

Militant

SPECIAL

CONFERENCE

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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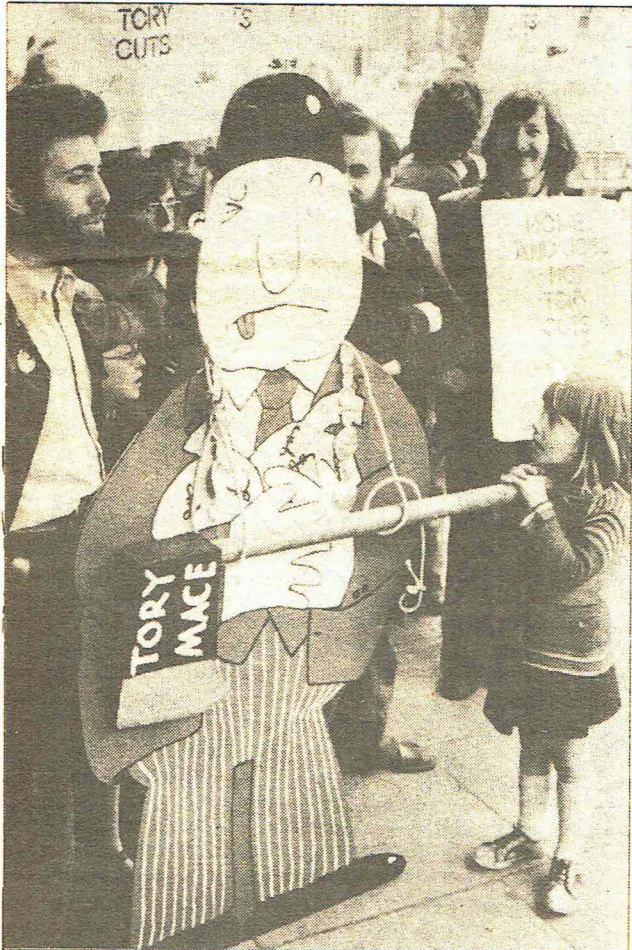
15p



"Right-wing rejects and Labour's future" see centre pages

Council workers fight redundancy threat ..

STOP SACKINGS -SAVE SERVICES



Wandsworth workers protest at cuts

The penny-pinching policies of the Tories have already cost us hundreds of jobs.

Untold suffering has been inflicted on people who rely on vital local authority services.

This is the result of three years of Tory control of the borough council in Wandsworth, South London. Now the Tories have ordered even worse to come.

But council workers have had enough. Now we in Wandsworth are fighting to save our jobs and local services.

Last Wednesday [14 January] all council offices in the borough stopped work when 3,400 white-collar workers took one-day strike action. This was the opening

shot in a fight against the threatened loss of 700 jobs.

Cuts in 1980 chopped £1.5 million off the budget and 200 jobs was the price we paid.

Wandsworth's Tories were Thatcher's little pets. They balanced their books, their rates rose only at the level of inflation, they increased the price of pensioners' meals by 500%—and they cut practically every-

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

By Dennis English

(GMWU steward, Wandsworth)

LABOUR PARTY SPECIAL CONFERENCE



Right Wing 'Democrats' Reject Party Democracy

A dozen or more right-wing Labour MPs have now made it clear that they intend to split from Labour and form a break-away "social democratic" party.

Right-wingers like Shirley Williams, Dr. David Owen, and their friends already accept that Labour's special conference this weekend will democratise the procedure for electing the Party leadership—a step forward which they see as a blow to their policies, their positions and their parliamentary careers.

The enemies of the labour movement will be delighted to see a split, and possible disruption of the Labour Party. Through a split,

Labour—they hope—will be blocked from winning a general election victory for years to come.

But they will be disappointed!

The right have lost the argument over policy within the party. But these great "democrats," who accuse the Labour left of "undemocratic methods" and "dictatorship," are not prepared to stay in the party and fight for their ideas.

Already, figures like Roy Jenkins, recently returned from his £58,000 a year job, has reportedly been promised £15 million backing from business interests to form a new "radical centre" or "social democratic" party.

Roy Jenkins has astounded even his own friends by

brazenly accepting a £10,000 a year "part-time job" with Morgan Grenfell, a big City firm of merchant bankers.

In case his new career goes wrong, however, Roy Jenkins can look forward to his £10,000 a year EEC pension when he is 65 [this is in addition to his £30,000 a year "farewell handshake" from the EEC which he will get for the next 3 years!].

Some people within the Labour Party are now arguing that efforts should be made to conciliate and appease these right-wingers to prevent an open split.

But the attitude of most rank and file members will be: "Good riddance!"

Labour Party members will not be blackmailed by the threat of a

new party damaging Labour's electoral prospects. The right wing MPs now preparing to split have been rejected by Labour's ranks—they will be forming a Dustbin Party.

With massive backing from the press and big business they may achieve some initial successes, and provide a temporary obstacle to Labour.

But the policies they uphold are the policies based on the "mixed economy"—in other words, pro-big business policies based on a diseased capitalist system. A Dustbin Party, even in alliance with these shame-faced Tories, the Liberals, will not stop the development of the Labour Party.

Militant

1 Mentmore
Terrace,
London E8 3PN

VOTING FOR LABOUR LEADERSHIP

The significance of Labour's Special Conference is not confined to the constitutional issue which dominates the agenda [widening the franchise for the election of party leader].

The implementation of this reform, carried in principle at last year's annual conference, will be another big step towards a democratised, socialist Labour Party.

The Blackpool conference last October demonstrated the overwhelming desire of Labour's ranks for both the constituency parties and the trade unions to be involved in the election of leader in the future. Only the reluctance of a number of major trade unions to accept one or other of the constitutional formulas being proposed prevented the reform being carried through at that time.

However, it would be a mistake to think that this vital reform is in the bag. Delegates to the special conference must be on their guard.

The right-wing MPs now trying to blackmail the party with threats of a split would undoubtedly be only too happy to try to ensure, through intrigues and manoeuvres, that no clear result emerges from the Wembley conference.

Delegates must therefore be clear on all the options available.

First, conference will have before it five alternative systems of electing a party leader. Then, delegates will have to decide on the proportions allocated to the PLP, the CLPs, and the trade unions [and the socialist societies] under whichever of the systems is agreed.

By means of an eliminating ballot, delegates will have to choose between:

- *An electoral college at annual conference,
- *An electoral college as a separate body,
- *An electoral college conducted by postal ballot,
- *A ballot of all individual party members,
- *And a miscellaneous section, including proposals like an electoral college with CLP delegates bound by a ballot of all party members.

Of all the proposals, the most democratic is clearly that of an electoral college at conference. This was the option that had the support of a majority of delegates at Blackpool.

In varying degrees, all the other systems would undermine the strength of the trade union basis of the

Party, and would downgrade the authority of annual conference.

Annual conference decides policy and elects the NEC: it is clearly the body which should also elect the leader.

An electoral college separate and apart from conference would clearly endanger conference's powers, and would concentrate the decision on the leadership into a much smaller, much less representative body. As was shown by some of the proposals to the recent Commission of Enquiry, a separate college would also pose the danger that, at a later stage, it would try to establish a wider influence over policy.

For instance, it was proposed that it could have a role in the selection of conference decisions for inclusion in the Party programme and election manifestoes. Some members in the trade unions clearly envisaged such a body as a "filter" for separating out any rank-and-file policies to which they are opposed.

The alternative now being backed by the most right-wing section of the PLP is the call for a ballot of all party members. This, they claim, would be "more democratic." However, this call for balloting is put forward by right-wingers who originally opposed outright any widening of the leadership franchise at all.

Genuine Democracy

Far from being "more democratic," in the present society, with the press and the media concentrated in the hands of big business, it would open the election of party leader and other issues to the manipulation of the capitalist class itself.

Not content with determining the leadership of their own party, the Tories, the ruling class wants to decide the candidates, the leadership, and even the programme of the Labour Party too. That is why they are so furious at the democratisation of the Party.

The right wing also counterpose balloting the whole membership to the alleged "elitism" of the activists. In reality, they would like to dissolve the party into an amorphous mass of Labour supporters, as some of their proposals ["primaries", for example] to the commission of enquiry clearly showed.

It is the Labour Party activists—who attend meetings, are involved in discussions, who recruit members, who carry out the election

work—who sustain the party. They are the key to winning new members and winning mass support for Labour in elections.

A system of ballots, moreover, would also undermine the trade union basis of the party, which is a conscious objective of the right. The trade unions created the LP, and their dominant role is still the basis of its strength.

Without the unions, the Labour Party would cease to exist as a viable force. The trade union block vote—exercised in a democratic manner—must be maintained and strengthened both at conference and constituency level.

However, the proposals of the right wing probably have little chance of success at the conference—which is why they already are threatening to split if the decision goes against them.

Conference seems most likely to choose one of the three forms of electoral college: [1] 40% of the votes going to the trade unions, with 30% each to the PLP and the CLPs; [2] with TUs, the PLP and the CLPs each getting a third of the votes; or [3] with 50% of the votes going to the PLP, with 25% going to both the CLPs and the trade unions.

'Militant' has consistently argued that the major share of the votes in a college should go to the trade unions. This is the most democratic new proposal, and would maintain the crucial role of the trade unions in the party on all issues.

Delegates supporting this view should therefore support the USDAW [Union of Shop, Distributive and Allied Workers] amendment giving 40% of the votes to the unions.

If that proposal is defeated, however, delegates should support the proposal for a third, a third, and a third of the votes going to the PLP, the TUs and the CLPs respectively.

The adoption of either of these amendments would be a major victory for Labour's ranks.

Even, however, if these fail and the proposal giving 50% of the votes to the PLP is adopted, this would still be a step forward.

The resolution of this constitutional issue at the special conference should mark the beginning of a new offensive against the Tory government. Labour's ranks must ensure that the democratic changes are used to elect representatives prepared to fight for Labour's policies—to mobilise a mass movement on the basis of a fighting socialist programme.

TUC illusion of alliance with bosses

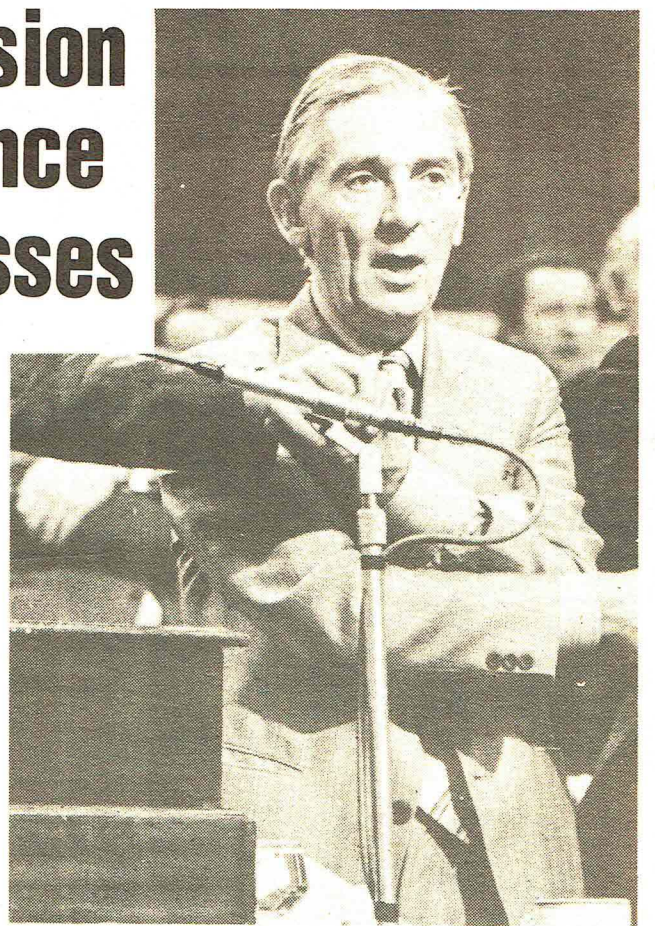
The TUC's economic review, to be published next month, traditionally lists economic and social demands and recommends changes for the spring budget.

Faced with Tory intransigence, this year's review is being drafted as part of a 'propaganda campaign,' leading to the planned TUC week of action in April. But union leaders are seeking strange allies.

Based on the TUC's 'Alternative Strategy,' they are calling for a massive injection of funds to revive the economy, with a large increase in social service spending, public job-creating investment and expansion of government work programmes. And they are seeking the employers' support.

Before next month's meeting of the National Economic Development Council, "TUC leaders intend to invite the CBI to discuss their economic policies together...so that a joint approach can be mounted." ('Financial Times' 15/1/81)

The TUC leaders, it seems, have accepted that negotiations with the Tories will achieve nothing. Their conclusion, however, is even more unrealistic.



Len Murray at TUC conference

Page: MILITANT

The Confederation of British Industry is solely concerned with big business profitability. They may chafe under Thatcher but she, like the Tory Party, is the employers' mouthpiece. The difference in the Tory cabinet and the muted criticism by industrialists is a symptom not of 'reasonableness', but of the chronic problems big business face in their desperate search for panaceas.

With private industry seeking ways to shore up profits at the expense of workers' wages, conditions,

and jobs, casting aside 'luxuries' such as the NHS, what common ground can they have with the TUC, whose job is to defend the interests of working people?

The bosses—and their Tory representatives—have never conceded anything voluntarily. At a time of economic recession, only a mass campaign, mobilising the real might of the trade union movement—its 12-million strong membership—can clear the way for a Labour government committed to defending workers' interests.

RECORD PAPER SALES BUT...

Sales of 'Militant' have hit record levels in west Wales. In an area threatened with devastation, there's a growing thirst for socialist ideas.

A gut hatred of the Tories is prevalent in our working class communities. There is no shortage of candidates to "do a job on Thatcher".

Yet we feel there is enormous untapped potential. We have set our sights at 1,000 paid sales of 'Militant' in the next six months.

Our pit sales have increased this year, from an average of 15 to an average of 130. Our aim in the new year is to cover every pit in the West Wales area, every week.

Recently, a new supporter, Jim Bond, reflected the new-found mood. He came over to discuss the sales of the paper at half past seven; by 8.15 pm we decided, on his initiative, to cover a night shift in one of the pits, Abernant.

It was an experiment really. Miners are not paid until the following day—



Llanelli LPYS paper sale

what would the response be? Within one hour, we had sold 35 papers. Both of us were highly pleased with our efforts.

Comrades are jockeying for the position of "super-seller". A healthy socialist competition has arisen, in getting the paper out to the workers on the streets, in the factories and on the estates.

The 'Militant' is the best paper in the labour move-

ment. It provides a Marxist analysis capable of arming the working class for the defeat of capitalism.

It is essential that we get these ideas over to every Labour Party member, trade unionist, shop steward and all those who are prepared to fight the system that destroys the lives of our people. Help us fight for socialism; help us sell the paper.

...Price increase needed

It has been reluctantly decided to increase the price of the 'Militant' from 15p to 20p from the issue 538 (6 February). Despite booming sales and the magnificent support from our readers to our fighting fund, this increase has been forced on us by the ever increasing cost of producing a newspaper.

In the last year alone, to

give some examples, freight charges have increased by 77%, postage 45%, paper 28% and phone charges 35%, with more increases in the pipeline for all of these items this month. It is exactly two years since our last increase, and I am sure all our readers will agree, the quality of the 'Militant' has improved enormously.

We are confident that our

growing readership will understand the reasons for this increase and be even more determined to ensure that our plans for a bigger and better 'Militant' are fulfilled as soon as possible. The subscription rates to 'Militant' will be increased accordingly to take account of the new postal rates, but will not affect current subscribers until date of expiry.

MARXIST PAMPHLETS ON BRITISH LABOUR

'Where is Britain Going', by L. Trotsky £1.25

'1926 General Strike' articles by L. Trotsky, E. Grant, P. Taaffe 40p

'History of Labour Party' Militant Pamphlet 40p

All available [price includes p&p] from

World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E83PN

Fight Tories Nationality Bill

As many as three million people, most of them black, would be turned into second and third class citizens, with absolutely no right of entry to this country, if the new Tory Nationality Bill becomes law.

The proposals contained in the Bill represent the most savage assault on the rights of black workers to be unleashed by any government.

The Bill proposes to create three basic tiers of citizenship: British Citizen, Citizen of the Dependent Territories, and British Overseas Citizen.

The first category, conferring all existing rights of ("patrial") citizenship, would apply essentially to the fifty five million whites who already reside in the UK, as well as to an additional two or so million

By Bob Lee
(Secretary PNP Youth)

whites who now live in countries such as Australia and South Africa. Only a relatively small percentage of blacks have "patrial" status—that is, who were born here, or have a parent or grandparent who was born in the UK.

The second two categories carry no automatic right of entry to the country. In fact, people who are to be classified as so-called "British Overseas Citizens" will actually find themselves worse off than refugees,

because they would become "stateless," without an absolute legal right to domicile in any country, least of all in the land of their "Citizenship"; the UK "Overseas Citizenship" will apply to people such as Asians in East Africa.

People who fall into the category of "Citizen of the British Dependent Territories" would be stripped of their existing right to enter the UK, and would become citizens of the "territories" where they now reside, such as Hong Kong, Gibraltar and Belize.

The Bill seeks to abolish the automatic legal right of black Commonwealth citizens who came here before January 1973 to register for British Citizenship; those who fall into this category will have two years to register.

After that period the granting of British citizenship will be entirely at the Home Office's discretion, with absolutely no right of appeal. Candidates will have to undergo a "language test" and satisfy the Secre-

tary of State that he/she is of "good character."

The Bill also provides for the abolition of automatic "citizenship by birth" to children who are born here to foreign parents. And mindful of the mass support for Labour among blacks, the Tories are also proposing to provide the Home Secretary with new powers to "review" at any time the right of Commonwealth citizens to vote and work for the Civil Service etc.

The ruling class hope to weaken the working class with this Bill. They will use it to "link up" the racial and nationality issue with unemployment and other ills of their system as part of the age-old tactic of setting black against white, worker against worker.

This Bill was published the day before the Tory Green Paper on Trade Unions, and will be proceeding through Parliament at the same time as the carefully stage-managed "public debate" on Prior's proposals to curb the rights of workers.

But the sheer severity of

the measures proposed in the Bill, coupled with the draconian discretionary powers to be conferred on the Home Secretary, also represent the most serious and direct attempt so far by the ruling class to "control" black workers through a vicious regime of harassment and intimidation in order to isolate them from the labour movement.

The Tories are hoping that these measures will frighten blacks away from politics, away from the labour movement and cow them into passivity.

Nothing could be further removed from reality! The Bill has been greeted with a roar of anger from many blacks; many of their workers' organisations have already initiated plans for a mass campaign against the Bill. But this Bill cannot be defeated by blacks alone!

White workers must recognise that an "injury" to one is an injury to all! The strategy of the ruling class is to weaken the working class by dividing it along racial lines. White workers

should immediately rally round their black brothers and sisters and campaign to stop the racist laws.

The labour movement, the organised force of workers' unity, must prepare to do battle against the Bill, to expose the racists and bring down the bosses' government.

Demonstration against Nationality Act and Racist Immigration Laws.

Saturday February 14th. Assemble 11.30am all Saints, Oxford Rd, Manchester.

Speakers include: G Kaufmann MP, Anwar Ditta, Bob Lee, G Morton MP and others from the labour movement. Organised by Manchester Labour Party.

LPYS Week of Action Feb 14-24 Stop Job Massacre

"The St Valentine's Day Massacre—of jobs." That's the theme of Pontypridd Labour Party Young Socialists' demonstration on Saturday 14 February as part of the LPYS National Week of Action.

Every area needs to make preparations now to ensure the LPYS Week of Action is the biggest possible success. In South East London LPYS branches have printed 10,000 leaflets for their local demonstration on Saturday 21 February.

Co-ordinate with your local Labour Party. Enfield North LPYS are participating in a demonstration on housing which has been called by Enfield Labour Party.

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS Chairman)

In the North of England and Scotland LPYS branches will be participating in the demonstration in Glasgow on Saturday 21 February. Already Liverpool District Labour Party have filled two trains to go to this demonstration.

To end the National Week of Action there will be a national day of Youth against the Tories, on Tuesday 24 February—the day the February unemployment figures come out. Some areas are organising all-night vigils of Tory Party offices and local Tory-controlled town halls.

Now is the time to plan events to follow up the week, to get new members involved in the LPYS branches. Hackney Central LPYS have already organised a debate with the local Young Tories on the problems of school students.

Other branches are organising trials of Thatcher, look for your suspects and prosecution witnesses now. Write to local youth clubs and school students inviting them to come along.

And don't forget social activities either. Round off the week on Saturday 23 February with a good social, local bands and groups. This week of action can be the biggest week of activity that Labour's youth has ever organised so help step up the campaign to kick the Tories out of office, and replace them with a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Support Lambeth Workers



Above:

Last Saturday's recall Conference on 'local government in crisis' pledged its full support to the week of action planned in early February [with a march on February 4th] by local authority unions. Full report next week.

London

This year's London LPYS Conference promises to be the largest ever. Held on the weekend 31 January-1 February it will have as its guest speaker Tony Benn.

Over 40 resolutions have been sent in on youth

unemployment, rights for women, cuts, transport, N. Ireland and many more. Refreshments will be available all day and a creche has been organised for both days at the conference venue.

On Saturday evening the band 'Spare Change', who were a great success at LPYS Summer Camp will

be playing. There will also be a disco, bar and buffet. Visitors do not need credentials beforehand and all LPYS members can attend.

Conference venue: Brunel Hall, Rotherhithe Civic Centre, Albion Street, London SE16.

and unemployed workers are invited.

Congress of Youth—Saturday 31 January at 10.00 am in the Old Public Library, Lothian Street, Bonnyrigg, Midlothian.

Speakers include: Chris Herriot, Chairman M & E Lothian Trades Council Youth Section; an organiser from the Unemployed Workers' Union, Newcastle; Pat Wall, president of Bradford Trades Council; Ron Brown, MP for Leith.

Lothian

Against the present background of mass unemployment, education and health cuts, etc., the Mid and East Lothian Trades Council Youth Section have organised a Congress of Youth for Saturday 31 January at 10.00 am. We want to give the youth of the Lothians a chance to get involved in an organised fight back against the Tories.

The one-day conference will include many discussions. Perhaps the most important will be on the Unemployed Workers' Union and Unemployed Workers' Centres, and whether they should be established in Lothian.

The Congress of Youth is an opportunity for young workers to put forward their views as to how the local fightback should be organised. All young workers, students, school students

SAVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

By Simon Heather
(Selly Oak LP)

Public transport will probably be one of the main issues in the May County Council elections. Just look at what the Tories have done in the West Midlands. They've raised bus fares three times in the last year, cut services 10%, and axed 670 jobs.

This Sunday's West Midlands Labour Party policy conference must take decisive action to reverse the decline of public transport. We must introduce a fare freeze for the four years of office.

The monthly travelcard should be gradually reduced in cost, as part of a move towards free fares. The 10% service cut must be restored,

and extra staff should be taken on, with workers having a basic wage of £80 per week.

Free travel should be provided immediately for the unemployed, school pupils and retired people.

Public transport is at a crossroads. Either we continue on the Tory road of cuts, fare increases and more cuts until there are only "profitable" routes left, or we have a bold programme to subsidise and

expand public transport.

It has been reported in the local press that "experienced socialist councillors are concerned that the conference should not saddle them with an election promise that would be virtually impossible to fulfill."

But we are not prepared to sit meekly by whilst Thatcher drives a steamroller over us. All cuts must be resisted. Our election programme should call for the building of a mass campaign to unite local Labour Councils and trade unions in national struggle to bring down this government.

NOLS:

A STEP FORWARD

The decision of the NOLS Student Council to stand NOLS candidates for NUS positions is a step forward.

'Militant' supporters within NOLS have always argued that NOLS should stand independently within the NUS; rather than being submerged into dubious alliances with Liberals and "independents."

This strategy was adopted at the NOLS Conference against the wishes of the NOLS leadership and resulted in the NOLS candidates being elected to the executive with high votes.

Giving Liberals seats

However, the proposal for NOLS to stand for every "full-time" position on the Executive was rejected by the meeting. The NOLS leadership argued against this, saying that there were other "good" candidates, and NUS needed a plurality of political ideas. If this strategy was carried out by Labour in local elections, it would mean giving seats to the Liberals!

Now, NOLS will stand for President, Treasurer, Chairman of Scotland NUS and three 'part-time' positions.

For the NOLS campaign to be successful, it must be a necessary that it must be a clear anti-Tory campaign aiming to build links with the labour movement. NOLS must explain that issues such as housing, grants and the standard of living are not problems faced by students alone but are caused by the crisis of capitalism.

However, the NOLS leadership, enmeshed in pessimism, said that NUS was "not ready yet" for an anti-Tory campaign, and that the first priority was to rebuild the union.

But it is only through political campaigns that NUS can be rebuilt as a serious force. Organisational and political questions cannot be separated.

It is also essential that the NOLS campaign clearly differentiates itself from the moderate policies of the 'Left Alliance.' We must learn the lesson from Labour election campaigns of the past—that with a more militant programme, Labour has had better results.

Many Labour Club activists will be angered at the choice of Helen Connor, the current NUS Treasurer, to be the NOLS candidate for

By
Alan Watson
(National Committee,
National Organisation
of Labour Students)

NUS president. At the last NOLS Conference, she was elected to stand as a NOLS candidate in the NUS elections; but withdrew a week later to stand for the 'Left Alliance.'

Now, three weeks before nominations were decided by NOLS, she returns to NOLS! David Aaronovitch, the current President of NUS, and a leading member of the 'Left Alliance,' has circulated a letter saying that there are no political differences between himself and Helen Connor. Indeed, she has been one of the main architects of the 'non-political' approach that NUS has adopted over the past two years.

Nevertheless, now that the NOLS slate has been chosen, Labour Students should campaign for the best possible vote for them. **Every Labour Club should stand candidates for the NUS Conference delegate elections in Student Unions, putting forward socialist policies.**

Helen Connor was elected at the Student Council because of the completely unrepresentative nature of that body. Of the 63 delegates, only 27 were from Labour Clubs, the others being National Committee members, or NOLS members with NUS positions.

Stand Labour candidates

Of the delegates from Clubs, 15 voted for the 'Militant' supporters to stand for NOLS, so a clear majority, 15-10 (2 abstained) opposed Helen Connor's nomination. This shows how support for the NOLS leadership has weakened in Labour Clubs, and many Clubs are now angry with the actions of the NOLS leadership.

With clear splits within the NOLS leadership, and virtually no campaigning activity being organised, every Labour Student must ask if we can afford another year of stagnation for NOLS. Only the election of a Marxist leadership at NOLS Conference prepared to organise activity and build a genuine base for NOLS, can drag NOLS out of the mess it is in at the moment.

Enfield Four



Police protection for fascists in West London recently

Photo: MILITANT

On Monday January 5, four Enfield LPYS members appeared in court charged with offences arising from the counter demonstration against the New National Front on Remembrance Sunday 1980.

Three of their four members were found not-guilty. The police did not have evidence to prove that they either obstructed the police or were causing a disturbance likely to cause a breach of the peace.

Unfortunately for the LPYS one member was charged and fined £100. This comrade, who is black, had been harassed many times during the demonstration. There were open threats on his life.

His crime—kicking the NNF wreath. The magistrates were concerned about the provocation that led him to take this action.

"In this country, freedom

of speech is important. £5 million was spent on Public Order last year. People who cannot restrain their feelings should not go on demonstrations."

But how much of that £5 million is used for policing provocative fascist demonstrations?

And the NNF were hardly restrained at their demonstration. One NNF member

had to be held back as he worked himself into a frenzy showering racist abuse at counter-demonstrators.

The case has cost over £445 with £345 for legal costs. Financial support is urgently required and should be sent to:— **Enfield Four LPYS Defence Campaign, c/o 195 Walworth Road, London SE1.**

**Mobilise for
Labour Party
Anti-Tory
Demonstration
Glasgow
Saturday 21 February**

JOIN THE RESISTANCE!

Thirty-five miles east of London, in the middle of the Thames, is one of Essex's blackest unemployment spots.

We have some of the biggest oil refineries—yet 1,100 out of work. Canvey Island is famous for its highly dangerous oil refineries, which Thatcher wants to expand.

"4,000 New Jobs" predic-

ted the local 'Southend Echo' will come from the newly planned installation. Canvey people have heard these promises before, but of the present refineries, the biggest only employs 300 on two shifts!

Since the early 1970s, the 'Castle Point Refineries Resistance Group' has organised opposition to the refineries, especially with mass pickets and demonstrations in the summer of 1973. Originally it worked closely

with the Labour Party, but since then the Tory MP for South East Essex (Sir Bernard Braine) has opportunistically 'championed' the defence of Canvey residents by 'safety' measures.

On November 27th a fire at one of the refineries led to one death. Only the quick action of the Fire Service [then criticised by the Tory press for planning a strike] prevented a catastrophe for Canvey and the whole of Essex.

POOLE

Recently myself and three other comrades from Poole LPYS were on a 'Militant' paper sale in Poole's shopping area.

An elderly gent saw me standing in a shop doorway with an armful of papers.

He strolled over and in a deadly serious voice said, "Do you know what this country wants, eh?"

I started to say yes, socialist policies, a planned economy, but before I could say much he carried on, "This country needs a more efficient Guy Fawkes, blow the bloody lot up!"

Although I would never wish being blown into a million fragments on anyone [even a Tory!] I couldn't help laughing because he was so serious, it appeared he really meant it!

By John Hayes
(Poole LPYS)

It is vital that trade unionists and Labour Party members play a leading role in the Resistance group and prevent the careless and dangerous expansion of oil refining by the Tories in this area.

**By Castle Point
Resistance Group,
Mr D S Kennedy**

**'The Marxist
Theory of
the State'
By Ted Grant**

**Price 50p
[including P&P]**

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BLACKBURN

A month ago Blackburn LPYS took up the campaign for day centres for the unemployed and OAPs.

We lobbied the council in November and since then every Saturday we have campaigned with a petition calling for the above demands.

In one hour every Saturday we have sold about 30 'Militant's' 16 'Socialist

Youth', half a dozen badges and 9 'Dump the Tories' posters and received 150 signatures. People began queuing to sign the petition as soon as we arrive in the market place. One woman signed the names of 7 people in her family, six of whom have been made redundant, for one of them this will be his sixth redundancy.

Another woman, a Tory,

even signed the petition in disgust at the government's policies.

The petition is being presented to the council in February, after which Blackburn LPYS will have to find another issue to petition against! We have until then to try and beat our record street sale of 35 'Militants'.

By Rosina & Peter Harris



7:84 ONE BIG BLOW

**THEATRE
COMPANY
ENGLAND**

WRITTEN BY JOHN BURROWS. MUSIC BY RICK LLOYD
7% of the population of this country owns 84% of the wealth

The 7:84 Theatre Company are currently staging their play 'One Big Blow' at the (Old) Half Moon Theatre in Aldgate, London.

By Julian McKittrick

The drama takes place within an ingeniously simple square acting-area, with the audience on all four sides. Lighting is mostly provided by miners' pit-lamps.

The action concerns the contraction of pneumoconiosis by a colliery-band's cornet player (Wally) and the miners' subsequent struggle for improvements in pit working conditions.

The band must find a replacement for Wally if they are to stand a chance in the national band finals which loom imminently. This search in turn provokes some soul-searching amongst the lodge members; what is the issue at stake—general working conditions, a show of solidarity for their stricken work-mate, doing well in the competition—or all three combined?

The play demands, and is here rewarded with, a talented team of actors successfully adopting several identities: at least two sets of miners as well as the NCB gaffers above ground, and above all a team who can sing and dance in harmony. For props are largely replaced by miming, and when the band is called upon to play, their voices must assume the character of brass.

The action is swift, and at times a little confusing.

Politically the play's achievement lies not so much in

asserting the need for social revolution, but rather in portraying class conflict and consciousness in a mining community—from birth to death.

The production is lively, amusing, highly entertaining and recommended.

DATES

31 January. (one night only)
Battersea Arts Centre.
1-21 Feb. in London (phone
01-253 4049 for details)

12 March-4 April, in Scot-
land (phone 031-226 4300
for details).

Terry Duffy is renowned as the 'realistic' leader of the engineering union. Concerned at the plight of the engineering industry, he decided to appeal to 28 top engineering company bosses [not, as far as we know, AUEW members] to sign a petition calling on the government to change their policies.

Only eighteen answered. To quote Sir John Boyd CBE, AUEW secretary, "Each one for various reasons declined to participate with us." What could any realistic trade unionist conclude?

A little pamphlet dropped through a reader's door proved so illuminating he passed it on to us. Produced by the 'Assemblies of God,' it concentrates mainly on trying to persuade us that Darwin and Evolution are all wrong, and there really was a 'special creation.' To show that it is not only scientifically backward and reactionary, it features on the front a regimental sergeant major talking to Princess Anne, and an article giving practical advice to people frightened of nuclear war—be ready to meet thy God!

But who is this on page three, laying the foundation stone at "Ramsbottom Assemblies of God Church"? Why it's none other than James Anderton, Chief Constable of Manchester, protector of the National Front [a group reckoned for its brotherly love], whose force is equally famous for its Christian tolerance of minority groups, pickets and so on. Need Britain tremble, while the sword of righteousness is held firmly aloft by our leaders? Isn't it reassuring to know positions of influence are held by those who still refuse to believe that man descended from the apes?

"God wants us to be rich and comfortable." If you are the chairman of Tiffany's, New York's world famous jewellers, perched in your office over five floors of 'recklessly inessential merchandise', it could seem that way. Surveying five floors of 120-carat jewels, gold and silver, fine crystal and china, Tiffany's chairman Walter Hoving told how he saw the light; "a fantastic miracle" that left him transformed.

Walking down Fifth Avenue, he was pondering how to accumulate 2.5 million quickly when an "inner voice" directed him to the telephone. After a quick word with a handful of acquaintances, he had nearly \$1 million. The rest soon arrived.

No stony road to Damascus for him. Now, between homilies to "Shun what is blatant or loud, trying to be what is not," Hoving dashes off newspaper pieces titled 'Are the rich a menace?' and 'Is Profit a dirty word?' His 'Christian' message is of course unaffected by material things.

'Discreet support' was how a British diplomat described the arrangements for Prince Charles' pre-Christmas Himalayan ramble. Reports that he would be accompanied by the smallest possible team for a quiet three-day break, unwinding and painting pictures of the foothills, looked a little silly when the details were revealed: it took 90 porters, 21 sherpas [one of whom has climbed Everest twice], 11 members of a royal suite, as many in the 'support party' plus the King of Nepal's brother, cases of imported bottled water, a special toilet and two foam mattresses, to get the Prince ten to twelve miles a day, travelling all of 2,000 feet in one go—downhill.

We hope he enjoyed the trip and that his pictures are pretty. But who foots the bill?

Ireland: Why partition?

A review of 'Divide and Rule', by Peter Hadden

"We are out for Ireland for the Irish. But who are the Irish? Not the rack-renting slum-owning landlord; not the sweating, profit grinding capitalist; not the sleek and oily lawyer; not the prostitute pressmen—the hired liars of the enemy.

"Not these are the Irish upon whom the future depends. Not these, but the Irish working class, the only secure foundation upon which a free nation can be reared."

James Connolly, April 1916

Northern Ireland today—the horrors of H-Blocks, the continued presence of the British Army, the regular threat of sectarian violence and the deteriorating social conditions, with one in six workless—surely all this makes the history of Ireland's partition a purely academic study?

As this excellent pamphlet makes clear, not one of these questions—or the problems of divided Ireland—can be solved on a capitalist basis. The words of Connolly, that "only the working class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland," retain all their validity.

Throughout Irish history, every fight against feudal and capitalist Britain's conquest and rule has gained its strength from the determination of the exploited, to rid themselves of the absentee landlords who brought misery to the Irish peasantry or, later, of the exploiting capitalist class.

Whenever the struggle for national freedom pushed to the fore social issues: who owns and controls wealth and power, the fight would get broader support from the poor. They could see good reasons for removing the parasitic ruling classes, distributing the land and wealth their labour had created. Such a movement could resist all British imperialism's attempt at divide and rule.

For the richer Irishmen, particularly the capitalists, Irish freedom merely meant a place in the sun—for themselves. The weak capitalist class that arose in Ireland was ruthlessly undermined by Britain's rulers.

But however much they resented British imperialism, they could not fight back

By Roger Shrivess

(Deptford CLP)

without relying on the combativity and anger of the downtrodden masses—whom they feared far more than their British oppressors and rivals.

Consequently, they were continually seeking compromises with the British state.

The involvement of the rich in the struggle for national freedom was always muted by their concern to keep out demands for social reform and change. Every time the upper echelons of Irish society successfully pressed for the abandonment of social aims by the national movement though, the movement was doomed to failure.

The national struggle became "stamped with a sectional and ultimately sectarian character. The way has been paved for the British ruling class to successfully intrude the weapon of sectarianism."

'Divide and Rule' looks at the period up to partition in this class light, in particular looking at the role of the labour movement and its leadership.

The pamphlet uncovers a period of workers' struggles reaching new heights. There was the docks strike of 1907 in Belfast which united Protestant and Catholic workers; the transport lock-out of 1913 in Dublin and the 1919 engineers' strike in Belfast, when workers practically ran the city.

In the rural areas too, the struggle against British rule became an open fight against exploitation from 1918 to 1921, when farms, land and creameries were taken over by workers.

Despite all this, by 1921 Ireland had been divided. Twenty-six counties had been given a very limited form of capitalist independence—while six counties (the present Northern Ireland) remained under British rule. Why?

The partition of Ireland had not been the original intention of Britain's rulers, nor the aim of those resisting Home Rule for Ireland. As the pamphlet shows, its main purpose was to cut across the dangers posed to capitalism in Ireland and Britain by a national movement streng-



Ulster volunteers parade. Why did British imperialism partition Ireland?

thened by an aroused working class.

How did they get away with it? The main reason was the failure of the labour movement's leaders to put forward a clear independent class position.

Class feelings ran high. The demand for a workers' republic—for independence from British capitalism and for workers' power, would have won a clear echo from Protestant workers in the North.

Tragically, after Connolly's execution, the labour leaders in Ireland failed to fight on such a programme. Accepting the pleas of the capitalist leaders of the Irish nationalist movement that 'Labour must wait', they supported the campaign of Sinn Fein and failed to fight the 1918 elections.

The battle was being fought on ground far more to the liking of the bosses. In the North, the Unionists played on the fears of Protestant workers about the rights of trade unionists in an independent capitalist Ireland controlled by rural interests and by people like Murphy, the Dublin transport chief who had locked out Dublin workers a few years before.

With no socialist alternative from the labour movement, or opposition to Home Rule gained the support of Protestant workers and partition was introduced, splitting workers North and South, unionists and nationalist, Catholic and Protestant.

Today the working class in Northern Ireland is far stronger than sixty years ago. The conditions faced by NI workers are amongst the worst in Western Europe. Once again plentiful chances will arise to build throughout Ireland a united working class struggle against the horrors of crisis-racked capitalism.

Today, a movement for national unity which remained within the confines of capitalism would be doomed to defeat on the rocks of sectarianism. The lessons of partition sixty years ago must be learned. This pamphlet will be an essential aid.

'Divide and Rule' by Peter Hadden. A 'Militant' pamphlet, price 60p+15p postage. Order from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN.

'SMILE THO' YOUR JOBS ARE GOING'



LPYS picket of Stock Exchange last autumn, on the day new unemployment figures were announced

Photo: MILITANT

Smile, Thatcher urged us in her New Year message, and things will soon be getting better.

Do the Tories really believe this? Is their "optimism" a cynical con-trick, or are they really self-deluded idiots?

Faced with gloomy predictions from all the main economic commentators, the Tory Chancellor, Sir Geoffrey Howe, ordered us not "to be obsessed by forecast-mongering."

With a 64% rise in adult unemployment (90% in areas like the West Midlands) last year, Howe's solution is to stop making official forecasts.

But the Paris-based OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), the "Treasury in exile," forecast another 750,000 unemployed by mid-1982, bringing the official UK dole queues to more than 3 million, or one in eight of the workforce.

Truth not safe

Another forecasting organisation, Cambridge Econometrics, (SJAN) predicts that "unemployment will rise relentlessly through much of the 1980s to reach 3.7 million by the end of the decade." By 1984, they predict, dole money and social security benefits for the jobless will absorb half of the revenue from North Sea oil taxes.

The London Stock-bro-

By Lynn Walsh

king firm, Philips and Drew, foresee that unemployment in Britain will approach 3 million by the end of the year. "There seems no possibility of a sharp fall in the unemployment rate at any time in the next few years—especially if the present deflationary policy stance remains intact."

The catastrophic rise in unemployment, with all the misery and suffering this means for working people, is the result of the disastrous decline of British capitalism, whose industrial output has halved since 1950 in relation to the other major industrial countries.

But all the crisis symptoms are intensified by the Tories' ruthless deflationary policies.

Keynesian "solutions" are now discarded by the capitalist economists. But a few words addressed by Maynard Keynes to Winston Churchill in 1925, when as Tory Chancellor he was carrying out ruthless deflationary policies, remain relevant.

"We ought to warn you," wrote Keynes, "that it will not be safe politically to admit that you are intensifying unemployment deliberately in order to reduce wages. Thus you will have to ascribe what is happening to every conceivable

cause except the true one.

"We estimate that about two years may elapse before it will be safe for you to utter in public one single word of truth...."

One or two senior managers, meeting recently at a luxurious conference centre in Wilmslow, Cheshire, were aware of the "truth". The organiser, Len Collinson, a director of Dupal Coach Builders and other firms, described the conference as "one of my hawk do's".

The two managers were urged to get stuck into the unions, slashing manning levels, cutting down overtime, limiting the number of shop stewards, sacking workers for "absenteeism" and even for taking certified sick leave.

"We have an opportunity now that will last for two or three years.... so grab it now....it's almost vengeance."

Chance for vengeance

Some firms, at least, are taking such advice to heart, although many, unable to keep up with their international competitors, will simply go under as a result of the Tories' deflationary policies.

Nevertheless, a recent survey (3 January) by the "Financial Times" of 363 industrial companies showed that their trading profits rose by 10.8% (year ending April 1980)—more than most bosses are offering to workers in pay increases.

Overall, the trading profits were slightly down on the previous year (15.3%). "But (some) falls," says the

"Financial Times," were offset by stronger contributions from building materials and electricals, where earnings increased by more than 30% and a mixed bag of 13 capital goods companies, whose joint earnings rose by 72.7%."

Other big companies, particularly in the financial sector, are doing very well. The 65 investment trusts and property companies increased their earnings last year by 35.9% and 26.9% respectively.

Overseas traders, moreover, pushed up their profits by 102%!

When he wrote to Churchill in 1925, Keynes warned that within two years "the adjustment (i.e. deflation with massive unemployment and cut wage levels) will have been carried through"—or "you will be out of office."

The labour movement must make sure that before unemployment is allowed to climb to 3 million or 3.7 million Thatcher and the Tories are well and truly out of office.

MILITANT ECONOMIC PAMPHLETS

- Will there be a Slump, by Ted Grant, 15p
- Inflation and the Financial System, 20p

Add 10p postage from World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN

Some are doing well....

The Tories and the bosses are always prattling on about how 'we' are all in the same boat, and that 'we' must all tighten our belts in order to save the nation.

Why, only this month the whole board of the big multi-national company, Spillers, got the chop. But there's not much chance of them being condemned to the despairing life of the dole. Redundancy payments for workers can go into a couple of grand, if they're 'lucky.' But this has to be spent before dole can be claimed. Yet for these directors, the pay-off went well over a million pounds.

After the Dalgety group bought up Spillers for a cool £70m, the former directors were in for a windfall. Besides £970,000 which has been put into a pension fund for the poor dears, the biggest payment went to the former chairman, Michael Vernon, who got over £14,000.

On losing his job, there were fears that he might be thrown out of his 'tied cottage'—a £155,000 house owned by the company in Chelsea.

But as part of the deal he was allowed to buy it, and as he earned £47,000 a year, he could afford to. Mind you, if he had been thrown out he could have got by, living at his 500-acre farm in Hampshire.

For one of the Spillers directors, these times of recession and chaos must be proving quite profitable. Derrick Hornby has had two pay-offs in three months. After resigning from his job as chairman (£60,000 pa) for the Carrington textile firm, he received an "undisclosed sum" for his trouble.

Now in the Spiller shake-out he is believed to have collected between £60,000 and £100,000.

And there's little possibility of them having to stretch these tidy sums out for the rest of their life—they will no doubt fall into other cushy numbers. Vernon, for example, is now director of the Strong and Fisher leather group.

The bosses are always whimpering about how the British working class have a terrible 'us and them' attitude. But then this is the real world.

For the bosses' class, losing their job is an added bonus, where they can casually pick up a football pools type sum of money before they slot into another well-heeled position.

For the workers in the 1980's, losing your job is a sentence to the soul-destroying living death of unemployment.

.. others aren't

● The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in Bristol have reported a growth of 65% in child battering in the last year the Bristol area. They put the entire blame on rising unemployment and government cuts.

● The Bristol suspension bridge is Bristol's most famous landmark. It attracts more than tourists these days. However, it has become the city's most popular suicide spot. So much so that workmen have had to erect barbed wire fencing because of a record number of deaths this year.

CUTS THREATEN RAIL SAFETY

Cutbacks on the railways are leading to more derailments, with the danger of things getting worse.

The annual report of the Railway Inspectorate (23 December) confirms the fears of the National Union of Railwaymen. Of the 48 de-railments last year, nine were at places "where a deliberate decision had been made to defer attention to the track," says the Inspectorate.

The Transport Department denies that cuts in maintenance have affected safety, but the Inspectorate reports that a steady ten-year improvement has been reversed with an increase in the was allowed to buy it, and as accidents"—those putting life at risk—from 200 to 243 despite a cut in train mileage.

At the same time, however, the results of British Rail's six-week £1 "go anywhere" concession to pensioners

shows how the number of passengers, and BR's revenue, could be vastly increased.

Nearly a million people took advantage of the flat-rate Awayday £1 tickets. More than 500 tickets were sold at Glasgow alone in the first hour of the concession, on 3 November. One pensioner, for £10, followed an itinerary that would have cost £395.86 by full ordinary returns, £248.58 by ordinary returns and day returns, or £124.29 using a normal pensioners' railcard.

The demand for travel is there, but BR has priced itself out of most people's reach.

Yet BR now reckon that they made an astounding £950,000 from the six weeks of the scheme!

CLASS CONTRAST

Two wage advice slips from the Hull section of Reckitt and Colman Ltd show the class reality of society today. One is from a personnel manager, the other from a semi-skilled worker.

By Alan Hartley

The manager gets a basic salary of £13,125 a year (£1,093 per month). On top of that he gets a 'housing allowance' of £1,134 a year (£94 per month) bringing his salary for the year up to £14,259.

At the other end of the scale life's a bit more difficult. The worker's pay slip shows a basic salary of £4,052 a year (£78 a week). In the week shown he did seven and a half hours overtime, making it a 47½ hour-week, in order to provide a semblance of a decent wage.

But the differences don't stop there. The manager makes a nominal payment

of under 50p for his lunches. Are they as frugal as that sounds?

For the worker no such subsidy appears on the pay slip. After pension and national insurance contributions his biggest contribution is 46p a week to the union.

Not surprisingly, no union amount is deducted from the manager's pay slip.

The contrasts will not end after both stop working. The manager's salary enables him to put aside a tidy sum for his pension. His monthly pension payment of £61 is nearly equivalent to the worker's basic pay.

What other benefits and perks do the management get, which are not mentioned in the pay slips?

RECKITT & COLMAN		DEPT. [REDACTED]		RECKITT & COLMAN		
NAME MR. [REDACTED]		TAX CODE [REDACTED]		PAY ADVICE NO. [REDACTED]		
NAT. INS. No. [REDACTED]		PERIOD No. [REDACTED]		DATE [REDACTED]		
PAYMENTS	HOURS	AMOUNT	DEDUCTIONS	AMOUNT	TO DATE	AMOUNT
SALARY		1093.75	TAX	247.35	GROSS	7663.56
HO. ALL		94.56	NAT. INS.	32.88	TAX	1674.60
			PENSION	61.14	NAT. INS.	197.28
			LUNCHEON	10.00	PENSION	366.84
GROSS PAY THIS PERIOD		1188.31	TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	351.37	NET PAY £	836.94

Top: A managerial pay slip—study closely and compare with that of semi-skilled worker after nearly eight hours' overtime [below]

RECKITT & COLMAN		DEPT. [REDACTED]		RECKITT & COLMAN		
EMPLOYEE No. [REDACTED] NAME MR. [REDACTED]		TAX CODE [REDACTED]		PAY ADVICE NO. [REDACTED]		
N.I. CATEGORY [REDACTED] NAT. INS. No. [REDACTED]		PERIOD No. [REDACTED]		DATE [REDACTED]		
PAYMENTS	HOURS	AMOUNT	DEDUCTIONS	AMOUNT	TO DATE	AMOUNT
BASIC PAY	40.00	78.13	TAX	15.30	GROSS	2823.08
O/T X1.5	7.50	21.97	NAT. INS.	4.83	TAX	423.90
			PENSION	2.59	NAT. INS.	130.13
			TCHU	0.46	PENSION	70.49
			CARE	0.09		
			CHARITY	0.01		
			S.C.FUND	0.01		
GROSS PAY THIS PERIOD		100.10	TOTAL DEDUCTIONS	23.29	CASH NET PAY £	78.81

Don't blame the lorry-driver

As a long-distance lorry driver, a supporter of the Labour Party and the 'Militant' as well as a member of the Commercial Transport section of the T&GWU I was disappointed at Dave Farrar's article entitled "Stop the Monsters" ['Militant', 19 December, 1980].

By Bob Stothard
(T&GWU, long-distance driver)

My union has had for very many years the policy of an integrated, nationalised transport system. The article referred to talks only of lorries, and frequently uses the emotive term "juggernaut".

Driving a lorry is no easy business, and lorry-drivers are ordinary working class people, not vandals. At the present time some 14,000 Heavy Goods Vehicle drivers are on the stones and more are likely to follow.

Dave is correct to point out the noise nuisance factor but should also have included motorbikes and many buses. Five years ago, the Brighton branch of the Work Hazards Group estimated that if £50 per bus (at 1975 prices) were spent on sound insulation the improvement would be immediate and dramatic.

The "menace" of lorries can hurt working class people—I don't deny it. But are the lorry-men to blame? A cursory glance at the housing situation in any large town reveals the lack of proper planning.

What facilities are provided for safe car-parking? Little lay-bys cut into the verges? Little courts that can take three or six vehicles? Imagine snaking your way

through streets of double parked cars when you have 55 feet of wagon behind you. Can you wonder how accidents happen in these situations; in fact the accident ratio for our industry is remarkably good compared to private cars.

Of course, working people should have geographical freedom to go where they want if they own a car—a nice relaxing drive about the countryside after a day's graft is the right of every one. But, maybe the car should be subject to "examination" too.

Cars, with the lead content in their noxious exhaust gases are an equally hazardous factor in the lives of residents and pedestrians. Ask people living in holiday villages such as Rottingdean in Sussex, where lorries are banned but the old folk are scared stiff in the summer because of the jamming presence of cars.

Most lorry drivers are concerned about traipsing through towns and cities when by-passes could be built as part of a programme of useful public works. Isn't this the sort of practical solution



Integrated transport system required with proper lorry routes

Photo: MILITANT

that "Militant" ought to put forward?

We have to consider the workers involved in road transport, especially the 1,600 workers recently laid off at Leyland's truck plant in Lancashire. The bosses in the road haulage industry only exploit a situation as they find it. We know that there is plenty of traffic which can and should go by rail, (eg. chemicals currently transported in road tankers by ICI) but any piece of merchandise will land up outside Marks and Spencer transported on a set of wheels.

Finally, to the vexed question of weights. The Armitage report points out that a proposed maximum of 44 tonnes loaded on 5 axles is no more damaging than the present 32½ metric tonnes loaded on three.

At present the standard weight of containers is 30 tonnes. It is a ludicrous situation that containers landing in this country have to be broken down to 20 tonnes to comply with our regulations when trailer lengths were only recently permitted to extend

to 40 feet from 36 feet to cope with the standard length of the self same containers!

Given a planned socialist society there would indeed be less need for lorries—but for the present we have to approach the problems of day-to-day existence in a forthright and sensible manner and seek to defend all our interests.

Cut-backs in the railway network over the past 20 years, particularly the decline in the collection and delivery department, has forced thousands of smaller concerns to provide their own transport for their own merchandise. This is the lunacy of the free market economy where an important national asset is forced into "competing" via limited cash limits with the last bastion of old-fashioned private enterprise—the road haulage industry.

We, the workers in the industry, know we have problems that will not shrink away. We have to face them and act accordingly, methodically and progressively; and put forward constructive arguments.

GOLD AT OUR FINGERTIPS

—but not in our pockets, as a jewellery worker explains

By Ross Taylor

(National Union of Gold, Silver and Allied Trades shop steward)

Birmingham is not only the centre of car production and British Leyland, it is also the heart of the British jewellery trade.

Birmingham's jewellery "quarter" is in a small area of Dickensian buildings which contain about 1,000 small firms employing 14,000 workers. Some buildings even have preservation orders on them. Inside they're dark and dingy, with tools and machinery that wouldn't be out of place in any museum.

Most of the "jewellery quarter" is dominated by little family firms handed down through generations. Often, to cut costs, three or more firms will occupy one building.

Even the building housing the NUGSAT union office includes 3 or 4 little jewellery firms. Many firms employ 7 to 10 people with pensioners working as porters humping around precious materials and generally acting as "dog-bodies".

My firm employs just three tradesmen with 100% union membership. But lots of the small firms are still unorganised and management takes a dim view of anybody who tries to introduce the union.

On average I can produce 25 rings a day for which I'm paid 85p each. They sell for £50 each in the shops. I make the ring and after it has been hallmarked and polished, set in the various stones.

Basic rates of pay for gold workers are skilled £72-00, semi-skilled £65-00, unskilled £52-00 per week. Many of the so-called unskilled jobs can-

not be performed by anyone just off the street, yet they are still paid unskilled rates.

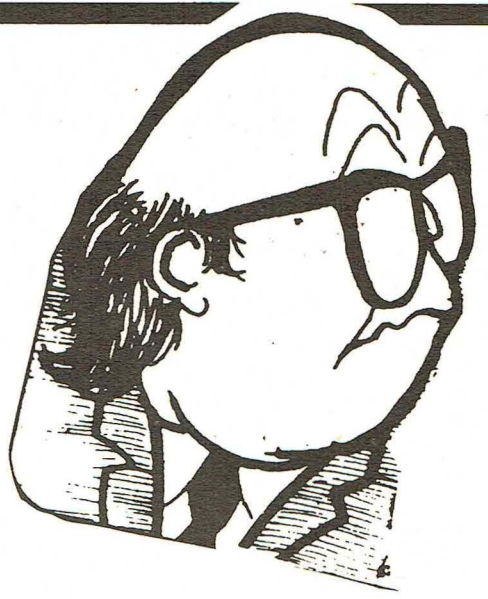
We can never hope to afford the luxury items we create. With gold being so valuable there are filters fitted under wash basins, regular vacuuming of workshop floors and the used buff paper is put into a special bin so that when it is full it can be processed into reusable gold.

But the recession is beginning to bite. Before the seasonal Christmas rush 90% of the companies were on short time. Within the jewellery trade itself the Assay Office, responsible for hall-marking, has been especially hit. Over the last nine months over one third of the workforce have been made redundant.

Due to the redundancies and closures of many firms there has been a steady decline in the membership of the union. We are seeking amalgamation with a bigger union, probably AUEW TASS.

We are now waiting on the result of a ballot of the membership to see if the conditions we have been offered will be accepted. If we have an amalgamation we would be better placed to build a stronger active union and better able to do something about the terrible wages and conditions a lot of our members have had to suffer over the past decades.

RIGHT-WING REJECTS — AND LABOUR'S FUTURE



The 24th January will be a crucial day for the Labour Party.

The great majority of Labour Party members will be waiting for the Special Conference to write into the constitution new clauses which will give effect to the Annual Conference's decision to widen the franchise for the election of party leader.

That decision together with the constitutional amendment implementing automatic, mandatory re-selection for MPs, made last year's conference the most important since 1918, when the party adopted Clause IV, the socialist basis of the constitution.

The right wing of the Parliamentary Labour Party, however, look to the special conference with gloom and foreboding.

David Owen recently described any decision to establish an electoral college as "a fix". Indicating to journalists the gang of three and about a dozen allies would be leading a breakaway from the Labour Party, Owen predicted that the conference would mark an "irrevocable change" in the Party.

According to Shirley Williams—much quoted in the capitalist press as usual—the special conference will be a "miserable business", even, apparently, if it adopts an electoral college giving half the votes on the leadership to the Parliamentary Labour Party.

The right of the PLP are clearly in complete disarray. They are all equally opposed to the democratisation of the party. But as the recent "Campaign for Labour Victory" conference showed, they are deeply divided over their tactics. Some are clearly in favour of splitting from the party immediately (like Rodgers, Williams, Owen, Horam, Wrigglesworth).

Some right-wingers like Sandelson and Horam openly announced their support for David Steel's invitation to join up with the Liberals, in an alliance or an electoral pact.

Others, however, like Roy Hattersley and Giles Radice, are less confident that a new centre or social democratic

By Lynn Walsh

party would get off the ground. They are still determined to battle on inside the Labour Party, opposing conference policies from within, and with a view to blocking the implementation of socialist policies by a future Labour government.

Clearly, many right-wing MPs are waiting to see exactly what constitutional amendment is adopted on the 24th before deciding on their next step.

But one thing is clear: Shirley Williams, David Owen, William Rodgers, and the other right-wingers who have been discussing a breakaway social-democratic party have lost the argument over policy within the Labour Party.

Both constituency and trade union delegates at the Blackpool conference, drawing the lessons from the disastrous record of the last Labour government, decisively rejected the right-wing policies that led Labour to defeat and opened the door to the Thatcher government.

The measures to democratise the party were long overdue reforms, which express the determination of Labour's ranks once again to take control of their own party.

Urging the right wing that it was "now or never for the big break", (*Daily Mail*, 9 January) Dick Taverne, himself a Labour renegade, made a telling point. Unless they jumped now, he said, right wingers would be pushed out through re-selection. Then they would be seen as rejects. Any new party set up under those circumstances would be seen "as the Dustbin Party"—and its slogan would be: "rejects of the world unite, you have nothing to lose but your seats!"

Even if they jump now, however, the right-wing MPs will still be Labour's rejects. While taunting the right for their cowardice, Dick Taverne is apparently oblivious of the fact that he himself took a "one way ticket to oblivion"

when he decided to stand against Labour after being "re-selected" by his Lincoln constituency. True, with the fervent backing of the capitalist press, Taverne won a by-election in 1973. But in 1974, Taverne was defeated by the Labour candidate and passed into political oblivion.

Taverne was simply one of the first of the Gaitskellite rump to be rejected from the Labour Party. He himself admitted that he originally obtained his seat through Hugh Gaitskell's personal patronage. This was by no means untypical of the Party in those days, when the constituency parties were treated by MPs simply as election machines there to ensure they regained their seats at general elections.

Under Gaitskell, the party leadership attempted to remove Clause IV, part 4, from the LP constitution. This attempt to remove the party's basic socialist aim was defeated by the constituency activists and the majority of the trade unions. But in practice the Gaitskellite leadership, which continued to dominate the party until the defeat of the Callaghan government, abandoned any attempt to implement socialist policies.

The Labour governments that came after Gaitskell's death made no attempt to implement socialist policies, abandoning even the reforms promised in the election manifestoes of 1964 and 1974.



In the last few years, the right wing of the PLP have attempted to bolster their position by attributing the swing to the left to the work of Marxist "infiltrators" and "plotters". But it was the right-wing Gaitskellites who

entered the party in the 1950s and 1960s who were the real "entrists".

In a period of relative economic boom and political stability, they saw the PLP as a vehicle for their own careers. Socialism, they argued, was no longer necessary in the old form: Keynesian economics and the "welfare state" could make capitalism fair and acceptable to all.

It is the shattering of this myth—with the return of economic crisis, mass unemployment, and a viciously reactionary Tory government—which has brought the defeat of the right, and the demand for the return of genuine socialist policies.

Many right-wingers used the Labour Party as their ladder to a parliamentary career, only to abandon it when it suited their purpose—people like Lord George-Brown (who never misses an opportunity to attack Labour), Sir Richard Marsh (now a well-paid spokesman for the employers), Ray Gunter, Reg Prentice, and many others like them.

Another of the professional infiltrators was Lord Vaizey, formerly Professor John Vaizey, an economist who was given a life peerage by Harold Wilson. He resigned from the Party in 1978. By that time (he wrote to *The Times*, 3 December 1980) "there was scarcely a Labour policy that I could support."

"The chancellor's economic policy was half-hearted monetarism that led uniquely to rising unemployment and a collapse in currency. The vaunted re-distribution of income and wealth had made the poor poorer and the rich richer." Was Lord Vaizey moving to the left? Hardly!

Underlying Lord Vaizey's disillusionment is the recognition that the Keynesian ideas on which the right-wing Labour leaders based themselves are utopian in this period of capitalist crisis. "There is no longer a set of social democratic ideas that will work. Keynesianism is intellectually dead...Nobody, not even Shirley Williams, has the faintest ideas how to redistribute income...social democratic theory is just plain wrong...is Shirley Williams going to nail her colours to that fallen mast?"

Vaizey's conclusion, however, is not that the Labour Party should return to fundamental socialist ideas. No, he concludes that "the only workable set of political

principles in free Europe today is Tory pragmatism." Margaret Thatcher, he asserts, is "honest, a patriot, and ready to listen."

Well, at least Lord Vaizey has followed the logic of his argument. Unlike Shirley Williams and David Owen, he is not attempting to blame Labour's defeat on the left wing of the party.

David Owen (*Daily Mail*, 7 January) claimed that if the special conference agrees to the electoral college, "Labour could lose millions of votes." Owen ignores the fact that it was he and the right who presided over Labour's decline.

The weakest and smallest constituency parties are not those which support the left, but precisely those with right-wing MPs. It is parties where there has been a growth in membership and increased activity which have demanded a return to socialist policies and the democratisation of the party.

On the other hand, there are parties like Bill Rodgers' constituency, Stockton-on-Tees, where, according to recent reports, there is a far from healthy situation.

A *Financial Times* reporter recently told how Bill Rodgers pre-empted criticism and a possible vote of censure on his opposition to the party's policy on nuclear arms by making a special summons to his sympathisers—"some of whom had not been to party meetings for years."

"Over this period [the 18 years Mr Rodgers had held this seat] the party has grown complacent—less than half the 90 management committee members attend meetings regularly—and has become a rather cosy family affair noted for its large number of husband-and wife teams."

"Few [of Rodgers' strongest personal supporters] are active in day-to-day party affairs beyond the purely social, and some share the widespread disillusionment with the last Labour government, and in particular, its 5% pay policy."

And yet, it is Bill Rodgers, the "gang of three" and their sympathisers, who have the blatant nerve to accuse the left of bringing about the decline of the party!

However, the FT's report did not stop another *Financial Times* correspondent from contradictorily claiming that "Mrs Williams is acknowledged to be by far the biggest vote-winner on the

right." Apparently, this lobby correspondent not only forgot that the last Labour government (with Mrs Williams as a leading minister) lost the election, but Shirley Williams herself lost her own seat in Stevenage! This paper and the rest of Fleet Street really mean that Shirley Williams is the one they would like to see leading a breakaway social democratic party.

The millionaires' press also ignores the enormous upward turn in the LP's new membership in the last year or so—precisely the period when the party has moved to the left. There has been an increase in active membership, despite the campaign of the PLP right wing against the decisions of the NEC and the party conference, despite all the attacks on the Labour Party and despite media attempts to whip up a witch-hunting scare campaign against the Marxist left around the 'Militant'.

Another of *The Times's* recent correspondents made a telling point. A supporter of the extreme right-wing National Association for Freedom, Professor Anthony Flew, has no patience with those "moderates" who still believe that the Labour Party can be saved for "social democracy".

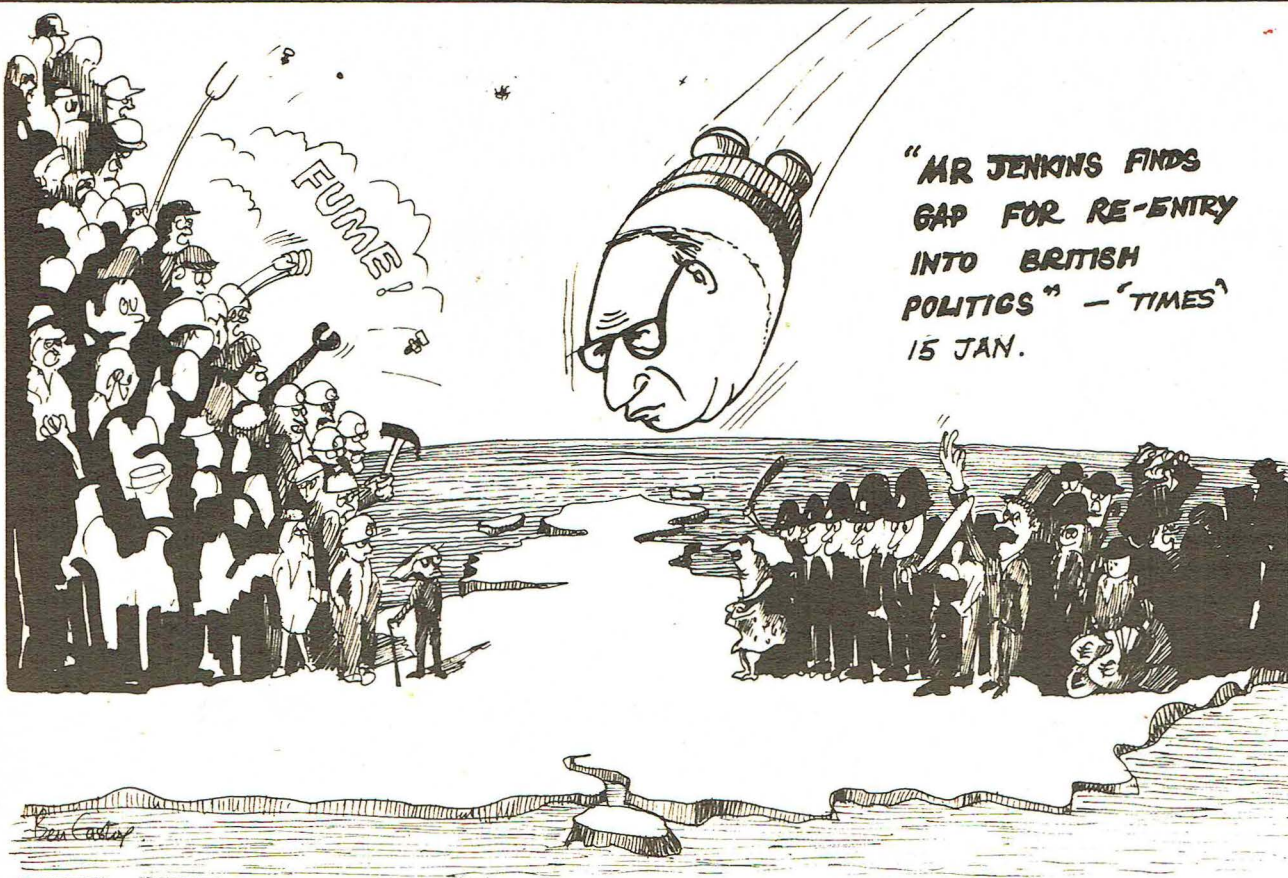
They have failed, he claims, to come to terms with the party's "constitutional commitment to total Clause IV socialism."

"Clause IV is not something which has been insinuated into the party constitution by a bunch of Trotskyite entrists: it has been there since 1918: it has been printed on every party card as the statement of the party's aims for as long as anybody can remember; and, as few people seem to know, words to much the same effect are to be found in the rule books of most of our major trade unions."

"It is idle to advise 'Labour's real leaders...to define a new set of principles' and to tell 'the militant rank and file' either to bury these or to 'seek another party'. It is the non-socialists who should long since have left the party whose clearly reiterated aims they do not share..."

On this one point we can agree with Professor Flew!

The press, which speaks for big business, is not really concerned about the damage being done to Labour's "electoral prospects", for which they pretend to show a touching concern. What they are really concerned about is that the Labour Party has



"MR JENKINS FINDS
GAP FOR RE-ENTRY
INTO BRITISH
POLITICS" — 'TIMES'
15 JAN.

The Labour Party must campaign to oust the Tories and fight for socialist policies

begun a process of transformation into a mass, socialist party committed to a fundamental change in society.

The Labour Party is no longer a reliable "second eleven", headed by a right-wing Labour "alternative" to the Tories. They are afraid that the party will now begin to campaign for its aims, to defend workers' class interests, and to challenge the wealth and the power of the capitalist class.



Now they are faced with the prospect of re-selection, many right-wing MPs who have never, in reality, accepted the party's socialist aims, are considering breaking from the party. Clearly, people like Roy Jenkins, who deserted the party for a highly paid job in the EEC, have a direct personal interest in the formation of a new centre party—to provide a position for the continuation of their parliamentary careers.

David Steel, the Liberal leader, is also keen on the formation of a new centre grouping, if he cannot persuade Labour renegades to join the Liberal Party. David Steel's recent "ten-point programme for economic recovery," which consisted of unworkable "Liberal-Tory" economic policies, was not so much an economic strategy as "a political strategem designed to provide common ground on which politicians of the centre could unite." ('The Times', 13 January)

But as 'The Times' editorial commented: "One should not exaggerate the contribution that the Liberals can make at this stage to encouraging a social-democratic break-away."

The spokesman of capitalism realise that the Liberal banner will have little appeal for millions of workers suffering from the break-down of "private enterprise" in Britain, and demanding bold

solutions to their burning problems.

But the prospect for a new "social democratic party" are no more rosy than those for a Liberal centre party.

The policies of the right wing "moderates" or "social democrats" would be the same as those put to the test—and found wanting—under previous Labour governments. Of course, the Labour renegades would get generous support from the capitalist media, and initially might have some successes. But in the long run, their policies would be no more successful than when right-wing Labour governments were in power.

Working class voters and even middle-class voters, persuaded to vote for them in a coming election, would very soon be disillusioned with their "pink Tory" policies.

While the main concern of right-wing MPs is with not wasting "promising careers in the wilderness" and "avoiding political oblivion", the strategy of big business is cynically to use Labour's defectors or a new social democratic party to inflict the maximum damage on the Labour Party. They want to block the return of a Labour government that would pose a challenge to the capitalist system.

"The people who are contemplating embarking upon this adventure (a new party)," remarked Peter Jenkins in 'The Guardian', "are not setting out to wreck the Labour Party, but that could be their first result."

Many of the serious commentators, however, are sceptical whether a break-away party would gain any significant basis at all. "At some time," wrote Alan Watkins ('Observer', 14 December 1980), "if Mr Jenkins and the BSW (Blessed Shirley Williams) are serious, someone will have to get out on the doorstep and sell the double glazing."

In other words, where would the active supporters, the organisers, the election workers, the rank and file trade union support come from for a new social democratic party? If the right wing have already lost the support of the great majority of activists in the labour movement, from where, how will they attract the activists to build a break-away party?

David Woods, in 'The Times', confessed that he could hardly "believe in a new radical party of the centre-

left." But he believed "in its necessity for moderate radicals, without being able to believe in the practical circumstances that could bring it into being."

"If it matters, what I do believe is that a break-away moderate Labour group could keep the Labour left out of office for the rest of the 1980s—if enough PLP moderates were prepared to stand against official party candidates. Are they?"

There we have it! The big-business support for a new party—and it is being reported that business interests have offered £15 millions to Roy Jenkins for the founding of such a party—is aimed at blocking the coming to power of a Labour Party committed to radical socialist policies.

Doubtful about the effectiveness of a new party, however, David Wood has also confirmed that the strategists of capitalism would prefer at least some of Labour's right-wing MPs to stay within the party to inflict the maximum damage on Labour in the event of a new Labour government.

"In a day of Labour government, it would be different. Assume that Mr Foot makes 10 Downing Street in 1983 or 1984 on anything less than a landslide, then Mr Rodgers, Dr Owen, and the Gaitskellite rump of the PLP, if they had the courage to risk constituency re-selection, would have a blocking vote on the wilder lunacies of new party policies."

The election of Michael Foot—by the PLP—to the leadership of the party itself reflects the profound swing to the left. Left to themselves, the PLP would undoubtedly have voted for another candidate, probably Denis Healey. But aware of the pressure from Labour's ranks, particularly in view of re-selection, and fearing "civil war" in the party if Healey were elected, a majority of MPs voted for Foot.

The capitalist press attempted to ridicule and condemn Michael Foot before his election. But again, the serious spokesmen understand the significance of his victory. They are well aware of the cynical, propaganda motives of attacks on Foot. "Mr Foot has very winning ways," wrote Ronald Butt ('The Times', 13 November 1980), "and the Tories who believe he will be an easier opponent than Mr Healey could well be wrong."

"Of course [Butt continues], there are dangers in Mr Foot. Capitalism in the mixed society is obviously in some present danger and Mr Foot's capacity to promote political feelings and class sentiments without calculating the real consequences is obviously a danger for the mixed economy."

Michael Foot's election as leader has been welcomed by Labour's ranks because it marks a strengthening of the left, the adoption of more radical policies, and the beginning of a new period of mass campaigning against the Tories and their system.

Speaking recently in Newcastle, Michael Foot said that the Labour Party must carry through a "socialist transformation when the party is returned to power." The next government would have to be "much more socialist" than any previous Labour government.

Statements like this, as the response to Michael Foot, Tony Benn and other left-wingers on the November 29th showed, are welcomed not only by party members, but by masses of ordinary workers.



However, faced with the catastrophic collapse of British capitalism, in the context of a world-wide economic recession, such a socialist transformation could only be carried out on the basis of a bold socialist programme. The "alternative economic strategy", advanced by the 'Tribune' left and largely accepted by recent Labour Party conferences, will not ensure such a transformation.

As 'Militant' has explained (16 January), the policy of partial nationalisation and an attempt to impose "planning agreements" on the big monopolies, will not give a Labour government decisive control of the economy.

Partial control, and attempts to implement reforms in the workers' interests, will either be blocked or rapidly sabotaged by enormous economic and political pressure from the capitalist class.

Britain is facing the worst slump since 1929-31. As the stock-broking firm, Phillips and Drew, recently commented: "The current recession in manufacturing industry is set to be sharper than the great depression of 1929-31. The cumulative decline in manufacturing output is expected to reach 14% between 1979 and 1981, the sharpest decline in manufacturing output this century. The equivalent drop in 1929-31 was 11%." ('The Times', 5 January 1981)

The economic forecasters are all vying with one another to predict the highest rise in unemployment, with predictions of 3 million or even 3.7 million by the end of the decade (see page 6).

Within the framework of this diseased capitalism, there is no room for significant improvement of workers' living standards, for lasting social reforms, or even for the defence of the past gains of the labour movement.

The crisis facing the working class demands the implementation of a rounded-out socialist programme based squarely on the aims of Clause IV, part 4 of the LP constitution. Common ownership of the means of production, under conditions of monopoly capitalism, must in practical terms mean the nationalisation of the 200 big monopolies which dominate the economy, together with the banks and other financial institutions.

Only then, with ownership and control of the "commanding heights" of the economy, could the labour movement integrate and develop the productive resources of the country in a planned way.

Enormous increases in output would be rapidly possible, making it possible within a short space drastically to cut the average working week, to increase holidays, to provide a comfortable standard of living for all workers, together with vast improvements in health, education, sport and recreation facilities.

Socialist nationalisation, moreover, would not be based on attempting to "compensate" the capitalists for the wealth they have extracted over the years from the working class. Compensation

would be only on the basis of proven need.

Socialist nationalisation would not place the management of industry and commerce back in the hands of state-appointed ex-capitalists and bureaucrats. Nationalisation would be under workers' control and management, with the industries being run jointly by representatives of the trade unions nationally, the trade unions in the particular industries, and the government.

A campaign on this programme, explained to millions of workers and linked to the immediate demand for an end to unemployment, for a 35-hour working week, for a reversal of government spending cuts and a programme of useful public works, and other immediate demands, would win overwhelming mass support.

The Labour Party's national demonstration against unemployment held in Liverpool on 29 November marked the beginning of a new stage in the party's campaign to channel mass opposition to the Tories and mobilise support for socialist policies.

Michael Foot, speaking before the 29th, supported the call for a demonstration with the remark that Aneurin Bevan understood the "association between the agitation outside Westminster and what happens in this place [Parliament]. He understood better than anybody in the 'Thirties that the House of Commons could be used as a sounding board for what happened outside. So if the demonstration we are holding in Liverpool [originally proposed on the NEC by LPYS representative, Tony Saunois—LW] has not already been in existence it would have been necessary to invent it."

The massive Liverpool demonstration, probably the biggest demonstration held outside London since 1945, showed the way. Now, the campaign against the Tories must be stepped up on the basis of bold socialist policies.

The carrying through of a constitutional amendment to give effect to the conference decision to democratise the election of party leader should mark a decisive defeat of Labour's right-wing infiltrators, the Tory "fifth column within the party", and clear the decks for the vital struggle ahead.



'Workers will not be slaves'

▀ The area in which I live supplies the wine for Jerez sherry, which goes to tables throughout most of Western Europe. How many who delight in this drink understand the suffering for working people which goes into its production?

My village has a population of about 6,000 of whom 98% are involved in grape picking or grape production, mostly agricultural labourers, with only a few able to live from grape cultivation.

Work begins in March to May when workers slim out the vines and put insecticides on the trees. Apart from ploughing, which doesn't give much work in any case, these initial activities only involve a few workers.

By the month of May the vine trees are safe from any attack from nature. From June to September/October mass unemployment is the lot of the overwhelming majority of the village. Indeed the harvest only lasts for twenty days when the grapes have ripened and are ready for picking.

There are no contracts between the agricultural labourers and the landowners, who take us on and kick us out when they like.

At the harvest, people come from all over Andalusia and all over Spain. These people live in very bad conditions, some in stables, others in wine cellars, and some in small huts. And after suffering all this, many go away without obtaining work.

The hiring of workers by the landowners takes place early each morning at 6 am. The owners come down and examine us to see who are the fittest, who will give them the biggest profits. It is like a cattle market, the owners pick out the best beast of burden!

If you are lucky you might get a job for several days. But usually you are just hired each day. Very often the owners choose people from outside, just to keep local people in their place and to hold wages down.

Some of these people work just for food, a bed, a sausage sandwich, and some wine! Of course anyone who is at all militant, or even just speaks their mind, is denied a job. Workers are treated more or less like slaves."

What is the mood of the people at present, I asked.

"Well, amongst the older people, it's apathetic. They believe there's always been rich and poor and there always will be. However, the youth are different. Many are rebellious in their attitude.

But even amongst the youth there are some who are quite apathetic, due to drugs, particularly marijuana, which is easy to obtain because Andalusia is one of the drug's main transport areas from North Africa. This drug is a weapon of the capitalists and the landowners. I used to use it, then I realised I was, in fact, a marijuana addict.

The rate of wages for picking grapes is very low. They pay 1 peseta (there are roughly 184 pesetas to the pound) for each kilogramme of grapes picked.

To earn 1,000 pesetas (just less than £6) you have to cut the grapes and carry them to the trailer. You have to pick about 1,000 kilogrammes, roughly 2,200 pounds, each day, which is a hell of a lot of grapes. (This is almost a ton—PT.)

You have to cut the grapes with a knife so your hands get full of cuts, then you have to carry them on your head, which gives a terrible headache and a pain in the neck at the end of the day."

I asked him about the mood of the workers in his village and Andalusia as a whole.

"I don't think there is tremendous anger, at least on the surface, at the present time. You have to remember that workers in these areas are used to grinding poverty. However, the situation is different in different provinces. In the province of Seville and Cadiz there is tremendous anger and bitterness."

It is the Seville area and around Cordoba that the *Observer Magazine* reported on rising tension.

One worker commented to the *'Observer'* correspon-



Agricultural workers in Spain at a protest in 1977

An agricultural labourer from Andalusia describes the poverty and anger of rural Spain

dent, "We're not prepared any longer to die of hunger. We'd rather die fighting." His eyes turned past the white walls to the countryside beyond: "If they [the landowners] wanted it there could be work, but they don't want us."

One worker commented, "I haven't known anything as bad since the 1930s and the Republic. You know how that ended. But before there was Casa Viejas."

On a recent visit to Spain, Peter Taaffe, editor of 'Militant,' interviewed Diego Munoz Garcia, a 22-year-old agricultural labourer from Rociana, Huelva Province, Andalusia.

This was the village where in 1933 the civil guard shot down insurgent peasants and agricultural labourers, which discredited the coalition government of liberals and socialists. This worker commented, "It can happen again. Look at Nueva Carteya two weeks ago. The Guardia Civil opened fire on the demonstrators."

In this area, in 1980 alone, they've held two mass demonstrations, a hunger strike, a sit-in at the town hall and blocked the roads a dozen times. As one labourer commented, "We are not going to starve."

In Diego's village also, there have recently been signs of rising tension centering around the decision of the village mayor, a member of the government

party, the UCD, to distribute excess municipal funds unequally to council workers. Diego comments:

"People originally thought the mayor was good. But now because of our pressure (Diego's a supporter of the Spanish Marxist paper 'Nuevo Claridad'—PT) people see him in a different light.

He has three jobs: village school master, mayor, and chairman of the bread factory co-operative. He must be an incredibly active and intelligent man to have three jobs. But he is getting three different salaries while many other people in this village have not got one job.

Municipal taxes went up last year, but at the end of the year, there was an excess of 600,000 pesetas (roughly £3,500) in the council funds. The mayor then decided to distribute the money to council officials and workers.

This was wrong. Any excess should go to benefit the whole village on public works or to benefit the poor. After all, we all pay taxes and it's our money that the mayor has distributed.

Moreover, there wasn't even equality in the distribution between one council worker and another. Those on the highest salaries will get the most, while those on the lowest grade got least.

The village council

We demanded equality in distribution of the excess amount between each council employee. We hoped in this way to produce a split between the poor council workers and the higher ups who are allies of the mayor and the big landowners.

However, there was general resentment in the village that the council workers should get these excess funds. We produced 500 copies of a leaflet denouncing the mayor and sold them at 5 pesetas each.

In the voting on the council, 7 UCD members voted in favour of the proposal to distribute the excess funds as suggested by the mayor.

However, what really disappointed us was that some of the PSOE (the Spanish Socialist Party) members abstained but none voted against. There are 7 UCD councillors and six from PSOE on the village council.

This shows the bad role which leaders of PSOE and the UGT (the socialist union) have played in the village, in Andalusia and indeed the whole of Spain in the past period. They've not acted as leaders of the workers, but on most occasions have tried to restrain them. Some of these leaders are no different from the leaders of the UCD—some of them are UCD types in disguise.

The other day the mayor almost broke his head on the orange tree in the village square to avoid meeting me. At the same time he has taken revenge on us for producing the leaflet. One of our comrades who worked in the bakery was sacked by the mayor.

I have also been denied work by this creature. I have only recently come back from military service. When I did I went to the mayor and asked about community work schemes. He kept on putting me off but I kept on going to see him and virtually had to beg him for work.

Eventually he gave me work, but only because I told him that unless he did I

wouldn't be able to pay the social security card. So he sent me to weed ditches, and gave me other small jobs.

However, when we brought out the leaflet, he just kicked me out of work. I worked 11 days but so far he has only paid me for five days.

At present I have absolutely no income. I have to live off my family. This is the kind of dictatorial power exercised by the mayor and his cronies."

We will see big changes coming in this area if workers have a fighting socialist leadership.

The only long-term solution to the problem of my village and the people in it, the working people of Andalusia and throughout the country, is by ending capitalism and the establishment of a socialist Spain which will end our grinding poverty, misery and unemployment.

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JAPAN: RECLAIMING THE UNIONS

In Militant 16 January we carried a report of the hellish conditions endured by workers at the Nissan [Datsun] plants in Japan and the blatant divide and rule tactics of management.

By Andrew Glyn

Undoubtedly many readers will ask where is the union? Unfortunately for a long period now it has been firmly in the pockets of the company.

Up to 1953 Nissan workers had one of the most militant unions in Japan with a high degree of control over the shop floor. In December 1952, shortly after rescue from near bankruptcy by US orders during the Korean war, Nissan concluded a technical tie-up agreement with Austins to assemble knock down kits.

In order to regain control of the shop floor management provoked a strike, and after a 100 day struggle, succeeded in breaking the union and replacing it with the Nissan Workers Union which co-operates totally with the company.

The union is virtually an

extension of Nissan's industrial relations department; there is a well trodden career structure involving moving from an official position in the union to a higher position in the IR department, and sometimes back to the union!

In annual bargaining, there is full consultation between union and management before the claim is submitted. In the years 1970-74 the union obtained from the company 100% of its claim each year! The economic crisis made it necessary for the union to go through the motions of submitting a real claim and then negotiating a compromise, but even this hardly changes the reality of the situation.

The union's charter prescribes that voting should be direct and secret. The percentage of voters who cast votes varies from 99.72% to 99.99%. But something is fishy; the percentage of votes gained by elected officers is between 99.58% and 100%!

The reason is that votes are cast under strict surveillance.

A May Day demonstration in Tokyo in 1952, shortly before the Japanese bosses created their company union

One worker, quoted in an article by Kiyoshi Yamamoto of the Tokyo University Institute of Social Science, says:

"When we vote, we are asked to gather round the supervisor's desk in a group of several at a time, and write out our voting slips right on the spot, on the desk in front of everybody. The desk is an ordinary office desk of about one meter in width.

"And standing beside the desk are the election administrators, I mean the assistant manager and the shop steward, who watch closely to see if we write down the right name."

Another worker at the head office of the company explains: "If blank votes or invalid votes are found, the

shop steward is forced to submit a written apology to the top union leaders. That is why he keeps an eye on how we fill in the voting slips. He even fills out ballots for new employees, saying that they miswrote the characters or that they may not know who the candidates are."

The workers are forced to accept this rotten system by an ingenious system of sticks and carrots. Firstly two-thirds or more of the wage is not basic pay but a "special allowance" manipulated by the company to the advantage of "loyal workers".

The few remaining members of the original 'first union' are discriminated against in a host of ways, wages, promotion etc (a later article will show how this operates in

another Japanese firm, Japan airlines).

The union actually intervenes over the question of promotion, urging priority be given to "one's record of union activities" and "one's standing in the union hierarchy." Ultimately exclusion from the union can mean loss of job (with this kind of union the "closed shop" would be most acceptable to Mrs Thatcher!).

Until the early seventies the control exercised by the unions was cemented by the very rapid increases in living standards which the boom in Japan brought. Between 1955 and 1979 consumption per head rose an estimated 368% in Japan (six times the increase achieved by British workers).

Since 1974 of course,

increases have been much less, 1 or 2% a year. In the last year or so there have been a couple of cases of groups of Communist Party members in big firms winning re-instatement to the union (and therefore the company) after being dismissed from the union for insisting on their democratic rights (ironically not concerned with union affairs themselves but with the right to campaign for CP candidates in parliamentary elections).

This is only the first whisperings of what will have to be an enormous struggle by Japanese workers to rid themselves of the exceptionally powerful system of labour control which is exercised over them and to reclaim the unions as their own fighting institutions.

EL SALVADOR-



Even the Army are unreliable. The government looks to a new right-wing US government for help.

El Salvador has a population of 4.5 million. It is a poor country dependent on coffee growing with no oil or mineral wealth. But a crisis in the ruling regime poses enormous problems for the mightiest capitalist power, the USA.

By Roger Shriver

The outgoing Carter government in Washington has resumed military aid to the regime in order to fight growing guerrilla activity against the Duarte government, claiming intervention from Nicaragua as justifi-

A CRUMBLING REGIME

cation. Despite air attacks from the Armed forces, the guerrillas say they have control in large areas of the country.

Over 9,000 at a conservative estimate have died in 1980 in acts of violence, the church claims 80% were murders of unarmed civilians including workers' and peasants' leaders, by the military. Right-wing 'Death squads' of plain clothed members of the police and Army supplement official military violence.

Thousands of refugees suffering from malnutrition afflict a people already ravaged by 50% unemployment. Three quarters of all under-fives are grossly under-fed; 90% of the population earn under £50 a year, and many peasants are landless.

The economy is bankrupt and millions of dollars have been taken from the country by the ruling '14 families' of landowners.

These landowners comprise also the military dictatorships who have held the lid down on this hell-hole practically continuously since 1927. 'Elections' were held but the military always announced the 'results', and the military candidate invariably won and the opposition were usually forced into exile.

Prodded by the US who

fear revolution on their doorstep, the regime has made feeble attempts at 'agrarian reform' opposed bitterly by the military tops. Some land over 500 hectares was expropriated but owners were lavishly compensated by cash and government bonds. The more important smaller plots owned by the elite for coffee growing were left untouched.

Meanwhile the 'reform' programme was used to clear the countryside of 'subversives' and the torture, intimidation and murder of union and peasant co-operative leaders.

The regime and the military have practically no social base left. The middle class and the church are largely in opposition. Now even the Army, faced with mutinies and desertions (even at the top level, by leaders aware of which way the wind blows) are unreliable. Like Somoza in his dying days in nearby Nicaragua, the regime have resorted to bombing their own densely populated cities.

Only the repressive apparatus defends the junta. The military right want new US President Reagan to intervene with American troops to save their skins and at the same time stop the land reforms which although in-

effectual, are hateful to them.

For US imperialism to invade would be a return to the Central American policies which led to invasions of Guatemala in 1954 and Dominican Republic in 1965.

The American ruling class fear the repercussions if El Salvador should follow the same path as Nicaragua where, despite attempts to isolate the left Sandinistas in the government, capitalism looks far from safe.

Upheavals in Central America, they fear, could spread to oil-rich Mexico and Panama, where the canal is vital to US capitalist interests.

If the US do not intervene, they reason, can the weakened regime maintain power? Intervention, start-

ing with advisers, has already begun. A full military intervention is definitely on the cards at some future date.

Even if US imperialism is able to crush the revolution for a while in such a small country as El Salvador, they could still face the prospect of a long drawn out guerrilla war. Hatred of a US Army bolstering capitalism with savage repression, would be added to the burning social questions.

The likelihood of a deformed workers' state, where landlordism and capitalism have been abolished, but without the control of workers' democracy, would increase.

The long term prospect for capitalism and imperialism in Central America looks gloomy.

COMING SOON!

Militant International Review
No. 21
Winter 1980/81

Articles on Britain, India,
and the Belfast engineering strike of 1919
Price 50p



Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

New horizons for prisoners

Dear Comrades

Margaret Manning (issue 532) inquired about the Barlinnie Prison Special Unit. Some years ago Provan YS visited the unit. We were given a guided tour by Jimmy Boyle and later spent some time chatting with the inmates.

These men were all considered hopeless cases by the prison authorities, yet in an environment free from the brutalising effects of orthodox prison life, developed latent artistic talents, and with it changed their attitudes and outlook.

The conditions in the unit were spartan (much better than normal conditions, however) and a degree of autonomy as regards dress, food and living conditions prevailed. Yet really these inmates were 'privileged' only from the viewpoint that their imprisonment was humane compared to the sub-human conditions of the rest.

Coming mainly from deprived backgrounds, these men had never known any other sort of existence except that of prison or crime. As such the unit has opened up for them another side to life.

It reflects on capitalism that when people are given decent conditions they can be transformed. In a society free from want, such institutions as prison will be unnecessary. Capitalism creates the conditions where violence and crime thrive. Socialism, by eliminating the cause, will also abolish the symptoms.

Fraternally
Eddie Phillips
Provan CLP

How to change the Tories?

Dear Comrades

I have been reading with interest your comments on "demonstration in Liverpool against unemployment."

We have 2½ million unemployed and I feel that marches and demonstrations no longer have the desired effect, under the present restrictions and by-laws.

I suggest that a large number of claimants visiting their MP's surgeries, especially those members with other jobs (see the Register in House of Commons library) would be more effective.

Also, by setting up a Claimants' Union in our localities, and claiming all benefits entitled and helping others to do the same, we can demonstrate to this Tory government and people that the labour movement is a responsible movement and the Tories' plans for prison camps, extra police, etc. are redundant.

If we all claim, and help others to claim, all the benefits they are entitled to, the Tory government and their allies will have to change policies and understand that putting people out of work is not profitable.

Yours fraternally
F.F.
Yapton, Sussex

The next election is not enough

Comrade

The recent changes in the Tory Cabinet indicate that the Thatcher government remains committed to destroying the trade union movement and smashing Britain's industrial base and its public and social services.

The hard-line capitalist members of the Cabinet are not concerned about losing the next general election. It will be the task of the 'one-nation' Tories to shed crocodile tears for their discredited Party.

The monetarists in the Cabinet are carrying out the demolition of consensus politics, for the British and international capitalist class.

Trade union and labour opposition has to be stepped up on two fronts. Politically, we expect the Labour, Communist and other parties of the left to conduct a war of propaganda aimed at raising the consciousness of the workers in the struggle against the capitalist class, and also to create a politically united left movement against the Tory

Jenkins' gold tablets

Dear Comrade

For months before he was due to give up his onerous and badly-paid job with the EEC, I heard through the media how Roy Jenkins would be setting things to rights in the Labour Party when he retired at the end of 1980.

It was said sometime before December—I forget the date—that he had already had a secret meeting with that great trade union-basher David Steel and that further talks would take place; that he would be meeting the 'Gang of Three' for discussions about a third Party etc, etc.

So it was with baited breath that I waited to hear the pearls of wisdom from the lips of this great proletarian leader when it was announced he would be interviewed on LBC on 13 January. Well, I listened, but instead of a mountain we had brought forth a mouse.

If anyone else listening to that great interview can tell me what policies he was putting forward, I shall be delighted to hear it. In effect he said sweet nothing.

Imagine my surprise [not really] when the next morning I read in the paper that he had taken up another poorly-paid post with a merchant bank in the City who—according to the 'Financial Times'—were delighted at their great fortune in having Mr Jenkins on their board, as he had so many good connections with bankers in the EEC.

I am sure when he finally does descend from the mountain with the tablets for us, showing us the true path to Jerusalem, millions of working class voters will flock to the banner of this great working class socialist who is having such a hard time. Perhaps the unemployed will have a whip round to help him start his new party.

Yours fraternally
Stan Natrass
Littlehampton



Photo: Militant

Tory cabinet members in about the only place they're welcome—Tory Party Conference

government.

Industrially, the trade unions should reject all closures and redundancies, and the membership should force reluctant leaders into fighting the employing class and local authorities which are creating mass unemployment. The unions should organise strikes, occupations, demonstrations and mass meetings.

De Beer

Dear Comrade

Another chapter in what must now be the most incongruous relationship between two large super-powers. For a considerable time the UK business press has concerned itself with the state of the gold market and what the world's major producers have been getting up to, particularly the top two—South Africa and the USSR.

They report some evidence suggesting these two countries have had discussions about the gold market. Speculative dealings by the Russians this autumn drew

Insulation?

Dear Militant

It seems that Basildon Council are not satisfied with government policy of selling council houses. Their "answer" to increasing waiting lists is to encourage tenants to take lodgers, without needing council approval or paying extra rent!

Rather than build enough homes for all, councils are looking for gimmicks and other ways of hiding the homeless figures.

Taking us seriously

Dear Friends

I note that in the 'Guardian' of 13 December 1980, Ian Wigglesworth MP, in declining to stay on the opposition front bench, gave as a reason that he had a full-time organiser for the 'Militant' tendency on his party's management committee and therefore had to devote himself to local internal party matters to a greater extent.

How many other MPs are there that need a local activist to make them take their responsibilities to the local party seriously?

Carole Galbraith
Burnley, Lancs

The will to win is there, but mass opposition can only be encouraged and unified by inter-union co-operation and the determination to raise workers' consciousness through programmes of mass working-class political action.

It will be insufficient merely to win the next general election. The pro-

cess of transferring power to the working class needs to begin now. The historical objective of the trade union and labour movement is to create socialism in Britain and the world.

Fraternally
Nigel Knowles
Wood Green, London

a visit to the USSR by the London-based Consolidated Gold Fields. Two large multi-national firms have an 'interest' in CGF: the Anglo-American Corporation and De Beers Consolidated Mines.

It has been recognisable that since the visit, the policy of both South Africa and the USSR, when operating on the gold market, has been similar. Of course this could be put down to mere speculation, particularly since the Soviet Union has no diplomatic relations with South Africa and, according to official Soviet trade statistics, does no trade at all with South Africa.

What will happen to people on social security or rate rebates if they take in lodgers and risk losing their benefits? How will poor and old tenants afford Heseltine's proposed £3 a week rent increase?

The Tories are trying to "phase out" council housing. Yet they never suggest that the richest private householders open up their mansions for the homeless!

Let us push Labour councils and the next Labour government to build

Tory honours

Greetings Comrades

The Olympic team missed out on the Honours List. They did not go for personal benefit, but for their country. They made just one mistake: they did not give generously to Tory funds.

There are two reasons for the Honours List: a medal from a defunct empire acquired from taking other peoples' countries. Second, to ensure continuity of Royalist support. This is why you go to the palace.

Fraternally for the
New Year
C Taylor
Axbridge, Somerset

Interestingly, a certain Mr Gordon Waddell, formerly related to Mr Harry Oppenheimer, whose family built up the Anglo-American Corporation and the De Beers firm, was in Moscow recently.

Mr Waddell is regarded by the bosses' press, at least, as a leading figure in the South African mining industry.

Although he was spotted at the Bolshoi ballet, Mr Waddell assured the reporter... "I'm only here for De Beer..."

Fraternally
David Churchley
Glasgow Cathcart
Labour Party

enough homes for the million homeless and in unfit housing, by nationalising the banks and building industries!

Yours fraternally
Mike Levene
Canvey Island LP

Transplants—but no hospitals

Dear Comrades

Recently my mother was unfortunate enough to have to spend some time in hospital. Visiting her one day, I noticed she was wearing a badge bearing the words 'Heart to Heart'.

Someone had gone around the ward selling them, and also car-stickers, in an effort to raise money for the Hare-

Dole quiz

Dear Comrade

A few days ago I was listening to a programme on the local radio, which included a phone-in quiz.

One of those trying to win the cash prize had laryngitis, and the announcer commented on this. The man informed her that he was unemployed and could not afford to buy anything for it.

The announcer said doc-

Fight cuts logic

Dear Comrades

On 27 November the government announced they intended to make further cuts of 19.5% in exchequer departments [Customs, Inland Revenue, National Savings, Treasury, etc] by April 1981.

Working in one of these departments, I am sure cuts of that magnitude will cause redundancies on a large scale. It would be impossible to effect such cuts using 'natural' wastage [i.e. lost job opportunities for the unemployed].

Having cut to the bone, this government now intends to pare back on direct services, affecting the futures of thousands of employees and the recipients of these services.

Such incalculably callous stupidity would be hard to believe—if it was stupidity. Cutting back in departments that raise revenue for the government is the logical extension of Thatcher's monetarism.

What the government loses, private enterprise gains. What the tax-payer loses in services, the finance shark gains in profits. Society goes backwards; the weakest go under; not one scrap of wealth is created by production.

Unions in the public sector and civil service must mount a concerted united struggle not just against the cuts but against the Tories. We must bring them down and we must do it now.

Yours fraternally
A CPSA member
Glasgow

field Hospital Heart Transplant Trust.

Is it not a terrible indictment of the corruptness of capitalism that in a society technically advanced enough to perform transplants of a major organ in the human body, the finance for this work has to be provided by donations from working class people?

However, it does not stop there. 'Militant' has already reported the scandalous proposals by certain large gambling organisations to conduct a lottery in order to provide funds for an ailing National Health Service, mortally struck down by the sickness of capitalism.

Such happenings further convince me of the need to fight for the socialist transformation of society. For only under socialism will we be able to ensure that the benefits of medical science are used for the vast majority.

Fraternally
Tony Church
Leicester West LP

tors are 'free.' Yes, replied the unemployed man, but prescriptions are not, and he could not afford to pay the charge.

'Can't you get them free?' asked the announcer. The man was unsure but said he'd probably have to fill in 99 forms, so he'll go on suffering.

Unfortunately he did not win the quiz.

Fraternally
Andy Allenby
Havant & Waterloo 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.

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.

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).

JAMES LEON BROWN born 19 December 1980, Bridlington. "Life is beautiful. Let the future generations cleanse it of all evil, oppression, and violence, and enjoy it to the full."

HARTLEPOOL Militant Readers' Meeting 'Fight Unemployment'. Speaker: Brian Ingham. 7.30 pm, Thursday 5 February, Room 2, Town Hall, entrance in Lauder Street, Hartlepool.

STOCKTON Labour Party Young Socialists Day School Saturday 24 January. 10-5, Stockton Library. Speakers: Margaret Reavy, Dave Cotterill

BRADFORD Militant Readers' Meeting 'India—the Gathering Storm'. Hear: Roger Silverman (International Editor, 'Militant'), at Thornbury pub, Leeds Road, Bradford, 7.30 pm, Wednesday 28 January

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)

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)

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 Lausman, c/o 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Organised by Rank & File Mobilising Committee for Labour Democracy, Tribune Group of MPs.

SALFORD Marxist Discussion Group. Subject: 1926 General Strike. Speaker: Eddie Fury. Thursday 29 January, 7.30 pm. For further details phone 061-793 5808

STEVENAGE Militant Public Meeting 'The Crisis of the Profit System'. Speaker: Geoff Jones (Brighton Labour Party) Time and place: Meeting Room 1, Stevenage Leisure Centre, Lytton Way, on Thursday 29 January, 7.45 pm.

MILITANT WINTER HOLIDAY DRAW 1981 Results

Will the following please contact the Militant offices, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN, enclosing with their letter their numbered tickets, and stating the address they want their prizes sent to.

1st prize: Week for Two in the Sun (Worth £500) M McCann, Belfast, no. 14421
2nd prize: Week-end for two in Paris (Worth £120) I Briggs, Sunderland, no. 62203.
3rd prize: Portable TV (worth £60) L Chatfield, Littlehampton no.48638.
Plus seven prizes of book/record tokens:— J Chapman, London N15, no. 23692; M Payton, Bradford, no. 02993; G Owens, London SE9, no. 23776; S Wood, Leicester, no. 72316; P Collins, Birmingham, no. 74040; G Vaughan, Folkestone, no. 31367; P Thorne, Bristol, no 43335.

Strathclyde Militant Trade Union Day School

Saturday 7 February

Morning: "Unemployment and the fight against the Tories" Ray Williams [NGA] Tony Mulhearn [Vice-President, Liverpool District Labour Party].

Afternoon: Seminars: The Employment Bill and the Closed Shop; trade union democracy; print unions and the freedom of the press; health and safety at work; the role of a shop steward; strategies for fighting the cuts.

Closing session: "Which way forward for the labour movement" Tony Saunois, Labour Party NEC.

Venue: University of Strathclyde Students Union, 90 John Street, Glasgow.

Tickets: 50p from Bob Wylie 20 Loch Meadie, East Kilbride. Telephone E.K. 29082

INFLATE OUR FINANCES

Good news for every worker! Although you may be facing a £3+ Tory-dictated rent rise, a 50%+ rate rise, massive fares increases, bigger heating, lighting and telephone bills... the rate of inflation has officially fallen!

It is now only 15.1% as compared with 15.3% last month! That will be a great relief to workers, faced with wage rises held below 10% by the strenuous efforts of the bosses and their government.

A drop in inflation of 0.2% is just a "drop" in the stormy ocean of problems besetting workers in Tory Britain.

The socialist alternative of public ownership and planned growth is a must. A plan of production dictated and democratically controlled by workers must replace the chaos and bankruptcy of capitalism.

'Militant', the paper that never lets up in the campaign for such an alternative must have your support.

'Militant's' Fighting Fund received a magnificent £94,000 for 1980, and 1981's target of £120,000 now has to be met quarter by quarter. A rapid recovery must be made from the strenuous efforts of last week. This week's total for 1981 has reached just £371, although we also received

By Clare Doyle

£1,262 of promises for 1980 in the last few days.

Special thanks go to those who have already set examples to follow:— KG Smith (Pontefract & Castleford LPYS) £5, T Tattersall (Lancaster) £10, Dewsbury/Batley/Morley supporters £20, Ron Brown MP Leith £1.50 and N Barclay (Edinburgh Pentlands LPYS) £2.

A supporter in Caen, France sent £5, D Scullard (West Linton) £5, S Edwards (Miami Beach, Florida) £13.35, R Barnes (North Fylde LPYS) £18.50, P Downes (Leyton CLP) £1 and a reader in Reading £16.10.

Thanks to a first time buyer in Mansfield who sent 85p, supporters in the South West who sent donations totalling £78.85, and all the extras on paper sales, including Mansfield £1.07 and Grantham 65p. And also the Readers Meetings and discussion groups, thanks this week to Barnsley for £6.

Inflation still ravages 'Militant's' income, as it does yours, so send us a donation today to help in the fight to get rid of the Tories and the scourge of their capitalist anarchy once and for all!

THIS WEEK £371

FRENCH CP SOW SEEDS OF RACISM

On Christmas Eve an irate crowd attacked a hostel in Vitry-sur-Seine, a working class suburb of Paris and proceeded to make the place totally unliveable.

They cut off phones, electricity, gas and central heating, doorways were blocked with earth and a bulldozer tore up iron railings.

The attack was on a hostel used by 300 immigrant workers from Mali in North Africa. Who were the attackers? A group of fascists? No. They were members of the Communist Party led by the Communist mayor of Vitry, Paul Mercierca.

Faced with growing un-

employment the Communist Party has shamefully called for a complete end to immigration—in other words throwing the responsibility for the growing economic mess on the worst-paid section of the working class.

Increasingly militant

Much of France's post-war affluence has been due to the "guest workers" as throughout Western Europe. Immigrant workers have been encouraged to return to their countries of origin but despite the mistreatment in France, condi-



1980 was a record year for fighting fund—and paper sales. Make 1981 even better.

1980 saw some of the largest political movements since the 1930s. On May 14th practically every town, small as well as large, had demonstrations against the government. We had the massive demo in London against nuclear missiles and of course we had November's magnificent turn-out in Liverpool, reckoned to be the biggest ever held by the Labour Party.

All these events boosted our sales to record levels, practically every week we had new sellers in new areas all over the country.

We believe that 1981 will see big battles against the Tories up and down the country. Already there is a Labour Party demo fixed for February and a TUC week of action in April. Make sure you march into battle with the 'Militant'.

To show the interest in our paper here is an event that happened in Basildon recently:—"My sister, who buys the paper, had to get a taxi home because she had so much shopping, on arriving home she found she was £1.49 short of the taxi fare.

"In negotiation with the

taxi driver she asked him if he would take any of the groceries in exchange for the £1.49, whereupon he said he wouldn't but would take the copy of the 'Militant' that was sticking out of her bag. She gave him the paper and he drove off well satisfied! [Margaret Lynch, Basildon].

Already, this year we have had 7 new bulk orders for the 'Militant' from Featherstone [two orders], Hounslow, West Linton [Peebleshire], Great Wyrley [West Midlands], Trowbridge [Wiltshire] and Pontypridd LPYS.

We aim to continue and even increase the boom in sales of 'Militant', but only you can guarantee that. Make a resolution that you will try to find at least one new reader a month and find new sellers in your Labour Party, trade union, your factory, office and estate.

Make 1981 the year we put the Tories in the dustbin of history, and build the 'Militant' to ensure the workers get that message.

better conditions and higher spending on facilities in working class areas the CP have taken the line of least resistance and taken a blatantly racist position for immediate electoral gain.

Communist Party leader Marchais took part in a protest against immigration in Vitry to confirm this policy. He said it was "inadmissible to let in new immigrants when there are two million unemployed in France."

Communist local authorities have taken a lead from this; one council in Brittany has cancelled an Islamic centre and others are refusing to settle immigrants.

The Communist Party leaders say they do not encourage attacks on immigrant workers but the cynical abandonment of class unity policies has sown the seeds for future stirrings of racist activity.

Instead of fighting for

Industrial

in brief

The Raleigh factory in Nottingham is to lay off 650 workers. The local branches of the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment have responded by calling on young workers to join the LPYS. As one of their leaflets points out: "Raleigh bosses were happy enough to make super-profits in the past. Now problems start the workers pay the price. The real reason for their inability to compete has been lack of re-investment out of these profits, leaving Raleigh with outdated machinery which is typical of British industry."

Striking journalists are waging a campaign to save the Camden Journal, a north London newspaper, after management's attempts to close the paper down after sacking nine of the staff without warning a few days before Christmas. The campaign, which has the support of Michael Foot, Tony Benn and other Labour MPs and trade unionists, has included mass pickets and lobbies, and the journalists have launched an alternative local paper, the 'Save the Journal.' Donations needed, send to Save the Camden Journal campaign, 38-40 Camden Road, Camden Town, London NW1. Also trade unionists and Labour supporters should give any news items to the strikers' paper—ring 01 267 1676.

The Civil Service's largest union, the CPSA, is opposing plans by the government to hive off Ministry of Defence ordnance factories to the private sector. The most important plants at stake are the 13 Royal Ordnance factories, employing collectively 13,000 workers.

The National Coal Board have refused to meet the NUM for immediate discussion on pit closures. The NCB want to put off discussions until February 10, when the chairman Derek Ezra puts forward plans for the industry, which the miners fear will include 20,000 jobs lost.

Prison officers at Bedford prison have refused to call off sanctions which they imposed during the meal breaks dispute. The Bedford Prison Officers Association say their executive had no right to accept an offer without consulting their members. They are demanding a re-call conference. Prison officers in 11 other prisons have also refused to call off the action, including Strangeways.

A mass picket was held this Wednesday at the Mosedale brick works near Manchester [see last week's 'Militant']. The strikers report that it seems that Frank Mosedale, the hard man of this family firm, is becoming increasingly isolated from the rest of the family business because of his intransigent position.

USDAW - vote for Broad Left

Elections in USDAW for the President, Executive Council and eight Divisional councils begin next week.

For the 450,000 members of the shop-workers' union these elections are crucial in deciding the direction which USDAW will take until the mid 1980s.

By Jeff Price

(Newcastle USDAW branch)

Are the shop and distributive workers to continue on the same path which USDAW has trod for 30 years under the leadership of the so-called 'moderates'? The leadership which meant that many USDAW members are third rate in the pay league, who have consistently supported the disastrous economic policies of the last three Labour governments, and who are now proving to be ineffective today in fighting the mass redundancies which threaten the very existence of the union?

The situation in the retail trade under the recession is dire. Redundancies have either been announced or are planned in companies like the Co-op, United Biscuits, John Collier; at the moment it is only a trickle of what will come unless a concerted fight is waged now by the union.

The present right-wing dominated EC and the right-wing President have proved themselves inadequate to the tasks which now confront USDAW.

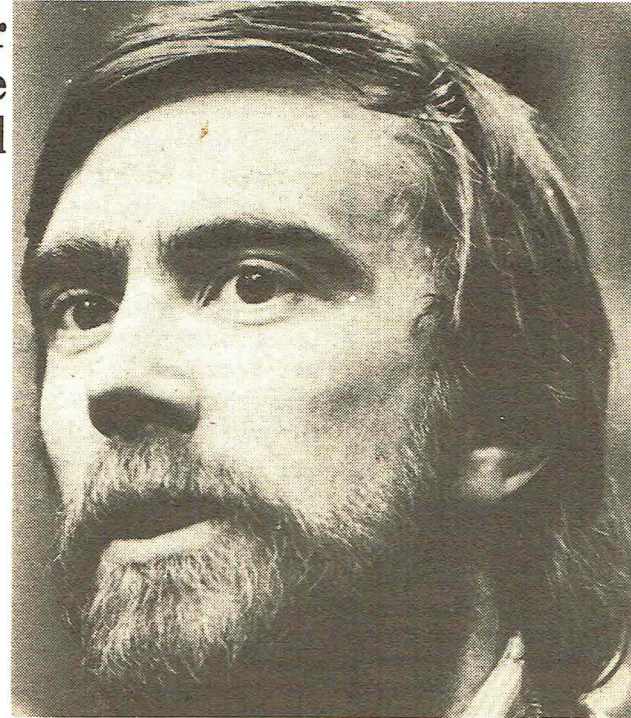
The situation is urgent. The need for a fighting leadership, for a radical approach to questions such

as pay and unemployment provided by the candidates of the USDAW Broad Left has never been more necessary.

A campaign involving the ranks of the union to win a minimum wage of £80 for a 35-hour week, opposition to all redundancies, waged through mass activity is the only effective way of defending USDAW members' living standards.

One important step to achieve this will be to elect the maximum number of Broad Left candidates to the USDAW Executive and Divisional Councils. Most importantly, the election of Audrey Wise the Broad Left candidate for President, would be a great step forward for USDAW.

The present leadership are living in the past. The days of cosy compromise are over. The employing class in Britain today have never been more determined to drive down the living standards of British workers. They have launched a concerted campaign spearheaded by Thatcher to achieve this in order to prop up their ailing economic



Jeff Price [above] who is standing for the North East divisional council, says:

"I am standing for the Executive Council of USDAW because I believe that it is time that the decisions taken by the ADM on wages and conditions were implemented.

"The ADM called for a national minimum wage of £70 per week, this to be linked to the call for a 35-hour week. The ADM also called for opposition to redundancies and the introduction of manning level agreements.

"This, I believe, needs to be fought for NOW. We need a campaign that can unite the members of our union against the attacks being made by the Tories—we need to make USDAW a force to be reckoned with—we need a leadership that can protect our members.

"If I am elected then I will make it my job to get these policies carried out. Times have changed, so must USDAW."

system. USDAW members are relying on their union to defend them from the attacks. USDAW members must attend their branch meetings between January 16th and March 2nd, in order to ensure their branch's votes are cast for Broad Left candidates.

★ For a Broad Left victory in the elections
★ For a determined campaign by the union to raise living standards and defend jobs.

★ For a national minimum wage in USDAW of £80 for 35 hours by the end of 1981.

JOIN THE BUSMEN'S FIGHT

Bristol busmen have launched a major campaign against the Bristol Omnibus Company's threat to axe 410 jobs out of 1,000, and to reduce the city's bus services by up to 50% with increased fares.

Their branch of the T&GWU have forced the company to suspend the implementation of these cuts, pending negotiations with union officials.

But the busmen are not content to leave the fate of their jobs in the hands of the negotiators alone, but to take their fight out to trade unions in Bristol, and particularly to the public at large.

An Action Committee has been formed as a sub committee of the City's busmen branch. They intend to set up committees in each depot to develop the campaign and involve members in the action that they are planning.

The busmen understand that the management's stay of execution is only temporary and they have planned

By Bristol councillor Pete Hammond

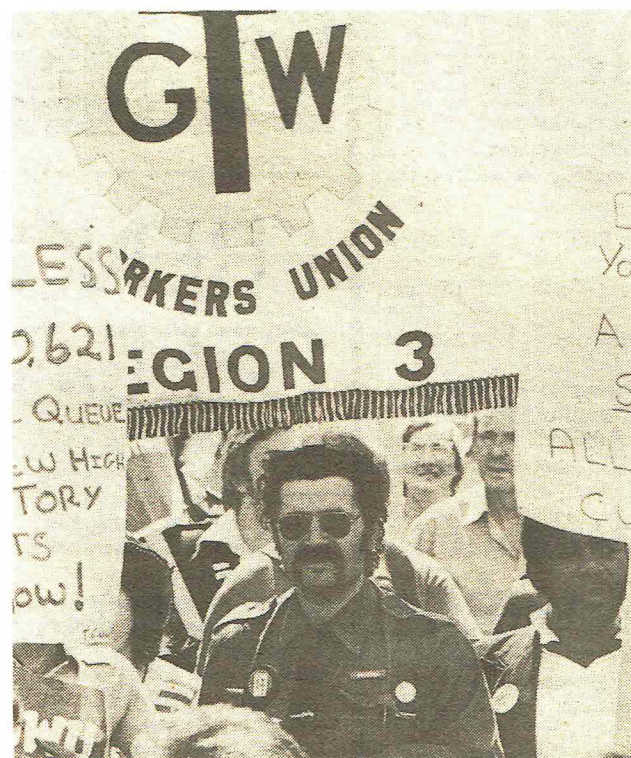
a series of events to take the struggle forward. A petition against the fare increases has been circulated, which has already had a tremendous response, and a day of action was held in the city centre to explain the dispute.

They will also be lobbying the traffic commissioners when the fare increases are discussed this week calling for the support of other trade unions and the public.

An emergency meeting of Avon County council, forced by the minority Labour group to discuss the cuts, will be lobbied too. On 21 February they are organising a march and rally which intends to involve the public and widen the dispute into a general protest against the Tories.

Pressure is also being put on the national leadership to recall their trade group conferences to organise a joint fight back against public transport cuts and to formulate a general transport policy.

The busmen have threat-



Bristol busmen on the successful 'Day of Action' demonstration in the city last year.

ened to refuse to implement the fare increases if they are introduced in February. Approaches are being made to the Labour controlled City Council to take over the bus services.

The busmen have stressed

the need to build public support in their campaign as they see the bus service as one of the assets of the workers of Bristol and one which represents their livelihood.

Vauxhall

After the most traumatic twelve months for the workforce of Vauxhall Motors, Ellesmere Port, management's latest disclosures must be the final insult.

It chose to inform the media of the proposed redundancies before the hourly paid workers!

During this twelve months management has bludgeoned and exploited the hourly paid workers—a few have been demoralised but most are just waiting for the right moment and conditions to fight back.

Our wages have been cut by about £15 per week. We have had to accept short time working on 75% wages. We have had a miserly wage rise; all these things are hardly likely to build confidence in the company's predictions and proposals for the future.

Now must be the time to fight all redundancies, no matter what heading they go under.

This company has probably used up more of the tax payers money than any other multi-national (in grants and subsidies). This is more reason why this company should be nationalised under workers' control with compensation based on proven need—although with this particular company it will be hard to see what 'proven need' they have. (SEE BACK PAGE)

By Tommy Burns
(T&G shop steward,
Vauxhall)

GLC dispute

When seven GLC scaffolders turned up for work the day before Christmas Eve, they were told they'd been made redundant!

Despite an agreement with the unions that there should be no compulsory redundancies, the Tories reneged, as part of their policy of the run-down of the direct labour organisation. It is possible that by the time of the GLC elections in May another 120 jobs could go on GLC construction.

The unions involved, UCATT and the T&GWU, have been picketing outside County Hall since January 5. They have secured the support of NALGO, who have 3,000 members in County Hall alone.

A mass lobby of the Housing Policy Committee meeting was held on Monday 19 January outside County Hall.

It is important that this fight is seen as one concerning all GLC workers, whether manual or clerical. It is vital that all the unions involved wage a concerted campaign against all redundancies, both compulsory or voluntary.

Tim Harris interviewed J Boles [joint secretary of the joint committee, construction section GLC] and Steve Burinshaw

Steelworkers

BALLOTS SHOW NEED FOR FIGHT

Once again the head of a nationalised industry has used the worst type of intimidatory management tactics to push through savage redundancies.

Going over the heads of the main and decisive union in the steel industry, the ISTC, McGregor, chairman of BSC, conducted a ballot amongst the entire workforce of British Steel—including all grades of management!

The ballot was held in an atmosphere of fear, with dire threats to all jobs if the corporate plan of chopping 22,000 jobs plus a six-month wage freeze, was not accepted. As with BL, the steel workers were bombarded with all sorts of propaganda from BSC management aided and abetted by the Tory press.

Nationally each BSC employee received a long letter delivered to their home. For example, in Teesside management officials told shop stewards that if they employed delaying tactics to avoid getting talks on cuts under way the Redcar blast furnace might be shut down.

In these circumstances a majority voted to 'save' the industry. Voting on the question 'Will you support the survival plan?' was 63,237 for and 17,900 (and

who doesn't want to survive?) against, with 35% following the advice of the ISTC and boycotting the ballot.

As Bill Sirs also pointed out, the ballot was 'rigged'. Over 35,000 in BSC's non-iron and steel subsidiaries were included in the ballot. These are in plastics, building and engineering.

Mr McGregor, the unelected, millionaire chairman of BSC announced himself 'gratified by the results' adding that the workforce was 'thinking along the right lines even though the results will be unhappy for some of them.' He now felt confident to go to the government to receive the £750m needed for the plan now that the blackmail of withholding this money if the workers did not submit had worked.

The feeling of isolation evident amongst many steelworkers was undoubtedly a factor in the vote. The union leaders must now instill confidence in the membership that the fight to save jobs will begin in earnest.

The ballot conducted by the ISTC, the biggest union

in the steel industry, amongst its own members was a truer reflection of the feelings of steelworkers. The result showed a 2-1 majority in favour of rejecting the BSC's plans.

Although craftsmen and the other unions in the industry have accepted the BSC's plans, a bold and resolute lead by the ISTC and the leaders of the Triple Alliance could raise the sights of all workers in the industry to fight back.

The vote and the readiness of sections like the Velindre workers to struggle shows there is a basis to fight. The Triple Alliance must now become a fighting reality at national and local level.

Shop stewards in South Wales, Scunthorpe and the rest of the industry must link up all the Action Committees nationally, insisting the ISTC launch a campaign of resistance, including the active support of the TUC.

But this alone is not enough. The action of McGregor and the BSC bosses once again raises the question of the running of the nationalised industries and the complete lack of workers' control and democracy.

Workers in the industry and the ISTC especially must demand from the Labour Party a cast iron guarantee that the next Labour government will sack the McGregors of this world and put control of the industry in the hands of the real 'experts'—those who work in the industry.

As part of an overall planned socialist economy, steel, like all industries, can be rationally and properly organised for the benefit of all workers.

By Mike Williams

(Shop steward, BSC Bryngwyn)

take the brunt of the redundancies, any job losses are a disaster in this area of mass unemployment.

This about turn in fortune for tinplate shows the complete inability to plan industry under the capitalist system. Where pure market forces are allowed to rule there can be no stability for working people no matter how hard they work.

The unions at Velindre, with the unanimous support of the members are prepared to fight the rundown.

BSC have so far refused even to give details of how

they arrived at their decision.

This is especially ironic as BSC is supposed to have a highly developed system of worker participation at all levels for joint decision making.

In reality, BSC, undoubtedly the stooge of the Tory government, drew up its plans without even consulting the unions at national level. The announcement of the plan was in the hands of the press 45 minutes before the unions had seen it!

To add insult to injury BSC have insisted that these cuts be pushed through within a few months, and that any opposition will mean further job losses.

In opposition, the unions at Velindre intend to draw up an alternative plan based on work sharing throughout the group.



Part of the mass picket outside Great Ormond Street Hospital last week. The picket, called by London NUPE, was in protest against the sacking of local NUPE branch chairman Conway Xavier by hospital management for carrying out union activities.

Bosses turn the screw

The shipping bosses are attempting to turn the screws on the seamen—they have stopped paying benefits from the 'seamens pool'—about £30 a week to seamen, unemployed between work.

In response to this, seamen in Liverpool have adopted the tactic of lightning occupations of ships.

At a delegate conference this week, leaders of the NUS agreed to intensify action, although it is to keep using the tactics of one day strikes.

The National Union of Seamen in South Wales are adamant and determined to win the 16% wage claim

which they are fighting for.

In South Wales, the main ports affected are Swansea, Milford Haven, and Fishguard. The response from the rank and file of the union has been magnificent—it has surprised the union officials the response which the strike call from the union has had.

There are four ships on stop in Swansea—Mingary—on stop for 6 days, Regent Park—on stop for 7 days, Valli Cari—on stop indefinitely, and the Centaurman.

Branch meetings held at Swansea, Milford Haven and Fishguard have been clear all along on what is

needed to beat the employers—all out strike action the length and breadth of the country, to close the shop down completely. The men

in Swansea have called for all out strike action from the beginning.

Most men take home £64 a week, many take home £55 a week. In the words of Joe Barlow—union organiser for South Wales—"How can you expect a man with wife and kids, with the price of food and clothes as it is to live on £55 a week—it is just not good enough for my members."

Support for the strike has been received from all over the world, in Singapore, Chile, Japan, Australia and Poland. The mood of seamen in Britain and throughout the globe is hardening day by day and they are determined to fight and win a decent living wage.

By Brian Lewis (Swansea LPYS)

7.9% NO WAY

"I've got an estimation that a married man on the lowest grade working 39 hours a week, is taking home £58. That is a lot different from the £120 average quoted in the press, for which some do a 57 hour week."

So two shop stewards representing water workers for the Derwent Water Authority illustrated the anger that is building up over their round of wage negotiations. I asked them what the situation was at the moment;

"We are not going to accept 7.9% on basic and overtime, not bonus. Birmingham unanimously re-

ected the offer, and its been rejected by the North East and the South West.

"There are a number of reasons for this present mood. Inflation is still about 15%. The water men are reasonable people but no way are they going to settle for 7.9% when you consider the increases we know are going to come next year; National Insurance contributions, rent, rates, gas, and so on.

How was the voting here? "The voting was about five to one for action. The feeling of the branch was that if we had to take action, we had to do it properly. We will not go back to work for 7.9% if we decide to come out."

Do you think that the government is using unemployment to keep wages

down?

"She's keeping wages down by fear of people losing their jobs. It's no good saying that industrial relations are improving just by keeping wages down.

"I do not agree with keeping a bloke's wages down. People have to have a good standard of living, otherwise there is no point in going to work.

What should NALGO members do in the event of a strike?

"Some NALGO members already do our jobs at times. We would hope they would stop, nor, of course, would we want them to work with 'roops."

By Gary Freeman (NALGO, Derwent Water branch committee)

VAUXHALL WORKERS REJECT REDUNDANCIES

It's the bosses crisis- Let them pay

On Tuesday [20 January], a mass meeting of AUEW members at Vauxhall, Ellesmere Port unanimously rejected the 3,000 redundancies the management had threatened.

They supported the resolutions presented by the shop stewards' committee, the first of which argued that the immediate problem is "lack of manufacturing investment rather than surplus of labour and as such we wholeheartedly reject the proposed redundancies."

The next resolution adopted agreed to meet local MPs, called for a meeting with General Motors President and American directors to demand the manufacturing investment required to retain jobs.

It also called for a public meeting in Ellesmere Port, and the active support of the TUC. It was agreed to contact German and American trade unionists for assistance, to put a weekly levy on membership and organise further mass meetings to report on progress.

The support for the shop

By Tommy Baugh

(AUEW steward, Vauxhall, Ellesmere Port)

stewards' must be built on to save these jobs. No Vauxhall workers in Ellesmere Port or anywhere else can afford to "volunteer" for redundancy. As Tommy Baugh said in his speech to the meeting "It wouldn't be volunteering for redundancy, it would be self inflicted dole with the poverty and misery that means.

"We've got to look to the future. The pot of gold wouldn't last. Who would pay the bills for the gas and electricity? Thousands on the local Woodchurch estate are being cut off because they can't afford the bills due to mass unemployment there.

"We'd be destroying the future for ourselves and our families. There are youth who haven't had work since they left school five years ago. Some youth will never work. "We've got to face up to the:

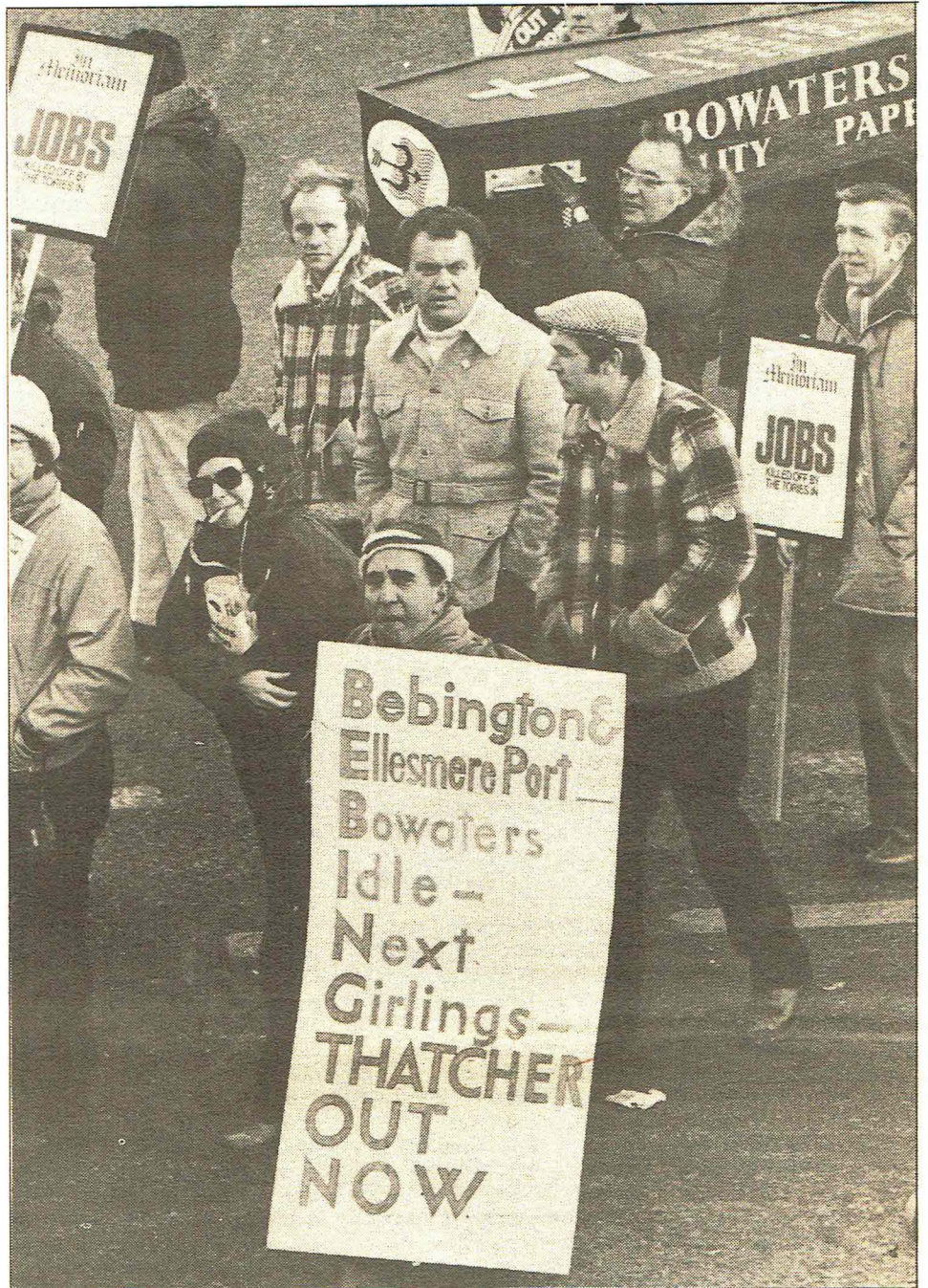
situation and fight by involving the entire labour movement from all plants and throughout the country. That is the only way to fight a multinational."

No job is safe—skilled, unskilled or white collar. In order to fight divide-and-conquer tactics by management, a joint shop stewards' committee needs to be built in the plant which could then involve all sections through regular mass meetings and whatever action becomes necessary.

Also the TUC and national trade union leadership should immediately organise a strategy to unite Luton, Dunstable and Ellesmere Port in common action to save all Vauxhall jobs. This would be greatly strengthened by immediate steps to build a national shop stewards' combine and, as the mass meeting agreed, through international trade union links.

Vauxhalls' have had £8.9 million in government aid in the past six months in Ellesmere Port alone. They spun workers the tale that wage cuts during lay off would save jobs. We've been laid off alternate weeks on 75% of flat rate pay.

The trade unions nationally should now fight for work sharing on full trade union rates of pay. Cut the hours not jobs or pay. The bosses should pay—it's their crisis under their system and their government.



Bowater's, Girling's, Vauxhall. Workers in the unemployment black-spot of Ellesmere Port will no longer accept redundancies

GM is the world's biggest manufacturing company with profits of \$200,893 million in 1979. This was described as a bad year!

Where have all the profits gone? What are Vauxhalls doing with the £20 million savings they have made with their temporary short-time compensation scheme? The trade unions should fight for

trade union inspection of the company books.

The whole motor industry is in chaos. The big multinational monopolies have had their chance to run the industry and secure jobs. They have failed!

The trade unions should now campaign for nationalisation of Vauxhalls and the whole motor industry under

democratic workers' control and management.

With one integrated nationalised motor industry production could be planned democratically by the trade union and labour movement to meet the needs of society and replace the criminal system where car workers face the dole whilst millions can't afford a form of transport.

STOP SACKINGS SAVE SERVICES

CONTINUED FROM
 PAGE ONE

thing that moved.

Despite this, a drop in rate support grant and the transfer of money from inner city areas to Tory shires meant a shortfall of £21 million. Wandsworth would have to cut again!

Once more, pensioners got the chop. Four lunch clubs are threatened. Young children, the Tories' prime victims, face the closure of an adventure playground, a playbus and an open-air swimming pool. There are numer-

ous other cuts threatened in other areas too.

Rents are expected to rise between £4 and £6.70 a week, and on top of this, the 'thrifty' borough council will still be faced with a rate rise of 26% to 46%. Wandsworth ratepayers will pay a lot more for a lot less. Not the 'value for money' that Maggie and Co promised!

No wonder that, like pin striped Oliver Twists, a local Tory MP Mellor and the leaders of this Tory council pleaded for 'more' from their

friends in central government!

A mass meeting of over 1,500 NALGO members on 12 January heard Geoffrey Drain their union's general secretary back the one-day strike. Next day over a thousand manual workers and white collar staff lobbied a council meeting. The next day was NALGO's strike.

A joint liaison committee has been formed between manual and white collar workers. We need to get across to everyone in the borough the effects cuts would have, using public meetings, rallies, mass leaflets and so on.

The manual workers have already met and agreed to black all contractors; to respect all picket lines organised by the liaison committee and to provide no cover for any jobs that are cut.

We will shortly be discussing details of a programme

of action against the cuts. The Liaison Committee must fight for a determined stand of:

- ★ No cuts!
- ★ No redundancies!
- ★ No rent rises!
- ★ No rate rises!

The council paid out £33 million this year in interest charges to the parasites who own the banks. This would be more than enough to cover all services and pay for improvements!

A national lead is needed against these horrifying cuts, bringing together trade unions, Labour councils, Labour Parties, tenants organisations. But a clear campaign of defiance led by the labour movement in one area could spark off actions throughout the country against the attacks of this hated Tory government.

Workers in Wandsworth must not be pushed on to the scrap heap. The fight is on for jobs and services.

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