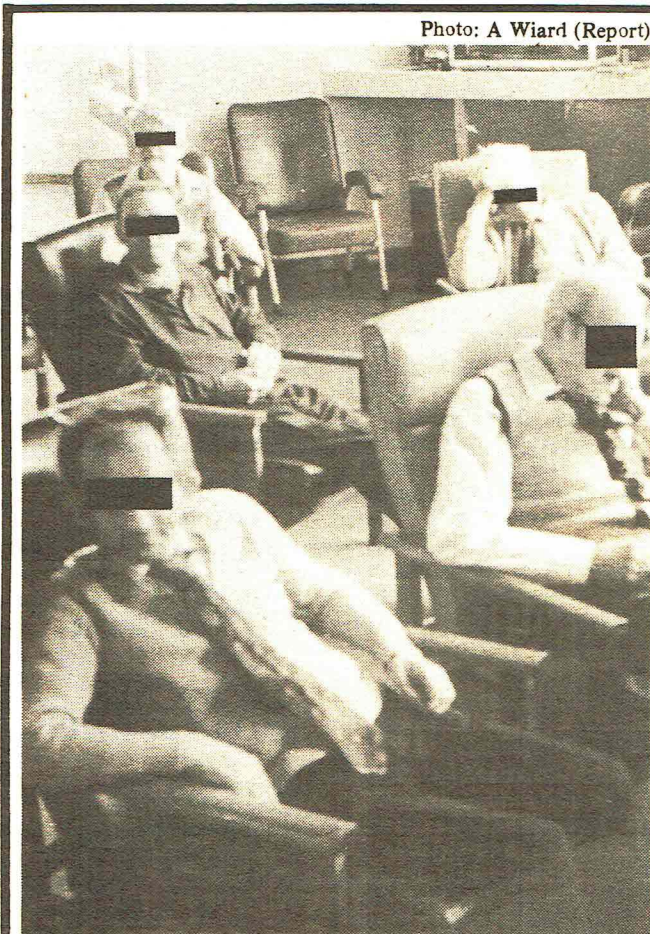


Photo: A Wiard (Report)

Cuts cause real hardship to elderly patients in psychiatric wards

TRYING TO COPE

By Sue Hinchcliffe (Newcastle Central CLP)

Christmas week is hectic on the ward—will the patients' laundry return in time? Will the men have to wear ladies' knickers again due to the shortage of mens' underpants? Will the ladies have enough stockings to go round?

Makeshift socks from bandages provide the answer for mens' footwear. No blankets; no towels—20 incontinent patients, we will just have to use sheets again for bathing.

On the 19 December the patients Christmas party is organised. A generous spread of cakes and trifles, sandwiches and sweets. Hot tea is desperately needed as the heating system on the ward has broken down again. Today of all days, we so wanted the patients to enjoy themselves.

Wait though, we've got a good idea, wheel in the tumble drier that will give off some heat. Thirty

patients wrapped in shawls and blankets too cold to move, three or four huddled around the drier. The heating engineers have arrived but the heaters are still inadequate the following week.

Shortly after the party one of our ladies died during the night. I'm not surprised with the temperature of her room she probably died of hypothermia.

December 28th, we've got an admission but with no blankets left she will just have to bring her own.

December 29, four staff on, patients quite disturbed, wandering all over, the nurses are so busy. 'Where's Mr.....? Oh no, come quickly he's lying in the corridor. How long has he been there? I don't

know, we were in the bathroom.' The patient was found lying against a hot pipe and sustained burns to his buttocks.

The following day another patient falls, causing a fracture. A few days later he is dead.

This grim but accurate picture is not just for one week out of 52 but all year round. With the cuts in the next year the standard of care we can offer our patients will be purely custodial.

Nurses battle on trying to provide some kind of life for the elderly patients who are spending their last days in a psychiatric hospital. Overtime is worked consistently to cover the wards. Management victimise those who refuse to work overtime and nurses go home exhausted but feeling guilty for not offering, knowing that the wards will be inadequately covered.

"Don't make a habit of drilling your thigh"

One Monday morning Stan Greene was drilling on the workbench in his firm's yard when the drill slipped and pierced his thigh. Stan was taken to the Victoria Hospital in Woking and given treatment (injections and penicillin).

Stan was told to stay off work until it had completely healed. On the Thursday of that week, three days after the accident, Stan returned to work.

Stan's boss asked him into the office and said, "I have had a word with my partner and we had decided to pay this time but do not make a habit of it and do not tell the rest because they will all be drilling their legs and having time off." Stan, a sheet metal worker, has been with this company for 14 years.

RATE RISE NO ANSWER TO TORY CUTS

This Saturday [17 January] delegates from trade unions, Labour Parties, Labour councils and Labour groups from all over the country will be attending the recall conference, called by Lambeth council, on the crisis facing local government.

Lambeth council, led by left-winger Ted Knight, has received much publicity for its protests against the Tories' savage cuts in public expenditure.

By
John Bulaitis

In October 1979, the council organised a demonstration of 20,000 workers against the cuts. Recently there has been a demonstration by dustmen, and council workers are now planning a two-week protest strike against the Tory government.

Last September, Heseltine cut £3 million in urban aid from three London boroughs, and slashed another £18 million in grants from 14 'over-spenders'—ten of which are Labour-controlled London councils. He also held back £200 million from the £1,400 million ear-marked to compensate for inflation.

This move clearly hit the inner-city boroughs hardest—boroughs with the worst housing, education, and other social and employment problems. The cuts were made despite the fact that local authority expenditure was only 2.6% over its budget, about normal for that period of the financial year.

Central government spend-

ing, however, was 20% above its target—despite Thatcher's determination to cut spending. This was largely caused by the government's vicious deflationary policies pushing up unemployment pay and social security benefits for the victims of Tory policies.

But how can the Tories be forced to retreat? Does the policy adopted by Lambeth council hold out a serious possibility of defeating the Tories?

If the labour movement nationally took up the cudgels, Heseltine and his cronies would be forced to back down. The disgraceful utterances of Labour's Front-bench spokesman Roy Hattersley, that councils should not resist the cuts because the Tories "have a mandate," must be rejected. Labour councils have a mandate to defend jobs and services.

However, in the absence of a national lead, it is not enough for individual local authorities to sit back and wait for the movement to develop, in the meantime



Lambeth Conference last year. Action is now needed

Photo: Tessa Howland (IFL)

making cuts and raising rates.

One big, inner-city council like Lambeth making a stand and resisting the Tories could act as a catalyst for a widespread campaign of resistance to Tory measures.

Bold proclamations, accompanied by half-hearted opposition to the Tory measures and even partial retreats, can never provide the basis for building a strong movement.

At the start of the Tory government, some of the Lambeth leaders even spoke in favour of accepting some cuts in order to gain a "breathing space" to prepare for a fight at a later stage. Such "temporary" concessions, however, only undermine workers' confidence in the determination of the council to fight.

When pressure was felt from the trade unions and Labour Parties locally, the council leaders came out with a "no cuts" policy. But at the same time, they advocated a policy of raising the rates to avoid making cuts.

But rate rises are a cut by another name. It may be argued that cuts passed on through the rates are more evenly and fairly spread. But this still amounts to a general cut in living standards for working class people in the area—no basis at all for mobilising mass support for a fight against the Tories.

Already, the average family in Lambeth pays £6 a week in

rates. With the supplementary rate of £4 now being levied by the council, this has gone up to £10 a week.

Rate increases will not force the Tories to back down. Heseltine will use his powers under the new Local Government Act either to cut the rate support grant or even prohibit further rate rises. Thus the strategy of "avoiding" cuts through putting up rates will neither avoid cuts nor save jobs.

More importantly, it will undermine working-class support for Lambeth's Labour council. While it is clearly the Tories who are responsible for the cuts and the rate increases, thousands of ordinary workers will hold the Labour council responsible for the increases.

Rate increases cannot save jobs in the direct labour, architects' or engineers' departments. The housing investment programme has now been taken under the direct control of central government.

In addition to the astronomical increase in rates, moreover, council tenants in Lambeth have been hit by a 25% increase in heating costs and a £3.25 rent increase imposed by Heseltine.

Meanwhile, the Labour council has been warned (at the end of December) by the district auditor that it may have no legal power to raise further loans on the money market.

In October, it was reported

that a number of merchant bankers were threatening that Lambeth and other "rebel councils" could be hit by a bankers' strike—with a refusal of bankers and other finance houses to raise further loans for council expenditure.

Lambeth now has an outstanding debt of about £400 million, and has to borrow an extra £50 million every year just to stay afloat. Interest alone costs the council £1 million a week.

Without these enormous sums going to financial parasites in the City of London there would be no "overspending" in Lambeth.

The responsibility of the big-business money lenders for Lambeth's crisis should be brought home to every rate-payer and every tenant in the borough. The fight against the cuts should be actively linked to the Labour Party's policy of nationalising the banks and finance houses.

Unless such a fighting, socialist policy is adopted. Labour in Lambeth could face a disastrous defeat.

The present policy of the Labour group, of proclaiming that they are fighting the cuts while the rates and rents are still rising, and local council jobs are far from safe, only demoralises Labour supporters.

Whatever the council's intention, the Labour council will in the eyes of thousands of workers, take the blame for a drastic cut in living standards.

VAUXHALL REJECTS EXTRA RATE

Vauxhall Labour Party general management committee recently discussed two motions opposing the levy of a supplementary rate of £4 a week. Three of the four labour councillors present argued for a further increase on a rate which, even by London standards, is already high.

This is the position of the majority of labour councillors, despite the commitment given at the special London Labour Party Conference in October that a Labour Greater London Council would not introduce rate increases, rent increases, or cuts to implement Tory policies.

The councillors explained their retreat by saying that either rate increases or redundancies were inevitable. The council would be declared bankrupt, labour councillors would be disqualified, and the Tories or commissioners would be brought into slash manpower and services unless they agreed to the auditors demand for a supplementary rate increase.

They feel it is most important to hold on to office into the new financial year beginning in April. Unfortunately, they seem unable to see beyond April.

What will their position be when Heseltine penalises Lambeth's "overspending" by cutting the rate support grant still further? Will they propose still further rate increases or will they then resort to cuts?

One of the councillors admitted to me that he expected to lose the next local election after a succession of rate, rent and heating costs increases. Trade unionists and Labour voters can hardly be expected to give enthusiastic support to the councillors if local workers are going to have to make good the Tory cuts in public expenditure.

Vauxhall's general management committee, showing considerably more foresight than the councillors, and voted to reject this strategy.

By Mick Carroll

Heseltine can be stopped

The local government conference organised by Lambeth council in November adopted a policy that included:

- ★ No cuts in jobs and services
- ★ No rent rises or supplementary rate increases
- ★ No rent or rate increases to compensate for government cuts
- ★ No sale of council houses
- ★ Strikes and occupations if the Tories move against councils that make a stand.

This is the policy Lambeth council must adopt now if it is to have any realistic chance of defeating the Tories. But already the council have further retreated from this policy by agreeing to sell council houses and imple-

ment a supplementary rate increase.

Of course, the 'November' policy would fly in the face of the Tories' deflationary economic policies. It would be a policy of defiance and confrontation, saying to the government: "we refuse to balance the books; if you want them balanced you provide the money."

The leaders of Lambeth's labour group have said that such a policy is too risky, the council would be declared bankrupt and commissioners sent in. Of course there are risks included.

In any form of struggle, whether a strike or occupation, workers take risks. There can never be a cast iron guarantee of success.

The demonstration organised last year by Lambeth council showed the support that could be generated for a

real struggle against the Tories. In April, every council will be asked to make massive cuts by the Tories. A stand now by Lambeth could rally the support of other councils for a national battle against the Tories.

If the council were dismissed, then Labour should put up fresh teams of councillors to fight an election on a platform of continued resistance to the government. If commissioners were put in to make cuts, levy a supplementary rate, and put rents up, then they must be met by a campaign of resistance, with industrial action, occupations, rent and rate strikes, and an attempt to spread the struggle to the private sector and other boroughs.

A properly prepared campaign of action with a bold lead from the councillors, Labour Parties and trade



Part of 20,000 protest march organised by Lambeth Council in November 1979

unions would force Heseltine to back down.

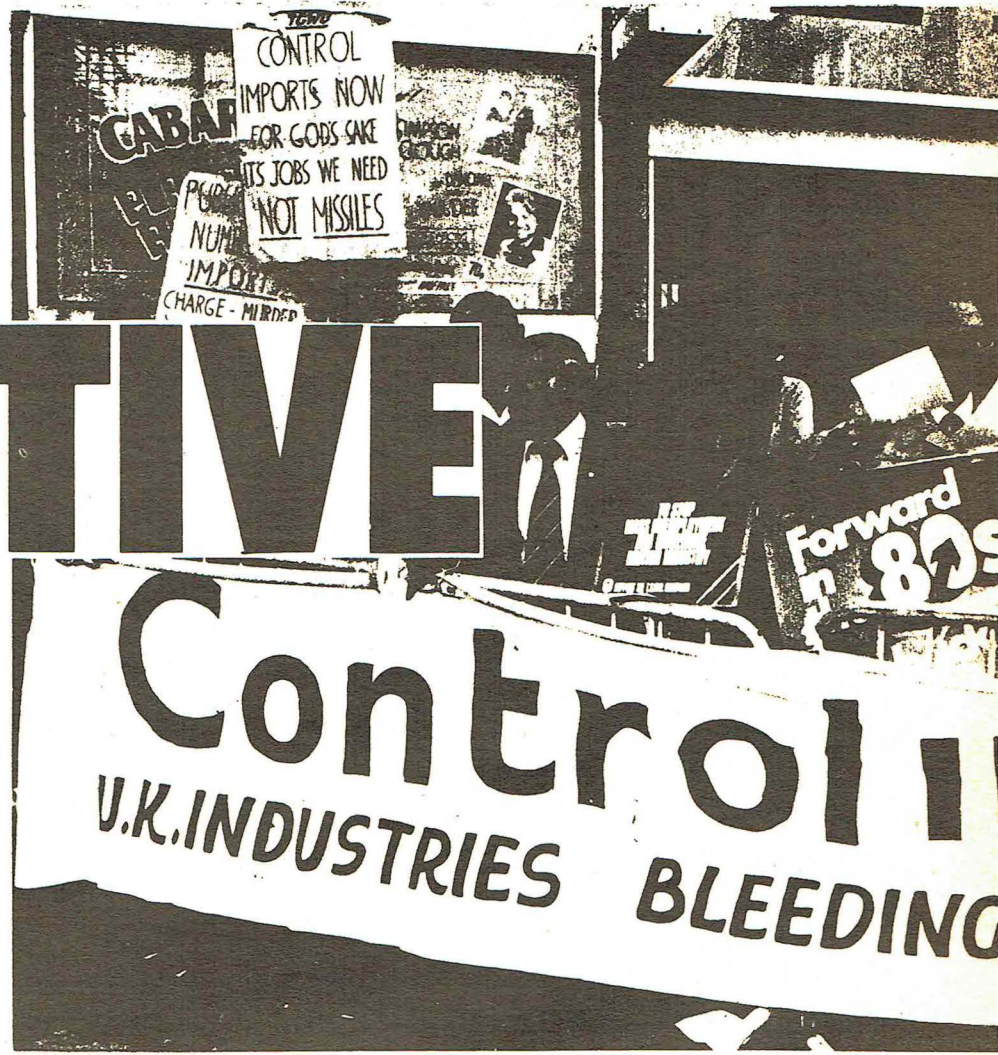
Such a campaign should not be restricted to just Labour Party meetings. It must have estate, street meetings, factory and workplace discussions to rally support for the campaign.

Councils in Lambeth and elsewhere are now faced with a stark choice: either carrying

on trying to avoid confrontation with the Tories and thus attacking workers' living standards and services; or follow the traditions of Poplar council in the '20s and become the spearhead of a mass national campaign to bring down the Tories.

That is the strategy the Recall Conference this weekend must adopt.

NO REAL ALTERNATIVE



The main elements of the Alternative Economic Strategy [AES] are the official policy of the Labour Party and have been since 1972. Yet there is insufficient discussion on it.

It suits the Right to have the AES kept as vague as possible so that any alternative to Thatcher's policy, such as relaxing monetary control or reducing the severity of spending cuts, can be concocted from the AES, while shuffling aside the anti-capitalist parts like selective nationalisation.

Some on the Left argue that the failure of the last Labour government to carry out the AES was simply a reflection of lack of grass-roots control over the PLP, and that this has been remedied, partially at least, by Conference decisions on party democracy. Now, they argue, the main task is to unite against the Tories and not engage in "sectarian" discussions as to whether the programme itself is adequate.

The ultra-left even argue that any discussion of an alternative political programme is a diversion from local struggles against the effects of Tory policies.

In one way or another all these points of view display a dangerous contempt for the activists who see the need for a convincing and radical alternative to Thatcher, which comes to grips with the crisis in British society and the power structure which has to be overcome.

In this context 'The AES' published by the Conference of Socialist Economists (CSE) and the Labour Co-ordinating Committee, is thoroughly welcome as the clearest and most comprehensive version of the AES yet published. It is also distinguished from other accounts by the fact that it attempts to analyse the problems which implementation of the AES would encounter.

Indeed, substantial parts of the book are devoted to meeting criticisms from the left—bits of it read like a dialogue with a 'Militant' supporter!

In essence, replacing a capitalist economy with a socialist one means replacing production for profit by production for need. The socialist case for the AES is that the best that can be achieved at present is to "reduce the role of profit in the economy" (p.45, our emphasis).

But is reducing the role of

profit really a more immediately attainable objective which would be "transitional" (in their phrase) to abolishing it completely?

Abolishing the role of profit requires the nationalisation of all the commanding heights of the economy. How then does the CSE group propose that its role can be reduced?

The most striking feature of their presentation of the AES is the low priority to nationalisations. They half accept criticisms of the idea that selective nationalisation (one profitable firm in each key sector) will allow "the behaviour of private sector firms to be moulded by competition from publicly owned firms."

They add that "workers in a company faced with bankruptcy because of a public firm receiving subsidies or operating with lower rates of return will be just as vocal in opposing "unfair competition from the state" (p.71/72).

Their main idea seems to be that nationalisation of "dominant profitable firms... provides the opportunity for new forms of successful public ownership, allowing new relationships between workforce and management and provides hope for improvement in areas where there is a popular perception of failure."

Planning agreements leave industry in private hands

But just how could these nationalised firms operate successfully according to the criteria of production for need when they are operating in competitive industries which will "subject them to the logic of capitalism even more directly than the existing public monopolies"?

Forced to admit that a nationalised tail will not be able to wag a capitalist dog, all the group can hope for is that "political determination" will allow the tail to wag according to its own laws (which might indeed disorientate the dog but which unfortunately is physiologically impossible).

Again, they give little priority to nationalisation of the banking system, simply saying that it "could allow a greater control over the allocation of credit" (p.76), presumably accepting the argument that it would not give firm control over industrial firms left in private hands.

This, of course, is the crunch question for supporters of the AES. The CSE group sees planning agreements as the crucial weapon, and describes them thus:

"an agreement negotiated annually, but for a five-year period which would cover the main strategic decisions taken by companies on investment levels and location, employment, price policy and the like. It would be negotiated between management and government with the trade unions playing an important role.

"The government would have available a variety of sanctions and incentives to enforce the agreement including allocation of selective aid and discretionary tax relief, control of funds channelled through a National Investment Bank...public purchasing policy, planning permission and permission for price increases...

"a final sanction of nationalisation in cases of obstinate non-co-operation would be available." (p. 77)

The Group makes it quite clear that it sees planning agreements as cutting directly across the criterion of profitability. Projects will be drawn up according to "non-market or social criteria" (ie. need); finance will be provided from government sources (so the capitalists cannot plead lack of funds); and the role of profit as giving the incentive to invest can be at least "to some extent supplanted...by using appropriate sanction and non-profit incentives."

But actually these "sanctions and non-profit incentives" are not "non-profit" at all. They are based on the threat to the capitalists that if they do not invest in a particular place then the government will do something to them, refuse to buy things from them or, in the last resort, nationalise them which will cut their profits much more than the particular investment project.

The capitalists, being rational "profit maximisers," will take the option which is most profitable, or rather least unprofitable, accept the new "rules of the game" and do what the government says.

But will they? They have a third option, of course, which is to "Subvert attempts at planning and to resist attempts at the imposition of social control...It is not difficult to see that any measures taken to deal with this problem through the exercise of more direct control by the government or the trade unions would simply

harden the opposition of Capital and could result in an all-out investment strike." (p.73)

Now, if the CSE Group believe that this will happen, which is not too clear, they are actually admitting that it is impossible to "reduce" the role of profitability. The whole basis of their strategy collapses.

The Group thinks that overcoming capitalist opposition is possible given sufficient mobilisation around and support for the strategy. But this process would surely not

leave industry in private hands. Workers could only defeat economic sabotage by widespread strikes and occupations of the factories. Does the Group really envisage the factories being handed back to the bosses in return for a "No investment-strike" agreement?

This review has concentrated on the central question of whether the capitalists could actually be regimented and directed under an AES; whether, in effect, they could be made to carry out their operations according to

Andrew Glyn analyses alternative economic



'The Alternative Economic Strategy' published by the Conference of Socialist Economists and Labour Co-ordinating Committee obtainable from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Price £2.80 inc. p&p.

'State Intervention in Industry' [reviewed on page 9] price £2 [plus post and packing] from c/o Newcastle Trades Council Centre for Unemployed, 5 Queen Street, Newcastle 1.

"socialist criteria." It is the central question because if they could, then many objections to parts of the AES would lose their force.

Import controls would be "Planned-trade" in reality and not in name; industries would be restructured, living standards would not be cut in the context of expanding production, and retaliation could be met by appeals to the labour movement abroad on the basis of the anti-capitalist programme being implemented.

With take-home pay and public spending being increased, a planned growth of incomes worked out by the trade union movement would be a necessary part of overall planning and not wage cuts under another name (the Group produces the amazing figure that between 1948 and 1976 there were 14 years in which incomes policies operated and over these periods



...ses Labour's ...nic strategy



PHOTOS: Top: a lobby of Labour Party Conference takes up one demand of the AES. **Below:** trade union leaders on demonstration last March call for the Tories to implement the programme

real take-home pay fell by 2%, whilst in the periods without incomes policy it rose by over 45%)

But planning agreements and so forth would not give a Labour government the control necessary to make realities of 'planned trade' and a socialist plan for incomes.

Commanding heights of economy

Any strategy for socialism will encounter opposition from the employers, using not only their economic power but also their control over the state machinery. But the weakness of the AES is that by deliberately leaving the economic levers so firmly in the hands of the capitalists, it will allow them to undermine the benefits from a planned expansion which the Group quite correctly stresses.

We cannot accept the argument that it is actually impossible to build up mass support for a programme of taking over the commanding heights of the economy as the only way of supplanting production for profit by production for need.

As the CBI is fond of telling us, profit has become a "dirty word," and quite rightly so in view of the misery and suffering being inflicted on the mass of people in its name.

By showing the impossibility under production for profit of essential demands, such as full employment and an £80 minimum wage, and by explaining how they could be guaranteed under a socialist plan, enormous support will be built up for depriving the capitalists definitely of their economic power.

The AES does not measure up to the tasks set for it.

NATIONAL ENTERPRISE BOARD

In July 1973 the big business journal "Management Today" referred in horror to Labour's proposals for selective nationalisation of industry and the setting up of a National Enterprise Board as a "monstrosity".

Yet only a few years later the same journal was to comment approvingly: "No British institution has ever diverged quite as sharply as the NEB from the track which its designers tried to lay down."

This book (for details see opposite) documents, through the bitter experience of the workers involved, how the hopes of the labour movement were dashed through the failure of the last Labour government's industrial policy.

How and why did this happen?

The first stage was the watering down of the original proposals by Labour's right-wing even before they reached parliament. Harold Wilson in his autobiography described what happened to the draft White Paper:

"A special committee of senior ministers was set up under my chairmanship to mastermind its re-drafting, which quickly decided that the document should be re-written....The section on planning agreements was cut down to size....The role and powers of the NEB were strictly defined; above all it was to have no marauding role."

Next, the remaining proposals were even further diluted under pressure from the CBI, who stated quite bluntly that they "regarded as non-negotiable any attempt to subject the leading 100 companies to a planning agreement system."

Finally, further to placate the employers, Tony Benn was removed as Minister of Industry.

Most of the book describes how in case after case—British Leyland, Alfred Herberts, Vickers and many others—the NEB was used as a means of carrying out rationalisations and redundancies often without even consulting the workers involved beforehand.

The fate of so-called planning agreements is best illustrated by the case of Chrysler. Here the trade unions established that the American parent company had been systematically stripping the assets of the UK operation, underinvesting and using false transfer pricing to artificially lower profits in this country and pay less tax.

The shop stewards realised quite clearly that "the only fundamental approach to the protection of jobs is to demand and to achieve nationalisation of Chrysler (UK) without compensation...."

Moreover, Chrysler's chief executive actually offered Chrysler UK to the government in December 1975 and was willing to pay £35 million as well. What was the government's response to this ideal

By Jim Hensman

candidate for taking over? They pleaded for Chrysler to stay and offered them £169 million into the bargain!

The subsequent redundancies and the eventual decision of the company to sell Chrysler UK to Peugeot-Citroën in August 1978, without notifying the government or workforce, showed how much respect the company had for the planning agreement they had entered into.

Although, as this book shows, the record of Labour's industrial policy was a tragic one, it also looks at two cases of NEB involvement which, despite government policy, were partial successes.

In 1977, in response to the crisis in the power turbine industry, the government attempted to back a GEC takeover at the expense of CA Parsons, the other manufacturer involved. However, the organisation of the Parsons workforce prevented this, and also forced the bringing forward of the Drax B power station order.

The other case was that of the workers at Lucas Aerospace, who produced their Alternative Corporate Plan in 1976 as a policy to fight redundancies. The Lucas example clearly revealed the tie-up between big business and the upper reaches of the 'impartial' Civil Service.

The Permanent Secretary at the Department of Industry Sir Antony Part, left the Civil Service in June 1976 to become a director of Lucas four months later. In turn, the Deputy Chairman of Lucas Aerospace, John Williams, was seconded to the NEB in 1978.

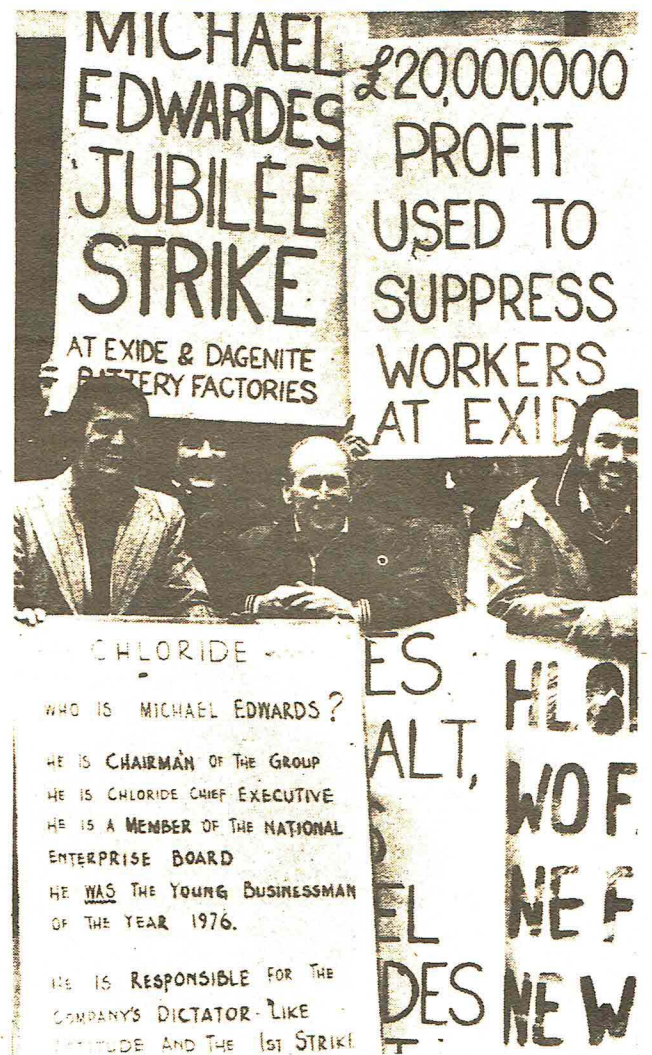
Despite these connections, and the ignoring by the government of the shop stewards' initiatives, the Lucas workers were able to resist most of the redundancies they were threatened with.

In both the Parsons and Lucas Aerospace cases one of the keys to the workers' success was having a clear strategy worked out and involving the rank and file in the decisions taken during the struggle. In both cases the shop stewards were able to maintain pressure on the national trade unions and regional Confed organisations while creating flexible organisations of their own.

Although the right-wing leadership of the Labour Party are shown up for their inability and unwillingness to defend workers' interests against the employers, the book is rightly critical of the left wing as well. Particularly apparent is their failure to mobilise support among the grass roots of the trade union movement for their policies.

The book clearly draws out

You can't control what you don't own



The presence of such characters as Edwardes on the NEB showed its real nature.

the need for strong rank and file organisation at plant, combine and wider level to fight for and implement socialist policies.

Central to the book is the conclusions it draws that "the structures of the present type of state are so biased towards the private corporations that working class people cannot rely on a socialist government being able to use this state to destroy the powers of these corporations."

The fundamental error in Labour's policy is well summed up in the statement quoted in the book: "You cannot plan what you do not control and you cannot control what you do not own."

This "workers' enquiry" should be read by anyone interested in why the last Labour government failed and how the mistakes it made can be avoided in the future. Although the book does not discuss the wider aspects of the political programme that is required by the movement,

several issues and ideas that could be taken up in future campaigns suggest themselves.

Initiatives such as the Lucas Aerospace Alternative Plan could be extended into a socialist plan of production for society as a whole, drawn up by the Labour Party, shop stewards committees and other trade union organisations, which could provide a powerful mobilising force throughout the movement.

The method by which this book was written—as a joint trades council inquiry taking evidence from trade union bodies, MPs and others—is itself an important model to be used in future campaigns.

A conference has been organised for early 1981 around the book and this will undoubtedly form part of the building of an understanding in the labour movement to ensure that the mistakes of the last Labour government are not repeated.



JAPAN: WORKING IN 'HELL'S BATTLEFIELD'

PHOTOS: Left: queuing for food at a soup kitchen in Tokyo in 1945. Right: Japan today, the biggest exporter of cars in the world. How did this phenomenal change come about, and what are the conditions for car workers in modern-day Japan?

Andrew Glyn introduces an account by Matsuoksi of work at a Japanese car factory.

Every week, the Japanese motor firm Nissan (Datsun) place a help-wanted advertisement in the major national papers: "Want to earn a stable income at a super modern factory located in green forests? Two days off every other week! No previous experience required!"

The real conditions in the Japanese motor industry make a mockery of the fine words of the ads.

The industry is often held up as a model for other industries and even economies to copy. Its success has been staggering.

Already in 1977 Japan was by far the biggest exporter of cars in the world, sending abroad twice as many as West Germany. Since 1977 the value of Japanese car exports has doubled.

At the heart of this success has been continual increases in labour productivity, which in Nissan increased twelve times between 1955 and 1975.

By 1973 the industry was producing twice the number of cars per worker as the British industry. Even in the last three years productivity has risen another 40%.

How have these terrific increases been achieved? Firstly by very heavy mechanisation. By 1974 Toyota and Nissan had invested in seven times and five times as much equipment per man as BL.

Wages are slightly higher in Japan than in Britain—in 1978 in the motor industry the differential was estimated to be about 20%. But the enormously higher productivity at present more than covers the higher labour costs

and the huge outlays on plant and equipment.

In 1977 Toyota and Nissan were earning 27% and 20% profit respectively on their capital employed; Leyland on the other hand, paid the inevitable cost of underinvestment. Using old models and antiquated equipment it was earning 1%

But what's it like to work in a Japanese motor factory? The conventional picture is of the paternalistic company looking after all the workers' needs.

The following extracts from an account of work at Nissan by Matsuoksi, published in 1974 in the magazine AMPO, explains why on the contrary, the workers there call it "Hell's Battlefield".

6 The "super-modern" factory roars around the clock; it is so noisy that one would imagine that hell, should one exist, would be a bit quieter.

In his first day at Nissan, the new worker takes part in a day long orientation programme. It consists of a factory tour and brief instructions on the work he is supposed to do.

There is no explanation of the whole assembly process. All that a worker is required to know is how to follow a set of instructions. There are many workers who, after spending years at Nissan, still do not know what part they are making every day.

Division of labour is pursued to the extreme; each worker's operation, not to mention each line of operation, is divided into tiny fragments and arranged to attain maximum efficiency.

Forced to complete each fragment of his work within 100ths of a second an individual auto-worker in 1974, like Chaplin's worker in Modern Times fifty years ago, is no more than a convenient supplement to a machine.

"You feel like you're swimming in oil," says one worker. Without exception a newly employed worker's exposed skin is soon heavily burnt by oil splashes.

Aches in shoulders, waist and neck are normal, since workers hoist parts weighing dozens of kilograms or concentrate on minute parts measured in millimetres or fractions of a millimetre.

"I've lost weight since I started working here," is a common comment. "We won't be able to live long in a filthy place like this."

During the daily eight or nine hours of work, workers are allowed only a one-hour break. At meal time, the 1,000 workers on a floor jam into a tiny dining hall capable of accommodating only about 100, and are served a meal which "tastes much worse than you get in jail."

During the day shift lunch hour, all lights are turned off in order to save electricity; there are no facilities where the workers can rest after a meal; all they can do is to take a nap lying on a newspaper spread on the floor.

Exhausted in the rat race with constantly speeded up assembly lines, Nissan workers suffer frequent labour accidents.

In April 1968 Mr K got a job at Nissan Motor's Muryama plant in a Tokyo suburb. He was assigned to an assembly line to attach engine and tyres to the car body—a very tough job for an unskilled worker.

After his third week he was

ordered to work on the night shift. Half a year later, in October, he fell ill from a cold and months of overwork. When he did not report for work, a supervisor dragged him out of bed in the company dormitory and escorted him back to the assembly line.

Mr K soon broke down and his temperature went up to 104°. The doctor at the company's clinic sent him back to the dormitory with no medication, saying that his was a simple cold and could be shaken off by a nap.

When he got worse the doctor refused to visit him. When his roommates came back from night shift next day, they found Mr K dead in the toilet.

Nissan tried to evade responsibility for Mr K's death by offering his family a condolence gift of 10,000 Yen (£20).

Divide-and-rule tactics

Management know that workers cannot silently endure such conditions forever. The capitalists have therefore equipped themselves with devices to prevent explosions of anger.

Most important is a strictly structured hierarchical supervisory system. The ranks of supervisors are: (1) director, (2) manager, (3) assistant manager, (4) foreman, (5) job instructor, (6) section leader, and (7) big brother. At the lowest ranks of the hierarchy, one supplementary supervisor is chosen for every five workers.

According to unwritten laws of promotion, ranks (3) and above are open only to

college graduates or those who have worked with Nissan for a minimum of 15 consecutive years.

In order to be promoted to ranks (4), (5) and (6), an employee must be either a high school graduate with a minimum of four years of service or above 35 in age; and the low rank of (7) is held only by those recommended unanimously by their superiors.

The road to supervisory rank is thus effectively closed for many workers, especially for those who start working for Nissan in their late 30s and 40s.

Various other devices include: quality control circles organised at the workers' "own initiative"; the labour union; and management conferences jointly run by the union and the company at different levels.

Nissan has thus managed to spread into every corner of the factory a closely-knit spy network enabling management to trace every single move of an individual worker. Under such a vigilante system, each worker is divided from his colleagues and never dares voice complaints openly, even though he knows they are shared by others.

This "divide and rule" tactic is supplemented by tacit discrimination against certain segments of workers. Even regular employees are differentiated into multiple layers of ranks so that they keep watch on each other.

Members of the minority union are ruthlessly screened out in the promotion system. Other workers, such as those in their probation periods, temporary, seasonal and outside sub-contract workers, are exploited and discriminated against even more severely. Like other Japanese auto-

makers, Nissan has extremely high employee turnover. A third of the high school graduates it recruits to its production lines every spring leave Nissan in six months; another third leave in the latter half of the first year; and by the end of the third year 99% leave.

Seasonal workers are indispensable to Nissan especially for assembly work. Many seasonal workers are peasants who come to cities after the rice harvest and go back to their villages the following spring.

The capitalists derive a great deal of advantage from employing these workers to carry 30 to 40% of the peak work load.

Even though they pay short-term workers twice the base salary of a regular employee, they more than save this by not paying them various allowances, insurance, and fringe benefits. Further, they do not have to worry about unorganised workers staging a strike or causing labour disputes—they can be fired at any time.

Not only are the living conditions of seasonal workers atrocious but they are discriminated against in many ways.

They are often assigned to the filthy, dangerous, or hard jobs that regular employees dislike. The capitalists make every possible effort to encourage regular workers to look down on seasonal workers as incompetents incapable of securing good jobs.

The ultimate purpose of the "divide and rule" policy is of course to prevent two groups of workers from staging a joint struggle. 9

A future article will look at the role of the trade union in Japan.

EANES VICTORY WON'T DEFEND WORKERS

Almost seven years have passed since 25 April 1974 when the coup of the Armed Forces Movement against the Caetano dictatorship sparked off an explosive revolutionary movement.



PORTUGAL

Only an independent working class programme can defend the interests of the workers in the towns or rural areas

The Portuguese workers and labour movement face a situation where there's a capitalist government and President Eanes was re-elected with a large majority on 7 December.

In short, they've got to face a government and a president totally against the essential gains of revolution: workers' control of factories, nationalisations, worker's commissions and the agrarian reform.

If we have in mind all the processes that produced the re-election, we'll see clearly who is mainly responsible for this situation. Through refusing to support an independent (from a class point of view), civil and socialist candidate, the leaderships of the Socialist and Communist Parties showed their lack of perspectives.

The Communist Party and Socialist Party weren't able to believe in their own forces, that corresponds to the large support of the labour movement. Their policies caused confusion and will provoke a feeling of frustration and mistrust in the very near future.

What happened is that it seemed there was no other alternative, apart from Eanes,

By Jorge Antonio
Dos Santos

(Oporto Young
Socialists)

nes, to fight the other capitalist leader (Soares Carneiro) supported by the right-wing coalition of Democratic Alliance (AD).

The SP and CP, the leaders of trade-union movement (i.e. the socialist section of UGT; the others supported Soares Carneiro, and the CP controlled union CGTP-IN) tried to convince the workers that Eanes was the only one who could defend "democracy", the "Portuguese Constitution", the one who could stop the "AD" from destroying the "actual regime".

Through not offering an alternative and always presenting Eanes as a "democrat" able to fight against "fascism" (represented by Soares Carneiro), the leaders of the working class provoked a sentiment of fear of fascism in many sectors of the workers' movement.

The CP and SP weren't able to believe in their own strength and explain the conditions for the appearance of a fascist dictatorship. In order to grow, Fascism must have mass support together with great

demoralisation in the ranks of the working class.

The present situation in Portugal is totally different: the working-class parties are still very strong, the trade-union membership is one of the highest in Europe (83%) and Portuguese capitalism is suffering a deep crisis.

Eanes was re-elected mainly with the support of socialist and communist workers (56.4%), while the candidate of the capitalist government suffered a great defeat (40.22%).

In the main industrial and working class areas, Eanes received big support. In the main towns, where their is great support for SP and CP, Eanes got the majority of votes.

Even some sections of the middle classes that voted "AD" on the last 5 October refused to support Soares Carneiro out of fear of returning to the past, to the dark days of fascism and repressive regime (about 12%).

The re-election of Eanes doesn't itself represent a step forward for labour. However, it must be made clear that it reflects the support that the workers' organisations still have, and above all it demonstrates this will of the workers to fight against the actual government and its policies.

The workers cast a vote of

defiance and a vote against "AD"!

Anyway, we mustn't have any illusion about Eanes and who he represents. He represents the faction of capitalists who prefer the "social contract", the "consensus" and the "pacts" with the workers parties.

Socialists don't forget that Eanes was responsible for counter-revolution, when hand-in-hand with the capitalist parties and ministers he began the attacks on the conquests of the labour movement.

This happened under Nobre da Costa, the Mota Pinto and also the Pintasilgo government. These governments, we must repeat, began a real offensive against Agrarian Reform, and the nationalised sector of industry, workers' control etc.

Eanes is a general, a representative of the capitalist state and army. Eanes is the head of the repressive organs of the State!

As he said, he is going to follow the same policies as "AD". The only difference between "AD" (Soares Carneiro) and Eanes is the way in which they prefer to put an end to the gains of revolution and try to stop the workers' fight.

Is Eanes going to defend the Constitution, especially its most essential elements, when despite all its contra-

ditions, it still has "Socialism" as an objective? When it defends the nationalised sectors and workers' control of industry?

No! Eanes is going to follow the programme of "AD" (after the last elections, Eanes immediately said that "there is a large area of agreement with the government for the revision of the Constitution," like the defence of private ownership...) even though apparently there can be some disagreements between them.

As far as the ultra-leftist candidates are concerned, Otelo de Carvalho and Aires Rodrigues, their tiny support has shown their utopian and sectarian policies.

None of them represent the aims of a socialist alternative, that's to say, the

unity of the working class, in order to make their consciousness grow. Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho had a support of 1.47% and Aires Rodrigues a support of 0.21%!

The alternative existed and exists!

The alternative is posed by the objective situation in labour and society: the will to fight, the strength of workers' organisations, and the support of a large number of the middle class.

What is lacking is a socialist programme, a socialist leadership that could concretize the will of the workers to change society and build a healthy socialist democracy, as a first step to the Socialist Iberian States and socialist change all over the world.

RESULTS BY AREA

Area	Eanes %	Soares Carneiro %
Beja [Alentejo]	74.49	20.73
Braga [North]	52.12	45.15
Coimbra	57.03	39.84
Evora [Alentejo]	70.40	25.65
Lisbon	60.72	35.94
Setubal [near Lisbon important industrial town]	68.0	28.24
Oporto [second town in Portugal]	68.58	28.29

International Notes

SPAIN

The congress of the Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia [the Catalan Communist Party] has rejected the term 'Eurocommunism' as "contrary to the ideology of the Party" and elected a new pro-Soviet Union party president and secretary-general.

The decision will cause a crisis in the Spanish Com-

munist Party [PCE] whose general secretary is Santiago Carrillo, the leading international theorist of Eurocommunism. In a distorted way the decision reflects the realities of life for workers in the biggest industrial area of Spain.

Press comment has largely concentrated on the new leadership's removal from the party programme of any critical references to the Stalinist bureaucracy in

the Soviet Union. A more significant cause for the jettisoning of the old leaders is likely to be the growing problems facing the working class where unemployment has been rising particularly in the formerly prosperous Catalan textile mills.

Carrillo's leadership has seen the Communist Party tied to support for capitalist 'democrats' including support for King Juan Carlos who the PCE claim to be

essential to the change over from Francoism to democracy. A Spanish cartoonist has dubbed the PCE the Royal Communist Party in honour of the regular consultations by Carrillo in the Royal Palace!

The Catalan party's decision does not reflect any support for the bureaucratic leadership of the USSR amongst Spanish workers. But at a time of growing capitalist crisis workers are asking what have they gained from allegiance to the capitalist politicians—whatever their 'democratic' credentials.

The decision reflects

growing support for an independent class programme for the workers' parties of Spain.

FRANCE

For the first time, in the run up to the French Presidential elections this spring, the Socialist candidate Francois Mitterand has been given a clear lead in a public opinion poll.

It is dubious to base firm election predictions on such polls, but they do indicate that the press build up of

the President Giscard d'Estaing as a great leader has come unstuck. Giscard's UDF did badly in a set of by elections in November and the economic situation is worsening.

Inflation is officially running at about 14% per year and unemployment at 7%. French capitalism has had a 6% fall in production from the summer to the autumn, with economic forecasters anticipating about a 0.5% growth rate at best, if and when the worst of the current recession has past later this year.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Unfair to GDR?

Dear Comrade Taaffe
I am in broad agreement with your paper and its policies but the occasional scurrilous attack upon the socialist countries does nothing to help the struggle for socialism.
Your recent book review of "Collin" by the so-called dissident author Stefan Heym gives a completely false picture of the German Democratic Republic and the NVA or National People's Army.
As a frequent visitor to the GDR I should like to stress that the GDR, unlike the Federal German Republic, is a People's State in every sense of the word. Since the liberation of the German people from fascism, the GDR has played a vital part in the struggle for peace. Its economic achievements are second to none.
From the point of view of the implied allegation that jazz is regarded as a deviation meriting the attention of the secret police, I

must point out that this is complete rubbish as any visitor to one of the many Berlin nightclubs can discover. Youth in the GDR have the fullest means of expressing itself in any form of art, music, literature or indeed any artistic field. It is only anti-state and subversive elements like Heym who distort the picture presumably in aid of the West German BND or Radio Free Europe.
The NVA cultivated anti-fascist traditions, and the highest ranking soldiers from General Hoffmann, Minister of Defence, to the lowest private down, are experienced soldiers in the struggle against fascism. To blandly assert in support of publicity minded individuals such as Stefan Heym it is an army engaged in nothing but the defence of a "Stalinistic bureaucracy" is a slur for which your reviewer should have the decency to apologise.
Yours sincerely
W A Burborough
Secretary, Hillingdon Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries

Only 'repairs' possible

Dear Comrades
While on a recent visit to West Germany I heard it reported that the right-wing Social Democratic Mayor of Hamburg, Ulrich Klose, stated at a public meeting that the present form of state existed only to "carry out repairs on capitalism," thereby admitting the truth of the Marxist analysis that the state exists to protect the property of the monopoly capitalists who control the economy.

Such apparently 'left' remarks by such a prominent right-wing politician reflect the growing desire of the rank and file that the German Social Democratic Party should return to socialist policies. Our fight for a Labour government committed to a socialist policy is not only the way to stop the attacks on our own standard of living by a decaying capitalism, it is also the way forward to the Socialist United States of Europe.
Yours sincerely
Dudley Edwards

Charities—no way to give education

Dear Comrades
Being unemployed I happened to be at home a few weeks ago when I heard a knock at the door.
Wondering who it was, I opened the door to find a young boy of about 8 years old. He proceeded to ask me if I had any Heinz labels, as he was collecting them for his school.
Apparently, Heinz are offering schools sports and recreational equipment, in return for collecting a given number of labels for each item they require. It's disgusting that schools should be forced to take part in such a ridiculous scheme as this just because of the Tories' ruthless cuts in education spending.

It was around a quarter past five on a very dark night, and he was dressed in a dark blue parka and dark trousers. What would have happened if he had been run over or injured?
Children should not be used in this way just because of the cuts. We must kick out the Tories and fight the cuts, increase education spending and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.
Yours fraternally
Tracy Paterson
Luton West LPYS

Charities—state should provide

Dear Comrades
I welcome your article (issue 523) towards charities. For while it is healthy for people to donate towards the quality of life for others, I suggest we make it clear to the people of Britain why there is so much emphasis on charities today.
Charities play straight into the hands of Thatcher

Just go private

Dear Comrades
About 18 months ago a teacher friend of mine went to the doctor suffering from severe back pains. She was told (and many a woman will recognise these words), "Stop fussing! It's merely a woman's complaint and you'll just have to learn to put up with it. Take a couple of aspirins."
After months of this, with the added uncertainty that maybe she was making too much of it, my friend returned to the doctor and insisted on seeing a specialist. Her illness was immediately diagnosed as needing an operation and Angela was assured that, as she was in such pain, and she had a

Producing the wealth

Dear Comrades
If working people only knew
The value of the work they do,
They grow the food and make machines,
Build our homes and can our beans.
They build the ships and make the cars,
And build the prisons with their bars,
They nurse the sick and fish the seas,
Oh, what a lot of busy bees.
If they went missing for a day,
What would the non-producers say?
The Lords and Ladies, kings and queens,
For thirty quid would they tin beans?
Would they dig coal for sixty notes?
They'd sooner go and cut their throats.
To carry bricks and build a house,
They find it hard when shooting grouse.
By Ted Fewtrall
Unemployed bricklayer
Composed three years ago during building recession

New threat to British industry

Dear Comrades
I came across an interesting quote the other day when doing some research for a speech. It read: "Japan's trade menace—reckless national sales policy."
"The menace to British trade through underselling by Japanese manufacturers is the subject of a report which the Federation of British Industries has submitted to the Board of Trade. 'Japan,' the report states, 'has employed every means of underselling her competitors. The deprecia-

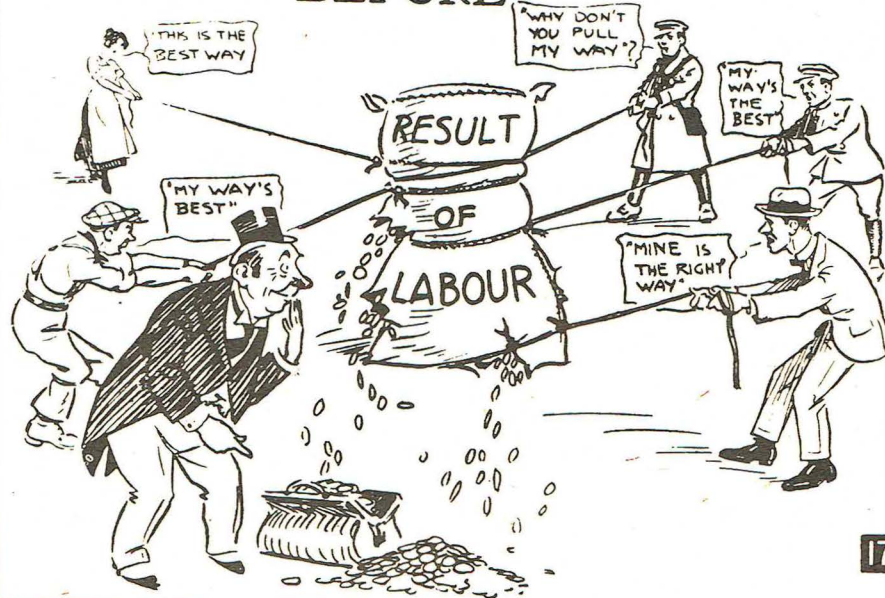
and her hierarchy. In a democracy, the state should provide adequate facilities to preserve the quality of life for others, not charities.
A democracy for all the people and not just the privileged few, the right to work, to be decently housed and educated. Let's hope we have a socialist government in office in the near future which will bring back the quality of life which is so lacking in our society today.
James Nugent (Jnr)

Good old days

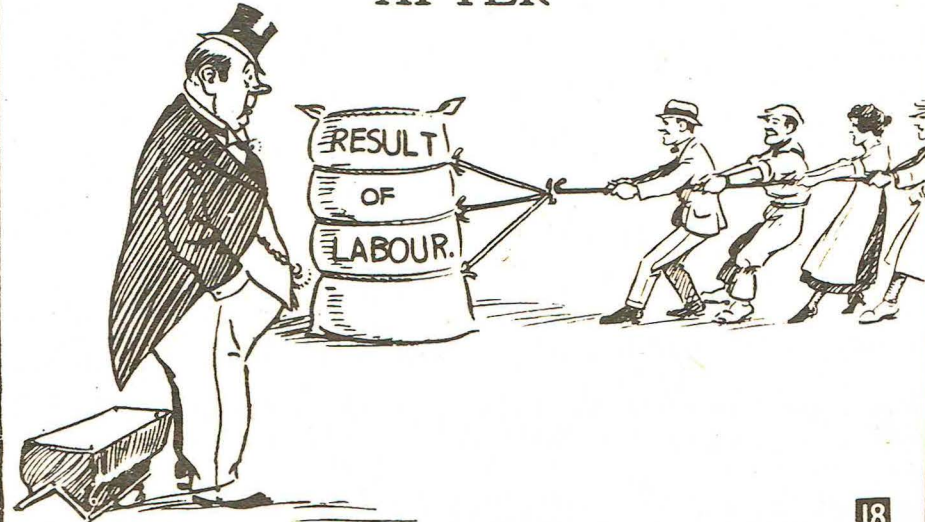
Dear Comrades
"We must get back to the way things were,"—that's the Tories' constant cry.
What must we get back to?
In my lifetime there were: two world wars, a depression which saw three million people out of work, a living standard under which working people were exploited to the hilt, poor education, poor inadequate housing, no health service, a crippling Means Test which

practically deprived people of any independence, no school meals, no provision for the old and the ailing.
When the Tories talk of the way things used to be, they want to go back to pre-1945 when there was very little in the way of legislation to prevent them from plundering and grabbing all the wealth that came their way.
Our modern Tory talks of taking away the power of the trade unions. It is considered shameful that the unions should subject the poor boss class to such

BEFORE



AFTER



Cartoon from 1922 TGWU paper

HOLLAND 1922

tion of the yen has been deliberately used to embark on a reckless national sales policy with disastrous results to British and other traders'."
Now where did I see the quote? Was it in the

T&GWU 'Record' to support import controls, or in a speech by Michael Edwards, or from one of the AUEW [TASS] research documents or even 'Tribune'?
No, it was from the

'Glasgow Herald' of 2 June 1933. The performance of Japanese industry seems to have been an excuse for the crisis of capitalism long before now.
Fraternally
Bob Wylie E Kilbride LP

Learn from pioneers

Dear Comrades
In the face of the devastating wave of redundancies hitting British industry at present the demand for import controls is being raised time and again within the labour movement.
This demand has rightly been criticised by 'Militant' and comrades fighting for a truly socialist solution to the capitalist crisis can take heart from the attitude of the socialist pioneers on this question. This is best portrayed in Robert Tressell's classic 'The Ragged Dicks' or 'The Ragged Philanthropists'.
The book is set at the beginning of this century when most workers still

voted Liberal or Tory. The workers in the book are facing similar unemployment and wage cuts to today. The Liberal workers argued only free trade could ease the crisis, the Tory workers demanded protection (i.e. import controls).
Owen, the socialist hero, explains that neither of these policies can aid the workers and only the setting up of a co-operative commonwealth (i.e. socialism) can put an end to their misery.
Here's hoping in 1981 that more and more labour activists will make a return to 'Owen' in their attitude to import controls, and put all their efforts into the only struggle worth waging, the struggle for socialism.
Fraternally yours
Dougie Miller
East Kilbride LPYS

ads

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

Newcastle University Labour Club. Debate on unemployment. Newcastle University Students Union Debating Chamber. Clive Heemskerck (Leeds University Labour Club), Peter Young (National Chairman, Federation of Conservative Students). At 7.30pm. on Friday 23 January.

SOUTHERN AREA MILITANT SCHOOL on Sunday May 3rd-Bank Holiday Monday May 4th. 3 speakers + social (with food) Hotel Bed and Breakfast at the Danville Hotel (on sea-front) Cliftonville, Margate.

Only £7.50 (same price as last year) Please book early as limited capacity. To book write/phone K. Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Cliftonville Margate Kent (0843-291293)

Electing the Leader—the latest broadsheet from the Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy, including articles from Tony Benn, Eric Heffer, Jo Richardson, Dennis Skinner, Vladimir Derer and rank and file trade unionists. All the arguments for winning the democratic reforms at the special conference. (20p plus postage to: RFMC, c/o 10 Park Drive, London NW11.) (Bulk orders: 30+ copies for 10p each plus postage).

LANCASTER Militant Readers' Meeting 'Will the Labour Party split?' Monday 26 January at the Trades Hall, Fenton St, Lancaster. 7.30 pm. Speaker: Gerry Lerner. All welcome.

HARINGEY Militant Readers' Meeting. 'The fight against unemployment'. Wednesday 28 January, 8.00 pm. Brabant Road Trade Union and community centre, Brabant Road, Wood Green, London N22. Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, Militant); Denis McCracken (President, Haringey Trades Council, personal capacity)

ROTHERHAM Militant Readers' Meeting 'The Socialist Alternative to Thatcher' or 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Gary Horne, Doncaster Labour Party. Monday 19 January, 7.30 pm, the WEA Rooms, Corporation Street (above Ratcliffe printers), Rotherham.

University of Manchester Militant Supporters Society 'Would Carter have been any better?' Speaker: Gerry Lerner (Eccles Labour Party) Monday 19 January, 12.45 pm, Students' Union, Oxford Road.

The 'Plunder Woman Must Go' cartoon book



SOCIALIST CARTOONS DRAWN FOR MILITANT BY ALAN HARDMAN

41 of Alan Hardman's best 1980 cartoons collected in an attractive 11in. x 8in. book with red, black and white cover.

Send only £1 plus 20p post and packing [orders of 5 or more post free] to Cartoons, Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Cash with order please. All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund

Subscription offer!

Take advantage of our special subscription offer now. Unfortunately, postal charges will be going up in the New Year, which means higher sub rates for the paper.

But if you renew your subscription now it will still be at the old rate. Why not take out a 'Militant' subscription as a present for someone? What better present than a copy of 'Militant' through the door every week!

LONDON Eve of Special Conference. Mobilise for Labour Democracy Rally. Friday 23 January. 7.30 pm. Central Hall, Westminster.

Chair: Joan Maynard MP. Speakers: Tony Benn MP, Ken Cameron, General Secretary Designate FBU. Eric Heffer MP. Ian Mikardo MP. Reg Race MP. Arthur Scargill, NUM (personal capacity).

Admission 50p. Tickets in advance from Jon Lansman, c/o 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Organised by Rank & File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy, Tribune Group of MPs.

South Africa & Namibia. Sat 24 Jan. 2.30-5.30pm SACTU film "We are all Workers" + speakers (free)

8 pm SACTU Benefit (£1) Bar/Food. Trades Hall, 96 Dalston Lane, E8.

Fight the Tory racist laws. Socialist Action public meeting on Wednesday 21 January, 8 pm at the Roebuck, Tottenham Court Road, London W1. Speakers: Bob Swart from London Labour Party CARL and Mike Rodney from National CARL.

Build Militant

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target for year
Eastern	4990		5,000
East Midlands	4438		3,800
Hants & IOW	4832		4,600
Humberside	2092		2,500
London East	6797		6,200
London West	4243		4,700
London South	5875		4,700
Manchester & Lancs	3673		5,100
Merseyside	4595		6,000
Northern	5637		7,300
Scotland East	2758		3,200
Scotland West	4862		5,000
Southern	6032		5,900
South West	3261		3,200
Wales East	2342		2,800
Wales West	3295		3,100
West Midlands	8022		9,000
Yorkshire	5645		7,300
Others	10460		10,600
Total received	93849		100,000

TARGET FOR YEAR - £100,000

A RECORD WEEK!

Thanks for a marvellous effort! Though we were naturally disappointed not to reach £100,000, a total of £8,680 reached us this week, or is in the post at this moment!

This beats our previous record week by over 30%! Is there any other paper in the world whose readership could match your confidence and determination?

You will be able to see the final total for your area on our chart, so here's how much you sent us this week, together with just one or two of the outstanding contributions from each area.

This week there are many hundreds of small (and even large!) contributions that for reasons of space we can't mention, but this doesn't mean we don't appreciate them! (If any individual or organisation wishes to have a receipt for their donations, these can be sent on request). The totals below include proceeds from our Winter Holiday draw:

Supporters in **Eastern** region raised £455, including £103 sent by Harlow readers and another £22 at a social there, together with a donation from Colchester supporter J Hull, and a share of the surplus from Stevenage banner-makers.

East Midlands supporters sent in £354 which included trade union expenses passed to us by a Leicester reader of over £20, and donations from A Proctor, D Lee and P Byrne (CPSA), M Ritchie (IRSF), and K Pattenden (USDAW).

£143 from **Hants & IOW** readers included the proceeds from more seasonal festivities and donations from W Tuck (NGA) and J Heath (Hayling Is.), while **Humberside** supporters' £238 was boosted by £78 from Scarborough and yet more money from a sponsored bike ride!

East London readers had a last minute push to get another £781. Sources were

By Steve Cawley

a Tottenham social, J Dean and M Hanbury (both Enfield), H&J Wobey (Hackney), E Fennell (S Essex CP), Cllr J Reeves (Newham) and a donation forwarded from K Bevan (Swansea).

'Militant' supporters in **West London** made it £583 in the last week. This includes donations from Hillingdon Parks Dept. workers, Coombes Bakery workers, J Golding (Fulham), Anon. (Ealing) (£25 pay rise), and N Colman & J Edwards.

South London readers accounted for £649 of this week's total. Some of the contributors were G McManus, H Sargent (POEU), T Goddard (Croydon NW CLP), J Warnes (POEU), F Payne (Streatham LPYS).

Lancashire and Manchester supporters raised a total of £384 in the last week. This included donations from C Jones (CPSA Morecambe), J Knight (sponsored walk) and supporters in Ardwick, among others.

Merseyside supporters sent in another £469. Contributors this week included M Reed, P Jackson, and S Callaghan (all Ellesmere Port LPYS), NGA members M Smith (Wavertree), Knowsley NALGO supporters and J Marston (Wavertree).

Northern readers found another £754 for us in the last week. Some of this came from Newcastle Readers Meeting; J Harker (Newcastle); Gosforth LPYS; A Littlefair (Chester-le-Street) Durham Miners; P Johnson; and P Marsden (Blyth LPYS).

Readers in **Scotland East** sent us £217 this week. Donations came from K Simpson (East Edinburgh), Craigmillar (New Year Party), Mr & Mrs Harkness (Dalkeith) A Campbell (AS-LE&F), while supporters in

THIS WEEK £8,680

Scotland West raised another £455 this week. This included H McIlwhannie £100 (Hillhead), R Dingwall (Glasgow), E Burns (Glasgow), R Friel (NALGO), G Scott (Glasgow) E McGeachan, J Edwards, M Swan, (all CPSA), and Quatermass End of Year Disco.

Southern readers responded to the tune of £727 to our appeal. Special thanks to comrades in Brighton, (where they raised £165 on Saturday!) Bracknell, Littlehampton and Medway. Also C Knight (Tunbridge Wells) who wants "a rapid fall in unemployment figures, except for Tory MPs."

Southwest supporters have always had a good record of selling raffle tickets, and over £50 worth was sold at the T Lucas factory (Bristol). This helped a lot in pushing the target up £836 on the week! Thanks also to B Dixon (T&GWU) and N Callas (LPYS), also readers in Redruth and other far-flung areas where the socialist flag is kept flying!

Wales East kept up the momentum of recent weeks to a total of £152. Particular thanks to supporters in the Rhymney Valley for over £50 and more in the post! while **Wales West** supporters have £168 more to their credit than last week, thanks mainly to Swansea readers, including £2 from Swansea GMWU branch and £1.32 Mr DW Williams (NUM), also M Edwards (Amman Valley) amongst others.

West Midlands readers raised £709 this week inclu-

ding £87 surplus on the 500 club draw. Our thanks are due also to TGWU 5/909 branch, B Morris (Birmingham), M Sturgess (AUEW) and T Parker (GMWU) both Staffs., K&L Hollins (Stoke) and supporters in Coventry.

Yorkshire readers added another £544 to their line in the final week, of which 'John and Jane's New Year Social' gave us £35, and Brighthouse Disco £66. R Wade. AUEW Huddersfield, and M Lass, M Nelson, P Lazenby and F Heath (all Leeds) responded to our appeal sheets. Thanks for £15 to the LPYS NC member G Hawes for sending us £15 on behalf of Rotherham readers.

In the **Others** column, the total of £82 over last week was accounted for by sales of our Winter Draw tickets at recent conferences, and also sales of Christmas cards.

Thanks to all our readers who have contributed throughout the year to our Fighting Fund. Militant is now that much better equipped to assist the working-class in the struggles ahead in 1981 in what already is seen as a turbulent year for the labour movement.

Bromsgrove & Redditch Labour Party Young Socialists send international greetings of support and solidarity in the fight for socialism to all of Militant's readers

Industrial

in brief

Workers on the Belfast Liverpool P&O line ended their sit-in last week after management finally agreed to talks. The sit in was spontaneous by the crew members after P&O closed the line in response to the union's action over a 10 per cent pay rise, leaving thousands stranded both sides of the Irish Sea. Management have now said they are prepared to talk on the scrapping of the line, and the crew members have told them they will not accept either a drop in wages or manning levels. See 'Belfast NUS' report on this page.



NUPE's London divisional officer Harry Barker wrote to all London Trades Councils and Labour Parties, calling on them to support the mass picket of Great Ormond Street Hospital last Tuesday. The picket was in protest over the sacking of local NUPE branch chairman Conway Xavier. Management say Mr Xavier was sacked for 'disloyalty'—however, he was sacked for carrying out union activities, which he was democratically elected to carry out.



The Civil Service unions, the CPSA, the Society of Civil and Public Servants and the Civil Service Union, are to fight Tory proposals to reduce excise control on Scotch Whisky. The unions, which represent workers in distilleries and warehouses, say a reduction in control would cost the government more in lost duty than it plans to save in staff reductions, and would mean the loss of several hundred jobs.



There has been a 'steep fall' in orders for the machine tool industry, according to the 'Financial Times' [3 January]. New orders for export between June and September last year fell by 26 per cent.



The power workers' unions, representing 96,670 workers, have put in a pay claim for nearly a 20 per cent rise. They are also calling for a 35 hour week, better shift pay, and a reduction in retirement age, and improved pensions, for workers at 60.



Nine Civil Service unions representing 530,000 white collar workers have said they are prepared to unite in the battle over pay. The unions, organised in the Council of Civil Service Unions, have now agreed a 'broad strategy' for industrial action.

Water workers ready to fight

"The Water Council did us in the comparability study—why should we only get 7% now?"

So a worker at the Beckton water works in East London summed up the determined angry mood of the water workers.

By Steve Feely
(Beckton Water Works, AUEW)

The water workers union, NUPE, are now carrying out

a ballot asking them whether they support their

executive's call to take action against this measly offer.

If the feeling at my works is anything to go by, there will be a great deal of support for the union's stand. They all definitely blame the Tory government: "We should have an all out strike to bring Thatcher down. All the union bosses should get together to get her out."

This job has always been low paid, although in the past there has been job

security. But a lot depends on shift work, as the stations have to be manned 24 hours a day.

The basic is £60-£70 a week. But this is in East London where we are slightly shielded by London weighting and a productivity bonus, which can amount to up to a third of the wages. However, as the 'Sunday Times' (11 January) pointed out, "Some sewage workers are lucky to take home £45."

If the strike goes ahead it will be the first the water industry has ever had—this time they've pushed the workers too far.

The water authorities try to split the workers into sections—manual, skilled and white collar—so we never negotiate together. But since the 300 odd water authorities were nationalised under, strangely enough, the last Tory government, the unions in all

sections have gone from strength to strength.

The water workers must now use this strength to beat back the Tories—they say they cannot afford to give us a decent living wage, yet the Thames Water Authority for example, pays more to the banks and finance houses in interest charges than it does on wages!

The Tories are attempting to make the public sector their whipping boys. They tried to take on the firemen and were beaten back. They are trying to limit pay rises in the Civil Service and have stirred up a hornets nest, uniting all nine Civil Service unions into one body.

Similarly the water workers must stand firm and beat the Tories off. And we must unite as one with all the public sector unions in the struggle to stop the Tories' attempts to drive down our living standards.

BELFAST NUS

Manus Maguire of 'Militant Irish Monthly' interviewed John Magee, Chairman of the NUS Disputes Committee in Belfast on the action being taken by NI seamen.

What is the mood of the membership in Belfast?

John Magee: There is total commitment by the Northern Ireland membership for the lead given by the union. The NUS in the North are advising that action should be stepped up nationally. We are one of the most militant NUS branches and we are pushing for an escalation of the strike. We want to tie up all ships leaving ports in Northern Ireland and Britain.

We contacted Liverpool and called for an extension of the action. Reports that

we are constantly receiving from Britain indicate that the strike is building up there. We are making attempts to push the National Executive to extend the strike.

What was the reason and advantages over occupation of Liverpool ferries in the last strike?

John Magee: The previous occupation had a tremendous effect, it was completely the decision of the membership, who themselves moved into action. Occupation was the decisive reason for the success and the defeat of the closure. That undoubtedly points the way forward in this struggle. Militant action is the only answer to the threats of the bosses, it's the only way of opposing any redundancies.

Suffolk NUAAW

Although there was only a small attendance, the Suffolk county conference of the National Union of Agricultural and Allied Workers illustrated the socialist aspirations of farm workers in East Anglia.

A resolution moved by my branch calling for the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, and outlining the socialist programme of 'Militant' was passed unanimously, although the fraternal delegate from Essex joked how he now knew how to sum-up all of conference in one resolution!

Similarly, an emergency resolution was amended by our branch with unanimous support. The resolution called for the proposed inquiry by the Agricultural Wages Board into farm workers wages to be held by an 'acceptable arbitrator'. We amended this to 'by the trade union movement'—the general feeling of conference was that we don't want anything to do with the Ministry of Agriculture, as the members don't trust it.

The main discussion was

By Teresa Mckay
(Tuddenham NUAAW)

of course on the employers derisory pay offer of just over 11%. They claimed they had given us a rise of 21% last year which lead to redundancies. But as far as we are concerned, the redundancies were a result of the EEC milk subsidy, which was paying the farmer £750 per cow to come out of milk production.

Resolution no. 2 pointed out just how low paid farm workers in the country are. UK farm workers are even worse off than their Italian counterparts! The hourly rate here is £1.84—in Italy it is £2.01. West Germany and Denmark pay around £4 an hour!

Now a derisory basic of £64 has been offered—the conference whole heartedly showed the disgust of Suffolk farm workers at this low sum. And the mood of militancy was shown by the sales of the paper—of the 28 delegates, 18 of them bought copies of 'Militant'.

Longworth hospital

By John Hicks
(Assistant Secretary, Oxford COHSE)

When you take a turning off the Oxford-Swindon main road, you find yourself on the narrow country road to Longworth Hospital. The quietness and beauty of this country land peacefully makes its impression upon you.

At the hospital gate however, posters and pickets proclaim that Longworth has been occupied by its staff, and that COHSE has made the occupation and 24 hour picket official!

Back in 1978, Oxfordshire health authority (AHA) let it be known that Longworth would have to close in order for a community hospital in Witney to be opened. This despite the fact that Longworth has 50 beds (and a day-patient hospital) and Witney was built to hold only 40 beds for

the elderly, out of a total of 78 beds.

COHSE Oxford branch at this time agreed that, when necessary its members at Longworth should occupy and that supporting action would be undertaken in order to counter attempts at closure.

Later, after a campaign by health service workers, management conceded to a series of meetings for "public consultation" over the future of the local health service.

But some months ago finance for the opening of 20 beds at Witney was provided for; the AHA then intended

to open 7 additional Witney beds at the cost of closing down 13 beds on the first floor of Longworth in January. Just before Christmas, COHSE members at Longworth decided on occupation to counter any moves towards such partial closure.

Oxfordshire AHA has reacted by stating Witney will not open while Longworth is occupied. A clumsy try at blackmail.

We cannot afford to lose this fight—the area is already 200 geriatric beds short, on the AHA's own admission! Help us to defend the Health Service. Support and offers of help to: **The Occupation Comm., c/o 13 Bow Bank, Longworth, Abingdon, Oxon.**

Newsham Hospital

Patients at Liverpool's Newsham Hospital who were sent home for Christmas from A2 ward have not returned! This is the orthopaedic ward planned to close.

The AHA has refused to meet the union officials and the Newsham Action Committee. Their New Year resolution is to accelerate the closure.

Even the concession to keep open H ward, has been reversed by the AHA—the dermatology beds are to be

transferred to Broadgreen hospital.

Out of 10 doctors dealing with geriatrics, there are only 5 left now. They are to be moved to Mossley Hill Hospital, leaving no geriatric hospital in the Eastern sector.

An attempt is being made to 'buy off' the ambulance depot. The ambulance officer was informed by Roberts, the Chief Nursing Officer at the hospital, that Newsham is to be converted into the biggest ambulance depot on

Merseyside. How much are Roberts' promises worth?

Roberts has also said if things go easy, the hospital will stay open until 1984, if not, it will close in eighteen months. Is this a threat?

Now is the time to turn out to the movement, with mass meetings in the hospital to keep all staff informed about management's propaganda. Pressure must be applied to the local council to reverse Tory cuts.

By Jimmy Hackett

United Biscuits

By Neil Hargreaves
and Sue Kohn

The dole queues in West London have doubled in the last year. Now the management of United Biscuits—tied by a hundred threads to the Tory Party—are threatening to close their Osterley plant, putting 1,700 jobs at risk.

The board of directors of UB is staffed with Tory party members. Last year £30,000 was donated to the Tory party. Ex-director Jim Prior is now unemployment minister, and present director H Plumb is a Euro MP for the Tories. Characters like these claim

the 'company is having to face up to a number of serious problems.' But the Tories themselves are to blame for these problems. In attempt to restore profits, the Tories and their big business paymasters have cut wages, closed industries and now complain there is a recession.

They have proposed the grand sum of one week's pay

as redundancy money which is a slap in the face of all UB workers. But even if a greater sum was offered, workers in this area cannot afford to sell jobs.

In Southall for instance, where most UB workers live, there are only 79 vacancies for the 3,000 on the dole in the area.

With this background it is vital that the union gives a firm lead and that the labour movement locally mobilises to support the UB workers in the fight to save jobs.

Reports

STOP THESE TIN-PLATE BOSSES!

The tin plate works at Velindre is faced, as part of BSC's corporate plan, with 1,500 redundancies—out of a work force of 2,200!

Dennis Jenkins, chairman of Velindre works council, told Rob Sewell of the situation.

By Rob Sewell

Broadly speaking, the BSC corporate plan entails the full loading up of the Ebbw Vale and Trostre plants and the running down of the level of production at Velindre.

This will mean, including the transfer of the administration staff, roughly 1,500 redundancies. Now, we know that there is no way that a plant like Velindre can survive under that kind of set-up, because it is a large plant and requires continuous operation in order to break even.

What the management are saying is that Ebbw Vale and Trostre plants will have to perform in such a way so as to offset administration costs of keeping Velindre alive under that kind of work schedule.

This can only mean a short term survival plan, leading to the ultimate closure of Velindre itself.

The initial feeling at the announcement of redundancies was one of absolute amazement and shock, bearing in mind that over the years, management at group level have always indicated that we have performed well in a viable plant and made profits.

In the last eight years we have made £41.6 million profit. That in my opinion is not a drain on the tax payer; we have in fact earned money for the tax payer.

MacGregor and this government's policy is supposedly one of saving money for the tax payer in protecting

those industries that can perform, and not support 'lame ducks'. It would appear our tin plate management have got it all wrong!

We at Velindre certainly don't want to counter the management by playing one plant against the other. Our alternative strategy is simply the fundamental trade union principle—in bad times we work-share.

Share out the work

I've been here 20 years and we've had bad times, but we've always shared out the work. Even the BSC are saying that in the middle of 1982 there will be a pick-up in the consumption of cans and the need for more tin plate.

Therefore, our policy would mean that they would have three works available with the necessary manning.

We have in the last few weeks been playing the Corporation at their own game, compiling evidence to counter their proposals. We should therefore enter immediate negotiations now with management with a view to changing their proposals and getting agreements on our alternative strategy.

UNITED NEWSPAPERS

By a Doncaster NUJ member

United Newspapers have sacked 35 workers at Doncaster; but the journalists and printworkers are resisting the redundancies.

The first the workers heard of it was on local radio! It was confirmed later by management when they gave out redundancy notices.

There was no consultation with the unions involved—NUJ, NGA, NATSOPA, AUEW and SOGAT.

The immediate response of the NUJ chapel was to stop work and to go into mandatory session, demanding withdrawal of the notices. The print unions are also fighting the sackings. Many workers feel this is

the first shot in an attempt to make redundancies in other newspapers throughout the group. United Newspapers claim the Doncaster newspapers will make a projected loss of £400,000 in 1981, yet the group—according to 1979 figures—made a profit of several million pounds.

The NUJ is calling for a joint approach by all the unions in the plant and also support from other United Newspaper group chapels. They also welcome any form of support from the labour movement. The NEC of the union are giving full support to the action of the journalists.

NUM

By Meirion Evans
(Brynllyw Lodge, NUM)

We must not sell our jobs'

As reported in last week's issue the problems of dealing with the policy of the NCB at pit level are continually increasing.

One major problem we face at present is the lack of recruitment in the industry. In the minutes of a November Area consultative council meeting it is stated that due to 'cash flow' problems a ban on recruitment has been instituted in the area.

It was also reported attendance had improved thereby increasing wages costs way above those budgeted for by the NCB. Rather than go sick when they need to, men are attending work more regularly because of price rises, transport costs and rent and rates etc.

Over the past year Brynllyw, where I work, has lost over 100 men either through early retirement, ill health or even men leaving with the hope of a better future abroad. These men have not been replaced, and men who would normally be upgraded are kept on their jobs.

Some men, young and with families, are forced to stay on switches at the face for more than three years. Also the training of young men to become colliers is

virtually at a standstill—this spells trouble for the future.

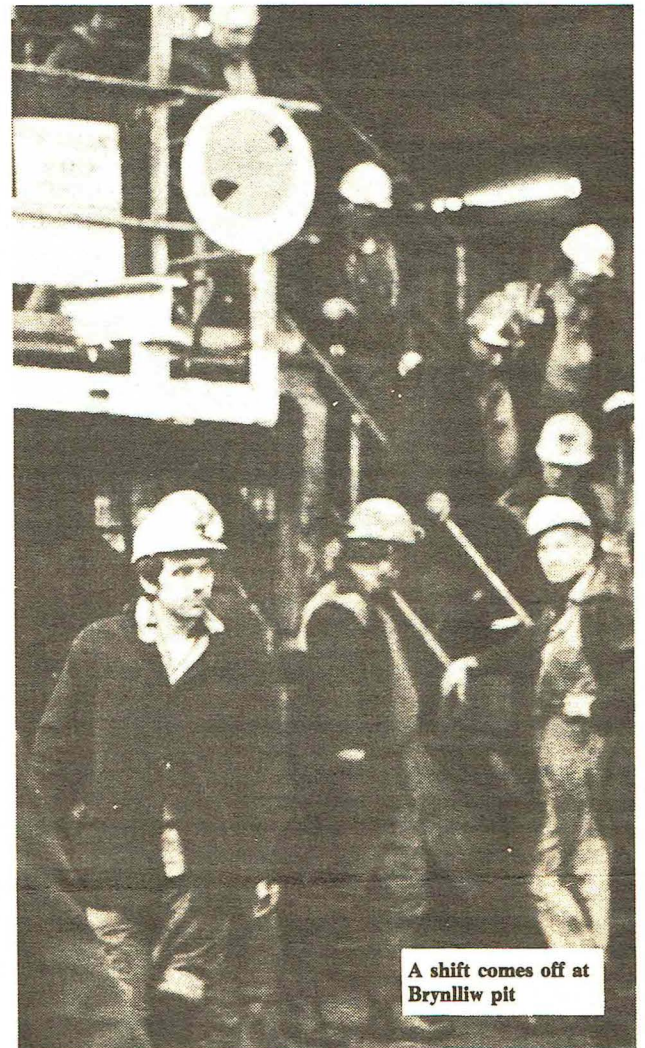
At the same time, a longstanding demand of the NUM for the elimination of contractors from the industry is being established; at the insistence of the NCB! But obviously as a means of running down the area.

The contractors have been used to develop new districts and faces, so that as one face is worked out or abandoned, there is another ready to be manned. It is therefore imperative that the development work takes place at all times.

But soon we will be in a position where we will not be able to carry out developments, coal production and other necessary work as we have in the past, due to the critical situation we face.

We have informed management that we are not prepared to accept their proposals to cut back production on one face in order to carry out salvage and development work elsewhere at the cost to the pit, thereby making it more unviable than at present.

As a Lodge we have tried almost all ways and channels at getting the board to change their policy on recruitment (we have even considered advertising in the local paper for ex-



A shift comes off at Brynllyw pit

miners who would be prepared to re-enter the industry as a means of applying pressure). The Board are attempting to strangle our pits in order to run down the industry.

The men at the pit know that things can't continue in this way. We realise there is no possibility of employment elsewhere, and no

chance of a transfer to another pit.

The miners of Brynllyw, like all South Wales miners, will not be prepared to sell or lose their jobs. We will fight to maintain our livelihood using whatever means that are necessary, and fighting for the correct leadership of the union during the struggle.

MOSEDALE: SUPPORT MASS PICKET



Mosedale, the owner of the brickworks, is confronted by pickets

Photo: Colin Wolfenden

After six weeks and a great deal of legal advice, the management have summoned up the courage to mount a hypocritical press attack on the striking workforce.

The men who so unjustly sacked 50 workers have accused the union of trying to destroy 100 jobs. The article goes on

to say that the future of Flixton works had been in doubt for 2 years.

They neglected to mention the quarrying rights which were so bitterly defended in a recent legal dispute; quarrying rights to supply clay to Flixton brickworks for up to 30 years! This must be seen as indicative of the

political nature of Mosedale's scheming.

Workers have been further strengthened by the support shown by the labour movement to representatives on the recent tour of Liverpool factories.

The union members at Mosedale's are appealing for support by all trade

unionists at the mass picket Wednesday 21 January at 7.00am. Send donations to Mosedale lock out fund, J Brown, 216 Irlam Road, Flixton, Urmston, Manchester.

By Colin Wolfenden
(Salford LPYS)

Steam comes to Mosedale!
See page 6

FULL SUPPORT FOR THE SEAMEN

On 12 January, the first day of the seamen's dispute, 166 ships were stopped by the action.

With overtime being the main issue of the dispute, the National Union of Seamen have shown the shipping bosses they are not prepared to accept their 12% so-called 'final offer' at a time when living standards are continually being driven down.

Mass meetings were held throughout major ports this week to discuss the action. At Southampton, 150 seamen attended the meeting on Monday. Their action has already held up two ships—one an oil tanker the other a container ship, with further disruption expected.

The meeting agreed to hold a complete 24-hour stoppage from midnight Tuesday, which will halt ferry and coastal services from Southampton, Portsmouth, Poole, and Weymouth.

An action committee has been set up to co-ordinate further action. The mood in the area is growing increasingly militant, and further stepping up of the action seems likely if no settlement is reached.

The shipping bosses, echoed parrot fashion by the Fleet Street press barons, have tried to make out the issue is merely over basic weekly pay rise. But the main issue is overtime—the union want better overtime agreements to compensate for the long unsocial hours that seamen work.

Peter Drew and Derek Farrell, who work for the Ulster Prince on the P&O line which settled last week (see page 14), described conditions faced by seamen. "You have to work something like a 78 hour week.

"Your don't get a real weekend off. You work a rota. Even on your first day's leave you go home at 12, have a day off, and go back to work

By Militant reporters

at 5 or 6am.

"If we cut overtime we couldn't live. You need to work 20 hours overtime to pick up £70."

The shipping bosses were hoping to confront the NUS and beat them down, so as to undermine the strength of the union and pave the way for further job losses.

While the gutter press scream that the seamen are 'cutting their own throats' by striking and that jobs will be lost, the serious paper of big business, the 'Financial Times' (Jan. 12) showed who was really to blame for the decline of British shipping.

It pointed out that through lack of investment, and with shipping bosses shifting into more profitable but short lived areas of the industry 'while failing to exploit potential growth areas such as the UK offshore oil services industry.' UK shipping had declined by a quarter, shedding 17,000 jobs in the past five years.

But of course the solution the 'Financial Times' came to was to drive down seamen's wages. They whined that it "costs nearly twice as much to run a handy-sized bulk carrier with a British crew as it does with a Korean crew."

No doubt they want wages to be at the same level as those of super-exploited third world workers. Seamen at the meeting in Folkestone pointed out that the liner 'Canbera' based at Southampton pays its Asian sailors the grand total of 8 pence an hour!

The seamen must be given full backing by the trade union movement, especially the transport unions ASLE&F and the T&GWU, to ensure they inflict a defeat on the bosses' attempts to further drive down our living standards.



TOP: Workers at the mass meeting in Dover on 12 January
 BELOW: Deserted—the port at Dover

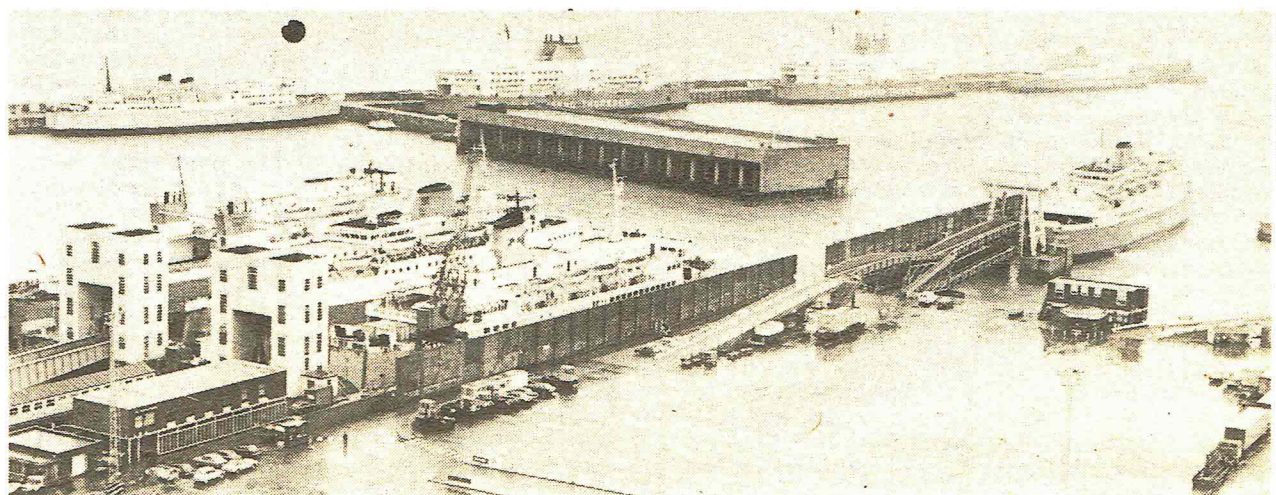


Photo: Militant

Photo: MILITANT

'TORIES TREAT US LIKE RUBBISH'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

teer'.

With the threat of the re-establishment centre over you, they think you will then be more likely to find a job—even if there aren't any, and despite the fact that employers don't want you because you're "long-term unemployed."

Eventually, the day comes for you to attend the centre.

The one I attended was in Whitechapel, London, a short distance of 65 miles. They expect people to get there by 8.30 am, and to stay until 4.00 pm. Some of the men had long and difficult journeys home.

The fares to the centre were paid, plus your dole money. My fares were £17.50, with £16.50 dole money.

The centre was located behind the Whitechapel Underground station—in the middle of a rubbish dump. Once or twice we found rats in the kitchen dustbins.

The place had the atmosphere of a prison. The crime was to be unemployed.

In the canteen there is a set of rules covering keeping yourself and the kitchen clean, having a medical examination, etc. If disobeyed, it says you could collect either a £10 fine or a month in prison.

There was a free dinner every day—probably in a vain attempt to keep you there! When I first went to the centre the food was grotty to say the least, but it did improve.

Your time here could be spent in various ways. In the carpenter's shop or paint shop. There are no cleaning staff so you could clean the stairs, rooms or lavatories, or you could be in the kitchen

helping the cook.

The place ran largely due to sheer boredom—you were so bored that you had to work for something to do.

I started making bird-tables in the carpenter's shop. Eventually I moved into the kitchen, which was better because you got out an hour earlier.

The centre was extremely unpopular. It was nearly always half or even three-quarters empty. The only day it approached the true number that there should have been was on pay day.

There was universal contempt among the inmates—we all agreed that it was a waste of time and money our being there.

The machinery in the workshops was largely second hand. The books that they had in the recreation room were old and the games table had been salvaged from the rubbish tip outside.

People generally attended the centre for 13 weeks. But some had been going there for up to 11 months.

The supposed purpose of the centre was to get you into the routine of working. But since leaving the centre, I have been told that there is no prospect of me getting a job. Most of the men at the centre had been unemployed for at least a year and with that sort of a work record you are unlikely to get a job.

The centre is really used to harass people the DHSS think are not looking hard enough for work. So with the present level of unemployment, the centres will probably be busy for some time to come. They are nothing but time-wasters for the unemployed.

We want jobs—proper

FIGHTING FUND

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

socialist transformation of society.

In 1981, therefore, 'Militant' will be appealing to our readers and supporters for £120,000. This means that the Fighting Fund will need over £2,000 every week.

If the new target is approached with the same enthusiasm and determination that our supporters have shown in the last few weeks of 1980, we will have no problems!

But don't relax your efforts. Let's make 1981 a very prosperous new year for the 'Militant'. Let's show the bosses that we mean business!

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