

# Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 545  
27 March 1981

20p

# TORIES PUSH RENTS THROUGH ROOF

## Rents up £3.25 or more

“How can we possibly pay it?” This is what millions of hard-pressed working-class families will be asking this week as they get their notices of higher council rents.

Tory Environment Secretary, Michael Heseltine is determined to force up council rents by a minimum of £3.25 this year.

In some areas, where the councils are controlled by Tories only too willing to carry out their masters orders, the increases will be even more, £5, £6, £7 or more.

To force rent increases on Labour controlled councils, too, Heseltine intends to cut back the central government's housing grants to local authorities.

Housing has already born the main brunt of Tory spending cuts. The £2,500 million being slashed means a 50% reduction in spending on housing by 1984.

No wonder house building, both public and private, is now lower than at any time since the 1920s. Waiting lists will grow, homelessness will increase, and the condition of the housing stock will continue to deteriorate even faster now.

Yet among the ever-growing army of unemployed are over 300,000 construction workers whose skills are going to waste.

And it is council tenants who are taking the worst hammering of all. This year's increase,

an average of 40%, follows a 30% increase in council rents last year.

On top of this, some council tenants face 40% or more increases in heating charges—far more than the real rise in the cost of heating fuel.

Like owner-occupiers, moreover, council tenants also face massive rate increases—over 50% in many inner-city authorities.

At the same time, millions of council tenants are suffering from the cut-back in council spending on repairs. Urgent repairs are increasingly being left undone. The general environment of estates is going from bad to worse.

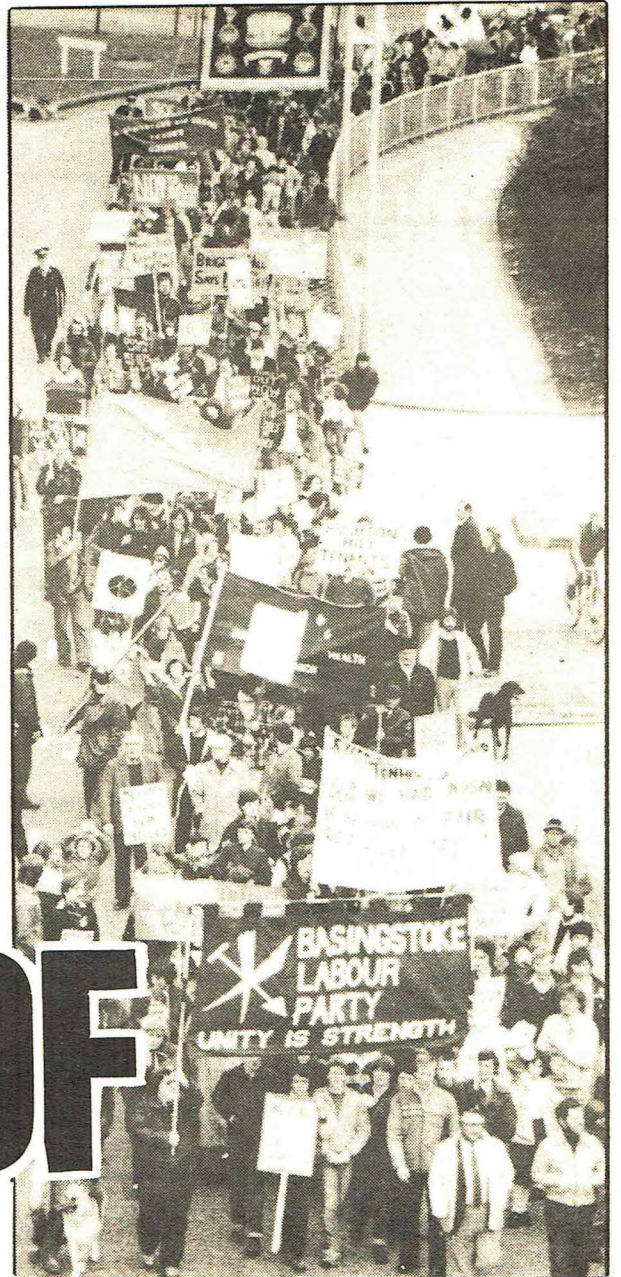
In many areas, angry council tenants are beginning to organise to fight the rent increases.

This fight, to be successful, needs the backing of the trade unions. Labour Parties must also give a lead, actively campaigning against rent increases.

Unfortunately, some Labour councillors, lacking socialist policies to fight the Tory cuts, have themselves car-

By Lynn Walsh

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO



Rent protest in Basingstoke on 14 March

## HORROR BIRTH SENSATION!



# Social Democrats launched by bosses media

With an enormous fanfare of free publicity from the capitalist press and television, the Social Democrats have at last launched their brand new Party.

With their bright new image, expensively packaged by media and publicity men, they are out to cash in on disillusionment with the Tories—and workers' disillusionment with the last Labour government, in which

Continued on back page

# Militant

## Labour's social-democrats try new witch-hunt

**Those "Social Democrats" like Roy Hattersley and Denis Healey who have, for the time being, remained in the Labour Party, have launched a campaign to drive 'Militant' and its supporters out of the Party.**

They failed last time and their present venture will be no more successful.

But of course, the millionaire gutter press have once more waded in on their side. Blatant distortions and outright lies are their weapons.

The 'Daily Mail', for instance, states: "Members of the right-wing Manifesto group of MPs gave detailed case studies of Militant tactics." In the next paragraph it says that "left-wing extremists took control of meetings and intimidated life-long members—even by hurling bricks through their windows."

The implication is clear:

'Militant' supporters are alleged to throw bricks through LP members' windows in order to gain support within the movement! The 'Sunday Mirror' [22 March] quotes a letter allegedly sent to the Social Democratic deserters. The author of this letter "claimed that the Militant tendency had threatened to break his legs.

Not a shred of proof is produced to justify these lies.

No genuine supporter of 'Militant' would employ such tactics. Anyone who did so, who claims to be associated with us, would be repudiated by the 'Militant'

and by our supporters.

The right wing are incapable of answering our arguments on policy, on programme and on the question of Party democracy. This is why they have to go in for lies and distortion of our ideas.

Yet Labour Party members will be astonished that Michael Foot, Labour leader, has it seems given his blessing to a "coherent counter-attack" against 'Militant'. This can only encourage the right wing in their witch-hunt.

It is true that Michael Foot has expressed opposition to any expulsions of 'Militant' supporters on the basis of their ideas.

Nevertheless, Labour Party members will be disquieted by the kindly treatment reserved for Social Democratic traitors like Shirley Williams, Owen and Rodgers, while 'Militant' is viciously attacked.

Michael Foot, Roy Hattersley, Denis Healey pleaded with these traitors who have stabbed Labour in the back to stay in the Labour Party. But 'Militant' sup-

porters who are building the movement come under attack from the Labour leadership.

Michael Foot talks about a "coherent counter-attack" against 'Militant' and its ideas. If this means that debate and discussion on our programme will be opened up we welcome it.

### Democratic discussion

'Militant' has gained its support within the movement on the basis of democratic discussion and debate. The mis-named "Solidarity" campaign of Messrs Healey and Hattersley would not be able to get away with their distortions in debates in front of labour audiences.

It is only because they find no echo within the labour movement, except in the right-wing Parliamentary Labour Party, that Hattersley and Co. retell their distortions within the

pages of the capitalist press.

We are willing to answer their allegations in debates and discussions before Labour workers any time. Moreover, we are prepared to concede space in our newspaper for them to outline their criticisms of 'Militant's' programme and our reply.

We gladly accord the same facilities to Michael Foot, or any labour leader who wishes democratically to debate and discuss the ideas of 'Militant'.

But if the right wing are dreaming that they can remove Marxism from the labour movement by organisational means, they will be sadly disillusioned.

Criticism will be raised, not against 'Militant' but against those right-wing "Social Democrats" who have remained within the Labour Party, and were only recently political bed-fellows of the deserters.

They share the same ideas and the same approach towards the movement as those who have deserted. They are a Tory-Liberal-Social Democratic Trojan Horse within the Labour Party.

Moreover, they pose an enormous danger to the labour movement in the event of a new Labour government coming to power. They could split from a Labour cabinet in the same way that Ramsay McDonald did in 1931.

Some of them have well-documented connec-

tions with organisations financed by the CIA. Some have been backed by and linked to big business, bankers, financiers etc., sworn enemies of Labour.

The ranks of the movement must now raise their voice to defeat a witch-hunt against the Marxists.

The attack on 'Militant' is correctly seen by Labour's ranks as part of the right wing's campaign to reverse the Wembley Conference decisions and all the recent victories of the left.

Any attempt to proceed by organisational means against 'Militant' will split the Labour Party from top to bottom. The rank and file of the Labour Party, the Young Socialists, and the trade unions, even where they disagree with 'Militant' implacably defend our right to put forward our ideas within the movement.

It is against the right-wing infiltrators, the friends of the CIA, that the anger of the labour movement will be directed.

Our programme and policy has found an echo within the movement because of the discrediting of the ideas and programme of the right wing. The march of events in the next period will confirm the analysis of Marxism and the programme outlined in 'Militant'.

No matter what organisational steps are employed, this programme will receive increased support within the labour movement.

# SWANSEA MP HELPS TORY PRESS ATTACK SOCIALISTS

As the right-wing social democrats finally stab Labour in the back, their shadows who remain in the Party are attempting in South Wales to witch-hunt supporters of 'Militant' out of the Labour Party.

In league with the local Tory press, the right wing are busy fabricating stories of plots and infiltration. According to the *South Wales Evening Post* (21 March), Swansea West MP Mr Alan Williams demanded that supporters of 'Militant' should be "outlawed".

Not interested in finding out the truth Mr Williams makes wild accusations that 'Militant' supporters "don't believe in our concept of democracy and in my view have no place in a democratic Labour Party." Yet 'Militant' has consistently fought for democratic rights all over the world including in the Stalinist countries of Russia and Eastern Europe.

'Militant' also believes that Clause IV of the LP constitution should be carried out, so that the economy can be planned in the interests of working people and not a handful of parasites.

"No place in a democratic party," says Mr Williams, echoing the attacks of the old Gang of Four, and then proceeds to the ultimate slur: "I am deeply concerned about who is funding them."

If Mr Williams would just take the time to read the 'Militant' he would see where our money comes

**By Alec Thraves**  
(Swansea Labour Party, personal capacity)

from. It is from the pockets of workers in the Young Socialists, Labour Party and trade unions who want to see a socialist Britain. It does not come from any sinister source, as implied, but from supporters in the labour movement itself.

In the same *Post*, Swansea East's MP, Mr Don Anderson, thinks it worthwhile to have an enquiry to see if there is a "party within a party". However, an enquiry was held by the NEC as long ago as 1977 and dismissed the Tory allegations made against 'Militant'. We have co-operated nationally with the NEC in providing them with the information they require. They found no reds under the bed!

If you're looking for infiltrators or groups, why not examine the Manifesto Group, the Campaign for Social Democracy, or Solidarity? By the way, we didn't hear our MPs howl much about George Brown, Dick Taverne, Reg Prentice, Shirley Williams, etc., who used the Labour Party for their own careers. I wonder why?

### SWANSEA Militant Public Meeting.

**No Witch-Hunt! Fight for Socialist Policies!**  
Hear: Peter Taaffe [Editor of Militant]  
Monday 30 March, 7.30pm Dynevor school, Swansea.  
ALL WELCOME!



Lighting for all tastes  
Traditional, modern and decorative  
light fitting specialists  
29 Oxford St., Swansea  
Tel. 53401

South Wales  
**Evening Post**

No. 33,532

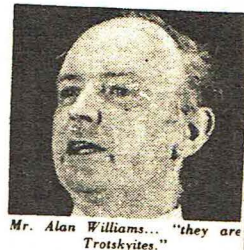
**SOCIALISTS**

**WEEKEND SPECIAL**

SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 1981 10p

City MP lashes 'Militant Tendency'

# DITCH THE EXTREMISTS



Mr. Alan Williams... "they are Trotskites."

Exclusive by Paul Chambert

**SWANSEA West MP Mr. Alan Williams today called for members of the extremist Militant Tendency to be thrown out of the Labour Party.**

In his first public statement on the Militant Tendency, he said they should be outlawed — if they belonged to the MT they could not belong to the

Labour Party.

His denouncement came as Swansea Labour Party started an internal inquiry into the activities of its Young Socialists movement.

Many local party members fear the YS is in danger of being taken over by the MT.

Informed local sources say the Swansea association is in a "make or break" situation.

They allege the MT has taken over two city ward Labour parties, has a presence in all 15 ward parties

and is seeking to "infiltrate" local trade union branches.

One senior Labour Party member said today he feared MT sympathisers or members would challenge for influential positions on the association executive at next month's annual meeting.

**Small**

"They are a small but vociferous minority at the moment but if they gain more power they will make a

very strong bid to oust Mr. Williams when he comes up for reselection as a candidate as he must under the new Labour Party rules," he said.

It is also understood there is a strong feeling that the local Young Socialists should be disbanded.

"It has happened in other places. We will await the outcome of the inquiry but I feel action must be taken against them."

"Their activities should be severely curtailed at the very least and they must come under much closer scrutiny by the association's executive," said one association member.

Mr. Williams said: "There is no doubt that the Militant Tendency is pursuing a calculated challenge to take over the Labour Party."

"They are Trotskites who don't believe in our concept of democracy and in my view have no place in a democratic Labour Party."

"I am deeply concerned about who is funding them. There is no way they can finance their scale of operations from the sale of their newspaper — The Militant."

"They pursue their policy by stealth and subversion and their activities should be brought out into the open and an inquiry set up into

The front page of Saturday's 'South Wales Evening Post'

### HOUSING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE)

ried through rent increases. Active members of local Labour parties must exert pressure on Labour councillors to oppose all rent increases—and fight for socialist policies on housing.

At the root of the crisis in housing is the strangle-hold

of the banks and the big money-lenders. Over 57p of every £1 "spent on housing" goes to pay off the debts to the big banks and financiers.

Local councils in England and Wales owe about £32,600 million—or £659 of debt for every man, woman and child in the country. Most of this arises from housing.

The basic housing needs

of millions of working people will never be satisfied while interest and profit stand in the way.

Labour must take up the fight on behalf of council tenants, and also unite them with workers who are tenants in the private sector or owner-occupiers, who face the same basic problems.

★ Freeze all rents, council and private.

★ Fight massive rate incr-

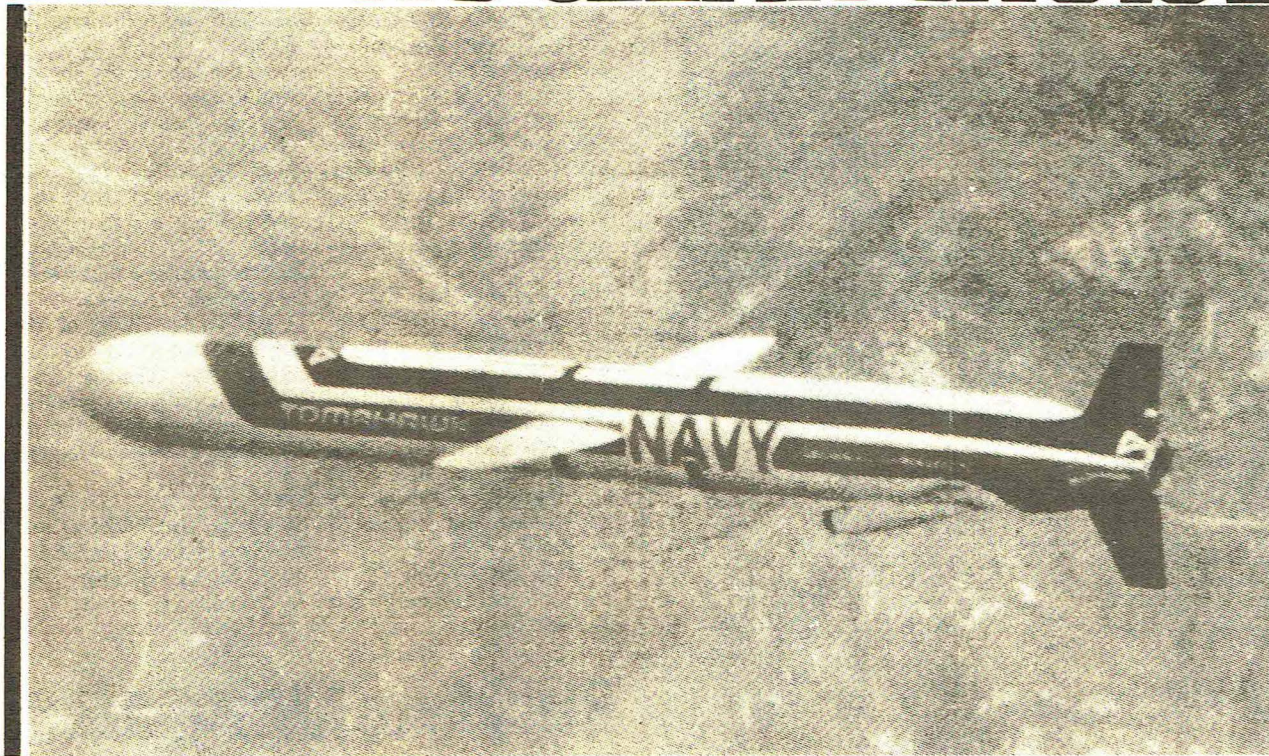
eases to pay for Tory cuts.

★ Nationalise the banks, finance houses, and other big money lenders.

★ Nationalise the construction and building materials industry.

★ Reverse the cuts in housing spending: start a crash programme of house-building and repairs, and housing improvement.

# NO-TO THATCHER'S NUCLEAR CRUISE



## LPYS CONFERENCE Working women in the firing line

**Probably no other section of the working class has been hit so hard by the crisis gripping the British economy in the last few years as working-class women.**

The bosses want to intensify the exploitation of women by isolating them and making them accept unemployment or low wages.

These attempts to drive women back into the home and force down their living standards will be an important feature of this year's LPYS conference.

Over the last four years, the number of unemployed women has risen four times faster than men. This has particularly hit younger women. Girl school leavers are worst affected—only 6% of girl school leavers have gone into apprenticeships. The figures distort the truth—many women do not register as unemployed as they are ineligible for benefit, and so up to 250,000 disappear from the statistics.

Over 75% of working women are employed in office jobs, teaching and nursing—all of which are being cut back. Given the way that capitalists introduce it, the introduction of new technology upon many of these jobs will be catastrophic—98% of secretaries are women!

As the Stevenage resolution to LPYS conference points out, it is essential answer the position put forward by the media and some trade union leaders, that women only go to work for 'pin money'. In fact, two million women in Britain

are the main wage earners in their families.

The resolutions from Aberystwyth, Erith and Crayford and Aberavon explain that the effect of Tory public expenditure cuts on working class women is to force them back into the home under the pretence of re-uniting the family. With the closures of nurseries, old people's homes, transport cuts, etc., many women are becoming increasingly isolated on council estates on the fringes of towns.

The Tories' attitude is summed up by Lynda Chalker, MP for Wallasey, who stated that, if a woman wanted to have a child, she should be prepared to take the full responsibility for it. In other words, no nurseries, no day centres, and no right to your job back if you leave work to have a child.

Yet, when capitalism found it necessary for women to work during the war, there was no problem in providing nursery places. In 1944, there were 67,479 places in local authority nurseries. By 1974 this had dropped to 24,772, and that figure has been cut back even further under the present Tory government.

Despite 'double exploitation', working class women have demonstrated their determination to struggle. Since the 1960s, women have joined the trade unions in increasing numbers—now over 37% of the membership of the trade union movement are women. The bitter fights for trade union recognition or against closure, at Grunwicks, Meccano, Klein Brothers, Tate and Lyle etc. have shown that women

workers stand in the forefront of struggle.

Despite all the obstacles working class women have looked to the labour and trade union movement for a solution to their problems. It is absolutely essential, as the majority of the LPYS resolutions point out, that the labour and trade union movement take up the day-to-day issues facing women—the question of unemployment, the campaign for a 35-hour week, the demands for day nurseries, equal pay, free abortion on demand and decent health facilities.

These demands should not be taken up in isolation—they must be fought for as part of a general struggle against capitalism; the only long term solution to the problems facing working class women and men is the creation of a socialist society. The past few years have taught a bitter lesson, no reforms are permanent, but are only retained by a united struggle.

A programme linking the



**By Josie Aitman**  
(LPYS National Committee)

day-to-day demands with the fight for socialism will attract thousands of working-class women to the ranks of the labour movement. As a first step trade union meetings should be made accessible to all members by holding them during work time with no loss in pay, and with crèche facilities provided.

Lenin's statement that the emancipation of women was impossible without the socialist revolution is true as is the reverse—the socialist revolution is impossible without the involvement of women. There has never been a more favourable time to win working-class women to socialist ideas. The programme put forward by the LPYS and to be discussed at this year's conference provides a bridge to win the support of young women in the struggle to change society.

### LPYS ANNUAL CONFERENCE 17—20 April, Bridlington, Yorks

Political debates, guest speakers include Arthur Scargill [NUM], plus social activities, disco, band, theatre group. Further details from local LPYS or Andy Bevan, National Youth Officer, Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17

### SATURDAY MARCH 28 LPYS RALLIES AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT

**DOVER**  
Assemble 2pm  
Russell St Car Park  
[outside Southern TU office]

**W. LONDON**  
Assemble 11 am.  
Alexandra Rd,  
junction, Lampton Rd,  
Hounslow

The growing support for nuclear disarmament in the labour movement, and amongst youth in particular, reflects the fears about a nuclear holocaust and all the horror it would mean.

The fear has been reinforced by the campaign of 'war hysteria' over the invasion of Afghanistan, the holding of American hostages and the election of Ronald Reagan.

By  
Rob Sewell

Even leaving aside these new developments, the situation speaks for itself. On a world scale there have only been seventeen days of 'peace' since World War Two. From 1955 alone there have been 120 armed conflicts, with the dead estimated at around 25 million.

Over the past period there has been a spectacular increase in arms expenditure, amounting last year to a global figure of over \$500,000 million—more than a 10% increase on the previous year! In pounds per person, the world has more explosive power than food.

A single American MX missile has more explosive power than all the bombs dropped in World War Two and the Korean War.

In a crazy attempt to restore the might of British imperialism, the Thatcher government is causing a catastrophic drain on the economy by spending over £12,500 million a year on defence. She now intends to replace Polaris with Trident missiles costing £5,000 million!

It is with this terrible threat hanging over our heads that there has been a turn to CND. This weekend's labour movement CND conference must arrive at a clear programme and strategy if it is to avoid the decline that took place in CND in the mid-1960s.

It should be understood that war arises from the contradictions of capitalism. The arms race is not the plot of generals but arises from the contradiction between the capitalist states and the totalitarian Stalinist regimes of Eastern Europe where landlordism and capitalism have been overthrown.

At present, due to the superiority of the Stalinist states in conventional weapons, a new world war by its very nature would be a nuclear one. Yet war is the continuation of policies by other violent means. The capitalist class wages war not for glory but for markets, raw materials etc.

But nuclear war would mean outright devastation for the capitalists as well as everyone else! So even the capitalists would not be crazy enough to threaten their whole existence on such an adventure.

The idea has been put forward that an accident could lead to world war. Yet, a whole system of checks has been devised to ensure correction to the functioning of military computers. The imperialists have too much to lose at this stage to leave annihilation to 'chance' and 'mistakes'.

Before any 'accident' could lead to war all other fundamental conditions would have to have dev-

eloped beforehand. Under modern conditions, it is the class balance of forces that is the decisive factor.

The Second World War would not have been possible without the crushing of the workers' movement in Germany, Italy and Spain. Today, nuclear war could only be undertaken by neo-fascist military dictatorships adopting the 'strike-first' policy.

Before such maniac regimes could emerge in Western Europe and America, the powerful labour organisations would have to have been crushed in blood. A victory of reaction could only come about if, under false leadership, the working class failed repeatedly to come to power.

It is the socialist transformation of society and not nuclear war that is on the agenda in the decade ahead. But in the longer term, the choice before us is: socialism or military dictatorship and nuclear annihilation.

Those in the leadership of CND who imply that the struggle for 'peace' must take precedence over the fight for socialism are completely misguided. Both questions are indissolubly linked. Without the overthrow of capitalism there can never be a lasting peace.

The argument that war will be eliminated through disarmament again fails to understand that capitalists do not wage war because there are weapons. Conflicts arise from the contradictions of capitalism and the incompatibility of capitalism and the Stalinist bloc.

Despite all the appeals, 'treaties', and pleas to the superpowers, there has not been a reduction but an enormous increase in the spending on weapons of destruction. Even if there was a temporary reduction in armaments, new tensions would inevitably arise with the continuation of capitalism, and with them the development of new, more sophisticated weapons.

There is no short-cut solution to war. The CND without a clear socialist programme will be as ineffective as campaigns for peace in the past. Only the socialist transformation of society can end the threat of nuclear disarmament.

Then, the resources from armaments would be channelled into useful social expenditure. The planning of resources in a rational manner would open up undreamed of possibilities. With the new technology at our disposal, living standards would rise at a terrific pace.

Hunger, poverty, war, unemployment, and disease would be eradicated once and for all. That is the only real perspective that can channel the energies of working people in the struggle for peace itself.

# LABOUR IN ACTION



Pontypridd LPYS lead their demonstration through the town

A 'St Valentine's Day Massacre of jobs'—that was the theme of a demonstration by the Pontypridd Young Socialists in February. Over a hundred local youth joined the march, many of them spontaneously as they saw the YS march by. However, five minutes

before the march was to begin, the police told the YS their venue for the following rally had been changed to a site a mile outside town!

But undaunted the march went on—so the police used a new tactic. A youth who joined the march was snatched from it by the police.

Understandably many of his friends followed the police to see what had happened, leaving the march. The police later said they had 'been after' this youth—yet minutes after bundling the youth out of the march, he was released!

Despite these tactics, the

march was a great success, and it showed that in Pontypridd, like in many towns throughout the country, many people are joining in the struggle against this chaotic capitalist system.

By David Jones  
(Pontypridd LPYS)

## NUS-VOTE FOR NOLS

**This NUS conference meets at a time of crisis for the union.**

The Tories' latest public expenditure proposals will cut the grant for higher education by 3% in real terms next year.

With the loss of subsidies for overseas students, cuts in university expenditure of 10% would be necessary.

Closures, or drastic cuts in lecturers and courses, seem inevitable, unless a sustained campaign against the Tories' is organised by the student and labour movements. These cuts would mean less opportunity for working class students to study.

This term has seen occupations in London colleges against the overseas student fee increases, and rent strikes against proposed rent increases. The NUS Executive, led by the "Left Alliance", which consists of members of the "Communist" and Liberal Parties

By Peter  
Lush

and "independents" has failed to organise any serious campaign on these issues, or even give real support to the students involved.

The fact that three former "left" leaders of NUS have joined CSD, shows how much to the right they took the union. NUS must break with this approach.

The Executive should also organise a campaign in defence of NUS and against those Tory students who are trying to divide the union and get colleges to disaffiliate.

The National Organisation of Labour Students are standing five candidates in the Executive elections, including for the positions of President and Treasurer. Whilst the NOLS candidate

for President, Helen Connor, has been involved in the "Left Alliance" in the past, a victory for her would mark a swing to the left in NUS.

It would be a rejection of the strategy that the present leadership have adopted—a 'non-political' approach, dealing only with "student" issues. This approach has been consciously promoted by the "Communist" Party, and has weakened the union's ability to mobilise its members against the government's policies.

### Vote Labour

The NOLS leadership are even supporting Leighton Andrews, a member of the "Left Alliance" and the pro-capitalist Liberal Party, for the Executive. For this position, 'Militant' supporters advocate support for Hank Hastings, a Labour Party member.

For too long, NUS has

completely neglected FE and Tech students, although this is where most working class students study.

A campaign for a minimum grant of £25 a week now for all 16-18 year olds would get an excellent response, and would open the door to full time education to thousands of working class youth who are forced to finish education for economic not academic reasons.

The attacks by the Tories show the need for NUS to link up with the labour and trade union movement. Last year NUS supported the TUC day of action on 14 May. The union should back other TUC and Labour Party demonstrations against this government.

The affiliation of NUS to the TUC and the Labour Party would concretise the links that already exist. As a first step, NUS should call on all students to vote Labour in the GLC and County elections on 7 May.

## Exclusive

I have pleasure in reporting how 'Militant' has apparently been responsible for a member of the Conservative Party changing his views in a leftward direction.

I can now reveal that after reading only one copy of 'Militant' the [former] Tory MP for North West Norfolk, Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler, left the Tory party and joined the Social Democrats!

It happened like this; in December our Trades Council organised a confrontation with our MP in the form of a public debate, on the subjects of the Transport Bill and ACAS. I was selling 'Militant' before the meeting; a person accidentally left his copy on a table by the door.

After the meeting Christopher Brocklebank-Fowler picked up this copy of

'Militant' on his way out. I now look forward to seeing what effects a second copy of 'Militant' will have on C.B.F.

In the light of the above I would urge other sellers to try the almost magical powers of 'Militant' on their local Tories but I must also advise caution. C.B.F. started reading his first 'Militant' on 6 December. It is to be assumed that Tories are very slow readers.

But in the light of the tendency for Tories to take things for nothing from members of the working class, make certain they pay for their copies like everyone else.

By Tim Webb  
(Sec., Kings Lynn &  
West Norfolk  
Trades Council)

## Blackburn

Members of the Blackburn LPYS went along to a special council meeting to discuss the council's budget.

A disclosure to the local press had said that the Labour proposals of a 21% rate rise would mean 200 council job losses. As a result, many local trade unionists went on a day's strike in protest and about 100 of them turned up to the council meeting.

However at this meeting a Tory amendment was carried with full support of the Liberals and Ratepayers, which kept the rate rise to 15%. This means that services will be hit even harder and up to 350 compulsory redundancies will be enforced.

As the workers left the Council chambers with shouts of 'Tories Out' I saw a Tory Councillor push one of the council workers in the back. I immediately stepped in and ripped him off verbally, not only for this incident but also for his party's decision.

Suddenly his wife (wearing a fur jacket that would have cost as much as many council employees earn in a month) stepped in. She had only the week before lost a local by-election and I believe she described herself as a 'peace-loving Christian.'

But the next thing I knew she hit me across the face! A local reporter who saw this reported it in the following night's paper, under a title of 'Rates Fury'.

After commenting on my complaint the Tory's wife said "I lost my temper. I just cannot stand this kind of demonstration...I know what it's like to be redundant. But I don't go round shouting on the streets!"

However twenty minutes later after the arrival of two policemen one of the local authority workers who muttered 'one law for the rich—one law for the poor' was arrested!

Peter Harris [Blackburn  
CLP Youth Officer]

## Thatcher accused

In the dock: Mrs Thatcher, defended by Sir Payem A Pittance. The jury: over thirty young people from Ellesmere Port. The charge: crimes against youth.

Unfortunately, the defendant skipped bail.

As it was a Labour Party Young Socialists meeting, Thatcher didn't deign to attend in person. She was too busy with Reagan planning further atrocities against El Salvadorian workers.

So bravely assuming an ignominious role, Leslie Holt [Kirkdale Labour Party] stood in.

Youth presented an array of charges against Thatcher: failure to provide decent jobs, housing, education, leisure facilities, national health service etc.

Sir Payem A Pittance, Thatcher's defence counsel blamed youth for the economic crisis; "If unemployment benefit and Work Experience Programme wages were cut back together with other frivolous public expenditure, like buildings and schools, then

we can make our country great again!"

The reaction of the youth was that big business, in the form of Sir Payem A Pittance should be in the dock with Thatcher.

Both were found guilty and sentenced to six months on £18 a week dole followed by six months Work Experience Programme on £23.50, counting lampposts, life in an unimproved council house, with no hot water or inside toilet, with rent increases every six months.

Big business was sentenced to providing workers with an £80 minimum wage and a 35-hour week, but should he default, then workers will take over his factory and compensate him according to his proven needs.

Seven youths applied to join the YS, helped no doubt by Thatcher telling them that "All youth who are not in the YS are my very best friends!"

By Sue Starkey  
(Sec., Ellesmere Port  
LPYS)

# EETPU - A move to the left

Frank Chapple's statement threatening to split the EETPU from the Labour Party has given rise to enormous concern up and down the country.

A stormy regional meeting in Glasgow on 7th March reflected this anxiety.

Both 'moderate' and left wing delegates were strongly critical of Chapple's statement, having been made without the endorsement of the Executive Council or any consultations with the rank and file.

Jumping to Frank Chapple's defence the Regional Secretary quoted a pre-release of an editorial in the union's paper by Chapple

By an EETPU  
'Militant'  
supporter

himself. It argued that the Labour Party was controlled by a 'rag-bag' left-wing clique. It was this left 'caucus' that had made the Party a shambles and were responsible for the splitting away of the Council for Social Democracy—a body for which he had much



Frank Chapple, right-wing leader of the EETPU

sympathy!

Delegates responded angrily that it was editorials like these that caused divisions in the Party, and to underline this sentiment the meeting welcomed the statement of Bob McTaggart MP that the CSD should resign their seats and put their policies to the electorate.

Right-wing and left-wing delegates were concerned at the way in which increased

EETPU delegations to the Labour Party were being handled. Delegates from Falkirk, Stirling and Grangemouth Labour Parties said they were pleased at the increased number of union delegates at their GMCs, but discrepancies had been brought to light. Two delegates, it was reported, were not members of the Party itself. The full-time political organiser said that there

had been some organisational difficulties.

Delegates replied that the methods being used were arousing antagonisms and creating suspicions.

The influx of new delegates to this conference was expected to fully endorse, without criticism, the "line" of the right wing. Yet, this was not the case. Although the left were defeated in the elections for the political advisory committee, voting was extremely narrow.

In the future, as attacks on working people increase by this reactionary Tory government, EETPU Labour Party delegates will look to the union's political structure to represent their interests.

This conference marked a further shift to the left within the ranks of the union, especially within the Labour Party delegates, and also a growing awareness by EETPU members that the present leadership is totally incapable of protecting and improving living standards—especially when it comes to the crunch of mounting a political campaign to remove this hated Tory government from office.

## -FASCISTS ATTACK YS-

Last week Labour Party and LPYS members in Broadmead, Bristol were manning a stall of literature, selling papers and giving out leaflets.

Suddenly we heard chants of 'Sieg Heil' and about 100 marching, chanting young thugs led by fascists approached where we were.

Ordinary shoppers were pushed and shoved out of their way. When these thugs saw us, they stopped and attacked our members. They overturned our literature stall and beat up four Young Socialists.

This unprovoked attack was political. It was not, as the 'Bristol Evening Post' said, merely football hooligans or rival gangs clashing. Football fans do not march military style chanting fascist slogans.

Let's be clear about the role of the police on Saturday. All day a few police officers had been keeping a friendly eye on our activities. A sergeant, in a reasonable and friendly manner, had checked our letter agreeing with the City Council that we had paid to have a stall. Then 3 policemen had told us that some Chelsea supporters were making their way to Broadmead. Half an hour later, suddenly all policemen had disappeared just before the 100-strong gang of thugs appeared.

It seems strange that whenever the fascists march through Black or Asian areas they are assured of massive police protection, but when 15 YS and Labour Party members are attacked by 100 fascists, the police have

all gone away.

The trade unions, the Labour Party, the Black and Asian people of Bristol must rely on their own strength and make sure that the fascists are not allowed to walk our streets intimidating people.

Hundreds of ordinary shoppers were witness to Saturday's events.

One old man afterwards came up to us and said "I've seen it before—in the 1930s."

We can promise this time, as in the 1930s, the fascist thugs will not be allowed to rule and intimidate the people of Britain. And having sold 75 Militants on that day, we will continue to sell our papers—we will not be intimidated off the streets.

By a Bristol LPYS member

## Brentwood

Brentwood and Ongar LPYS have also called a demonstration against the Tories, to be held on 25 April with speakers Andy Bevan and Ernie Roberts MP. Even Brentwood, a once affluent commuter town, has been hit by the capitalist crisis, with its major employer, Ilford Films Ltd, shutting up shop and closing down. And we are holding a protest meeting against the rent increases—this should receive great support from tenants, as we are leafletting whole estates, after the Labour Party has given us £10 to produce leaflets to advertise the meeting, on one of the town's large council estates.

John Ball (Brentwood and Ongar LPYS)

## I.O.W.

LPYS branches on the Isle of Wight held a successful picket of Newport job centre, selling 27 'Militants' and collecting 250 names on

a petition against unemployment. The event was covered on local radio and in the local press. They will now take this campaigning programme into Freshwater, and then into East and West Cowes in May, and on to Ryde in June.

Pat Westmore (Chairman of IOW Labour Party)

## Eastbourne

Over a thousand people joined a demonstration against the Tories called by Eastbourne Labour Party and the LPYS when the Young Conservatives held a conference in their town. Mrs Thatcher herself attended the conference, although she managed to sneak in a rear entrance. However, the YC delegates were a constant source of amusement for the demonstrators.

When Thatcher finally did appear she made a quick get-away in a shiny Jaguar, followed by a hail of abuse, not to mention a volley of eggs. She was

clearly shaken by this display of working class anger—in a town which has (or did have!) a Tory majority of 26,000.

Pete Day (Eastbourne LPYS)

## Havant

The Havant LPYS held a day of action in the town on Saturday. Our YS agreed to do this as we have noticed an upswing in the number of youth saying they agree with the fascists, whether the National Front or the British Movement; recently a YS member was punched in the face by a young fascist.

Though we must protect ourselves, the LPYS has a task of convincing any youth that might be drifting towards fascism that this is no answer to their problems. With a leaflet drive and a street meeting we spelt out the real causes of unemployment and the class nature of society.

Helen Mullineux (Youth Officer, Havant CLP)

## Northern Region conference

The prospect of a quarter of a million unemployed in the Northern Region now looms large.

For this region insecurity and poverty caused by unemployment is ingrained in the minds of workers. For the conference it acts as a huge backdrop against which all the issues facing the labour movement have to be debated.

Inseparable from unemployment is the issue of the cuts in local government expenditure.

The issue of the cuts weighs heavily on councils in the Northern Region. By "good housekeeping" they have tried to avoid or mitigate the effects of cut-backs. But cuts now inevitably mean compulsory redundancies, lost services and a detrimental effect on the community—particularly on the working class.

Understandably, therefore, opposition has begun to arise in Labour Groups where cuts have been implemented. In Gateshead four Labour councillors have been suspended from the Labour Group because they voted against implementing cuts and inevitably this will happen in other local authorities.

Those councils which think that next year will see an improvement are living in a dream world. The die is cast—either councils will continue with salami-type cuts, or a fight against the Tories has to be organised.

Not surprisingly demands are being advanced at the conference for Labour Groups to follow District Party policy. Linked to this

has come forward the demand for more control over Labour Groups as a wider extension of democratic control.

The key to the conference, however, is the discussion on how to combat the Tories and the elaboration of a strategy to overcome the problems which face the region.

The example of Sunderland classically underlines what must be done. Unemployment is now 20%—25% of jobs are dependent on the public sector. New industries, primarily small ventures, have created jobs. But in the month of January alone 800 jobs were lost. During the last five years a total of 15,000 jobs have gone.

Tinkering with the system through Regional Aid, development agencies, co-operative ventures has not worked in the past and will not work now.

A socialist programme of public works could provide jobs for all and stem the dismantling of industry and services. The nationalisation of the banks, insurance companies and major monopolies with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need is the only way forward.

By Jeff Price

(Northern Regional Council, personal capacity)

## MILITANT READERS MEETINGS

### BIRMINGHAM

'Fight the Social Democrats, Fight for Socialism' Speaker: Terry Harrison, prospective Labour parliamentary candidate for Liverpool Edge Hill. Monday 30 March at 7.30pm. Digbeth Civic Hall

### SOUTHERN AREA SCHOOL

Sunday May 3 and Bank Holiday Monday May 4. Three speakers, social and food. Hotel Bed and Breakfast at Danville Hotel (on sea front) Cliftonville, Margate. Only £7.50 (same as last year). Please book early as capacity limited. Write/phone K Nicholson, 25 Grotto Road, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent (0843 291-293). Speakers: Ray Apps 'What is Marxism', Dudley Edwards '1926 General Strike.' Debate—"Militant" versus Communist Party, 'Perspectives for Britain'.

### NEATH

Meets every Wednesday, 7.30pm Full Moon Pub, Neath.

### SWANSEA

Meets every Monday, 7.30pm, Dynevor School Swansea.

### NORTHERN REGIONAL LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Saturday March 28, 7pm at Bay Room, Park Hotel, Tynemouth. 'A socialist strategy to fight the cuts.' Speakers: Jeff Price (Regional Council), Peter Doyle (NUPE) and Councillor Peter Mole (G&MWU), all in personal capacities.

### WEST HULL

Democratic Socialism or Social Democracy, which way for Labour? Hear: Mike Foster (Louth CLP). Wednesday April 1. 7.45pm Costello Sports Centre, Room 3, Pickering Road.

### CANVEY ISLAND

'Poland' Hear: Bob Edwards (Harlow LP). Labour Hall, Lionel Road, Thursday 26 March, 7.45pm—all welcome. Information—Canvey 60187.

### GATESHEAD EAST

'The secret service and its activities within the labour movement.' Monday 30 March, 7.30pm. Miners Welfare, Smithburn Road, Boghouse Estate.

### BRADFORD

'Socialism or Social Democracy' Textile Hall, 7.30pm Wednesday April 1.

### LEWISHAM

'What is happening in the Labour Party?' Hear: Peter Jarvis (NGA and Hackney South LP) Wednesday 8 April, 7.45pm Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road, New Cross SE14.



A new book entitled "Socialism, Democracy and Human Rights", written by Leonid Brezhnev drew a warm review from the loyal 'objective' Soviet Ambassador Popov. The book was the work of a man, he said, who had "done a lot for the development of Soviet Democracy".

As in Alice in Wonderland, everything is turned on its head. Brezhnev, one of the leading members of the Russian totalitarian bureaucracy, has precisely "done a lot" to ruthlessly suppress all opposition to the privileged elite and stamped on every democratic aspiration of the Russian workers. This 'democrat' fully supported the murders of the Stalin regime, the crushing of the Hungarian workers in 1956 and any attempt by the masses since then to challenge the rule of the bureaucracy. He is undoubtedly an authority on democratic rights as was his twin Joseph Stalin.

"That first million pounds in the bank, that country estate, chain of businesses, holiday villa, yacht, or simply a car, needn't be just dreams."

Such was the advertising appeal made to seedy, money-grabbing employers from the "The Profit Maker". Just subscribe to this carefully designed, step by step guide and "give the Midas touch to your business". Your monthly portfolio will be a bumper package of "ideas, advice and news that will fire you [sic] into action, such as:

- ★ How to make cash from VAT.
- ★ How to build consumer loyalty and boost profits.
- ★ How to persuade staff to accept less....

To heal the closure scars of bomb shattered South Wales, the Tories have dreamed up a most wonderful thing—a Swansea Enterprise Zone! Sick and tired of being pelted by the local population, Government Ministers are taking cover.

They really feel for the unemployed. You can tell that by the expressions on their faces....

Now the proposed zone will bring happiness to the depressed area of Swansea. How you may ask? Through down-right bribery of course. Flash incentives are being offered to would be capitalist settlers. e.g. no rates to pay for ten years!

But there are no promises to help working people or the unemployed with rising rates or living costs. It's a far cry from Thatcher's election statement, 11 April 1979, that under the Tories: "the things we have in common as a nation far outnumber those that divide us" and that she would bring about "a society where those laws are enforced impartially on the rulers as well as the ruled."

Cheap-skate Charlie, always with an eye for a bargain, saved himself a bomb by borrowing a large sapphire from the Royal Collection—to be turned into a ring of course for Lady Diana. The bill hasn't arrived at the Palace yet for the new setting, although similar rings, as you know, cost at least £28,000.

In this case the bill for the job shouldn't be more than a mere £2,000. Handy these Royal Collections. Charlie's no fool, but he doesn't give you the ring of confidence.

As British capitalism plunges down the league of major industrial producers, it can at least boast that it has become top country in one industry—tax avoidance. A report last week from the Economist Intelligence Unit, said that Britain is now the world's finest tax haven—even firms registered in Jersey or Lichenstein pay more.

The report estimates that more than 4,000 non-resident British companies enjoy tax-free status. It points out that a combination of changes in the tax laws by Tory and Labour governments, the abolition of exchange controls, the numerous double taxation agreements and the financial expertise in the City of London has meant as a tax haven Britain "has left all the others far behind."

So whilst working people have to fork out more and more in taxation, large sections of business escape scot-free. And as if to emphasise that tax avoidance is an industry for the rich, even this latest report costs £50.



Anwar Ditta (right) on Manchester Labour Party's demonstration last month against the Tories Nationality Bill

Photo: MILITANT

## Anwar Ditta wins her fight

The five years of struggle to bring Anwar Ditta's children to Britain ended in victory last week, when the Home Office finally agreed that Anwar was the mother and the children could join her.

It was only her determination and the campaign that was waged which won her the right to be united with her family. A defence committee was set up in November 1979 and in the last eighteen months Anwar has spoken at over four hundred meetings (an average of four a week) and there have been three demonstrations in Rochdale and one in Manchester.

By Tom Stott

(Rochdale Labour Party)

The strength of this campaign aroused the interest of Granada's 'World in Action'. And last week blood tests they took showed that the possibility of Anwar and Suja, her husband, not being the parents of the children were ridiculously remote, one chance in 250 million. This and other evidence finally forced the Home Office to back down and allow the children in.

After the announcement, Anwar stated:

"I only hope that this will give courage to the thousands

of black people who are suffering because of these unjust laws. I will continue to fight and help others in the same situation.

"Although my children are coming, the problem does not end there. My case has exposed the complete farce of the immigration laws and the way they work. It runs against so-called British justice that black people should have to prove these things. The onus of proof should be on the Home Office."

She thanked all her supporters in the Labour Party in Rochdale and various parts of Britain who had been tremendously helpful in her campaign.

But the campaign is not yet over. It has already cost several thousand pounds, and it will cost a further £1,000 to

fly Suja to Pakistan to collect the children and bring them to Rochdale.

The Defence Committee has asked individuals and organisations to contribute in whatever way they can to help pay for the tickets (all cheques payable to the Anwar Ditta defence committee and sent to 127 Crawford Street, Rochdale).

Anwar's campaign and her determination to win the right for her family to be united has been an inspiration to everyone she has met. As she says, the case has exposed the complete farce of the immigration laws. The campaign will go on; the only way to end these injustices is to commit the next Labour government to repeal these immigration laws so that no-one has to suffer Anwar's years of agony.

## TELECOMS...

The Tories have taken a leaf out of 'Militant's' programme and turned it round. They have introduced an enabling Act in reverse—not to nationalise but to denationalise an industry.

The Tories Telecommunications Bill is specifically designed to allow the profit grabbers in big business to lay their hands on British Telecoms—one of the most profitable firms in the country.

Yet whilst would-be buyers are licking their lips in anticipation at getting a hold of such a money-spinning bonanza, some recognise that it won't be so rosy given foreign competition, especially from the US telecoms giants. The AT&T Corporation employs more people than the federal government and has a greater operating revenue than the Gross Domestic Product of Denmark!

The past performance of the British has included lack of investment, inefficiency and short-sighted profit-grabbing so their fears are not without substance. In the last two decades their share of the telecommunications markets has steadily declined.

Changes from electro-

By Colin O'Callaghan

(Overseas Telegraphs, personal capacity)

mechanical to electronic equipment accelerated this. In 1963 the UK had a 25% share of world telecoms trade. In 1975 it had fallen to 5.9%. Import penetration rose from 3.5% in 1967 to 14% in 1976.

The Bill will cause further loss on the home markets resulting in a major loss of jobs in manufacturing industry. These workers could be drawn into the campaign against the Bill.

The general secretary of the Post Office Engineers Union, Bryan Stanley, has called for "the strongest and most united opposition to the government's proposals". POEU branches have been asked to campaign against the Bill by approaching MPs with our case and holding a joint lobby of Parliament with other Post Office unions.

Whilst supporting these efforts we must recognise they are insufficient to mobilise our members and win other workers into the fight against the Tory proposals. The government's measures represent a disaster, especially in the rural areas.

If there were firm proposals for action and a mass campaign, the Tories could

## stop Tories sale

be made to retreat. Our members would respond enthusiastically to protect their jobs and the industry.

"We have been arguing and lobbying. Now drive these points at home" demands our general secretary. But how? Without posing the issue of effective industrial action we will not be able to defeat the Bill. The lobby of parliament should have been combined with a one day strike to ensure a maximum turn out and to show our strength. Mass meetings at area level should have been called on this.

Such meetings must now be called to discuss all issues especially the need for industrial action, including strikes, blacking 'line only' circuits (ie. where private competitors put the equipment on lines BT provide) etc.,

If members are sent home, we should be prepared to counter any retaliatory action by management with our own measures. Hit their main backers ie. finance capital. We should draw up plans to cut off the Stock Exchange, banks and international communication links.

Our campaign must extend to include:

Leaflets to members on particular aspects of the threat from the Bill, ie. installation staff depletion, subsidiaries, rise in imports

from USA etc, restriction of our competitiveness.

Leaflets to explain to the public how the service will be affected.

Press statements together with good agitational adverts.

A national approach to other unions especially to the electricians (EETPU), engineers (AUEW), and scientific workers (ASTMS) for joint action to defend public services should be made.

Branches should submit resolutions for support and joint action to Trades Councils and Labour Parties.

Finally we should demand a guarantee from the Labour Party National Executive Committee and Parliamentary Party that the next Labour Government will carry out POEU policy and renationalise hived off sections without compensation. That would warn the Tories and their rich big business friends of the consequences of their action.

A resolution along these lines will be discussed at the next meeting of our Union's Executive.

Now's the time to put into practice the unanimous resolution of the 1979 POEU Conference "To oppose by all means possible, including industrial action, any attempt to break the Post Office monopoly."

## FIGHTING THE TORY CUTS



Photo: M. Ruster [IFL]

Mass demonstrations [above November 1979] showed that Lambeth workers were prepared to embark on a road of confrontation with the Tories

# What are the lessons from Lambeth?

**The hopes of the whole labour movement that Lambeth Council would lead a successful fight against Heseltine's attacks have been disappointed.**

**The whole idea that the Tories' cuts on social services could be defeated through raising the rates has been shown to be an illusion.**

**By Clare Doyle**  
(Lambeth Norwood Labour Party)

Last week, Lambeth Council decided to cut a massive £11½ million from the 1981-82 budget. Rates will be going up by another 37% and rents will rise £2 this April and a further £2 in October!

The ruling Labour group has stated that there will be no compulsory redundancies and the effects on services will only be minimal. But on the admission of Ted Knight, the leader of the council, at least 200 office jobs must be shed through posts not being filled. But what happens if not enough staff leave and how can you cut 10% without services deteriorating?

Lambeth NALGO's policy remains one of total opposition to cuts in jobs and services. In their latest 'CUTS Bulletin' they spell out what a 10% cut could mean in just one department:—

- CUT**
- 'Running costs' for adult and childrens homes. ie mostly food.
  - Aids and adaptations for the homes of the physically handicapped and elderly.
  - Holidays for the elderly.

- Placements in private and voluntary residential homes. This will place additional strains on workers in Lambeth's own homes when there is currently a 30% vacancy rate.
- £182,000 from grants to voluntary organisations.

**FREEZE**

- Vacancies to 10% (although in many parts of Social Services there is already a 16-17% vacancy rate).

**POSSIBLE CLOSURE**

- A day centre for the mentally ill.
- But the council leader maintains that £11½ million represents a little fat which can be eaten into! This approach plays right into the hands of the Tory press and upper class ratepayers who have continually accused Lambeth of being "profligate overspenders". An inner-city borough with Lambeth's enormous social problems, needs every penny it can get!

The massive rate rises of the last year (49% in April 1980 and an extra £4 average supplement early this year) have meant that those who work and live in Lambeth have had to "make

up the difference" caused by Tory policies.

A leaflet circulated before the cuts, by tenants on Stockwell Park Estate criticised the rate rises: "Is it fair that in April 1980 we were paying £18.60 for a 3-bedroomed flat which by April 1981 will cost £31.34 (with rent and heating charge increases)?...When did you have such a rise in your pay packet?" As one tenants' association activist complained: "The council is cutting the living standards of the working class in Lambeth".

And now with cuts, the "social wage" is under attack. For Lambeth council workers, whose overtime is being cut, even their actual take-home pay is going down! Was there any alternative?

### Clear socialist alternative

The "options" presented by the leader to the majority party group on 27 February included various mixes of rate increases and cuts. No cuts would have meant a 57.9% increase in rates, and Knight argued that: "Such an increase would be unacceptable to Labour voters and would continue the opposition generated by the supplementary rate."

'Militant' maintained, from the first days of Tory rule, that Labour councils together with a 'no cuts' policy should not raise rates or rents to compensate for Tory cuts in central funding. "But this means bankruptcy, collapse, chaos and pointless martyrdom—gao, or at best unbearable surcharges for the councillors and no jobs for the 10½ thousand employees of

Lambeth council!" were the objections from Labour group members.

'Militant' argued that such a policy of defiance of the Tories could be successful if a clear stand was taken by the council itself and a mass campaign was conducted to mobilise support. It would have meant every councillor, every Labour Party member and every active trade unionist getting out on the streets, leafletting, addressing workers at the factory, depot or office entrance, and calling mass meetings on housing estates with poster campaigns, street meetings, demonstrations, etc.

"Envoys", like flying pickets, would have been despatched to every Labour-controlled borough in London, to get pledges of support. A labour movement conference would be needed to rally this support and hammer out a fighting strategy.

'Militant' supporters argued that such a campaign should be linked to a socialist programme to take over the banks and insurance companies, whose interest charges are such a heavy burden around the necks of local authorities. A policy of confrontation against the capitalist class was the only way forward.

Such a policy of defiance would have won the support of ten or fifteen other boroughs. Victory could have been achieved.

In these circumstances, it is even doubtful whether a Commissioner would have been sent in, let alone the council suspended. But if that had happened, a thoroughly prepared movement would have refused co-operation at the town hall. Combined with rate and rent strikes and all-out strike action of every trade

unionist in the area, this would have meant there would have been no "martyrs", no mass sacking of 10½ thousand workers and no suspension of all public services.

In the face of such a social explosion, the Tories would have backed down. They did so with the miners, and in the past in Poplar in the 1920s and Glasgow in 1915.

Lambeth council's Labour group took a battering in the press and the media for their no cuts policy and the huge protest meetings of ratepayers. They replied by correctly laying the blame squarely where it belongs—with Heseltine and the Tories.

They have taken the blame for making a 'stand', but the 'stand' has satisfied neither one side nor the other—neither the Tories nor the workers and residents of Lambeth.

A test of Labour's policies and the hatred of the Tories will come in the GLC elections in May. Ted Knight is standing in the Labour seat of Lambeth, Norwood, which is considered 'marginal' by London Labour Party officials! Labour activists must fully play their part in working for his election and argue for real socialist alternatives to Tory policies.

There is no doubt that there are currently many disappointed Labour voters in Lambeth. Unlike the councillors, 'Militant' supporters are convinced that they would have backed a defiant council, fighting to defend their living standards with the possibility of victory. Now the fight is that much harder. One chance of victory in the battle to defeat the Tories has been lost but there will be many more!

## Workers notebook

### Government spending

Despite all the rhetoric about cutting public spending, Thatcher's government next year will spend 3% more of gross domestic spending than Labour did in its last year 1978-79. 1981-82 will see the government spend 45% of total expenditure, about the same as Labour did in 1976, before Healey carried out the cuts ordered by the International Monetary Fund.

But there is quite a difference on what the money is spent on. Because of the Tories' economics, they are now spending virtually double the 1978-79 figure on unemployment.

In that year the unemployed received £1,540 million, £810 million of which was in supplementary benefit. In 1981-82 the jobless are budgeted to receive (at 1979 prices), £2,780 million, of which over £1,500 million will be supplementary benefit.

Whilst the Tories have had to pay out more in total on unemployment, they have viciously slashed the social services. Housing in 1981-82 will be 33.5% down on 1978-79 figures, at only £3,143 million, and education at £8,544 million is 6.8% down.

And it will get worse. The Tories are budgeting for more cuts. In 1983-84 total public spending on housing will be £2,230 million (at 1979 prices) compared to £4,928 million in 1979-80. At the same time they have increased spending in some areas in 1981-82—defence expenditure is up 7.9% on the 1979-80 figures and 'law and order' up 11.1%.

The future the Tories offer us it seems is the most expensively guarded, tightly policed slum state in Western Europe.

### Disabled cuts

In the International Year which is meant to assist them, the disabled face deliberate and serious cuts into their living standards from the Tories.

An analysis by 'New Society' magazine (19 March) showed that because of Chancellor Howe's refusal to uprate benefits, a married couple on invalidity pension will be £96.20 worse off next year than in 1979-80; if they have two children, £119.60 worse off.

Under the Tories' social security legislation disabled people can no longer reclaim new charges for services as supplementary benefits.

Added to this is the attempt by some local authorities to break their legal obligations, under the 1970 Chronically Sick and Disabled Act, to provide services for the disabled. Essex Council has made a 25p daily charge at training centres, Hampshire Council a £1.50 attendance charge on mentally handicapped clients at a day centre. It took threats of court action in Trafford and Durham to force those councils to install aids under their legal obligation.

So when the Tories talk of 'equal sacrifice', ask them how much more they wish to take from the disabled.

# The split in the To



From its first day in office, the Tory cabinet has been divided between the Thatcherite right wing and the so-called "wets".

But, in the aftermath of the budget, a yawning chasm has been opened up.

It is an open secret that at least six of the cabinet were implacably opposed to the budget and the whole "economic strategy" of Howe, Thatcher and their supporters.

The CBI have denounced the budget as "a kick in the teeth". Even erstwhile supporters, such as the Tory MP, Tapsell, has not only denounced the budget but called for the removal of his former idol Howe from office.

Thatcher herself has come in for a storm of criticism. The capitalist organ 'The Observer' has demanded that the government performs a complete about-turn or that Thatcher is removed.

'The Times' has suggested that "the unthinkable", the removal of Thatcher, is now widely canvassed amongst Tory MPs and their big-business backers.

These developments are a symptom of the seriousness of the crisis of British capitalism and its repercussions within the Tory Party. It was Karl Marx who pointed out that "Revolution always starts from the top." The ruling class feels the gathering opposition from the working class and middle layers in society.

It threshes about in a search for an alternative and splits into groups and factions in the process.

Trotsky also showed that the British ruling class in the past were very careful to conceal any divisions within their ranks. Hence the special form of British hypocrisy, "parliamentary cant", which seeks to mask such divisions.

The capitalists, said Trotsky, are always conscious that there is "a third party", i.e. the working class, listening into their discussions. A split in the ranks of the ruling class can give enormous encouragement to the movement of the working class.

The fact that these divisions have now burst out into the open indicates the gravity of the present situation as far as the capitalists and their political representatives are concerned.

Not so long ago all the critics of Thatcher within the Tory Party and the ruling class were cheering her on in her savage onslaught against the rights and conditions of

By Peter Taaffe

working people.

They have only turned on their former favourite because of the devastating effects of her policies on British capitalism, on the one side, and, on the other, because of the explosive social tensions which these policies have created.

They are now discovering what the Marxists have predicted all along, that the effect of Thatcher's policies would be the opposite of what was intended.

Strict control of the money supply and a savage programme of deflation—cuts in living standards of the working class—were prescribed by Howe and Thatcher for putting ailing British capitalism back on its feet. But they are like doctors who, faced with a case of pneumonia, recommend that a bucket of cold water should be poured over the patient!

At a time of world recession, the cuts made by Thatcher and Howe have had a catastrophic effect on British capitalism. Manufacturing industry collapsed by 15.5% in the last year, the biggest drop this century. Industrial production dropped by 11¼% in the three months of November, December and January.

If oil and gas had been excluded this would have represented a decline of 13½% over the year. Almost every industry has been affected: textiles, leather and clothing have dropped by 21%, metal manufacturing was down by 20%, engineering by 17% and chemical and petroleum by 16%.

The car industry is only turning out 924,000 units a year compared to 1.64 million in 1970. Construction is 25% below the level of 1970.

And it is not just the old, basic industries which have been affected, but also the so-called "sunrise" industries, such as ICI, which faced a drop in its dividend for the first time since 1938.

The intention of the Tory government was to eliminate inflation, to cut back the living standards of the working class in order to boost profitability, and, as a by-product, to eliminate the weaker, ailing industries in

**FREEZING WATER SIR GEOFFREY,  
THAT'S THE MEDICINE FOR  
THESE PNEUMONIA CASES**



favour of "the strong".

But, a policy of deflation, while boosting profits, cuts the market. At a time of world recession, with "excess capacity" on average of more than 20% in all the capitalist countries, there is no incentive for the capitalists to reinvest in industry.

In 1980 manufacturing investment dropped by 8% and is expected to drop by a further 15% to 20% this year. Thus, British capitalism falls further and further behind its rivals. The average age of the equipment in British factories is 35 years old!

Even if an economic upswing comes British capitalism will be once again outstripped and beaten by its rivals both in the world market and in its own backyard.

Moreover, every one of the predictions of the government has been falsified. Money supply was supposed to increase by 9% throughout 1980, whereas it increased by more than 20%. The deficit on public spending was to be kept to £8,500 million but turned out at £13,500 million.

### Pessimistic bosses

Small businessmen were promised lavish assistance. Instead they have been crippled by high interest rates and the recession. A record 6,876 companies were declared bankrupt last year!

Thatcher promised to slash taxes. Yet under the Labour government taxes were 40% of gross domestic product while this year they were a

massive 48%. Almost all these taxes are paid by working people.

The government itself slashed public spending which in turn helped to boost unemployment by almost 70% in the last year. But this in turn pushed up public spending because of the extra amount needed to be paid out to the unemployed!

No wonder that just before the budget 'The Times' (24 February) could declare in relation to Thatcher's policies "dreams are engaging but dreams end." Thorneycroft, Tory Party chairman, and supporter of Thatcher, expressed the widespread pessimism within the ruling class when he recently declared: "I have been in politics many years and I have tried, or seen tried, almost



# ries

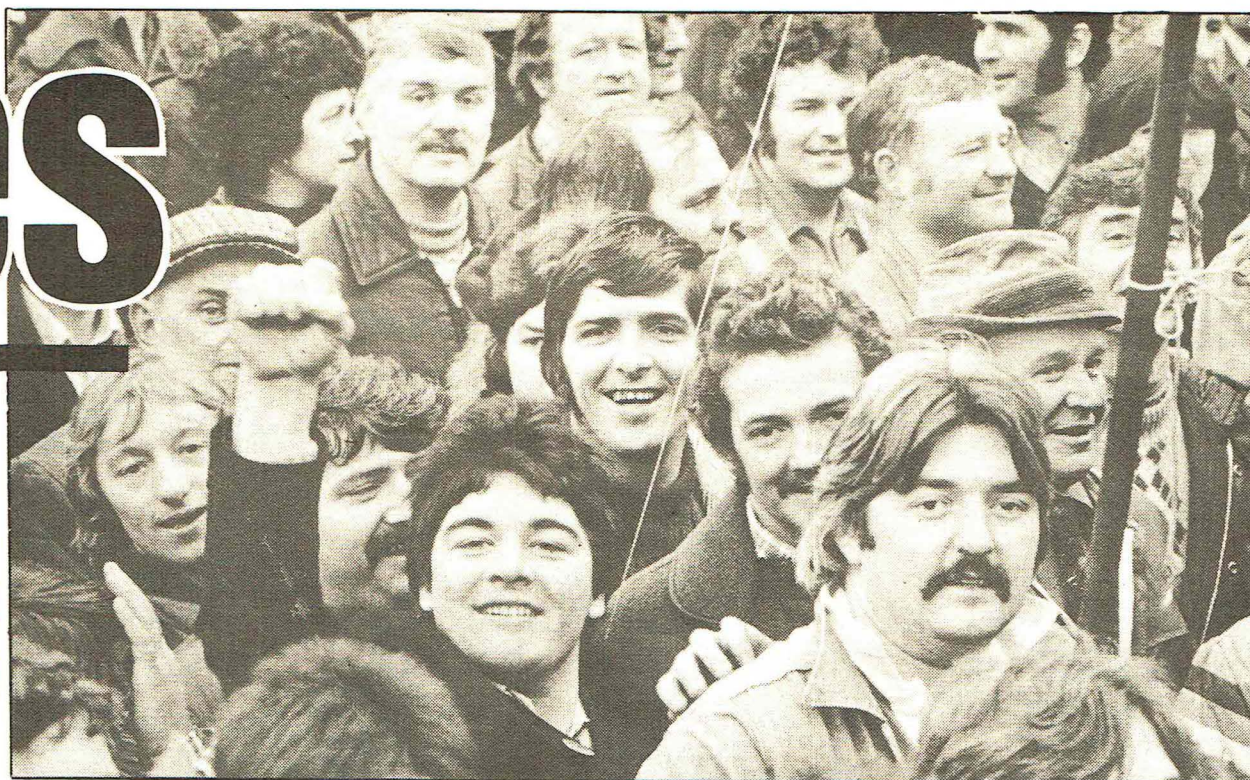


Photo: Militant

Workers demonstrating against vicious Tory policies. Fears of a social explosion, and the power of the working class are influencing the Tory 'Wets'.

expanding the market in the nationalised industries and local authorities for the ailing companies represented in the CBI.

And yet, even if the CBI's programme was accepted, this would merely stabilise unemployment at its present level of 2.4 million. The CBI expects virtual stagnation until 1985, and only the beginnings of an improvement in the economy in 1983. There is not a glimmer of hope in the programme of the CBI or of the wets in the Tory cabinet.

The Tory and capitalist critics of Thatcher do not differ with her over objectives. They all support the aim of unloading the responsibility for the crisis of British capitalism on to the shoulders of the working class.

However, Thatcher's inflexible "monetarist", deflationary policies are enormously aggravating the crisis of British capitalism. At the same time, as the miners' strike demonstrated, the effects of their policies could ignite a social explosion.

## No way out under capitalism

It is this which has precipitated the revolt of Tory MPs on some of the budget measures, and the resignation of Brocklebank-Fowler and his defection to the Social Democrats.

This desertion is also a symptom of the extreme social crisis in Britain and of the volatility in particular of the traditional Tory voters in the middle class.

This is the first defection from the Tory Party to an opposition party for 75 years.

This in turn has led to speculation that Thatcher could be removed as prime minister. However, it would be fatal for the Tories, no matter how much they disagree with Thatcher's present policies, to precipitate her downfall now.

They are not at all squeamish about removing leaders who are not delivering the goods. As the political correspondent of 'The Times', David Wood, put it (16 February): "The Tory Party has always known how to put the boot in; it has worshipped its leader one day and sent him to the knacker's yard the next without showing the least qualm or compunction. But usually the butchery has been done in private, in an abattoir where only gentlemen are licensed to use the more or less humane killer."

every known solution and none of them really works."

This confession of bankruptcy by Thatcher's right-hand man expresses the perplexity within the ruling class about the problems confronting them and their system.

The CBI has belatedly recognised that the cuts in government spending, particularly in construction and capital expenditure, has had a negative spin-off effect in private industry. Hence the about-turn recently when the CBI called for a "reflation" of £1,500 million a year.

However, the extra public spending was not to go, according to them, to the pensioners, to the old and the sick, or to the victims of Thatcher's policies. It was to be used as a means of

To remove Thatcher at this stage, in the middle of a crisis, could lead to a general election and the downfall of the Tory government. The capitalists will therefore first exert terrific pressure on the cabinet to reverse the budget when it is seen to be not working. Within a matter of months, Howe will probably be compelled to produce a new budget which will attempt to "reflate" the economy.

If the economy improves, paradoxically, it will be then that the knives will come out for Thatcher.

She is too identified with the savage attacks on living standards of the past two years. If she leads the Tories into a general election it would be electoral suicide.

The Tories will therefore attempt to refurbish their image, with a leader like Lord Carrington, or Frances Pym, in preparation for a general election.

However, no matter who leads the Tory Party, "wets" or "hard" Thatcherites, their policies offer no salvation for working people. British capitalism has demonstrated its complete incapacity to show a way forward for British society.

But on the basis of the speeches of Labour spokesmen in the budget debate it is also clear that the Labour leadership has not learnt the lesson either of the last Labour government or the experience of two years under the Tory government.

Peter Shore demanded "bold action", but then went on to say that "the only way was to deal direct with both sides of industry, formulating an agreement of national revival."

The TUC has even suggested a united front with the CBI against the Tory government. This is like proposing a joint struggle with the devil against sin!

Under the stewardship of the British capitalists, represented both by the CBI and the Tory government, British industry and British society have been brought to the brink of ruin. Until recently the CBI were slavish supporters of Thatcher. They have only begun to squeal because of the effects on big business.

The only "partnership" which they understand is between rider and horse, with the working class and labour movement in the latter position. Only a class and socialist alternative can show a way out of the present crisis.

Capitalism cannot overcome the contradictions between the enormous poten-

tial of the productive resources—science, technique and the organisation of labour—and the narrow limits imposed on them by private ownership and the national state.

Moreover, the capitalists are on the horns of a dilemma. Keynesianism—budget deficits, etc.—merely fuel inflation. But Thatcherism, deflation, cuts the market. There is no way out on the basis of capitalism.

It is not a system for the production of goods for the population but of production for profit for the monopolies, banks and insurance companies. If factories and industries don't produce profit then they will be unceremoniously closed down and whole communities thrown on the scrap heap. It is the lust for profits, not social need, which is the driving force of capitalism.

Diseased British capitalism, in particular, cannot afford lasting reforms. The right wing in the last Labour government, recognising this, carried out a watered-down version of Thatcherism. It enforced counter-reforms, cuts in the living standards of the working class.

And any new Labour government remaining within the framework of capitalism would be forced to retrace the steps of the last Labour government.

This would be the case even with a "left" Labour government. A massive programme of public spending would undoubtedly lead to a rocketing of inflation on the basis of capitalism.

This is why the CBI, for instance, is utterly opposed to the demand of the TUC for an injection of £6,000 million public spending in to the economy. Quite correctly from their standpoint, they put the question to the TUC: where would the money come from to pay for such expenditure?

## For a socialist plan of production

If it is to come from the working class in the form of increased taxes, this would merely cut the market and cancel out any benefits from increased public spending.

If on the other hand, it were to come from attacks on capital in the form of a wealth tax, this would cut the already depleted profits and lead to a further refusal of the capitalists to re-invest back into

industry. That would cancel out any gains in creating jobs from public spending.

If as an alternative to increased taxation, the government resorts to the printing press to produce pound notes which are not backed up by the increased production of goods and services, this would merely fuel the fires of inflation.

The whole labour movement must demand a useful programme of public works to begin to eliminate the scourge of unemployment. But the TUC's demand for £6,000 million is a mere flea-bite. The last Labour government cut £8,000 million in public expenditure, which has been matched by a similar cut by this present Tory government.

However, the programme of the TUC, if implemented, would represent a step forward. But it is clear that for this to be realised, the increase of public spending would have to be linked with the need to transform society along socialist lines.

To defend past conquests of the working class, never mind big improvements in living standards, is possible only if the labour movement arms itself with a socialist programme.

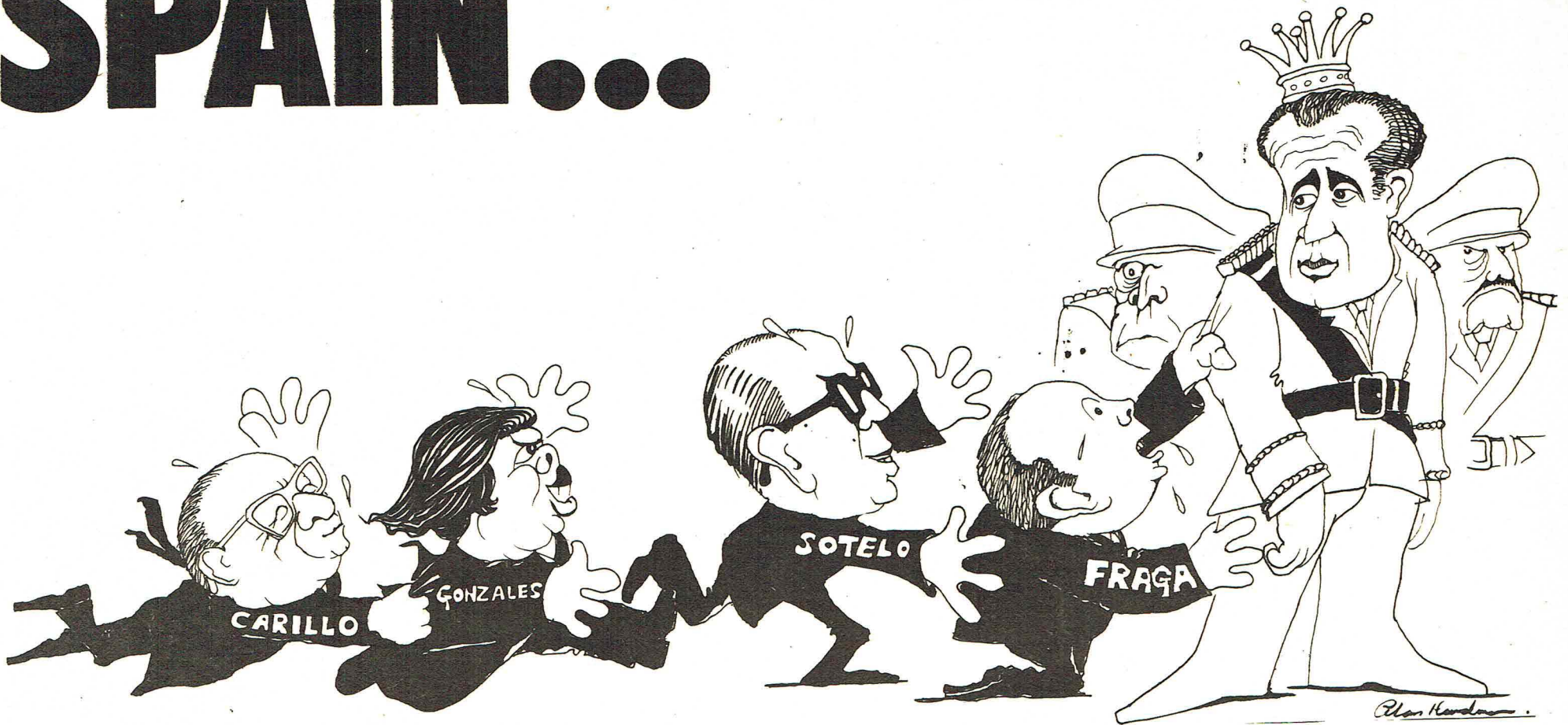
The battle against the effects of the Tory budget and further proposals for another £6,000 million to be cut from public spending raises the need for the labour movement to arm itself with a socialist perspective and programme. Only by taking over—with minimum compensation on the basis of proven need—the 200 monopolies which control 85% of the economy will it be possible to eradicate the scourge of unemployment and the attendant mass poverty.

The 196 directors who control these companies are the real government of Britain, no matter whether Labour or the Tories are in power. They will frustrate and sabotage the next Labour government as certainly as they did the last one if their power remains intact.

A socialist and democratic plan of production will allow the labour movement to cut the working week, to introduce a massive programme of useful public works, to rapidly increase expenditure on housing, social services, etc. This, moreover, would be the only way to guarantee that another Tory government, or a Social Democratic/Tory/Liberal government, would never have the chance again to perpetuate some of the crimes carried out under Thatcher in the last two years.



# SPAIN...



## When the cheering stops...

**A human sea of a million people in Madrid demonstrated their opposition to reaction in Spain and their support for basic democratic rights after the failed coup.**

**Another 200,000 turned out in Barcelona, a quarter million in Valencia and many more in other demonstrations organised by parliamentary parties.**

The ruling class parties, so called 'defenders of democracy' had only participated in demands for demonstrations because a highly charged situation threatened to explode in actions by the working class. The leaderships of the workers' parties too wanted to use these parades as an escape valve to head off illegal acts.

Many industrial workers were cold to these demonstration—in favour of a still reactionary constitution—and hand in hand with reactionary parties. Nonetheless millions in 60 different cities decided that even the minimum democratic rights they had today were worth fighting for—and to show their disgust at the coup attempts.

But when the euphoria dies down we will be back in a life or death struggle for the working class.

The first period of capitalist democracy saw the same euphoria, but the disillusion which crept in afterwards created the basis for the move to the right by the ruling class.

The important question is how to explain these apparently convulsive swings in Spanish society and analyse the way forward.

The working class which flooded into the CP, PSOE,

**By Pedro Rodriguez**

Workers commissions and the UGT in 1977 has temporarily seen its hopes in these organisations dashed. On vital issues, the workers' organisations respect the parliamentary balance of forces and act against any 'illegal' attempt to use extra-parliamentary activity.

### Power in grasp of workers

Carrillo said that he maintained the struggles within the 'democratic' order, despite the fact that it was the heroic Vitorian general strike, sharpened the conflict inside the ruling class. They decided to ditch the Arias-Fraga government for fear of a social explosion, and called on Suarez to reach agreement with the workers' leaders.

Tejero's attempted coup, with its revelations about the degree of military support and the lenient treatment meted out to Tejero for previous planned putsches shows a lasting threat to the working class. The attitude of a state which has maintained the same judges, jailers, army officials and bureaucrats as the Franco dictatorship may not surprise us. The support given by the workers' leaders to the capitalist 'democratic' figureheads has been worse.

When Calvo Sotelo, whose investiture was rudely interrupted by Tejero said in his inaugural speech that "the transition period has finished," he meant that the capitalists had given all the concessions they were prepared to accept—and were now going back on pending

consciousness of the working class dragged behind its action. They had the chance to change society, but weren't conscious of the power they had in their hands.

The leadership tried to convince the workers of the need to go for "la ruptura pactada" (the negotiated split) and organised Platforms with mere shadows of the ruling class 'parties' which didn't win one seat in parliament between them and represent no one.

While the post-Franco government of Arias Navarro-Fraga was using repressive measures against the working class to contain the situation, these 'democrats' were the very picture of impotence.

Nevertheless, the workers mobilisations, culminating in the heroic Vitorian general strike, sharpened the conflict inside the ruling class. They decided to ditch the Arias-Fraga government for fear of a social explosion, and called on Suarez to reach agreement with the workers' leaders.

Tejero's attempted coup, with its revelations about the degree of military support and the lenient treatment meted out to Tejero for previous planned putsches shows a lasting threat to the working class.

The attitude of a state which has maintained the same judges, jailers, army officials and bureaucrats as the Franco dictatorship may not surprise us. The support given by the workers' leaders to the capitalist 'democratic' figureheads has been worse.

When Calvo Sotelo, whose investiture was rudely interrupted by Tejero said in his inaugural speech that "the transition period has finished," he meant that the capitalists had given all the concessions they were prepared to accept—and were now going back on pending

legislation. The liberal newspaper 'El Pais' commented that Calvo Sotelo could find himself forced to do by legal means what the mutineers wanted to accomplish 'illegally'. This they said, would be a 'grey coup' a democratic coup, the first steps towards reaction.

Through Suarez the ruling class has been able to base itself on the support of the workers' leaders to re-establish 'order'. Suarez's reforms, accepted as "sound money" by the CP and PSOE leaders were a giant fraud, which aimed to maintain all the most fundamental aspects of the old regime under the facade of formal 'democracy'.

Ironically, the workers, who had had power within their reach, entrusted their leaders. These, in turn, placed their trust in "Yesterday's fascists" who in turn depended directly on the boardrooms and the big banks.

### The rise of the 'centre'

In reality, the ruling class had only made concessions under the pressure of the mass movement. And it was only prepared to continue doing so as long as they felt endangered.

While Santiago Carrillo of the 'Communist' Party and Felipe Gonzales of the Socialist Party looked upwards deeply impressed by the 'power' of the ruling class, the strategists of capital looked down in fear at the mobilisations in the factories, streets and housing estates.

The two principal forces in society were locked in an unstable equilibrium. The panic-stricken ruling class, disorientated and divided was unable to continue dominating with the old methods, while the working class was paralysed by the

short sighted behaviour of their leaders.

Terrorised by the danger of class polarisation, the oligarchy had to hide its interests behind the grotesque mask of the centre, that imaginary point in politics where all colours are reduced to a static and empty grey.

Nevertheless, once set up, this artificial body—without roots, traditions, or history began to acquire a certain base. How?

Trotsky once explained that if revolutions were the driving force of history, fascism was a giant brake. After 40 years of fascism and dictatorship the middle class had tremendous illusions in capitalist democracy.

When the working class struggle didn't result in a fundamental change in society they looked for the "easiest road".

Nonetheless, a bold socialist programme combined with implacable criticism of the UCD and the "Suarez reform" as well as a serious defence of the most advanced democratic demands,

could cut this period to a minimum, and speed the path of the middle class towards socialism.

But the CP and SP leaders far from fighting Suarez, identified themselves with his policies. The middle class, and backward or isolated sections of the working class, drew their conclusions and voted Suarez in 1977 and 1979.

But no sooner does he take power than all the accumulated contradictions in Spanish society come to the surface. Unemployment, the national question, terrorism...one by one the unpaid bills of history presented themselves, and the government could not solve them.

The disillusion of the masses now measures up to their previous exaggerated illusions. Only the workers' parties fighting on a socialist programme for a socialist government would cut the ground from under the feet of a new coup attempt in the future.

Further articles on developments in Spain will appear in future issues.

**New Militant pamphlet**



**'Lessons of Spain'**  
by Leon Trotsky  
With the original  
1938 introduction  
30p + 15p p&p

Also available:  
**'The Spanish  
Revolution 1931-36'**  
by Ted Grant  
30p + 15p p&p

# SLAVE TO THE TRACK

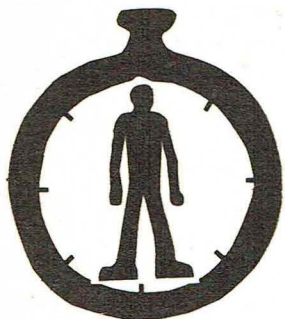
Mass unemployment has always been used by the bosses to increase the exploitation of workers. This is done not just by holding down wages, but by increasing the amount of work from each worker who still has a job.

Michael Edwardes and BL management have gone in for this in a big way, particularly since Thatcher came to power. At Rover, Solihull, we have been treated to the cold brutality of the bosses on the offensive.

In September 1979 we had a five-week strike against the bosses' attempt to rip up all previous manning-level agreements. The strike failed because we couldn't get support from other BL plants, who soon faced the same issues themselves.

But it was the introduction of the infamous 96-page document in April 1980 after another strike, that heralded some of the most vicious attacks on our working conditions.

In 1979 over 5,000 workers, shop-floor and staff, worked on the car side of Rover in Solihull. By February 1981 this had fallen to 2,000—a drop of 60%—while production had fallen from 44 to 24 an hour—a cut of 45%.



If you take into account that a certain number of workers remain more or less constant or fall very little irrespective of production levels (such as maintenance and stores), you will realise that for track workers the work-loads increased greatly.

After the 1979 strike each track worker had, on average, 20% more work. Then in January 1981, after all the jobs had been re-timed, the average work-load increased again by 25%.

Time-study engineers rec-

ognise that every worker goes through a 'learning curve' on their job. What this means in plain language is that most workers, through their own dexterity, are able to 'cut corners, after a certain time and do the job slightly quicker.

For years management have longed to grab this 'extra time' back from the workers by constantly re-timing their jobs. Only now have they been able to do this.



The 'times' we are talking about, by the way, are not minutes or hours but hundredths of a minute. On my job the time-sheets went into the greatest possible detail of all my movements.

*1st element:*

*"Walk from car to pallet [3.5 metres] and procure left-hand tail-gate harness." Time 00.100 mins [6 seconds].*

The only way you could do this particular operation is by running, as sometimes happens. But beware, behind the pallet lurks a time-study man. Before you know it, a new time-sheet is issued with the time reduced for this particular element to five seconds.

With the track moving at 12 cars an hour it means you have 5 minutes to complete all your work on each car before the next one has arrived on your station.

It is your hard luck if anything holds you up and you go "off station." It will probably take you the rest of the shift to get back "on station." Meanwhile, you are working under someone else's feet and tempers get frayed.

In January 1981, the company moved all the workers,

including me, off one line on to another line. They used this to introduce new times for the jobs. Some of these times were from previous studies, others were 'estimates.'

After a few days they turned the line speed up to full rate. As a result, more and more of us went 'off station' and 'down the line.'

The company's answer to this was intimidation. Along with others, I was given a 'recorded, verbal warning' that unless I held my job I would be subject to disciplinary action leading to the sack.

After a few hours of this there was a spontaneous walk off the job and 24-hour strike.

The company threatened that they would 'shut up shop, lock stock and barrel' if we didn't get back to work. They held out the promise that 'the difficult jobs would be examined.' With the recent history of BL and mass unemployment as a background, the workers at a mass meeting, by a tiny majority voted to go back.

I would estimate, however, that the bulk of track workers voted to stay on strike.

The aftermath was that my job, as one of the 'difficult ones' (though most jobs could fit into this category), was re-timed.

The attitude of the time-study man spoke volumes for BL management's arrogance. He admitted to me that the bosses thought work-standards in the past had been 'too loose'. He was here to 'tighten them up'.

I was not be disappointed. He timed me doing the job and recorded a time of 5.7 minutes, that is the work I was given took 0.7 minutes more than the 5-minute cycle time of the track speed.

Well, you would think this would mean that some work would have to be taken off me—but not according to the BL bosses!

After going back to his office, the time-study man



informed me that "even though" it took me 5.7 minutes to do the work, I was in his opinion only working at 85% effort/pace. Therefore, if I worked faster and reached 100% I could do the job in 4.7 minutes, ie. under the cycle



Automated production, under capitalist management, is a form of modern-day slavery.

time, then I would have some spare time as well!

This vicious speed-up resulted in many workers applying for voluntary redundancy, and also excessive absenteeism. My group of 24 workers, for example, had an average daily absenteeism of 9.

Those who are left harbour enormous resentment and hatred for BL and the Tories. One of the most frequent comments is: "what we need is all the unions striking together."

A few years ago, the ex-managing director of Rootes described track work as comparable to "modern-day slavery." That was in a period of boom. Now it is even more like slavery, with the twist of falling living standards.

Such is the tightness of the jobs that stories abound of workers injuring themselves and not being able to get someone to cover their jobs to go to the surgery. Some of these cases I witnessed myself and insisted that they go, cover or no cover. It would be hard to exaggerate the sweat-shop conditions.

There was even a case where a worker became too frightened to leave his job to go to the toilet and the foreman would not get a floater to cover him. He suffered the inevitable embarrassment for himself and his work-mates.

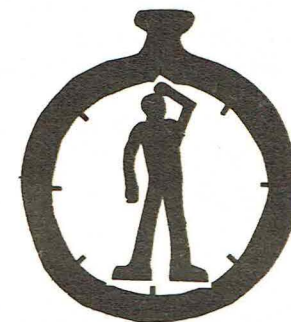
For most track workers, their day was the same as mine. Straight on the job at 7.30 am. Invariably, you find others on your station who the day before, exhausted, had pinched a few extra minutes by letting their jobs run down.

Nobody feels like saying, 'Good morning.' Everyone is immediately in a bad temper as they shove and push to get in the car to fit their parts.

This part of the shift is dominated by a mad rush to stay on station, at worst—or to gain a car at best.

I fitted the electric cables on both sides of the tail-gate. This meant I had to clamber in and out of the car boot,

and sit on the boot floor. After a few cars, black sealer from the tail-gate glass would get into my hair and stay there until I got home and had a bath.



These discomforts were nothing compared to the overwhelming feeling that after working flat out for two hours, you are in exactly the same place—and those cars still keep coming.

Only the arrival of the relief operator to give you a 15-minute break allows some time to recover.

The tea breaks are a gamble. In that 15 minutes you have to walk 50 or 60 yards

to the hot water dispenser, queue for a sandwich at the canteen, and walk back to the rest area. This leaves you about 5 minutes to gobble your tea and butty. If you take any longer, you will find your car off station which then causes aggro with fellow workmates.

One of the most miserable things the company did was to stop the washing-up period at the end of the shift. Now the track runs until 4.30pm. The only way you can get your hands washed is by working flat out for the afternoon and gaining one or two cars.

Most nights I went home without even a hand-wash.

This pace of work means that even the fittest are tired at the end of shift. For any average person over 40, the pace eventually becomes too much.

BL management are sitting on a time bomb. When the BL workers move into action and begin to win again, they will remember the cold cruelty of the bosses.

## STILL AVAILABLE!

### The 'Plunder Woman Must Go' cartoon book

SOCIALIST  
CARTOONS  
DRAWN  
FOR MILITANT BY ALAN HARDMAN



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

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



# ads

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

**ISLE OF WIGHT Labour Party and Militant supporters** welcome visitors to the island. Copies of Militant and details of meetings etc., Cathy Wilson c/o 10 Fairlee Road, Newport. Tel. 526318

**BRISTOL Labour Party Young Socialists Benefit Creature Beat Out of Order The Beleeshas Robert Lawrence React Trinity Hall, Saturday 28 March. £1 on door**

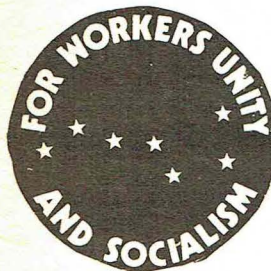
**SOCIAL—Good food and music. 8.00pm at the 'Factory', Mathias Road. N16. Saturday 28 March.**

**HAMPSTEAD LPYS Public Debate "How can Ireland be unified?"** Hear: Tony Saunois (Labour Party NEC) v Geoff Bell (Troops Out Movement). 8.00pm. Monday 30 March 37a Broadhurst Gardens, London NW6.

**Nottingham Militant Supporters' Association.** Marx & Engels Draw. 1st prize No.13 B Esmond; 2nd Prize No 71 Cllr J Casey

**SOCIALIST ACTION FORUM** 'The way forward for the Labour Party'. Speakers include Bob Swart (Streat-ham CLP) at Room 7, Friends House, Euston Rd, NW1. 8.00pm Wednesday 1 April. Admission 20p.

**Starry Plough Badges** 20p each, or 10p each for 20 or more. p&p add 25p for the first 20 badges and 12½p for every extra 10 badges. Order from V Seal, 15 Thornbury Road, London SW2 4DL.



Summer T-shirts. Colours—white, yellow, sky blue, dark gree, navy and black. All with red motif. Round neck and short sleeves.

Sizes—children's: 24, 26, 28, 28 and 30 inch chest. £2.80 each. Adults: small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra large (no dark green)—42-44. £3.25 each. Both costs include postage and packing. Please indicate colour, and size preferred. ALL PROCEEDS TO THE FIGHTING FUND:

Cheques and postal orders made out to R Harris. Send orders with payment to: R Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn. Lancashire BB1 1UR.

## SIXTH SOUTH WALES MILITANT SUMMER CAMP AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY 1981

### POLITICAL PROGRAMME:

- ★ The Russian Revolution—Ted Grant
- ★ Fascism in Germany—Jeremy Birch
- ★ The Spanish Revolution—Ted Grant
- ★ The Hungarian Revolution—Pat Wall
- ★ Marxism & the Labour Party—Ted Grant

Cost: £8.00 per camper

Bookings to R Sewell, 99 Penderry Road, Penlan, Swansea [Cheques payable to R Sewell]

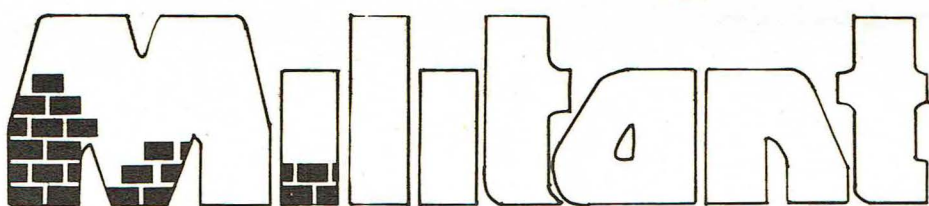
Any family interested in hiring a caravan for the period please get in touch with Howell Bithell [0792]-464081.

### POOLE LPYS/TRADE UNION DAY SCHOOL Sunday 5th April, Retreat Hotel, Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole

11—1pm: Film 'Look Back At Grunwicks' Speaker: Cathy Wilson [ex-PPC, Isle of Wight]  
1—2pm: Lunch  
2—4pm: Trade Unions and the Law' Speaker: Peter Jarvis [NGA, personal capacity] All Welcome

**POOLE LPYS JUMBLE SALE** Saturday 4th April, 2.00pm Woodlands Hall, Ashley Road, Parkstone, Poole. For further details contact Andy Rosser, Parkstone 733989

# Build



Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 11 April	Target for year
Eastern	800		1775	7100
East Midlands	638		1375	5500
Hants & Dorset	669		1300	5200
Humberside	380		875	3500
London East	1123		1900	7600
London West	759		1200	4800
London South	631		1375	5500
Manchester & Lancs	754		1450	5800
Merseyside	683		1650	6600
Northern	859		2150	8600
Scotland East	468		1100	4400
Scotland West	717		1875	7500
Southern	988		1775	7100
South West	453		875	3500
Wales East	281		650	2600
Wales West	454		1150	4600
West Midlands	711		2150	8600
Yorkshire	1280		2250	9000
Others	202		3125	12500
<b>Total received</b>	<b>12850</b>		<b>30000</b>	<b>120,000</b>

**Target for 11 April £30,000 Target for year £120,000**

# LAST FEW WEEKS!

# THIS WEEK £1,483

After the royal wedding, the unholy alliance of Lady Shirley Williams and Prince Brocklebank-Fowler in the "Social Democrats" has been the best thing to happen to the Tory press for years.

Millions are promised for this horrible hybrid by banks and big business concerns—but where is the support from ordinary workers? The kind of financial aid which shows real backing for ideas.

Last week, *Militant* received £94 plus IOUs from the Labour Party conference in London. We've now had over £100 from the *Militant* meeting at the Scottish LPYS Conference, while a record £245.31 was collected at the North Eastern (Yorkshire) Conference of the Labour Party!

Appeal sheets received from the Scottish Labour Party Conference raised just over £80 for our funds. It would have been more, but *Militant* supporters at conference also donated £50 to the heroic Lee Jeans workers' occupation at Greenock. Among the 33 constituency and union delegates who contributed were M Miller (E Kilbride), R Brown (Leith), R Curran (NUPE) and S McCluskie (NU Seamen).

Mineworkers who responded to appeals this week included Blaengwrach NUM S Wales, and T O'Sullivan, Lodge Secretary, Tower NUM. Merseyside NGA supporters sent in their usual sum, and Strathclyde readers donated the balance from a trade union day school, after considerable expenses.

Individuals' donations included F W Vasey (Batley) £25, B Risby (Manchester) £24, C East (Thornton Heath) and M and I

By Steve Cawley

Emmerson (Coventry) £10, whilst fivers included those from D Patchett and D Beale, Coventry, P Phillips, Haverhill, Anon, Rutherglen, and T Oram and P Taylor from S London.

Other readers, such as A Tweddle from Wallsend and S Auger (Dagenham), J Jones, L Walker and B Shepherdson all from Gedling, Notts. send in smaller sums regularly. In addition we have donations from newer names such as Neath readers R Morgan, D Kennedy and A Sweet. We are sure they won't be the last.

Whether you can afford £7 such as Hull supporter J Hartley (AUEW-TASS), or 60p such as another Hull reader, S Kendall, a member of the Unemployed Workers' Union, it's the concrete help you give us that counts.

Some readers put their spare cash into collections at discussion groups and *Militant* meetings. Nearly £100 this week (with IOUs on top) came from meetings in Brighton, Basildon, East Ham and discussion groups in Bootle, Nottingham and Kingston. If you can't get to a meeting in your area, how about putting in the fare you've saved?

The total line on our chart would be about half way across by now, were it not for the "others" line which most years comprises cash collected at national demos, conferences etc. Many areas on our chart are now about half way across. In order to finish the job in the next three weeks we appeal to all our readers to concentrate efforts at locating all available spare cash!

Think what you now save by not having a drink or a smoke! A mere thousand of our readers could carry us way over our target on the basis of a donation equivalent to one small round of drinks and 40 cigarettes each week!

But we don't want each reader to think "I'm not going to be one of that 1,000—let the others do it" because the burden will then fall more and more heavily on fewer and fewer shoulders.

So if 10,000 of our readers sent in £1 each week from now on—equivalent to less than two pints of beer, or just over 20 cigarettes, we would still be nearly £13,000 over our target, without counting what we anticipate will be a record collection at the *Militant* meeting at the LPYS Conference in April.

Come on comrades, what's more painful—the loss of the odd green bit of paper—or the continued existence of the capitalist system?

## Selling 'Militant'

For the last three weeks we have been organising a regular sale outside the dole office in Newcastle.

The headline in this week's paper has sold better than any other we have tried. Every one who passes us makes some comment, the most popular is "you should shoot Thatcher down not shut her down."

One young girl says she cannot afford a copy as she has only got her bus fare left, but after a chat she agrees with all we say and agrees to join the LPYS.

A passing worker tells us

he's a lucky one. He's got a job, and gives us 50p for his copy. The total sold in an hour is 10. Not very good this week, but times are hard. Next it is off to a cafe for a cup of tea to warm ourselves up.

The man behind the counter buys a copy. Refreshed we go to a meeting of strikers from the CPSA, where we sell another 15 papers, this time we get two donations of 50p.

*Militant*, at 20p is the only good investment you can get in Britain today.

## MAY DAY GREETINGS IN MILITANT

We invite your trade union, Labour Party or LPYS branch, shop stewards' organisation or trades council to place in 'Militant' fraternal May Day greetings to the labour and trade union movement.

'Militant' is read by thousands of labour movement activists in Britain and internationally. Unlike the capitalist press we have no rich backers or big business advertisers. We rely on individual workers and workers' organisations like you own to support our newspaper.

Send your greetings of solidarity with the labour movement. Help build a paper that fights for socialism. The closing date for copy is Tuesday 21 April.

RATES FOR GREETINGS: Semi-display: 3 column centimetres (up to 15 words)—£3; 6 column centimetres (up to 25 words)—£6; Display: one-sixteenth page—£10; one-eighth page—£20; one-quarter page—£40.

# Industrial

## in brief

The long dispute at Ansell's Brewery in Birmingham continues. This Friday [27 March], workers from the unions throughout the huge Allied Breweries combine are meeting to discuss the way forward for the strike.

The bosses' carrot of redundancy payments are little help to those facing the prospect of years on the dole. They are even less use when they are of the size 'offered' by Marconi Instruments in Stevenage. Their microwave products division is part of the massive GEC combine where hundreds of millions of £s slush around uselessly in the banks accruing vast profits.

Twenty three people are heading for redundancy there, but the best the company can offer is half a week's wages for each year over and above statutory obligation up to 20 years service.

One man who has worked for them for 35 years gets, at the age of 59, £4,100 including government entitlement. Another man of 61 with 33 years work gets £3,524. As the union branch points out the media always shout about the need for 'loyalty' to employers but what loyalty have GEC shown their workforce?

Another group of West Scotland workers are standing firm against redundancies—at Hoover Cambuslang, where the workforce has declined from 5,400 in 1975 to half that figure today. Management now threaten 418 redundancies and say if these are turned down by the workers, another 540 jobs will be lost.

Workers are refusing to accept the blackmail. Already they have scored a victory on short time working. 50% of normal wages were offered by management in return for having one week in four off. This represented a 12.5% wage cut.

After workers said they would turn up for work whether management liked it or not, the bosses have agreed that full time working will start again pending negotiations.

The Euroweld dispute in Belfast is now in its 10th week. The workers are still picketing the factory in an effort to prevent closure and save vital jobs. There has still been no response from the government.

But messages of support and cash have been coming in from the labour movement in Britain and the South of Ireland, and this has helped sustain the fight. However, unless the fight is now stepped up with the re-occupation of the factory, the workers' mood could begin to be undermined; the AUEW and the Boiler-makers, have still not made the dispute official.

The Euroweld convenor is appealing for the support to keep coming in.

# Linwood defeat but workers fight back goes on

Reports by Willie Griffin and Bob Wylie

The promise of a major struggle in the West of Scotland to fight redundancies, outlined in 'Militant' [20 March], has received a serious setback.

On Wednesday 18 March a mass meeting of Talbot workers, at Linwood, voted by a 2 to 1 majority against shop stewards' proposals for an occupation of the plant to prevent its closure.

Instead, the shop stewards have been mandated to demand better redundancy terms from the Peugeot-Citroen management.

This decision will dash the hopes of hundreds of shop stewards in the West of Scotland, as well as the 1,500 men within the factory, who were determined to fight for these jobs.

All the pledges of support that Linwood workers were given showed that there was a mood abroad to 'have a real go' to stop Linwood closing.

This decision may temporarily affect that mood, although it may simply focus attention on the struggle of the workers at other plants threatened with redundancies.

So why was there no mandate for a big struggle from the workers at Linwood? It would be simple to say, as undoubtedly many will, "the workers wanted the money."

The truth is, of course, more complex. 90% of the workers at Linwood wanted to keep their jobs, but a majority weren't confident that their struggle would be successful.

Every attempt to build a fight to prevent sackings and closures now carries with it the burden of the defeats and reversals of the past period.

Workers in one factory cannot win these battles on their own. To their credit the Linwood stewards recognised this and attempted to gain support for their fight on a widespread basis, crucially amongst the shop stewards in the West of Scotland.

But pledges of support have failed, in this case, to break the psychological barrier of "can we win?"

It would be wrong however to assume a mantle of black pessimism from all of this. The miners victory showed that victories can be won despite setbacks in the recent past.

The other side of the coin of the redundancy landslide is that growing sections of workers facing the sack know there is nowhere else to go and that any redundancy pay-offs would have to last for life.

One major victory from a united struggle would eclipse all recent defeats.

Sadly, it seems that the struggle is not the turn of Talbot, Linwood. It may be that something will develop out of the arguments on redundancy payment. But it looks as if the door on another factory shutdown is nearly closed.

## London Transport

Ed Bober spoke to Ernie Hancock, TGWU shop steward, Edgeware bus garage.

We are holding a two hour stoppage today (Monday 23 March) because garage management is breaking the main agreement. They are not covering for casualties buses.

If casualties take out a crew they are refusing to put in a replacement bus, so London Transport are losing business. New buses costing £50,000 are standing idle while drivers want to man them.

On Sunday there is a half hour service on virtually every road. London Transport are refusing to employ people. They are calling it

financial restraint, but there are passengers who need the service and men who need work.

The money should be made available. How can a shed be short of crews when you've got three million on the dole? We would rather work overtime than have passengers waiting. But really the firm should take more people on.

Two garages are helping us, Cricklewood and Hendon. We did not ask them, they came forward and offered not to cover for us on routes. Today's action, is a start. If management don't listen, there will have to be more action.



The massive February 21st demo in Glasgow shows the willingness of Scottish workers to fight against the Tories.

## Shop Stewards

Shop stewards in Scotland last weekend gave full support to the call of the Scottish TUC general council for a 2-hour stoppage on Wednesday April 8th in protest against government policy.

Jimmy Milne, General Secretary of the STUC pointed out that "The government are planning for 3½ to 4 million unemployed by 1983/4."

Jimmy Milne was greeted with applause when he said "The STUC jointly with the Confed Unions were calling for a two hour stoppage to

By a 'Militant' reporter

change the policy of Thatcher—but the lady is not for turning—she is for burning."

Support was pledged by representatives of workers at Govan shipyards, British Leyland, Bathgate, Timex, Dundee, Rolls Royce, Scottish Council of NALGO with 70,000 members, the Council of Civil Service Unions with 60,000 members, and even the universities hit by

## Lee Jeans

Despite the setback of Linwood last week, workers in Scotland are carrying on the bitter fight against the Tory disease of factory closures.

Workers at the VF Corporation in Greenock (Lee Jeans) are now entering the seventh week of their occupation, and spirits remain high.

The 240 workers, mostly young women, were offered new redundancy teams by the London management recently, which were double the original. But the workers rejected the deal.

At long last, the National Union of Tailor and Garment Workers (NUTGW) have made the dispute official and the workers are preparing for a long battle. They operate a 3-shift system of 12 hours day shift, 12 hours night shift and a day off.

They have organised a range of activities to keep themselves occupied—keep fit classes, bingo, rock bands, filmshows etc. The LPYS Saturday night disco is now a regular feature in the factory. The girls are drawing up rotas for the summer holidays.

The cost of running the occupation is about £3,000 a week, but support from the labour movement has been tremendous. Weekly levies of 50p are coming in from shipyard workers and dockers as well as factory collections and donations from all over Britain.

The VF workers are an inspiration to all trade unionists and workers fighting to save our jobs. Messages of support to Ellen Monaghan, 55 Cambridge Road, Greenock. Cheques to VF occupation.

the budget will join in.

Dick Vivian, AUEW steward, congratulated the STUC for organising the meeting, but questioned the wisdom of only a two hour stoppage and was warmly applauded when he called for a half day stoppage.

April 8th must be a success, despite the difficulties of only a two hour stoppage. It is only the first step to force a general election to oust Thatcher and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

## Yorkshire Imperial

Swindon's abysmal job prospects have suffered yet another blow, with the threatened closure of Yorkshire Imperial Plastics.

YIP (a subsidiary of ICI) are threatening to close production at the plant by 1985, throwing most of its workforce on the ever lengthening dole queues.

150 workers which include T&G, AUEW, AST MS, and APEX members are to be callously dismissed by 16th June with only the bare minimum of redundancy pay.

GEORGE RANDALL, T&G, told 'Militant' of how they had been conned over the years to produce more

By Mick Coleman (Swindon LP)

with a 'profit sharing system'.

Even at this late stage, 3 machines have been working at full capacity, squeezing the last ounce of production from its workers, before discarding them on the dole queue dustbin.

George remarked that even one of the staff accountants was appalled at the lucrative orders that had been turned away since the dispute started.

Workers are refusing to resume production until

management make concrete proposals about compensation.

BRIAN DARLINGTON (T&G convenor) stated that nothing would move until the bosses talked money. Promises of explanatory talks were not enough. The action has been made official.

1926 General Strike  
by L. Trotsky,  
E. Grant, P. Taaffe  
All available from  
World Books,  
1 Mentmore Terrace,  
London E8 3PN.

# Dockers must win

**Southampton TGWU Registered Dock Workers are now on official dispute after a lock-out by the Port Employers, the British Transport Docks Board.**

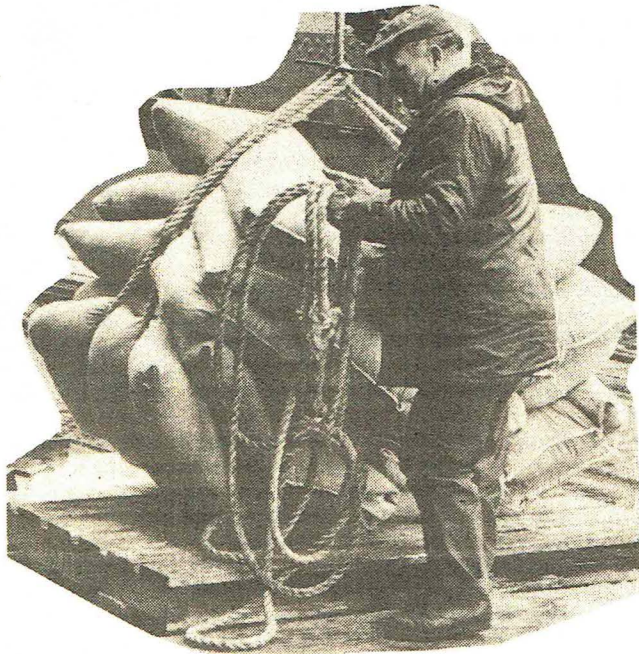
Dockers' were returning to work [12/3/81] after a 24 hour stoppage for an increase in wages, when the employer distributed a letter stating all industrial action must cease, and unless this assurance was given we will not be permitted to resume work.

The shop stewards called a mass meeting and explained, that in 1980 we won the battle of the Temporary Unattached Register, and this was another attack by the Tory government, and the National Port Employers, on the National Dock Labour Scheme that secures our jobs.

The meeting unanimously supported the shop stewards recommendation that unless the letter is withdrawn by the employers there will be no resumption of work.

The fight is on; the Local Dock Group have passed a resolution for an immediate National Docks Delegate Conference for a national dock strike.

International support from Spain and the Contin-



ent is promised. Local Road Transport T&GWU have given 100% support.

250 Dockers turned up when requested for picket duty—it is our intentions to send flying pickets to the 18 B.T.D.B. ports.

With buying of jobs by

By Henry Williams

(Shop steward, Registered Dock Workers, T&GWU)

the employers, it is now clear to most workers that privatisation of the docks must end, and the only clear way out lies through a socialist programme based on nationalisation, and the implementation of workers' control and management.

## Triangular Valves

Following five weeks of lock-out because of opposition to management's self-imposed wage deal, workers at Triangular Valves, Wigan, faced a new crisis last Friday.

Management had informed union officials that unless workers returned to work by Wednesday this week, the factory would be closed, without redundancy payments.

Even if they did return to work, 350 of the 550 shop floor workers are to be made redundant over the next two months. The original wage deal of no increase in basic wages and the implementation of a new bonus system was also to be imposed.

A mass meeting was called with an AUEW local official calling, incredibly, for a return to work, claiming "after all, if a new employer came to Wigan with 200 jobs, he would be given the red carpet treatment" (!) As someone shouted back, "they are not giving 200 jobs, but taking 350."

Dave Berry, convenor, thanked everyone for their tremendous support and solidarity throughout the previous five weeks and said

By Dale Quinlevan  
(Wigan LP)

if they could be guaranteed redundancy payments he would be prepared to stay on strike. But given the management threat to close the factory without redundancy payments, he thought they should accept the return to work, and negotiate the best possible deal for those who are to lose their jobs.

A heated discussion took place. It was pointed out that there would be more staff than shop floor workers, and that this was just a threat to make them go back to work, without a wage rise.

Finally on a show of hands however, the fear of lost redundancy pay won the day, and the meeting decided for a return to work the following Wednesday.

This is without doubt, a defeat for the workers and the trade union movement as a whole, but the workers there have shown their willingness to fight and relationships at Triangular Valves are going to be much different in the future.

## Reports

### Littlewoods An angry 'no' to closures

**In an area already devastated by mass unemployment, closures and redundancies, workers at Littlewood's plants in Merseyside are now in the firing line.**

Dave Kennedy spoke to an USDAW shop steward involved in the dispute.

*What is the background to the dispute?*

Because of the recession Littlewood's say cuts are needed. In 1979 their profits exceeded £41m, now suddenly even though they are still making profits (about £5m in 1980) they feel they need to make cuts to guard for the future.

*How many workers and factories or warehouses are affected?*

The whole of Derby Lane, Liverpool, offices are to be put under the Crosby roof with the loss of 1,200 jobs. The company have said they guarantee 600 extra jobs at Crosby and other jobs in the pools and a new telephone ordering system. Then with natural wastage they expect 40 people to be made redundant. The whole of Earl Mill in Oldham is to close with the loss of 800 jobs. These people have been given no alternative but the dole. A part of Earl Mill is to be kept open, this

is a parcel sorting depot, but the unions cannot understand why the sorting depot, is being kept, because it still means paying rates, lease etc. on the rest of the building.

*What is the attitude of the workers under threat?*

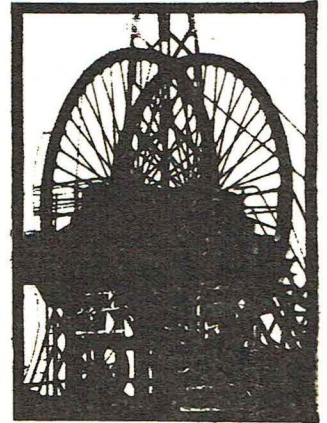
Anger mainly; especially when only three weeks earlier we were told that there would be no more redundancies in Littlewood's after the closure of Spa Mill in Slaithwaite and 1,500 going through natural wastage.

The only trouble is with so many redundancies and closures throughout Britain it's amazing that the Tories have actually bred into people to accept job losses and some of the fight has gone with the attitude of "why should we fight, they'll close it anyway".

*Are the union going to organise a campaign against the threatened closures?*

Firstly, there is a non-co-operation plan, i.e. blacking all movement of merchandise from either mill. On this count we have full support of the Littlewood's drivers. This is thought to be a watertight move by the unions but if this is overcome by the company then industrial action cannot be ruled out.

### Where the sick get punished



It happened on the night shift, on the 'paddy train' taking me to my workplace, W27's main gate, Whitwell Colliery, North East Derbyshire.

Suddenly, a pain in my chest, getting worse every minute. The next thing I'm out of the pit—on a stretcher and on my way to hospital.

That was last November. Now, due to excellent nursing from hospital staff and help from my wife and family, I'm ready to start work again. I can't go back on the coal face, so I've asked for a surface job till I'm fully fit.

I start next week after 14 weeks on the sick list. But how much do I earn?

With one blow I'm relegated from top rate plus 100% bonus to the lowest rate plus 40% of area bonus, this is after 23 years on the coalface.

Now I realise what scores of miners have had to suffer in the past. Why should men who suffer illness or just get too old to work on the face, suffer the indignity of having their living standards lowered after 20, 30 or perhaps 40 years producing wealth?

Now that time has caught up with them and the back-breaking, dust-breathing hours of pit drudgery have taken their toll must they face a drop in wages?

Does the stockbroker or lawyer or member of the Coal Board take a drop in income just because they have lived a certain number of years? No, they don't! Are they any more valuable to society? No, they aren't!

Why haven't the union resolved this question before now? Perhaps if the full-time union official or NCB member took a salary drop at a certain age, something might be done.

Let us get this anomaly, and others like it, changed. Send resolutions to this year's conference, mandate your delegates to support your motions.

Eventually I hope to return to my previous work, but to many this isn't possible. So let's begin to change this system which punishes older and injured workers. Here's to the day of a socialist society!

By Ian Whyles

(Whitwell NUM)

## Civil Service



CPSA pickets outside Port Cullis House, a major civil service establishment in Southend, Essex

**Inland Revenue workers are fully behind the Civil Service Pay Campaign. 98% of union members at the Shipley and Cumbernauld Accounts Offices, which process big tax payments from companies, are on strike.**

Their strike pay is being met by voluntary contributions of £2, £1 and 50p a week, according to grade, which virtually all members are paying.

The Tories are trying to break the strike by asking local Collection Officials to

By an IRSF  
'Militant' supporter

blackleg. The Council of Civil Service Unions must reply by calling out the entire Collective IRSF membership, with effective picketing of offices.

Feelings are running high on Merseyside. 97% of Bootle [Taxes] members struck on 9 March; in Liverpool [Taxes], IR Claims, and Liverpool and North Wales Collection it was over 90%, and even

more will support action if staff are suspended.

The small number of scabs shows the need for a closed shop in the Civil Service.

Revenue workers supported the mass walk out on Friday 13 March when four CPSA members were threatened with suspension. This unity of action is the basis for one union for the Civil Service. IRSF members must stand firm for 15% now, and not to trust any Tory promises for the future.

## TELECOMMS BILL

# Stop the Vulture's Charter

The threat to British Telecoms from the Tories' Telecommunications Bill is the most serious ever faced by Post Office workers.

Quite right for workers anyway, but the lifting of the monopoly will without doubt line the pockets of some of the bosses in private industry very nicely.

As the article on page 6 shows the Bill will give scope for the Tories to move at their own pace, and strike when the time suits them. They hope for this tactic to isolate the proved profitable sections and then hive them off to private "enterprise".

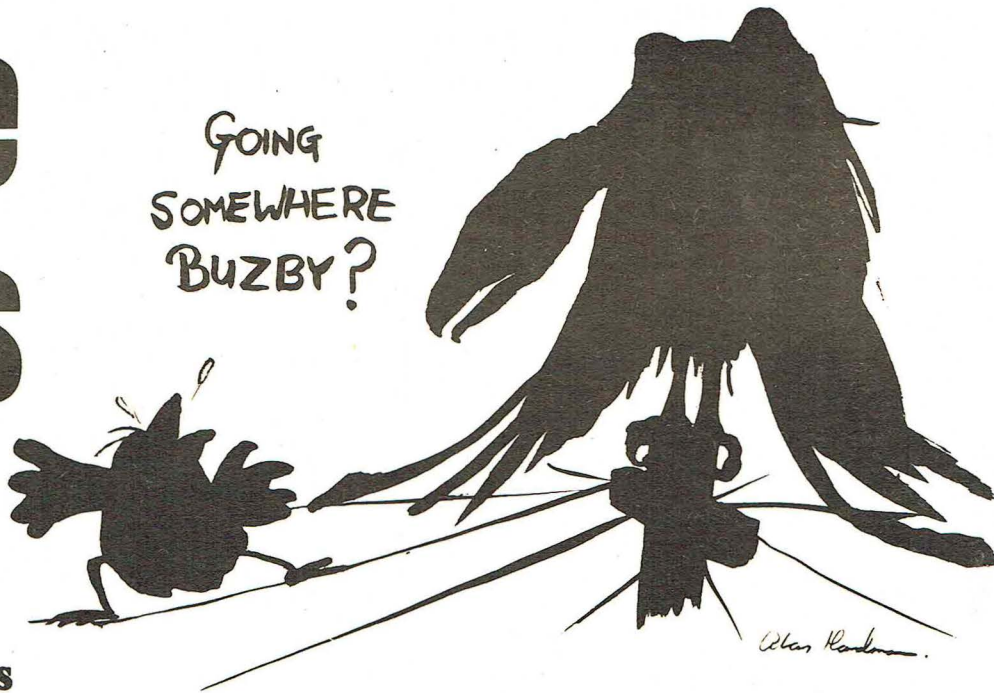
But already interest on loans re-payable to the banks was £355.8 million in 1976. In 1980 it was £534m. Add on the manufacturers'

profits on BT purchase, and it is evident that private enterprise represents a huge drain on public industry.

In a socialist planned economy this money plus further investment in this key industry would be a massive lever to regenerate British industry.

But under the present system even the relatively favourable conditions that currently apply are in jeopardy.

See article page 6



## SOLIDARITY WITH WHOM

Some loyal Labour Party members, hopefully picked out by SDP renegades as possible fellow deserters, have been getting postal material not only from the Social Democrats but also from the "moderate" Solidarity group, which includes right-wingers like Denis Healey and Roy Hattersley [see Editorial, page 2]. Are the two groups, one outside one inside the LP, using the same mailing list? Suspicions that they are working hand in glove can only be strengthened by the fact that labels on Social Democrat and Solidarity envelopes carry the same code number [showing they have been through the same franking or addressograph machine]. What is going on? Labour Party members will be demanding that 'Solidarity' members come clean.

# TAKE OVER BANKS!

Pity the poor banks! They can't afford to pay their workers the 20% increase being demanded by the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union [BIFU]. The bosses have offered a 'final' 10% increase.

So now they are faced with a mounting campaign of industrial action, beginning with a number of 24-hour strikes by clerical workers in the clearing banks' computer centres. This could have a devastating effect on the banks' normal business transac-

tions. Bank workers, however, are far from sympathetic to their bosses' pleas. Hardly surprising!

This week, the annual report of the National Westminster Bank showed that the Chairman, Mr Robin Leigh-Pemberton awarded himself a pay rise of 31% last year.

His annual salary went up from £51,822 in 1979 to £67,966.

Well, inflation has pushed up the cost of living! But

with total profits of a mere £410 million, paying 20% more to the people who do all the work is quite another matter.

And Leigh-Pemberton is not the only one. Sir Jeremy Morse, chairman of Lloyds, increased his salary by 21% last year. This looks relatively modest—until it is realised that his salary now stands at a "mere" £78,000.

How does he manage? Now even the serious capitalist press is beginning to complain about the [highly profitable] parasitism of the big banks.

It is doubtful, confessed the 'Financial Times' [6 January] whether the big banks are "either competitive or efficient". As far as mere customers are concerned, the big clearing banks "form a distinctly lazy cartel".

But in one respect the British banks are highly successful.

"If profit is any yardstick," commented 'The Economist' [14 March] in its

International Banking Survey, "British banks are undoubtedly the best." This is the real situation, confirmed by 'The Economist':

"In 1979 Barclays became the first bank ever to top \$1 billion in pre-tax earnings (\$1.2 billion). And National Westminster was not far behind in chalking up a cool \$930m. Out of the top 10 profit-makers in the world the big four London clearing banks took first, second, fifth (Midland) and seventh (Lloyds) places. When expressed as a return on assets the four big British banks were streets ahead of all their major international rivals."

These facts should be explained to everyone by the labour movement. Factories are closing, more and more workers are thrown onto the scrap heap—while the banks go on making ever more fabulous profits.

It is time that Labour's policy of the nationalisation of the big banks was made a key campaigning issue!

## SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

the most prominent social democrats were themselves leading ministers.

If you want, you can join the Social Democrats by credit card—if you've got one. You could be sure that your subscription would be in "good hands": the SDP's finance committee includes some of the City's most respectable merchant bankers and business luminaries.

Even before the launching, the SDP was recruiting well. Its ranks are already packed with noble Lords, professors, and television personalities. Trade unionists, of course, are conspicuous by their almost total absence.

The Social Democrats certainly know how to organise big press conferences and air-borne whistle-stop tours. But whether their skills include addressing envelopes, knocking on doors, and talking to ordinary workers is very doubtful.

David Owen, Shirley Williams and the others will lay stress on "democracy", accusing the Labour left of "totalitarianism."

This propaganda is evidently to disguise the fact that the Social Democrats have rejected democracy. They opposed the democra-

tisation of the Labour Party—which was accepted by the constituency parties and affiliated trade unions. They rejected key socialist

policies—accepted by Labour's conference.

Not prepared to argue and campaign for their ideas as a minority, they have left the party. The SDP is really a dustbin for all those, particularly in the Parliamentary Labour Party, who refuse to accept the democracy of the labour movement.

David Owen bemoans the lack of "fraternity" in the Labour Party. What he means is, Labour's ranks were not prepared to act as a loyal fan club for David Owen, Shirley Williams, Bill Rodgers and their cronies.

Already, however, the brave band of social democrats are at sixes and sevens.

They all "remain loyal" to the last election manifesto, David Owen and Company to Labour's—Brocklebank-Fowler to the Tory party's!

In reality, the SDP hardly has any programme. They all agree on proportional representation—vital to undermine the Labour Party's electoral base and boost their new centre party.

They all stoutly defend the Common Market—when millions of workers and even Tories angrily reject the high food prices and all the other burdens

imposed by EEC membership.

On one point, at least, Owen and Co. completely reject Labour's last manifesto. They support the continued build-up of monstrous nuclear arms, a policy favoured by the Pentagon and the US State Department but which has nothing in common with the labour movement.

### Labour Solidarity links—see above

Some Social Democrats, like Owen, still claim to stand for "socialism"—of a kind which vaguely embraces everything, except criticism of capitalism!

At least Roy Jenkins, now a highly-paid, part-time merchant banker, has the good grace to admit that he hasn't used the word "socialism" for years.

Indeed Roy Jenkins has close contact with big City financiers, many of whom are now bitterly disillusioned with Thatcher's brand of monetarism.

With open splits appearing in Thatcher's government and the Tory party, it is not hard to see why big business is now keen to build up the Social Democrats.

The strategists of the ruling class see the Social Democrats as a safety-net to catch disillusioned Tory

voters who will defect from the Tories in their millions—beginning with this May's local elections.

Above all, big business will finance the Social Democrats—as a third capitalist party, alongside the Tories and Liberals—to block the return of a majority Labour government.

Big business fears the swing to the left in the Labour Party, which reflects the anger of millions of workers at mass unemployment and slashed living standards. The extension of Party democracy means that the Parliamentary Labour Party will not indefinitely be dominated by lawyers, professors, and all kinds of Tories-in-disguise.

The strategists of capital fear that, under pressure of an aroused working class, a future Labour government will pose a real threat to their power and wealth. The Labour Party might actually begin to implement the socialist policies it was built up to fight for.

With big-business finance and massive publicity, the Social Democrats may make gains in the next election. But they will not stop the growth of a mass Labour Party committed to socialist change.

Labour's answer to the new Social Democratic Party must be to counter their pro-capitalist propaganda—and step up the fight for socialist policies!

# subscribe NOW!

BRITAIN & IRELAND 13 issues... £4.00  
 26 issues... £8.00 52 issues...£16.00

EUROPE [by air] REST OF WORLD [by air]  
 26 issues... £9.00 26 issues...£14.00  
 52 issues...£18.00 52 issues...£28.00

Name.....

Address.....

Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to the Circulation Department, MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN Bulk orders available, sale or return