

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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20p

SACK THE TOWN HALL TORIES

Stop plans for astronomical rent rises

Tories in Hillingdon have shown the real aim of Tory housing policy. If they thought they could get away with it, they would raise council house rents to £110 a week!

When Tory councillor Len Lally asked in the Housing Committee what the council considered to be a fair rent for tenants on the Highgrove estate, the front page of the 'Ruislip Post' trumpeted the answer—over £110 a week.

This is exclusive of rates. The Post headline was that tenants were being "subsidised" by up to £90 weekly!

Within an hour of seeing the paper, twenty tenants on the estate went to confront Cllr Lally in his luxury double-fronted detached house. Tenants demanded that he tell them where the money was going.

All he could say was that it was the system. "Capitalism," remarked Wally Kennedy, the tenants' chairman. Lally tried to fob this off by asking what capitalism had to do with it, he was met by a deafening

By Jake Magee
(Labour GLC candidate,
Uxbridge)
and Wally Kennedy

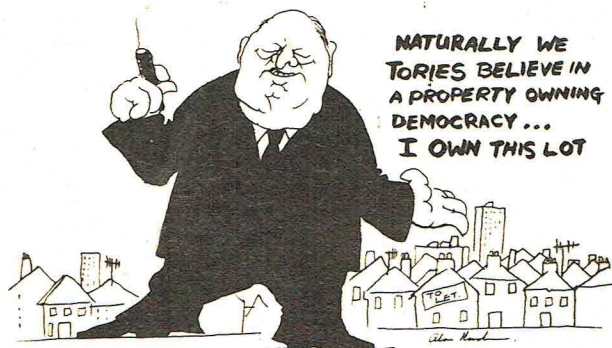
chorus of "Every bloody thing."

The latest figures show that 71% of Hillingdon's housing expenditure goes in interest charges to the banks and money-lenders. In 1978-79 whilst only £3.1m was spent on repairs to council houses, £14.7m went on interest charges out of a total housing budget of £20.6m.

On average for every man, woman and child in Britain there is £659 worth of debt owed by local authorities to the financiers. The case for taking over these parasites and cancelling all interest charges is overwhelming—last year the four main clearing banks made over £1,400m profit.



Jake Magee. Next mass canvass Sunday 3 May. Meet 9.30-10.00 am, West Drayton station.



NATURALLY WE
TORIES BELIEVE IN
A PROPERTY OWNING
DEMOCRACY...
I OWN THIS LOT

Yet who built the estates? Highgrove was built by the working class. The people who live there are working class—yet those who benefit are the tiny minority who own the financial institutions.

This year rents have gone up on average by

£3.25 throughout London. This comes on top of a thirty-two per cent rise last year and further increases in the pipe-line. Last week Tory housing chief Heseltine declared,

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AS THE BOSSES SAY
IT'S THE WORKERS
JOB TO CLEAR
AWAY THE RUBBISH!

Alan Hardman

Workers of the World Unite

Today, under mounting attack from a capitalist class in crisis, the working class everywhere is showing its fighting traditions.

More and more the need for unity and international class solidarity is felt.

For almost a century now, 1 May has been a day for the demonstration of worker' unity.

In 1886, this was the day selected by the American workers' organisations, the Federation of Labor and the Knights of Labor, to launch action for the eight-hour day.

The United States then was the most rapidly developing capitalist power. The American employers were ruthless, and the contrast between rich and poor was stark. The workers had to toil long hours for their daily bread, while the wealthy amused themselves by smoking cigarettes wrapped in \$100 bills. The wealthiest 1% took a larger share of income than the poorest 50% put together.

There was an enormous growth of the

By Elma
Louw

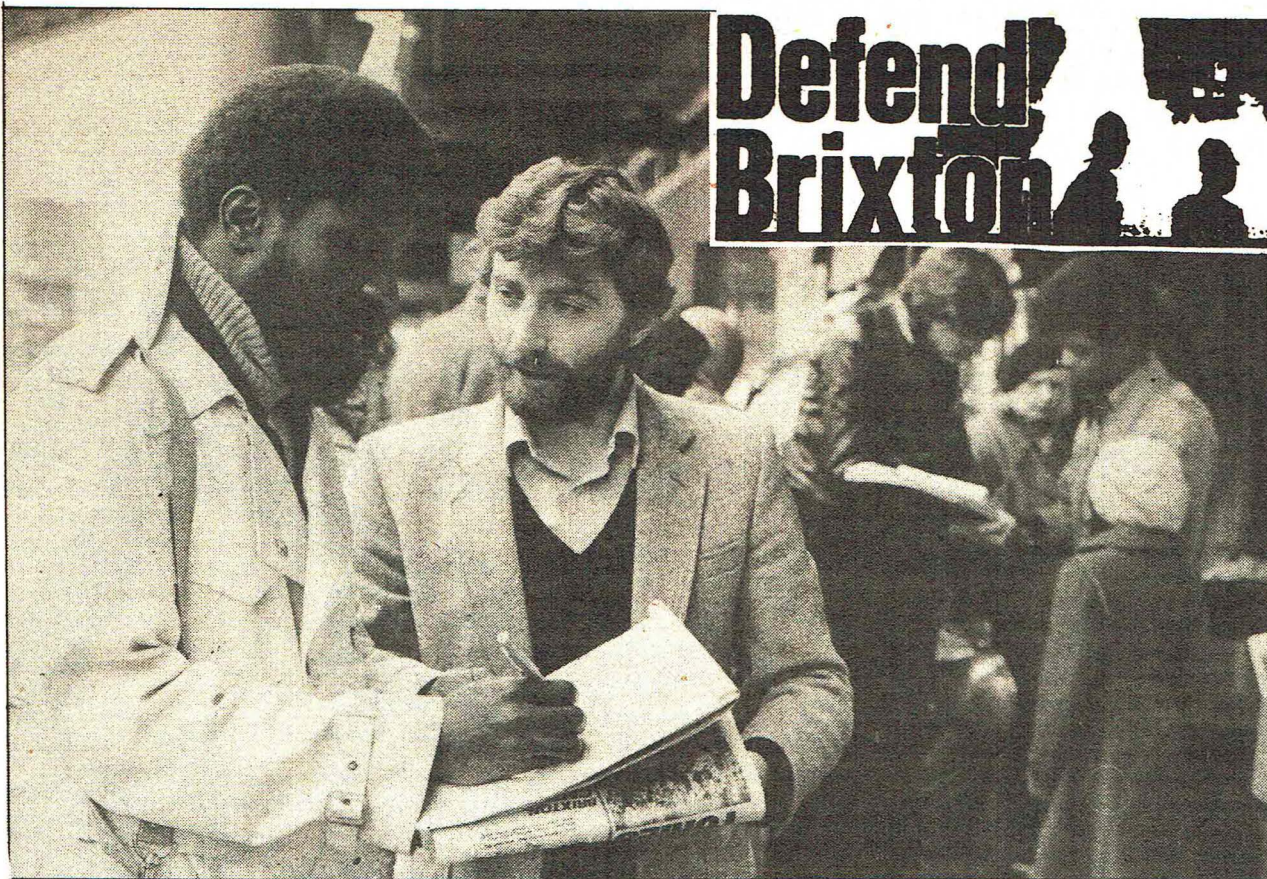
unions. In 1885 alone the Knights of Labor increased its membership seven-fold to 700,000. The employers were determined to smash this movement. As a result, unions had to face the violence of the courts, the National Guard and professional scabs.

On 1 May 1886 in Chicago alone 100,000 workers struck for the 8-hour day. There was a peaceful march and rally. But on Monday 3 May the police attacked, killing six pickets.

The next day a peaceful protest meeting was held. Then a bomb was thrown at the police, probably by a police or

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VOTE LABOUR ON THE 7th



LPYS members gaining support for the campaign on the streets of Brixton this week
Photo: MILITANT

Labour Committee for Defence of Brixton formed

By Sam Brown (LPYS Regional Cttee) and Bob Lee (PNP Black Socialist Youth Movement)

Aware of the urgency of the labour movement taking action in Brixton, a number of leading activists in local trade unions, Labour Parties, LP Young Socialists, and other local organisations have come together to form a Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton.

During the events of 11/12 April there was a magnificent unity between black and white workers. This must be maintained, especially in the face of Tory attempts to use 'divide and rule' racist tactics. This can only be done through the labour movement taking action.

The Labour Party Young Socialists, involved on the streets of Brixton from the beginning, took the initiative in organising a mass meeting on 15 April. Over 600 people unanimously supported the Declaration proposed by the LPYS.

Following the mass meeting, LPYS members collected over 1,000 signatures for a petition including the Declaration's main aims.

The signatories include leading local trade unionists, among them AUEW District President Jock McPherson Quinn; a number of convenors and shop stewards, members of the LPYS Regional Committee, members of local Labour Parties, including councillors and John Tilley, MP for Lambeth Central, and members of local community action organisa-

tions.

Many of these expressed support for the formation of a Labour Defence Committee so that the proposal for a labour movement enquiry will not be left up in the air, but work will be begun now to mobilise the labour movement for action.

At the first meeting of the LCDB last Sunday there was an urgent, 'get up and go' attitude.

Workers, especially black workers and youth are already suffering from the aftermath of 11/12 April. Many face serious charges, with some of those charged held in detention. It was reported at the meeting that a number of black youth had appeared in court without legal representation, and were under pressure from the police to plead guilty.

There are now all the signs, moreover, of a massive "mopping up operation". It is reported that over 100 detectives are now working in the Brixton area "making enquiries" with regard to the explosive weekend.

Police are reported to be examining all press photographs and television films, which could lead to more arrests. Ominously, it is the Commander of the Metropolitan Police Anti-Terrorist Squad who is being put in charge of this operation.

Many of the social problems in the area, especially housing, have become more acute. Complaints have now come to the surface which reveal the enormous grievances that have built up over recent years. Many families, for instance, have suffered eviction and been thrown out on to the street, and there is a strong feeling that black families have not been getting a fair share of new housing.

Those present at the Labour Committee meeting felt that the labour movement would lose all credibility unless it started immediately to take up the issues and fight for the workers in the area.

The LCDB is appealing to local bodies of the labour movement, particularly to trade union branches and shop stewards' committees, as well as to regional and national bodies of the movement.

Proposals for a labour movement enquiry and other action already demanded by a number of local trade unions, including T&GWU, NALGO, AUEW) must be concretised on the lines outlined by the LCDB statement. As the T&GWU observer at the meeting said, there must be something which labour movement bodies can "link into" now.

Trade unions, trades councils, Labour Parties and black organisations will decide for themselves how best to link into this work, and formalise a full labour movement enquiry.

A steering committee was elected on Sunday, made up of Chris Sutton, Secretary of Lambeth Trades Council (in a personal capacity); Harry Barker, District Officer of NUPE (in a personal capacity); Bob Lee, PNP (UK) Socialist Youth Movement; and Sam Brown, Area Representative on the LPYS Regional Committee.

The LCDB will also be backing local black youth who are now in the process of creating a new organisation, which will be seeking to organise an international committee to investigate their problems.

Already, members of the committee have collected a considerable amount of

evidence of the police's treatment of black youth particularly those arrested after 10 April, and also material on housing, welfare, and other problems in the area.

To continue this work, actively collecting more evidence in accordance with the aims of the committee and particularly in establishing links with organisations of the trade union and labour movement, the LCDB urgently needs support and funds.

The events in Brixton have highlighted in an acute form the situation which is now developing in all the other main cities of Britain as a result of a crisis in the system. We hope that throughout the country the labour movement will be examining the lessons, and particularly showing solidarity by sending messages of support and financial backing to the Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton.

Messages and donations should be sent urgently to: Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton, c/o M Boyle, 167 Railton Road, London SE24.

DROP ALL CHARGES

At a special meeting of Lambeth Trades Council [27 April], Maurice Styles of the TUC Race Relations Advisory Committee outlined the TUC's proposals for a response to the events in Brixton.

The TUC wanted the Scarman inquiry to be made into a representative inquiry—but this had been rejected by the Tory government. The TUC also asked the Commander of the Metropolitan Police's L Division, covering Lambeth, to meet with local community leaders so that "normality could be reached." The Commander refused this request.

The position now is that the TUC intends to make a submission to the Scarman inquiry, and wants this submission to be an umbrella for local trade unionists and community groups to use to put forward their views.

The feeling in the meeting, however, was that the Scarman inquiry would be a whitewash, and that the labour movement should carry out its own inquiry. There is certainly no confidence in Scarman amongst the black population in Lambeth.

Jack Dromey, who attended on behalf of the South East Region of the TUC, supported the idea of both submitting evidence to Scarman and to a labour movement inquiry. The TUC also demanded that the Metropolitan Police should be made "publicly accountable."

Maurice Styles told the Trades Council that the TUC would assist in raising funds for the defence of those arrested. This is to be applauded—all sections of the labour movement must support the victims of the police harassment.

However, Maurice Styles then qualified his remarks, saying that these funds would not go to defend those who (he said) "crept in behind" and burnt and looted. Dele-

By Kevin Fernandes (LPYS Regional Committee)

gates stressed the responsibility of the police for what happened on 11/12 April.

The fighting was provoked by a number of provocative actions by the police, following a week of their "Swamp '81" operation which saturated Brixton with police. Throwing petrol bombs and looting are not forms of action which can be supported by the labour movement, but they were nevertheless a response to the police oppression, and expressed the anger and bitterness of youth suffering from mass unemployment and appalling conditions.

In any case, the labour movement cannot take charges brought by the police as the criteria for deciding who and who should not be defended.

For several hours on Saturday 11 April, the police had no control over the centre of Brixton. Later when they had big reinforcements, they started "mopping up", arresting people indiscriminately. Many were simply by-standers, and now face completely trumped up charges.

The labour movement must demand the dropping of all charges, while at the same time mobilising resources to defend those who are detained or are facing the courts as a result of the events of 11/12 April.

Pat Byrne, a delegate from the Civil and Public Services Association outlined the demands of the *Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton*, and called on the Trades Council to support it. Unfortunately, no formal decisions could be taken at this special open meeting, so a decision was left until the next delegate meeting.

Bob Lee gave details of the work of the Labour Party Young Socialists in the area, especially its activity to unite black and white workers in a campaign around the demands of the LPYS Declaration.

OUR DEMANDS

The Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton was initiated to work for the implementation of the demands of the petition adopted by the mass meeting on 15 April.

The meeting called for a labour movement enquiry, and a campaign for "(1) an end to police harassment; (2) withdrawal of the massive police presence and the ending of arbitrary stopping and searching; (3) dropping of all charges against those arrested; (4) disbanding the SPG; (5) a reversal of Tory cuts in public spending."

Members of the LCDB have already begun to work on an immense amount of evidence already collected, formulating three general aims:

- (i) To investigate the role of the police in Brixton, examine the charges of racial discrimination and harassment of the local community, including an examination of the role of the SPG, the use of 'Sus', saturation police policies, the bias of the Courts and the treatment of blacks on remand and in prison.
- (ii) To assist in mobilising support and raising funds for the defence of those charged or in prison as a result of the events. To work in co-operation with and assisting black organisations and other Defence groups.
- (iii) To investigate the real causes of appalling unemployment, atrocious housing and other oppressive social conditions, inadequate social and recreational services and to use the findings as a basis of a campaign for fundamental changes.

This work should now be developed in an organised way by the committee with further evidence from groups of individuals being sought as widely as possible.

We appeal for support and involvement from all sections of the labour movement and black organisations and for the mobilisation of the full resources of the movement.

In order to carry out the work thoroughly and rapidly, extensive funding will be needed to cover expenses (secretarial, telephone, stationery and other expenses). The committee therefore appeals for declarations of support to be backed up by collections and donations.

We call for all bodies of the labour movement and of the area, as well as individuals, to treat this issue with the utmost urgency.



Socialist policies to end unemployment

The explosive increase of unemployment in the last year has resulted in rising anger, bitterness and demands by working people for action.

This month's People's March for Jobs by 500 workers and unemployed from Liverpool to London has won support from wide sections of the labour movement.

By Lesley Holt
(Liverpool Kirkdale Labour Party)

flags; as a marching song they preferred, both for sentiment and tune, 'Colonel Bogey' to the 'Internationale'.

But the fight to end unemployment is political. The bosses in the Confederation of British Industry are quite prepared to see more unemployment and want £3,000m cutbacks in social services to safeguard profits (see article page 7). The Liberals want a permanent incomes policy to drive down workers' living standards.

Yet the TUC leadership of the People's March have argued, as was argued in Popular Fronts during the 1930s, to unite workers with their class enemies. In the '30s this resulted in confusion and disaster.

Socialists are in favour of class unity around a clear programme to take over the commanding heights of the economy and remove the scourge of capitalist-created unemployment. Such a programme would attract sections of the middle class who are searching for an alternative.

But watering-down a pro-

gramme to accommodate the bosses' representatives or leaders of middle-class parties tears the heart out of this alternative. It is essential that the People's March argues for clear socialist policies. Unfortunately at present its demands try to find a solution to unemployment within capitalism.

It calls for more regional aid and state planning. But how can you plan what you do not own and control?

Regional aid has not solved the problems of Tyneside, Scotland or Merseyside. In order to replace the jobs lost on Merseyside alone, more regional aid would be needed than was available in the whole of the 1960s!

Bowaters and other firms have pulled out despite cash bribes. Are companies like Tate and Lyle going to allow the trade unions to tell them where to invest?

The banks can decide whether firms sink or swim. When Weir's in Scotland were threatened, the banks decided to give them credit because Weir owed them £7.35 million in interest charges.

Why should the City of London shareholders have the power to make such decisions? We need to nationalise the banks and finance houses along with industry so that workers themselves have control over such decisions.

The bosses have never been convinced by reasoned argument. Their motive is profit. The only argument they listen to is industrial action. Workers at Gardners occupied their factory to save jobs and won. When the miners went on strike to

stop pit closures, the government backed down.

Industrial action to prevent closures, tied to a programme of nationalisation under workers' control is the only ultimate guarantee of successful planning.

The other major plank of the TUC programme is import controls. As recent articles in 'Militant' have shown, big business would be cosseted, but not restored, by protection from overseas competition.

Working people have seen the effects of import controls through the EEC food policies. The big farmers and food processing giants simply raise prices and increase their profits. The end result would be higher prices with no guarantee of extra investment or jobs.

The People's March must put forward the clear socialist alternative.

Bobby Owens, chairman of the TGWU's Region 6 committee has pointed out: "Our own 6/612 general workers' branch will have a deputation on the march. We see the march as part of raising consciousness against the evils of unemployment."

"I don't hide from the fact that present unemployment levels are a direct result of this government's economic policies, so this in itself is political and would suggest any answers are obviously political. Our own alternatives must be of a socialist nature. I hope the march will speed up the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies."

'WHY WE ARE MARCHING'

Sharon Blackall and Mick Hogan are unemployed members of the Transport and General Workers Union. Why are they marching?

"New echoes of the 'thirties were heard last week—means-tested benefits for all sixteen to nineteen year olds! This is supposed to encourage young people to stay on at school," declared LPYS member Sharon. "No wonder the Tories are worried!"

"Under eighteens unemployment went up by eighty percent last year. This week thousands more will hit the dole from school. The Tories are suggesting they be robbed of even the pathetic £23.50 a week, by introducing means-testing. It's already so bad the social security ask you where you've been if you're not in to answer the phone."

"That's why we've got to organise the unemployed, and why I'm going on the People's March, to put forward the views of the Labour Party Young Socialists." Sharon is a member of the Transport and General

Workers' 6/612 branch, which organises the unemployed.

Mick Hogan is another member in the LPYS: "We're going to take the LPYS banner. We want to make sure the march is political. We've got to get rid of the Tories, not just get them to do 'U'-turns or change course, as the TUC says."

"We urge all LPYS members to take part in the rallies on the way, and put forward our arguments about the Alternative Economic Strategy. We think the debates are a good idea, the AES doesn't go far enough. On Merseyside, for instance, we've got regional aid, but where are the jobs for young people?"

"Dunlop, Courtaulds, Tate and Lyle, Fords: they just pull out when it suits them—we don't think planning agreements will make them come to heel. People like John Moores pretend to be do-gooders, but when it comes to his profits, he's prepared to threaten two thousand jobs."

SCOTTISH TUC

"Since the last Scottish Trade Union Conference twelve months ago, 100,000 Scots have lost their jobs. Factories which were once household names are now empty shells."

Opening the 84th Annual Conference of the STUC, the President, James Muriel, predicted a 20% unemployment rate by the end of the '80s, which would mean 600,000 people on the dole in Scotland.

Faced with this prospect delegates pledged the resistance of the Scottish labour movement to any further attacks by the Tories on the living standards of working people. Overwhelming support was demonstrated for a resolution from the National Union of Mineworkers calling for action to defeat the Tories and calling for a "left Labour government committed to a massive and irreversible shift in the balance of wealth and

By Jim Newlands
(Stirling Trades Council, personal capacity)

power in the favour of working people."

Unfortunately, however, none of the resolutions explained how this shift was to be achieved. The experience of the last Labour government, which in words was committed to such a programme, demonstrated that unless the labour movement takes bold socialist action there will continue to be a shift in the balance of wealth and power away from working people.

Speakers criticised the recent STUC intervention on unemployment to which Nationalists, Liberals, Church people and even Tories and the Confederation of British Industry were invited. Chris Herriot from Midlothian Trades Council told the con-

ference, "Discussions with Tories won't solve the problems facing the unemployed. In fact it is these people and their systems who create unemployment in the first place."

John Wilson of Falkirk Trades Council pointed out that there are 1 million workers affiliated to the STUC and twelve million to the British TUC. "Our movement is strong enough to fight independently. We don't need to waste our time talking to Tories and businessmen."

The conference overwhelmingly rejected the ideas of the right wing of the trade union movement. So-called moderates like Tom Jackson of the Union of the Communication Workers and other trade union leaders received a chilly reception from delegates when they attempted to argue for an incomes policy.

In contrast, the warmest applause of the conference was reserved for Alan Fisher of the National



Scottish TUC in Conference last week

Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

Union of Public Employees (NUPE) who, giving a fraternal address on behalf of the TUC, welcomed the recent movements to the left in the Labour Party. He made it clear that his union fully endorsed the candidature of Tony Benn in the Deputy Leader election. "We too want unity in the Labour Party. But the question must be put, unity on what basis and for what purpose."

As in the Labour Party, the right wing are a declining force within the Scottish trade union movement. Increasingly the debates within the STUC will centre around the difference between the approach of left reformism on the one hand and the idea of Marxism on the other. Already the Marxists are emerging as a force within the Scottish labour movement. By linking the fight for a living

wage, for better working conditions and for an end to unemployment, with the struggle for the socialist transformation of society, the ideas of Marxism will grow by leaps and bounds during the course of the struggles that loom ahead, and the programme of the 'Militant' can become the programme of the labour movement, in both its political and industrial wings.

ads

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All advertisement copy should reach this office by SATURDAY

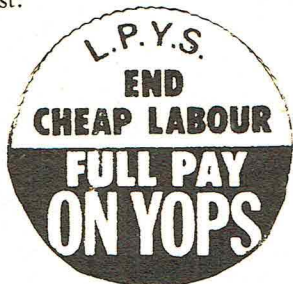
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MILITANT BACK NUMBERS Some copies of all issues 300-545 still available. These papers contain material no labour movement activist can do without! Only 25p per issue (including postage). Reductions for bulk orders. Cheques or POs to Dave Brandon, 29 Lime Avenue, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel 67310.

Dave and Anne San—baby daughter Jeannette, born 7 April. Let us hope that she and her generation will inherit a society where unemployment, poverty, racism and Tories no longer exist.

SHEFFIELD PARK LPYS Public Meeting. Young Workers Against the Tories. Hear Pete Skerrett (Sec. Coventry AUEW Jun. Workers). 7.30 pm, Tuesday 19 May, AEU House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield

SHEFFIELD LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS Public Debate with Sheffield Young Conservatives. 7.00 pm, Tuesday 2 June, AEU House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield. All welcome.



NEW YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT BADGE:

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Badges—“A woman's place is in the Labour Party” + logo. 20p each + s.a.e. Ardwick CLP Women's Section, 15 Cawdor Road, Manchester M14 6LG.

Socialist Folk Night, Trade Union Centre, Carlton Place, Glasgow. Tuesday 5 May, 7.30 pm. Entrance £1. Tickets from G Stevenson (041 770 5892), or at door. All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund.

MANCHESTER Easter Draw winners: 1st prize: Clock radio —S Moore, Rochdale; 2nd prize: Cassette recorder—M Harbour, Stockport; 3rd prize: Flight bag —L Jones, Rochdale; 4th prize: Travel alarm—G Horridge, St Anns.

SUNDERLAND Limited Draw 1st: No. 99; 2nd: No. 36; 3rd: No. 22.

Southern Region LPYS Committee 'Militant' supporters send May Day greetings

Andy Allenby (Chairman)
Jim McEwan
Clive Walder
Jacqui Beadle

Alan Huyton (YS NC)
Sarah Cooper
Paul Chettle
Ian Walker

Dump the Tories!

Owing to pressure of work in producing the special 20-page 'Militant' we regret we have been unable to produce the new chart. It will definitely appear next week!



The LPYS Conference, and in particular the Militant Readers' Meeting, generated enormous enthusiasm. Translate it into cash for Militant's fighting fund.

GIVE US THE CASH- WE'LL DO THE JOB!

The determination of 'Militant' supporters to see our targets met was shown this week by over £1,000 coming in.

The week after the Labour Party Young Socialists Conference is traditionally not the best time for the 'Militant' Fighting Fund, as many comrades are catching up with domestic chores, sleep, etc., and many readers are very hard up after generous donations at conference.

The £1,009 that has come in shows the enthusiasm generated by the Young Socialists' Conference. We are sure this enthusiasm will be enormously boosting our resources over the so-called 'spring'(!) period.

Northern region supporters' 'Geordie Night' at Bridlington netted us £212, and nearly £70 has come in donations at the NOLS and NUS conferences with other IOUs still to come! Donations have come in, too, from Littlehampton supporters (£20) and Feltham & Heston LPYS members (£30).

Over £25 was raised at a meeting in Manchester, and £37 at a Militant meeting in

Pontypridd, which will no doubt be the first of many. Other meetings as far apart as Sunderland and Pontefract, and Militant supporters in the Labour Parties in Liverpool and Bristol (to name only two) held collections for us totalling over £45. Coventry supporters sold teas at meetings too!

An industrial tribunal payment of £34 from a Yorkshire reader was the largest individual contribution this week, followed by £20s from R Shepherd (Bristol, union Conference expenses) and B Short (Sunderland). Thanks also to Sunderland supporter M Dodds, Boilermakers shop steward, for his tenner. Merseyside fivers this week were from print industry readers (NGA/SOGAT) and T Cummings (Kirkby).

Smaller amounts, which are still very valuable,

By Steve Cawley

THIS WEEK
£1,009

included £2s from R Stein (OAP, Cardiff), and K Morgan (TGWU), also £1s from South London readers S McKenzie (NUPE) and J Hogan (Erith & Crayford LPYS).

A whole variety of fund-raising ideas have been undertaken by our readers in the last few weeks. Why not see whether there are any that you can copy, or modify, for use in your own area?

Top of the bill must come Bracknell badges, raising £99(!) but Nottingham Trotsky posters netted £20. 15, closely followed by Blackburn 'Mole' T-shirts (£13), and Shipley rock (as in peppermint) £12.

A Torbay supporter, B Shaw, has been making rosettes for the election campaign, and has now sent us the third instalment from this venture, while H Shi-

elds, a Birmingham reader, has donated back copies of Militant that have been sold off. £40 from Yorkshire comrades has been the price of foregoing usual pleasures ie. drinking (£25—Leeds comrade) and smoking (£15—Sheffield comrade).

We've just over two months now to the half-year mark: this means we really need over £3,000 per week on average to reach £60,000. Although of course we urge all our readers to take advantage of fund-raising schemes to generate cash for us, the sort of sums that we need can really only be guaranteed if all our readers are prepared to make regular donations each week to assist our funds.

This May Day issue of our paper and the demonstrations and marches point the way forward for a resurgence in the labour and trade union movement, starting with a Labour victory in the local elections and continuing throughout the summer at all the major trade union conferences.

We appeal to readers looking at this column for the first time to appreciate that this paper could not have been produced over the years without regular help from its readers, and that its future is in the hand of present readers such as yourselves.

We need a more regular workers' paper more than ever. Give us the cash—and we will be able to do the job.

WALES TUC

Take the fight to the Tories

According to recent figures, industrial production in Wales fell by 19% from 1979 to 1980.

This staggering decline shows the depth of the crisis British capitalism has reached in many regions of the country.

Production of ferrous metal (that is iron and steel) dropped by 43% in the same period. Many thousands of jobs have been lost in steelworks, seriously damaging in particular the coal and railways industries.

At the Wales TUC, meeting this weekend, the major focal point will be a recently published consultative document from the Wales TUC entitled "The social plan—a bargain".

The document seeks to: "outline the framework for advancing peoples living standards over the next ten years." Unfortunately, the document, (ironically published the same week as the

By Ken Smith

miners strike proved that the Tory government could be beaten on the threat of redundancies) offers no way forward for working people.

The document calls simply for a re-hash of such policies as incomes policy dressed in new regalia. The document contains a wealth of material on the destruction of the welfare state and industry, presided over by this Tory government.

It puts forward some praiseworthy aims such as a minimum wage, greater health care at work, up to 400,000 new houses a year, and nationalising at least one of the major drug companies. Yet rooted in

the document is a misconception of how these reforms can be achieved.

A major underlying theme is that recent Labour governments have not been able to carry out reforms because of "misunderstandings" between the Labour government and the trade unions.

For example in the introduction to the document it is said: "The breakdown of agreement virtually assured the election of a Tory government, no matter how intellectually bankrupt its leaders, or socially divisive its policies. Currently we are paying a huge price for a disagreement within our movement which should never have happened."

The failure, however, of the last Labour government to be re-elected is not simply as a result of mere disagreements but precisely because the Labour government established under Denis Healey, a "mild" form of monetarism which led to a 10% drop in workers real living standards.

The Wales TUC document readily admits this, "the welfare state has been

under attack for the last ten years. Recently cutbacks in public expenditure have struck at its very foundations." For at least part of that ten years, the dismantling of the welfare state must have taken place under a Labour government.

The Wales TUC asks us to return to an incomes policy perhaps not in the same manner as under the last Labour government, but in the framework of capitalism in crisis any incomes policy will make working people poorer, intentionally or otherwise.

In fairness, the document calls for the establishment of a legal minimum wage and the maintenance of living standards by increases in pay never less than the increase in the rate of inflation. But how to finance such proposals?

The main suggestions for financing such a programme are left vaguely to using North Sea oil revenue, increasing the Exchequer revenue; more executive taxation and the realignment of spending priorities.

All this assumes that the

present economic crisis is merely a hiccup, but the resolutions to conference take up the weakness of this document showing that it offers no way to fight back against the Tories. Cardiff trades councils' resolution rejects any form of social contract.

On redundancies the document is even weaker. It seems to imply that workers are prepared to accept redundancies so long as the price is right. "To be brutal our experience in the steel industry shows that every man may have his price. At the end of the day all the union efforts achieved nothing more than increasing the price of redundancy."

Many workers will be flabbergasted by this sort of scandalous statement, asking 'what sort of leadership is this?'

Clearly a real alternative is needed to the Wales TUC. The next Labour government will still face a capitalist system in crisis. The Labour Party will need to take up a thorough going socialist programme to end the craziness of the capitalist system.

At present, the fight must be taken to the Tories. All trade unions opposing redundancies should take the lead of the South Wales NUM and other workers who are occupying factories up and down the country, taking up the fight against the Tories in every corner and for the calling of a national one day general strike.

Only by making sure that the next Labour government carries out conference decisions and goes on to get rid of the capitalist system will any lasting solutions be posed to the problems of working class people in Wales, or any part of Britain.

The message from the Welsh trade unions must be clear—a determination to kick out the Tories, but not for a return to the programme of the last Labour government. A Labour government must be elected to power to carry out the socialist programme.

This could be the only genuine basis for any "social bargain" or agreement between the Labour Party and the unions.

EETPU branch demands union democracy

A campaign has been launched to re-open the London Central branch of the EETPU, the electricians' union, which has been suspended by the union's executive. A statement by the campaign explains the issues at stake.

"The reason for the closure is stated in a letter from Frank Chapple to every branch member, dated April 9th, and is that the branch refused an instruction from the Executive. No rule is quoted.

"The instruction was that one Bro. J. Lees be a branch delegate to Bermondsey Constituency Labour Party. The EETPU rules are clear. Rule 14

By an EETPU member

clause 10, on branch powers, states: "A branch may send delegates to the local or divisional Labour Party..."

"The Executive only has power to instruct members (Rule 4 clause 4a) within the rules of the union which give branches the right to elect their own delegates to local Labour Parties.

"Bermondsey Labour Party had refused to accept J. Lees as they knew he had not been elected by the branch. The National Ex-

ecutive Committee of the Labour Party held an enquiry and said that Bermondsey should accept J Lees provided the branch "approved" him as their delegate. The EETPU Executive instructed the branch to "approve" him and when they did not, closed the branch.

"In trying to force London Central to elect J Lees the Executive are breaking the rules and acting completely undemocratically. Chapple's letter also states that the crucial motion to refuse the Executive was moved by a Socialist Workers Party member and seconded by a Communist Party member. This is irrelevant. Members should have equal rights within our union without political witch-hunts. The vote in the branch was almost unanimous and united members from many sites and of differing political views.

The branch did not delegate Bro. Lees because he had not attended for 14 years and had made his opposition to the branch's



In the Greater London Council election the Tories' only contribution has been the red bogey. But some people have altered their posters (above)

Photo: MILITANT

views clear within the Labour Party. The branch already has delegates to Bermondsey Labour Party.

"The attack on the branch has made the issue one of lack of democracy in our union. The members attending London Central have great belief in our union and do not think it

should be run as a dictatorship.

This bureaucratic manoeuvre by the right-wing union leadership is an attempt to dictate policy to local Labour Parties over the heads of local union members.

It is the right of every union to affiliate to local

Labour Parties. But it is and must stay the right of local branches to elect its own delegates to Constituency Labour Parties.

Send messages of support and donations to 'The campaign to re-open London Central', c/o Lansbury House, 41 Camberwell Grove, London S.E.5.

MILITANT READERS MEETINGS

CANVEY ISLAND 'The Socialist Way Forward'. Debate with Communist Party. Speakers: Danny Purton (Sec. Harlow Trades Council, personal capacity) for Militant. Ian Jackson (CP District Organiser). Thursday 14 May, 8.00 pm, at the Labour Hall, Lionel Road, Canvey Island. All welcome.

BRISTOL 'The Labour Party: For Social Democracy or Socialist policies?' Speaker: Bryan Beckingham (Militant Editorial Board). Chairman: Pete Hammond (Bristol City Councillor). Friday 15 May, 7.30. Room A, Shepherd's Hall, Old Market, Bristol.

PORTSMOUTH 'Social Democratic Party— which way for Labour?' Speakers: Nigel Bond (Chairman, Gosport Labour Party, personal capacity); Andy Allenby (Chairman, Southern Region LPYS, personal capacity and Havant CLP). Monday 4 May, 8.00 pm, 84 Kingston Crescent, Portsmouth.

SUNDERLAND 'Social Democracy or Socialism'. Wednesday 6 May, 7.30 at Sunderland Supporters' Club. Speaker: Dave Cotterhill. Further details phone 0783 6539994.

SOUTHERN AREA SCHOOL Sunday 3 May and Bank Holiday 4 May. 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 291293). Speakers: Ray Apps 'What is Marxism?', Dudley Edwards '1926 General Strike'. Debate—'Militant' versus Communist Party, 'Perspectives for Britain'.

Social-democrat calls for a witch-hunt

Witch-hunts against 'Militant' supporters by the right wing seem to be in season again. All the way from Swansea to Sheffield.

After a recent meeting of Sheffield Park General Management Committee I found a journalist from the local evening paper 'The Star' waiting outside. It appears that Don Alflat, an ex-secretary of Park had left the party and joined the Social Democrats.

In the true traditions of traitors he had sent a letter to the press in which he claimed that Park was an obvious target for Trot-

skite infiltration," as it is represented by "a non-Marxist MP, Fred Mulley."

He obviously does not realise ordinary workers are joining the Party to help shift it to the left. The deepening crisis of capitalism and the failure of successive Labour governments to make a decisive break with capitalism means that right-wing policies have no attraction.

Alflat went one further than many defectors. He claimed that if a Labour government is returned at the next general election "we can expect an early descent into Dictatorship...Remember Germany in 1930. They didn't take Hitler seriously."

This is a scurrilous attempt to tar the supporters of 'Militant' and of Marxists and the left in the Labour party with the filth of fascism and shows the fear in which the right wing hold the real democratic ideas of socialism.

I was told after the meeting that Don Alflat had been a member of several different political parties, including the Tory party. A real political nomad!

He was a true class fighter, but not for the working class of Park constituency.

As the right wing leave Park CLP, and the Labour Party nationally, we have a great chance to build a strong Labour party based on socialist policies offering a solution to millions of workers now suffering under capitalism.

MAY DAY GREETINGS

Greetings to all Militant readers from readers in **OLDHAM AND ASHTON**

Trevor Howley
Howard Foreman
Linda Mitchell
Reg Sidebottom
Brian Gilmore
Alan MacFadyen
John North
Kathryn England
Peter Green
William Clegg
Trevor Collin
Keith Albison

Bob Pounder
Vance Wilcox
Roy Cheetham
Phil Tomlinson
Jack Crossfield
R E Jones
Tony Purtill
Mick Walker
Paul Sager
Lilian Butterworth
John Smith
Glyn Jones

CATHCART LPYS

The youth of Castlemilk greet 'Militant' readers everywhere "Working class youth unite for a socialist Britain and a socialist world"

MAY DAY!

MAY DAY! Tory Hurricane ravishes Britain—socialist policies only chance for survival Littlehampton LPYS

May Day! May Day! Working class under attack from bosses' system. 'Militant' to the rescue with socialist policies now Comradely from **WARE AND HERTFORD LPYS**

VAUXHALL LPYS

Fraternal greetings to the labour movement for a Labour-controlled Greater London Council

BRIGHTON LPYS

Make Lady Diana redundant! Abolish the monarchy! **HOVE LPYS**

Fraternal Greetings to workers everywhere End poverty For a socialist world **Bristol South LPYS**

Chester 'Militant' supporters Send May Day greetings to all workers "Workers' unity knows no bounds"

Fraternal greetings from **Reading LPYS**

May Day greetings to all of you from **WOKINGHAM LPYS** Forward to socialism!

Norwich Branch EETPU Greetings to all militants Keep fighting for progressive socialist policies

On a 'lucky' site

Changing rooms are nearly always dirty, smelly and cramped. On a job I was on in London, our changing room was a caravan 14 foot by 6 foot, into which 36 of us had to squeeze in and change our clothes.

By John Fahey
(TGWU Construction Section)

This caravan had no light, no heater, no ventilation [36 pairs of smelly socks would make any place stink] and no lock on the door. All this was in the middle of the West End in Long Acre, Covent Garden on a "Prestige" £20 million office development.

On this job of drying your work-clothes and boots out, and very few jobs provide a drying room, so you get the situation where at 8 am you are forced to change into damp, dirty and musty clothes and soaking wet boots for the next 8 or 10 hours.

After constant union pressure we eventually got one fire to dry 36 people's work clothes. The only trouble was McAlpine's [the main contractor] got the night-watchman to turn it off at 6.10 pm, ten minutes after we'd all gone home, and then got him to switch it back on again about 20 minutes before we started work the next morning.

Canteen facilities on all but the largest and best organised jobs consist of providing a gas ring or a tea urn. Quite often, if the site is out in the countryside, the contractors can't be bothered to provide a supply of fresh water to fill the kettle up. You even have to bring your own water to work!

The sickening thing is, of course, they expect you to work out in the rain but won't give you anything to dry your clothes with.

Unusable toilets

The sickening thing is, of course, they expect you to work out in the rain but won't give you anything to dry your clothes with.

Perhaps the most degrading aspect of working in the building trade is the toilet facilities. A lot of sites don't have toilets at all! On the jobs where you're 'lucky' enough to have a toilet, they are often so filthy as to make them unusable.

We also had a guarantee that the changing room would be swept out every day. It was done once and nobody could find their clothes afterwards because they'd all been thrown in a heap on the floor behind a desk.

For instance, on the job I'm on at the moment in Nottingham City centre, we have a toilet but there is no lock on the door, no toilet paper, no seat, no light, and there's two or three inches of mud and sand on the floor.

Just to give that special tingling [Mc]Alpine freshness, the same kind soul washed the floor with undiluted industrial ammonia, the fumes from which made one man vomit. The idea was to stop you asking a second time.

As if that wasn't bad enough, you have to be fairly slim to get in, because they just happened to dump a lorry load of sand next to the door,

As I said, there was no way

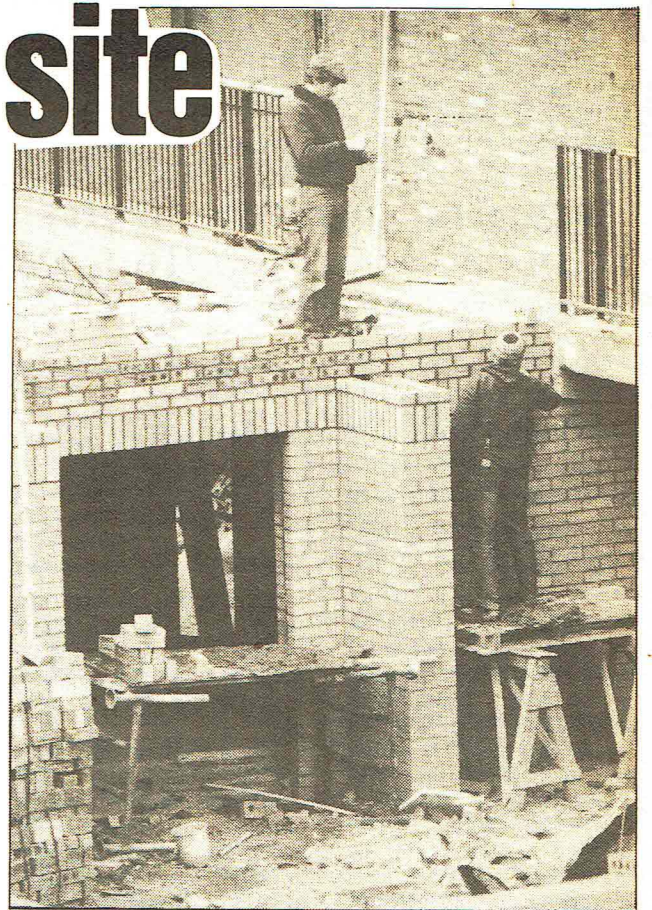


Photo: MILITANT

and had to get a labourer to shovel a bit away from the door so that it would open 8 or 10 inches.

As a final incentive to cross your legs, there is a sea of mud all around the toilet because the brick-layers' mortar-mixer is next to the toilet [convenient for the sand] and they use a lot of water cleaning it out every night, which means the ground gets cut up and muddy.

But as I say, that's one of the better ones. At least they made an effort! Ironically, one job that I've worked on was an extension to a sewage farm outside Newark. It didn't have a toilet or any supply of fresh water—because of inadequate drainage!

Appalling safety conditions

The appalling safety conditions have to be seen to be believed. On the job I'm on at the moment, there are so

many ways of killing yourself that it looks like the "Before" bit of a "Before-and-After" safety film.

The scaffolding is the worst I've ever seen. No hand rails, no toe boards [boards placed at foot level on a scaffold to stop you accidentally kicking a brick or lump of wood over the side], no nets on the sides of the scaffold (they should be between the hand rail and the toe board to stop you falling through the scaffold).

No ladders up to where you're working so you have to shinny up the scaffold. Plus most firms don't provide you with safety helmets, eye goggles or ear muffs, even though they are obliged to by law.

So what is the answer to all these problems? The first thing to do is join a union, either UCATT or the T&GWU, my own union, and organise the job properly.

To say you're not entitled to a decent toilet, not entitled to a decent place to change your clothes, or not entitled to any of the other things I've outlined is of course rubbish. Every worker is entitled to all the amenities that could be made available quite easily but which are sadly lacking at the moment.

Big business destroys the game

Only one decision at last year's LPYS Conference in 1980 was given publicity by the bosses' press.

By Jim Chrystie

It wasn't the demand for decent jobs or the anger of youth at being discarded onto the scrap heap. It was the call for the nationalisation of sports facilities. 'Nationalise football' was the mocking cry from the front page of the 'Daily Star', editorials in the 'Telegraph' and 'Mirror' and the predictably childish cartoon in the 'Sun'.

affront to human dignity, refreshment stands offering junk food at high prices and a PA system which is often inaudible are what most supporters have to put up with.

But all that has happened in the last year has only reinforced the LPYS demand.

And the businessmen who run the game are always on the look-out to make money. Many clubs occupy valuable potential building land, and the behind the scene manoeuvres at Crystal Palace last year illustrate how this asset is viewed.

The soaring admission charges, sometimes as high as £2.50 just to stand, have driven down spectator numbers to an all-time low. Ground facilities which would do credit to a Spartan are the norm for most spectators. Old stands, toilets which are an

the owner of Wimbledon Football Club.

Football league regulations limit the dividends and payments to directors. Noades wanted to establish a holding company above the two separate football companies. He would sell the Wimbledon ground for building land and then rent the Crystal Palace ground to the two clubs he controlled.

This was reported in the bosses press as "imaginative modern 21st century thinking," to create a super-stadium, ground-sharing etc. But it would also have been quite profitable for Noades as he would not have been restricted by the Football League regulations. Unfortunately for him the League vetoed the plan.

But what was noticeable about the whole plan that neither the players nor the fans of either club were involved in the decisions.

Footballers face similar class problems to fans—most

are treated like serfs in a feudal army. Whilst the financial rewards are great for the few that hit the big time, for the majority it is peanuts. Taken on as apprentices they are given no education, and should they suffer serious injury or fail to make the grade, as the vast majority do, they are tossed on the scrapheap with no thought of their livelihood or future.

The LPYS' demand is simple—give us back our game. Football became a mass game in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It is played by working people, it is watched by working people. If it was controlled and run by working people it would put them and not profit first.

THE FIRST STEPS WHICH KILL JOBLESS DEPRESSION

When you first become unemployed you do not worry too much about being out of work. You think, well, I can have a couple of weeks, then look for work.

Long term unemployment does not mean a lot to you as you know that all those on long-term unemployment are lazy good-for-nothing layabouts.

You know that's true, because the Daily Wail and the Argus have told you so, so

By Tony Hughes
(Chairperson, Hull U.W.U., personal capacity)

that must be right, mustn't it?
After the first month you

start to wonder why nobody is answering the letters that you wrote to inform the whole business world that you were open to the best offer and ready to go to the highest bidder.

But things are not too bad financially, or they weren't until Maggie cut the earnings related down to half last November, and the next year she is scrapping it all together.

By the time the second month is under way you are willing to aim your sights a little lower, and with some exceptions you will take any job.

When the third month of unemployment comes around you and your wife [or your husband] are having more fights and rows than even before. You are around the house all day and you lose interest in everything.

You stop looking for a job every day, and it is a real drag

to do anything at all. You only go out when you are forced to or when the mood takes you.

Then you try for another job interview. You know that it is a waste of time, but you would take any job now.

The fourth month comes along, and so do the headaches and the general feeling of depression. You find it very difficult to behave in what is thought to be a normal pattern. The next step will be suicide, either physical or mental. It is known as giving up the ghost.

But don't do it! Fight back, stop feeling sorry for yourself, stop wallowing in self pity.

Not an individual's fault

The first thing to ask yourself is not 'why am I unemployed?' but 'why are WE unemployed?' Then 'what can we do about it?'

The answer is to become a member of an unemployed workers union because quite a lot can be accomplished. You must build up a strong, caring membership. You



Photo: MILITANT

movement.

We, the unemployed do have a voice, and a loud one, if we get organised. First, into local unions and then a national one. With 2½ million out of work at the moment think of the membership power that the union could wield.

Of course, the only real and lasting answer is the overthrowing of the corrupt, capitalist system and replacing it with a socialist society. We can never beat the capitalists at their game. We will beat them when we change the game, and make everyone an equal partner in society.

We in Hull have started an unemployed union with a lot of help and advice from our local Trades Council and various other organisations. We were founded on the 29 January, 1981 and have at this moment 169 members, of which 28 are active.

We have no centre of our own, and are short on funds. We are also short on experience but we are determined to fight on.

Comrades, we are in need of any help that you, our fellow comrades, can offer to help us organise.

CBI plans to tighten screws on workers

Much has been made in the press of British industry's reservations about Howe's budget and the Tory government's economic strategy in general.

The reason for the CBI's worries comes out clearly in their latest document on economic perspectives, called, rather desperately, 'The Will to Win'.

The plight of British capital is summarised in a simple way by their chart (Chart 1). This shows how the rate of profit received by the employers has fallen from over 13% in 1960 to about 2% now.

In parallel, the level of investment has been dragged down. In the early 1960s, the capitalists were pushing up their stock of capital by 3-4% a year, even then a quite inadequate rate in relation to their rivals. By 1980 it was little over 1%.

The CBI sees some benefits from the present recession. It is "providing a much needed stimulus for major savings and improvements in efficiency. Companies are already taking a much more rigorous approach to pay bargaining, manning and staff levels, working practices, overheads, production and engineering efficiency" (page 22).

But does this herald an imminent "bottoming out" of the recession? Not at all, says the CBI. On the continuation of present policies they predict unemployment rising to 3½ million by 1985 with the rate of profit stuck below 3%. The budget, representing a further tightening, would make their forecast even worse.

So what alternative did the CBI argue for? A mad dash for growth perhaps? Not at all. True, they did call for a

By Andrew Glyn

package of reflationary measures building up to a cost of £6 billion in 1985. This seems an enormous amount. But all it would do would be to keep unemployment down to around 2½ million by 1985.

The measures they call for are virtually all designed directly to boost profitability: £3,000 billion from cutting the national insurance surcharge, £250 million from the abolition of heavy oil duty, £2,500 million from the reduction of capital taxes, £750 million from increased industrial policy spending, perhaps another £1,000 million from reduced rates and other business costs.

Much was made in the press of their call to increase public sector investment by £1,500 million. But this was investment on "infra-structure", like roads, which help to cut business costs in the future, not spending on council houses, hospitals etc. Moreover, the CBI also called for a further £3,000 million cuts in current expenditure. This would further hit the health service, education, social security, and other vital services for workers and their families.

No U-turn there, simply an attempt to put more of the burden of the economic crisis on the backs of the working people.

But even these concessions are not all the CBI wants. In order to restore "competitiveness", the CBI is calling for lower pay and higher productivity—that is, for wringing out more of the workers for less pay.

Their chart (chart II) shows

how the various policies are supposed to restore some part of the lost competitiveness, through lowering the unit wage costs.

Competitiveness is a mealy-mouthed way of saying profitability. A capitalist firm is competitive if, and only if, it can sell at a profit. Would the adoption of the CBI's policies lead to a radical improvement in profitability?

Not really. Chart III shows that the best they can hope for is to creep back to the profitability level of 1979, still only one third of the level of the early 1960s.

So the CBI is under no illusions whatsoever that the government's policies, even if they were adjusted as the CBI suggests, would restore British capitalism's position.

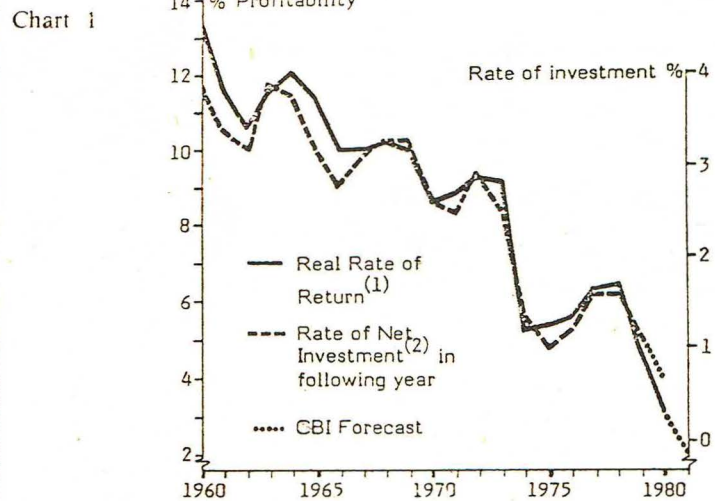
But even if the CBI is resigned to low profitability, they are determined to use the continuation of mass unemployment to further weaken the labour movement. When describing the benefits which companies were deriving from the recession, the CBI added a significant phrase: "these improvements must be made to stick."

This means that it is no good forcing through speed-ups and so forth ("better working practices" as the CBI would have it) if they are later reversed by the workers. Two million unemployed is probably the only basis on which the CBI thinks these changes can "be made to stick".

Moreover, it seems very likely that the CBI will try to cement the gains the employers have been making in legislative form.

In this document the CBI is rather coy about industrial relations legislation. However, they do say that they want collective agreements to include "peace clauses" binding "the parties" not to take industrial action, and laying down procedures for discipli-

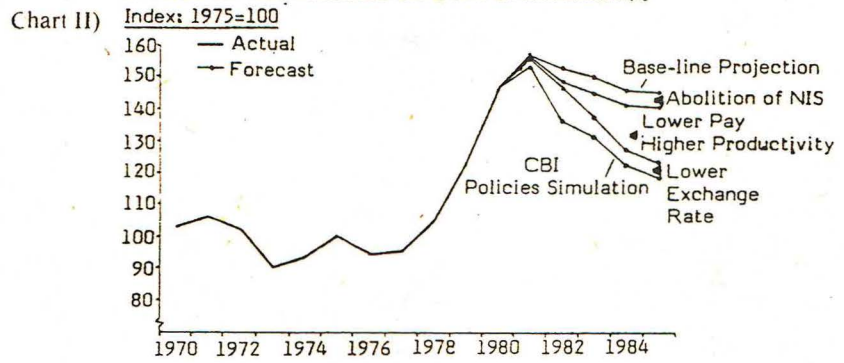
PROFITABILITY AND RATE OF INVESTMENT IN FOLLOWING YEAR



Sources: National Income and Expenditure, various issues; and CSO direct

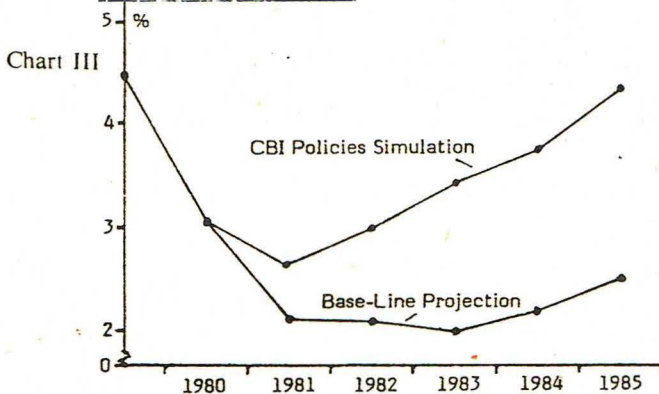
Notes: Figures refer to industrial and commercial companies excluding North Sea activities; figures for 1980 and 1981 are CBI forecasts.

EFFECT OF CBI POLICIES ON COMPETITIVENESS(1)



(1) UK labour costs per unit of output in manufacturing relative to those of main competitor countries on a trade-weighted basis.

REAL PROFITABILITY(1)



(1) Real pre-tax rate of return on assets employed by industrial and commercial companies excluding North Sea activities.

Note: Figures are annual averages

In charts II and III the base-line production line represents what the CBI expects to happen if the government continues its present policies. The other lines (after 1980) represent what the result would be if certain policies were implemented.

ning offenders.

Any notion that the policies of Thatcherism can be turned round by a joint TUC/CBI

initiative is simply exploded by the CBI's document.

The CBI's "Will to Win" is a class programme of big

business. Far from coinciding with workers' interests, it is aimed directly against the working class.

Belgian supporters of the Marxist paper VONK greet 'Militant' readers in the name of internationalism. Socialism knows no boundaries

Fraternal greetings to all workers Call a one-day general strike to force the Tories out and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies

NORWICH LPYS

Labour Party Young Socialists Birmingham branches send fraternal May Day greetings to all comrades Drive the Tories out!

AUEW-BRISTOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE extends May Day greetings to all members and trade unionists

As supporters of the 'Militant' programme for our socialist future AUEW READERS extend May Day greetings

AUEW Shop Stewards' Committee, Rolls Royce (Production) Bristol Greetings to all trade unionists No more monetarism—more employment

'Militant' supporters in CARDIFF SE CLP send May Day greetings to the labour movement

We call upon the labour movement to decisively reject the recent witch-hunt launched against 'Militant' supporters by the mis-named 'Solidarity' organisation

For an NEC enquiry into the financing of Labour's right wing by NATO, CIA, bankers and other enemies of the labour movement

Coventry (South East) Labour Party sends fraternal greetings to all workers and their families on May Day SAVE JOBS—SACK THE TORIES!

Morecambe Labour Party branch greets the labour movement on May Day, Forward to socialism, Tories out!

Bristol South East LPYS say We shall not be trodden under foot Revolutionary greetings!

MAY DAY GREETING Harlow 'Militant' readers send fraternal greetings to the labour movement

MAY DAY SOCIALIST GREETINGS FROM

Anna Bugler
Bill Bugler
John Burnett
John Burtenshaw
Bob Cheeseman
Fred DeFreitas
Tony Dines
Fiona Eyre
Frieda Fenby
Tim Gibbs
Brian Gill
Alan Gray
Paul Holder
Dennis Hosgood
Gary Hosgood

Pauline Hosgood
Norman Knight
Mick Lane
Chris LeTissier
John LeTissier
Alex Littlechild
Terry Lovely
Jayne McEwan
Jim McEwan
Dolly McGurk
Andy Millman
Jim Moore
Stan Natrass
Graham Nogett
Graham Padbury

Maurice Pollard
Harry Power
Dennis Sandford
Tim Stringer
Mark Still
Tony Squires
Wendy Squires
Jonathan Tapsell
Eric Thresher
Jerry Tomlinson
Adam Turff
Peter Wakeman
Sally Warren
Chris Wells
Paul Wilmott

We members of Arundel CLP say

Only the united labour and trade union movement pledged to socialist policies will smash the Tories

Hayes & Harlington Labour Party supporters and sympathisers send socialist greetings to labour and trade union movement Mobilise to kick out the Tories

May Day greetings from S Blakey C Berry J Dennison M Forster K Williamson

Grimsby NALGO Representatives, Humberside Branch Committee "Stop the Tory cuts"

PERTH AND EAST PERTHSHIRE CLP Sends May Day greetings to all fellow socialists internationally

Socialist Education Association (Cardiff branch) May Day greetings to all socialist teachers End Public Schools now!

May Day greetings from Glasgow College of Technology Labour Club Forward to international socialism

Remember Poplar Council Fight the cuts Fight the Tories Labour to power on a socialist programme Tower Hamlets LPYS

MILITANT SUPPORTERS OF UCW BROAD LEFT say Build a fighting union Support Wembley decision Democratised the UCW

NATIONAL SOCIETY OF METAL MECHANICS

"The members of the National Executive Council extend fraternal greetings to all members and trade unionists"

C P McCarthy General Secretary

ILFORD GAS branch of the G&MWU extend May Day greetings to the trade union movement

T&GWU BRANCH 5/909 Rover Solihull Send May Day greetings to all in the labour movement

Greetings from SOGAT Manchester branch Labour to power on a socialist programme

SAVE JOBS! SACK TORIES! Maesteg Trade Union and Labour Action Committee



ASTMS Liverpool Shipping & Freight branch

Send fraternal greetings to the labour movement on May Day

Support the decisions of the Wembley Conference
Forward to socialism!

BOOTLE LPYS sends greetings to supporters of *Inqaba Ya Basebenzi* Smash apartheid forward to a socialist South Africa

FORD WARD sends May Day greetings to all comrades

Celebrate at Bootle Labour Club's May Day social

MERSEYSIDE LPYS

Thanks to the 150,000 who marched with us on November 29

Build a mass socialist Labour Party!

Chairman: Steve Pimblett

Vice Chairman: Mick Hogan

Secretary: Jim Hollinshead

Treasurer: Carol Knights

May Day greetings to all trade unionists from TGWU 6/522 branch

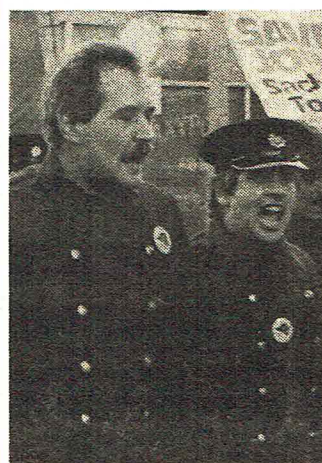
**MERSEYSIDE
MAY DAY
GREETINGS**

●●●●●●●●●●
Fraternal greetings from Bootle Labour Party
'Labour to power on a socialist programme'

●●●●●●●●●●
Liverpool Poly Labour Club sends fraternal greetings to all struggling against cuts and closures

CAMMELL LAIRDS
'Militant' Readers
Send May Day greetings to all readers

VALLEY WARD LABOUR PARTY
sends fraternal May Day greetings to all comrades in the fight for a socialist Britain.
The working class cannot afford to be unemployed, cannot afford to be uneducated, cannot afford to travel, cannot afford to pay rents, rates or mortgages, cannot afford to be destroyed any further by the savage attacks of this treacherous Tory government



Labour to power on a socialist programme

May Day Greetings

**FIRE BRIGADES UNION
No 9 REGION**

Merseyside & Cheshire Brigades

Greetings to all comrades active in the fight for a socialist transformation of society from

Old Swan Branch Labour Party

**BROADGREEN BRANCH
WAVERTREE CONSTITUENCY**
Greetings to all LP members

WAVERTREE CONSTITUENCY LABOUR PARTY
sends May Day greetings to 'Militant' and to workers everywhere

Ellesmere Port 'Militant' supporters send fraternal greetings to all comrades in the labour and trade union movement

THE TUEBROOK BRANCH LABOUR PARTY SENDS FRATERNAL GREETINGS TO THE LABOUR MOVEMENT



May Day greetings from ELLESMERE PORT LPYS Forward to a socialist plan of production

GARSTON CLP sends May Day greetings to all socialists
Thatcher out!
Forward to socialism!

Fraternal greetings comrades
'The strength of the working class will unite us all in the fight to overthrow capitalism'
GARSTON LPYS

CHURCH WARD Labour Party greets fellow internationalists For 'jobs, peace and freedom' through socialism

PAISLEY COLLEGE LABOURCLUB NUS in TUC
Students join the fightback—Tories out!

Fraternal greetings from Aberystwyth LPYS
'Workers of all countries unite'!

Mid & East Lothian Trades Council
May Day Greetings
Forward towards socialism in the '80s

Perth LPYS sends fraternal greetings to all socialists, internationally
Support STUC
Glasgow to Perth march!

BASILDON LPYS
The government of the rich
For the rich
By the rich
Tories out!
Socialism in!

Unfortunately, due to lack of space, some May Day greetings have had to be held over until next week. Our apologies to all concerned.

More May Day greetings pages 12, 13, 15

LINWOOD

LEARN

Talbot workers on Glasgow anti-Tory demo on 21 February.



“My future is on the dole. I don't see myself working again. I'm 47 now, in a few years I'll be 50 and who will employ me then? Everyone believes that they will be different, but they are not—they'll be unemployed like me.”

The words of Jimmy Livingstone, the T&GWU Convenor at Talbot, Linwood acknowledging that the Linwood plant is to close.

Linwood now seems destined to become another massive gravestone in the graveyard of the British car industry.

Four hundred thousand cars are stockpiled in Britain which nobody can afford to buy. Short-time working is now a way of life at most factories, with production in 1980 being the lowest for thirty years.

The car bosses claim huge losses. In the first nine months of last year, Vauxhall reputedly lost £1,803 a minute, Ford £1,892 a minute, and BL £760 a minute.

The closure of Linwood has therefore to be seen against a background of continuing crisis.

But the Linwood story is a textbook of the wrongs of the British car industry—of a lack of forward planning, of the anarchy of production based on profit, of poor investment, of asset-stripping by multi-national companies, and, of course, of job annihilation.

In addition, there are lessons to be learned from Linwood regarding the fight against redundancies. The question being posed now by many in the labour movement in the West of Scotland is “If Linwood didn't fight, who will?”

Linwood was established in May 1963, to produce the new small car of that time, the Hillman Imp. The Imp was to be the only new car ever produced, in the history of Linwood, despite many promises of new model development by successive owners.

In 1968, Rootes bought the Pressed Steel—Fisher body-making plant adjacent to their factory at Linwood, and the site almost became an integrated car manufacturing plant. Engine production was the only thing missing.

By the late 1960s the days

of Rootes were over, they sold out to the multi-national subsidiary of General Motors, Chrysler.

“At this stage all the setbacks are forgotten. Everyone can give themselves up to the feeling of splendid satisfaction that comes with achievement.”

—The Duke of Edinburgh, opening the Rootes plant at Linwood in 1963.

The early years of Chrysler were boom time. The Imp, Hunter Sceptre and Sunbeam Alpine were introduced to Linwood and combined production targets of 60 cars an hour were reached for years on end.

The good years came abruptly to an end in 1975 with the famous ‘Chrysler crash’.

The Crash

The crisis affecting General Motor's operations on a world scale, in the mid-seventies, forced them to attempt to stop production of Chrysler cars in Britain.

As John Hepburn, the deputy convenor of the T&GWU at Linwood has explained: “At the time of the 1976 crisis, Riccardo, the Chrysler president, wanted to sell the lot to the Labour government for a dollar, so he could get a tax write-off of \$100 million. Instead the Labour government gave him a bribe of £163 million to stay.”

At the time of the rescue deal, the stewards at Linwood had argued for nationalisation and incorporation of Linwood into a British Motor Corporation. Eventually they settled for the rescue plan by a majority of 157 to 148 votes.

That meant 1,500 redundancies at Linwood, as a share of 8,000 sackings in Britain, although the future of Linwood was guaranteed in a planning agreement which promised a new model in two years.

The shop stewards' scepticism about Chrysler's offer

By Bob Wylie

of a secure future for them and their members was confirmed in the findings of the Chrysler Joint Shop Stewards' committee report on company finances produced in 1976.

It gave dramatic evidence of under-investment, asset-stripping, and false accounting to show losses where large profits had been made.

The report showed that Chrysler's investment per worker was lower than all other European car firms, except British Leyland and Vauxhall. Between 1970 and 1975 Chrysler had spent the grand total of £15.00 (fifteen) per worker on its UK operations, not even enough to cover the cost of depreciation and repair!

It was demonstrated that tools and machinery worth £1 million had been transferred from British Chrysler factories, without replacement and that Chrysler (UK)'s statement of profits gave a false picture of British performance. This was due to dubious accounting practices, in which artificially low export prices were charged to other Chrysler subsidiaries, particularly in Switzerland, where taxes on profits were lower than in the UK.

Nationalisation or planning agreements

“These giants maraud from one country to another, and the biggest thief wins. We've had planning agreements at Linwood for years. But all they amount to is a long catalogue of broken promises”—John Hepburn, deputy convenor T&GWU, Talbot.

Nothing quite became Chrysler's life in the UK as their leaving of it! In one fell swoop they displayed to all the futility of relying on

-PLAN VICTO

planning agreements to control the operations of multi-national companies.

In August, 1978, they sold their entire European operation to the French car giant, Peugeot/Citroen, for £219 million—only £56 million more than the Labour government had paid in 1976 in the rescue deal which gave then one “worker director”, Roy Grantham of Apex, on the board of Chrysler UK!

Again the Linwood stewards pressed the case for nationalisation but they were told by the powers that be, that incorporation into B.L. would mean the closure of Linwood! But the passage of time has demonstrated the validity of the case for nationalisation.

Only the nationalisation of the entire car making industry under the control and management of the workers, can make sense of the present mess. Nationalisation would allow production to proceed on a properly planned basis, could guarantee jobs and the living standards of those dependent on the car industry, and use the skills and equipment present in the car factories to make useful

items, like public transport vehicles, tractors for the Third World and other socially useful products, instead of thousands upon thousands of unsaleable cars.

New team, same game

“I would like to say that the integration of Chrysler UK into a major European automobile group offers Chrysler UK....expansion and prosperity for its employees and dealer network.”—Jean-Paul Parayre, President, PSA/Citroen, August 1978.

“PSA/Citroen has signed a declaration of intent. It gives assurances on future use of facilities, on models, on engineering and design facilities and on Linwood.”—Eric Varley, Labour Secretary for Industry, August 1978.

When Peugeot/Citroen took over at Linwood there was a feeling amongst certain sections of the workers that they would be better than Chrysler. Certainly, better promises were made.

In reality, PSA/Citroen

continued the Chrysler practice of under-investment, asset-stripping, false accounting, and job destruction.

For example, PSA have continued the Chrysler practice of poor quality control. Quality Engineers at Linwood operate on a ration of two per building, whilst competitors like the German company Audi have fifteen per line!

Ron Rigby, the AUEW convenor in Talbot recently described the factory as “the most outdated in Europe”.

The shop stewards at Linwood, believe that PSA purchased the Chrysler operation in order to take over its dealer network and asset strip on a grand-scale. The cost of the introduction of production of the ‘Horizon’ at Coventry will be halved through transfer of machinery at present used at Linwood when production there is halted.

Evidence that this asset-stripping was planned for a long period of time is given by the fact that PSA have not spent a penny on new equipment at Linwood since their arrival.

Further, the Linwood workers have produced evi-

FROM DEFEAT

Photo: MILITANT



FOR RY

dence to show that Talbot cooked the books this year to show a loss, as an excuse for closure. Instead of making a loss of £20 million plus, the stewards have shown that an operating profit of at least £9.3 million was made at Linwood in 1980. This echoes ironically, the findings of the joint shop stewards in their report of 1976 about Chrysler!

In the area of job destruction, however, Talbot have actually outstripped Chrysler.

In 1978, when they came to Linwood, there were 8,000 employed. In December 1979 they reduced the workforce by 1,500 and in May 1980 put a further 1,100 on the dole.

With the benefit of hindsight, these defeats may be seen as significant in affecting the fight to prevent closure. The shop stewards recommendation, in December 1979, for a fight was massively overturned by the workers, and the redundancy of 1980 was accepted by the stewards as a result of the previous defeat.

The closure of Linwood will be a catastrophe for the local area, and for workers who work in supply indus-

tries. The white-collar union ASTMS have calculated that closure will eventually put as many as 35,000 jobs under the axe. Despair and frustration were characteristic of the press reports at the time of the closure announcement.

One Linwood woman, whose father was made redundant twice from Linwood, now has a husband who will become a redundancy statistic. She said bitterly: "My husband is only 36 years old and I reckon he'll never get another job if we stay here. At 36 he's finished, been 'retired'."

Strathclyde Regional Council has predicted that unemployment in Linwood will reach 40%. The Linwood workers will join the 11,000 in the Paisley area who are already on the dole and chasing the 300 jobs available.

One worker commented wryly: "The way things are now it's only a matter of time before the bars here go on a three-day week."

Fight back

It was in recognition of the calamitous effects of

closure that the Linwood shop stewards built their campaign to save the plant.

In the eight weeks following the closure announcement they held public demonstrations and meetings against the shutdown. They produced a document outlining a clear case for Linwood remaining open and issued four broadsheets of the 'Talbot Voice' which argued the case for a fight.

The campaign culminated in a 500 strong West of Scotland stewards' meeting which pledged the support of the majority of industrial workers in the West of Scotland for a fight to save Linwood. It was clear that the entire Scottish labour movement was ready to move to stop the redundancy bandwagon, supported by railworkers and dockers throughout Britain, who had pledged to stop the movement of Peugeot products.

Yet after this campaign, after these magnificent expressions of solidarity, two thirds of the Talbot workers voted to accept the redundancy. This poses important questions.

Why was closure accepted?

Jimmy Livingstone, the T&GWU convenor at Talbot points to a number of factors which conditioned the acceptance of closure.

The first of these, was the redundancy of 1979, which he says affected the confidence of those left. This defeat, combined with the period of short-time, two-day working for most of 1980, was damaging the morale of the workforce.

In addition Jimmy had some criticism for the national leadership of the trade unions. He said: "Senior trade union officials will have to start playing a more direct role on redundancy. They told us, 'We'll support you when you take action.' Why not, 'We're calling you all out. We're taking them on!'"

Jimmy Livingstone explained that he felt the trade unions in Talbot had really been on the defensive for five years:

"People knew that the closure was not announced in 1980, it was announced in 1976! We should have attacked more vigorously over the last two years about our fears of closure. We did not do enough to get the workers involved."

He added: "In the last eight weeks the campaign was as good as possible. But we saw the writing on the wall two years ago, and perhaps we accepted that the odd meeting and the odd bulletin was enough for the workers."

"We gave it all to them in the last eight weeks, perhaps it was too much to expect. I expected them to run with us because I knew we should."

Jimmy Livingstone is not

convinced that the offer of redundancy pay was a crucial feature in the decision not to fight. According to him, *the lack of confidence about winning the fight* was more significant than the offer of cash.

He then acknowledged that a section of the workforce wanted to accept the redundancy from the start, but argued that the vast majority wanted to keep their jobs but did not feel they could succeed in that fight.

"I'm not bitter with the membership. They've respected the union here always and the 200 stewards who leave this plant will be an asset to the movement if they find work. I do not agree with their decision but I understand it."

These careful words should be considered by every activist in the labour movement. The lessons implicit in them should be fully discussed the length and breadth of the organisations of labour.

It is necessary now for leaders in the workers' organisations to realise that the fight against redundancies anywhere carries with it the psychological burden of the defeats of the recent past.

It is important that the political nature of the fight for jobs is understood.

It is not only necessary to convince workers why they should fight sackings, it is also necessary to explain *how* the fight can be victorious.

The outline of possible future victories for workers in the West of Scotland was seen, in bold relief, in the potential power and strength of the 500-strong shop stewards' meeting to discuss the closure.

"Shop stewards are now going to face the big question, how can we win when Talbot did not fight?"

Jimmy Livingstone, Talbot Convenor.

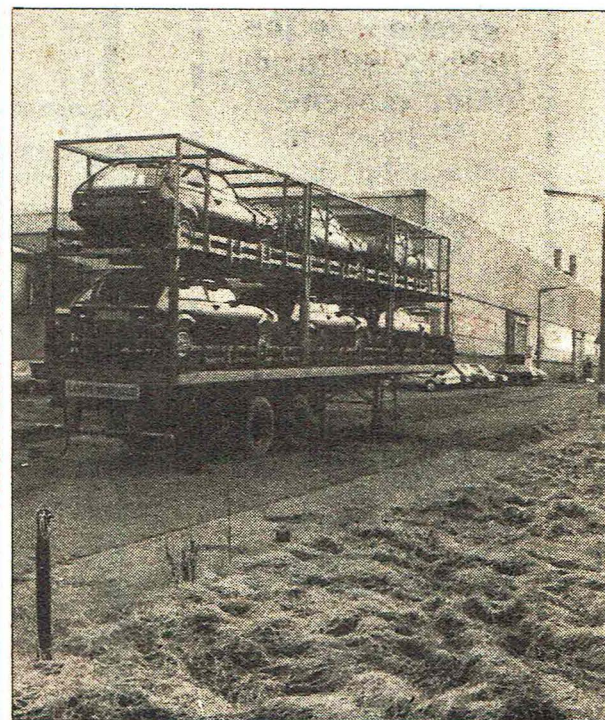
Without doubt, the defeat at Talbot is a set-back, which will adversely affect the mood of workers in the West of Scotland. But it would be wrong to assume that this reversal will be permanent. The postponement of the struggle ensures that it will be greater in scope and intensity when it is taken up.

Undoubtedly there was a willingness in the workers' movement to take Talbot management and the Tories on. This will come again, because every redundancy brings with it a realisation, in sections of the working class, that the only salvation is struggle.

The last word should be given to Jimmy Livingstone: "The movement in the West of Scotland is looking for somebody to get their teeth into. If we had got a fight at Linwood, it would have led to bigger things outside the area."

"Don't believe that the workers will never fight. There will be another struggle, no question."

The barber pole painter



Desolation at Talbot Linwood.

Photo: MILITANT

"The world will end on 22 May," says Morag Lynch, referring to the impending closure of Talbot, Linwood.

"It's 4,500 workers. More than half the people in this block of flats will go. What will it be like to live in this area then?"

Morag is the wife of Benny Lynch, a shop steward at Talbot. They married in January, 1976; their son, Simon, was born in April, 1979.

The changing fortunes of the Linwood car plant have loomed over the family's lives for more than a decade.

Benny, a toolmaker; started with Chrysler in August, 1970: "I left school in 4th year. My old man said, 'Engineering is the thing of the future, get a trade son, get a trade'."

"I had the offer of fifteen jobs, believe it or not, but I went to Chrysler, because the car industry was booming."

Benny's time was out in December 1974. Those were the days when the press built up the image of the rich car workers.

Morag remembers: "It used to make me angry. At one of my office parties one bloke said to Benny, 'You're the rich car worker eh—£130.00 a week is it?'"

"Mind you," Benny admitted, "the money then was not bad: £55.00 gross, which was about £20.00 above the average wage."

"Things fell in nice when we got married," Morag says. "But we came off honeymoon to the Chrysler crash. We came home and

Benny went on a three-day week.

"Things have gone downhill since then. It seems to me that its been a matter of time since the rescue deal in 1976."

There was the faint hope that Peugeot might be better. But "the redundancies in 1979 and 1980 showed that that was not going to happen."

Morag sees it clearly now: "Peugot has pulled a huge confidence trick, when you think of it. They've never had any intention of keeping it."

"In December 1979 I wished he had got redundancy. Imagine, wishing for the sack. But at least you know unemployment benefit is regular."

It is different when it comes: "It's 4,500 people. More than half the people in this block of flats will go."

"What happens after 22 May nobody thinks about. It took me about a week to realise what it meant. When you hear it on the television you know its not a rumour any more."

And the future? "I've no chance of getting a job as a toolmaker," says Benny. "We thought of going to Edinburgh, to Longbridge, but what's the difference. You get bumped here or you get bumped there."

Benny concludes: "I'll have to take anything now. Car-making has become a dying trade, like barber pole painting or dry-stone dyke making."

LITTLEHAMPTON BRANCH
1/874 TGWU
sends May Day greetings to our fellow trade unionists everywhere. We stand by, and defend Wembley democratic vote.

Solidarity with all workers
Happy May Day!
Vote Labour on May 7th!
Newport West Wight Sandown
Shanklin & District Labour Party branches

LITTLEHAMPTON LABOUR PARTY
sends comradely greetings to socialist throughout the world
Fight for a socialist Labour Party with socialist policies carried out by a socialist leadership

DEESIDE TRADES UNION COUNCIL
fraternal greetings to the labour and trade union movement

IOW CLP Ryde branch calls
To keep the Wembley decisions and sends greetings to socialists

Ashby/Loughborough 'Militant' supporters send fraternal greetings to comrades throughout the labour movement
Socialism now!

MAY DAY GREETINGS

Fraternal greetings to the labour and trade union movement. Forward to socialism and workers' unity. Tories out!
BLACKPOOL LPYS

FIRE BRIGADES UNION
extends May Day greetings to all comrades in the trade union and labour movement and calls for a united attack on the government's ruinous economic policy

Bill Deal President



Ken Cameron General Secretary

Labour for socialism
Fight rent and rate increases, make speculators pay up
MOULESCOOMB WARD, BRIGHTON LP

Fraternal greetings from YEOVIL LPYS now meeting every Wednesday at Yeovil Labour Club

Militant's May Day Message—
Mobilise, move
Maggie's murderous mob!
Longingly,
LEYTON LPYS

End unemployment
Forward from May Day to boot out the Tories
Workers and unemployed unite
SWANSEA LPYS

GODIVA WARD LABOUR PARTY
(Coventry)
send fraternal greetings to all comrades

WEST WALES AUEW SUPPORTERS
send fraternal greetings to all AUEW members fighting to replace our bankrupt leadership so that our union can assist in building a mass socialist Labour Party

AUEW-TASS Cannon & Stokes Leicester
On the picket line for eleven weeks send fraternal greetings to the 'Militant'

Solidarity with all workers suffering under the most reactionary government in living memory
EASTLEIGH LPYS

RESIST PIT CLOSURES
Scargill for President
Tony Benn for Deputy Leader
South Wales NUM
'Militant' supporters

May Day Greetings to the labour movement
For world peace and socialism
University College
Cardiff Labour Club

May Day greetings from Old Bracknell Branch WokinghamCLP
SMASH THE TORIES ON MAY 7th

May Day greetings from SOUTHAMPTON FORD WORKERS
Peace and socialist policies

Ford 2/251 branch T&GWU

Jim Cavanagh Chairman

Steve Stamford Secretary

Caerphilly Labour Party Young Socialists
WALES NEEDS JOBS NOT PRINCESSES!

Fraternal greetings from **SOUTHAMPTON YCAU**
Get organised, get into shape
Get Militant, get it straight

Fraternal greetings to all 'Militant' readers from North Fylde LPYS
Forward to socialism!

Leicester South LPYS
2½ million on the dole is 2½ million reasons to KICK THE TORIES OUT!

Fraternal greetings to all comrades from Rochester & Chatham LPYS
Save Jobs!
Sack the Tories!

May Day Greetings from NSB Glasgow CPSA 'Militant' supporters
RODDY FOR PRESIDENT

ESCALATE THE PAY CAMPAIGN!
KEVIN RODDY FOR PRESIDENT!
Swansea CPSA 'Militant' supporters

**CORBY AND KETTERING
'MILITANT' SUPPORTERS**
send fraternal greetings to all
workers

**SAVE STEEL!
REBUILD THE TRIPLE ALLIANCE!
KICK OUT THE TORIES!**

Brighton & Hove
Trades Council
**WORKERS OF
THE WORLD
UNITE**

BRIGHTON NUPE
sends fraternal May
Day greetings to all
local authority
workers

Our full support to Rod Fitch as PPC
On now to socialist policies and a resound-
ing victory in Kemptown.
Whitehawk (Brighton) Labour Party

**GREETINGS FROM
LABOUR PARTY YOUNG
SOCIALISTS NATIONAL
COMMITTEE 1981**

Kevin Ramage (Chairman, London North)
Linda Reid (Editor, Socialist Youth)
Laurence Coates (LPYS Rep elect on LP NEC)
Tony Saunio (Present LPYS Rep. on Labour NEC)
Andy Bevan (Secretary) Nick Toms (Vice Chmn.)
Willie Griffin (Scotland) Dave Harris (Northern)
Malcolm Clark (N. West) John Goodby (Yorkshire)
Derek Hilling (E. Mids.) Les Kuriata (W. Mids.)
Sue Kohn (London S.) Alan Huyton (Southern)
Mick Whale (S. West) Ken Smith (Wales)

The cause of socialism
is the hope of youth
Forward to 600 LPYS branches!
Forward to a mass LPYS!

Millbrook Ward
Soton Test CLP
sends May Day
greetings to all
socialists.

Labour to power
on a socialist
programme. No
reversal of the
Wembley
Conference
decisions

Fraternal greetings
from
Paddington No.1
branch—NUR
Forward with the
fight to kick out the
Tories!

Swansea Labour
Party 'Militant'
supporters say:
Keep up the fight
When their press
hate us we must
be right!

May Day
greetings from
Harrow West
LPYS
—Move over,
Horace Cutler,
your days are
numbered!

MAY DAY GREETINGS

in memory of our
branch secretary
Ian Burge
and in recognition of his
tremendous contribution to
the struggle for socialism
and health care in East
London
**ASTMS NE London
Medical Branch**

May Day greetings to the
workers of the world from
**Ruskin College
Students Union**

Pat Hall, President
Geoff Walker, Secretary

Fraternal
greetings to
readers of
'Militant'
Special thanks
for your
excellent
cartoons
**COHSE
OXFORD
BRANCH**

Militants on Canvey
say:
'Make Canvey
Island a
'Militant' rock
in a socialist
River Thames'

**PAISLEY
COLLEGE
LABOUR CLUB**
NUS in TUC
Students join the
fightback—
Tories out!

**Lewisham
Bristol
Deptford
Brixton**
Stamp out
racialism
Jobs for all
**Goldsmiths
College Labour
Club**

**WOKINGHAM
CONSTITUENCY
LABOUR PARTY** send
May Day greetings
"Workers unite—you have
nothing to lose but your
chains and a world to win"

From the staff and
supporters of

**MILITANT
IRISH
MONTHLY**
May Day
greetings

The Penyrheol
and Trecenydd
Ward Labour
Party,
Caerphilly,
Wales, extends
fraternal May
Day greetings to
their fellow
socialists in the
labour and trade
union movement.

EETPU
'Militant'
supporters
For light and
liberty
For a democratic
union and a
mass socialist
Labour Party
No support to
the SDP
Bring down the
Tories



**BAKERS, FOOD
AND ALLIED
WORKERS' UNION**

send
**May Day greetings
to the labour
movement**

**Defend the Electoral College
Organise to defeat the Tories
Defeat anti-working class
policies
There is an alternative—
SOCIALISM**

Joe Marino
General Secretary

Terry O'Neill
National President

INTERNATIONAL

EL SALVADOR - For a socialist Central America

In Militant 24 April John Throne outlined the background to the struggle in Central American country of El Salvador.

He pointed out that the conflict was likely to be protracted, with the right wing junta unable to completely crush the guerillas despite the savagery of their attacks because of the extremely narrow base of support for the government forces.

On the other hand, the guerillas would not necessarily be capable of overcoming the junta. The second and final article looks at the policies and methods of the guerillas.

The programme and methods of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] and the Democratic Liberation Front [FDR] is similar to that of the Sandinistas in neighbouring Nicaragua.

This was to unite all the forces in Nicaragua who opposed the Somoza dictatorship—the peasants, the workers and the capitalists who were not part of the Somoza family empire. The programme, therefore, was to maintain private ownership of industry and commerce.

The victory of the Sandinistas initially gave a boost to the economy as the enthusiasm of the population was aroused and as aid was poured in by the USA to prevent the new government from moving decisively against capitalism and landlordism.

This aid is now being threatened, and the capitalists in Nicaragua have withdrawn from the government and are sabotaging the economy by refusing to invest and instead taking money out of the country.

These big-business elements are terrified because of the armed power in Nicaragua. There are now around 50,000 in the armed forces, in the hands of the Sandinistas who have their roots in the peasantry and the working class.

Working class key to the struggle

The peasants and the workers who are fighting in El Salvador must learn the lesson from Nicaragua. There is no way forward for these countries in the under-developed world, any more than for the more industrially developed countries, on the basis of capitalism. Genuine land reform, full employment, adequate food, decent housing, democratic rights, all these are ruled out on the basis of capitalism.

In these under-developed

countries, the landlords, bankers and industrialists are tied together by loans, investments and the common defence of their wealth and privileges.

The Sandinistas will have to carry through the revolution and take control of industry, banking and the large estates and establish a planned economy—or the economy will once again stagnate, poverty and unemployment will remain and increase, and the gains already made will be pulled back.

This is the choice facing the Sandinistas. This is also the choice facing the workers and peasants in El Salvador.

Instead of confining the struggle to one of land reform and democratic rights, the struggle must be for land reform, for democratic rights, for the election of a constituent assembly, but a revolutionary constituent assembly which would adopt a programme to nationalise the commanding heights of the economy under workers' control and management and institute a socialist plan of production. This is the only way to end poverty and want.

Such a programme also raises more sharply the question of the method of struggle to be employed. At present the struggle is being conducted mainly in the rural areas by guerilla tactics. While these forces should of course hold on to their arms and as far as possible keep control of the areas they control, the key to the future is in the urban centres. It is the working class.

A significant working class exists in El Salvador. A third of the GDP comes from industry, construction, mining, electricity, gas, water and communications; 26% comes from agriculture and just slightly over half of the working population are involved in agriculture.

The task in El Salvador is to mobilise the working class around a socialist programme and prepare for a general strike to bring



PHOTOS: Above: Unit of the guerilla forces in the forests of El Salvador. Below: Sandinista rebels before Somoza's overthrow in 1979. A revolutionary mood is sweeping through Central America.



down the regime, while at the same time appealing to the working class in the neighbouring countries to come to their support.

Only the working class can solve the problems, can give land to the peasants, can establish democratic rights, and by ending capitalism and landlordism provide the necessities of life for all.

The capitalists in this area want a Central American "Common Market." The working class and the peasants must raise the demand for a Socialist

Federation of Central America.

With this programme on its banner and using the methods of struggle of the working class, building the trade unions and preparing for revolutionary general strikes, the working class could draw behind it the peasantry and the middle layers of society and establish healthy democratic workers' states.

Such a development in this part of the world would pose sharply in front of the American working class the need to end capitalism in

the USA itself with all this would mean for ending capitalism on a world scale.

On the basis of capitalism, the countries of the under-developed world are destined to sink further in poverty and want. Leon Trotsky, in his theory of the Permanent Revolution, explained that in countries where capitalism developed late on the scene of history the national capitalist class could not carry out the tasks which were previously carried out by capitalism in the advanced capitalist countries.

These tasks, the developing of a viable industrial economic base, the distribution of the land to the peasants, the unifying of the territory both politically and in terms of infrastructure, roads, communications, etc. therefore fall onto the shoulders of the working class, who on coming to power with the support of the peasantry would move to carry out these tasks and on doing so would move uninterruptedly over to the socialist tasks, the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy and the creation of a socialist planned economy.

This analysis was written in 1905/1906 and was brilliantly confirmed in the events of the Russian revolution in October 1917. It is as valid today as it was then, as the events in Nicaragua and the entire under-developed world demonstrate.

For the oppressed peoples of El Salvador and of Central America and the under-developed world as a whole, the way forward is under the leadership of the working class fighting for democratic rights and land reform as an integral part of a socialist programme, appealing for support from the working class movement throughout the world.

WEST
GERMANY:
No hiding place
in crisis

The West German March unemployment figures again show that no country is immune from the capitalist recession.

With 1.2 million people officially registered unemployed, the figure shows an increase of 38% from March last year and an increase of 7% from February.

In almost every area of the country the jobless total increased rapidly to reveal the worst unemployment figures since March 1955; in North Rhein-Westphalia, the most populated area, unemployment is running around 6.2%, again the highest for a quarter of a century.

Particularly affected are the youth, with 101,000 people under the age of 20 officially registered as jobless—a massive increase of 52% on last year!

The prospects for the future are none too bright either. The "Frankfurter Rundschau" [3/4/81] reports that the number of companies, who introduced short time working in the course of last month increased by 8.5% in comparison to February's figures, leaving around 405,100 workers on short time.

The government employment agency expects that unemployment will average around 1.1 million in 1981, if there is a nil growth in the economy. But if there is a 1% fall in production this year, something which even capitalist economists think more likely, then unemployment will average around 1.25 million, with doubtless a massive increase in youth unemployment.

Indeed, the agency admits that last month's figures would have been worse, were it not for short time working, government training schemes etc.

With unemployment now a major feature of every capitalist country of Western Europe, West Germany is proving to be no exception. It is vital that all socialists in the SPD and the Jusos [Young Socialists] take up the question of unemployment and demand a socialist solution to this ill of capitalism.

If this was the case, then hundreds of unemployed, particularly young unemployed, can be won to the banner of socialism and help the fight for socialist policies inside the Jusos, and SPD.

By Leo McDaid
(Paderborn SPD,
West Germany)

Demand for 'Militant International Review' No. 21, Winter 1980-81 has—unfortunately for new readers—completely outstripped our supplies. We appeal to readers to return all unsold copies as soon as possible. Please post them to 'Militant' or hand them over to your regular 'Militant' seller.

FRENCH
ELECTIONS

WORKERS LOOK FOR SOCIALIST CHANGE

In the final round of the French presidential elections president Giscard d'Estaing will be challenged by the Socialist candidate, Francis Mitterand.

If Mitterand wins he will be the first leader of a workers' party to become President in the 23-year lifetime of the Fifth Republic. Mitterand's first round vote (25.9%) surprised many capitalist commentators.

A noticeable feature of the poll though, was a disastrously low poll for the French Communist Party (PCF) who were not, as they did in 1974 campaigning on a common programme with the Socialist Party. Marchais, the Communist Party leader received only 15.4% of the votes cast.

After twenty years of right-wing government there is no lack of opposition, in particular, to the harsh austerity measures in-

By Ken
Whitehead

roduced by Giscard and his Prime Minister, Barre, over the last few years. Unemployment, underestimated (as in Britain) by official figures, has now reached 1.6 million. In the past, the countryside could absorb at least part of the dole queues but this is no longer so in a far more industrialised France.

Over 28,000 jobs have vanished in the last year in the motor industry alone. Consett and Corby have their French equivalent in Longwy, in the Lorraine, where the steel industry has almost died. It would take a real economic growth rate of 6%, according to government calculations, just to



Unemployment has risen dramatically over the last few years

stop the dole figures rising. The government's 'optimistic' prediction is that it will rise by a mere 1.6%.

Forty percent of workers earn less than 3,300 francs a month, and with inflation running at 13% wages are lagging way behind prices.

All Giscard could offer was a spurious 'stability'—as if capitalism could offer stability of jobs and living standards to anyone! Giscard is the incumbent president, and he claimed that a vote against Giscard was a 'vote for chaos', General De Gaulle's

favourite electoral tactic. But De Gaulle ruled in a period when the capitalist crisis was far less acute than it is today.

His main capitalist rival, the 'Gaullist' Chirac, echoed Thatcher and Reagan in calls for tax and spending cuts. The bosses' hopes that they could use him as a safety-net to stop disillusioned former Giscard voters turning out for left candidates were dashed by his low vote (17.9%).

The programmes put forward by both Mitterand and Marchais both both includ-

ed calls for huge investment schemes in new technology, a programme of public works, reduction of the working week to 35 hours, a tax on wealth, etc. These will have struck home with many workers in what is just about the most unequal society in Europe.

Undoubtedly, however, the difficulties still faced by Mitterand in achieving victory in the second round would have been far less if a clearer lead had been forthcoming from the Socialist Party and Communist Party leaders.

Mitterand looked to the Swedish and German social democrats for inspiration, just when the capitalist crisis in these countries has begun to stir opposition to their policies. Mitterand's calls for more nationalisation was 'balanced' by praise for a strong private sector. No wonder the bosses press in France were asking 'which Mitterand' would emerge if he won the election!

But the 'Communist' party candidate, Marchais, suffered the lowest vote by an PCF candidate since 1936. He probably lost many votes as a result of CP inclined voters opting for Mitterand to ensure that a left candidate went through to the final round.

The Communist Party, did not campaign—any more than the Socialist Party—to hammer home to workers the complete bankruptcy of French capitalism. They did not put forward a bold Marxist alternative. The idea put forward by the capitalist press that the low CP vote represents a rejection of the 'extremism of the left' is empty propaganda.

Marchais also confused many working class voters by directing his fire not against the main capitalist enemy, Giscard, but against Mitterand. The Communist Party has now been thrown into turmoil and crisis. Even if the CP leaders were to recommend abstention in the second round, there is little doubt that the CP's working class rank and file would still overwhelmingly support Mitterand.

The class realities of France mean that workers will be looking for a clear socialist change—and will be expecting Mitterand to deliver the goods.

Workers of the World Unite

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE ONE

bosses' provocateur. The authorities now had the excuse they wanted to attack the unions.

Eight workers' leaders in Chicago were charged with murder. Seven were sentenced to death and one to 15 years.

A mass protest movement developed, including France, Italy, Russia, Holland and England. Under this pressure two of the sentences were commuted to life. One had already died in prison.

On 11 November 1887 the four workers' leaders were hanged. One of them, August Spies, spoke the following words before he died: "There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you have strangled today."

Following the heroic struggles of the American working class in 1886, 1 May became the traditional day of the international proletariat. On 14 July 1889, the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution, the Socialist International declared 1 May as 'Labour

Day'.

The first celebration of May Day took place on 1 May 1890. The three main demands were:

- for the 8-hour day;
- for international solidarity of the workers;
- against militarism

Today these demands are still as relevant as ever. The rotten system of capitalism is creating mass unemployment. At the same time, for those with jobs to have to work long, hard hours and overtime is no exception. In many countries the 8-hour day has never been conceded.

In the richest, as well as the poor capitalist countries, less and less money is available for housing, schools and hospitals, but enormous sums are wasted on armaments. In war after war young workers are forced to fight and kill each other in the interests of their 'own' ruling class, and to suppress national liberation struggles.

Everywhere the capitalist class tries to weaken the movement of the workers by dividing them. May Day is the day of international working class solidarity, and the capitalist fear this.

In many countries, again and again, they have tried to ban May Day demonstrations and rallies.

Reformist labour leaders have tried to reduce May Day to a mere holiday. But workers have marched and will continue to do so.

The spirit and traditions of the world proletariat cannot easily be destroyed. Always, even after long periods of lull, the workers are forced into massive struggles again. May Day

1981 will show that the labour movement is preparing itself for the struggles that lie ahead. On this day workers in many countries will rally, demonstrate and discuss the tasks they face.

The history of the South African workers' movement has its own examples of workers' solidarity.

Struggles of African workers

On May Day 1931, for example, black and white unemployed in Johannesburg marched in a demonstration to the Carlton Hotel and the Rand Club where they demanded food. This event showed the potential for workers' unity across the colour bar, despite the vicious racial divisions sown by the capitalist class.

1950 was a year of major struggles by the oppressed. The Transvaal African National Congress, the African People's Organisation, and the Communist Party called on people of all races to stay away from work on 1 May and to demonstrate for freedom, land and the repeal of the colour bars.

On 26 April the Minister of Justice said strong measures would be taken to counter these demonstrations. All meetings on 1 May were banned.

On 1 May the police broke up gatherings on the Rand, attacked groups of workers who defended themselves themselves, and fired, killing 18 Africans and wounding over 30.

The committee which had

organised May Day gatherings declared 26 June a day of national protest and mourning. It called for a general strike to commemorate the eighteen who had lost their lives and to demonstrate against the passing of the Suppression of Communism Act.

The call for a general strike met with wide response on 26 June. This day became known as Freedom Day and has remained a focal point for resistance.

June 26 will always be an important day in the liberation struggle. But 1 May, which has long been neglected in South Africa, remains the workers' day.

In South Africa on May Day 1981, even if no demonstrations or rallies are called, the workers can begin to discuss the origins, demands and importance of May Day, and lay the ground for future action. By doing so they will join the immense battalions of the world working class massing together in action on that day.

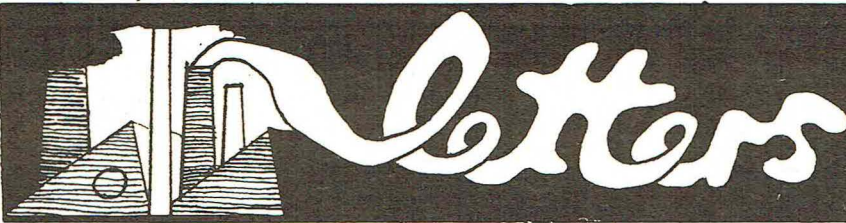
This article has been reprinted from the South African Marxist journal *Inqaba ya Basebenzi (Workers' Fortress)*. This journal is available from the following address: BM Box 1719, London WCIN 3XX.



NAVA SAMA SAMAJA PARTY SRI LANKA

thanks British and European
workers for their support
and solidarity with our
general strike and defence
against UNP repression

- Reinstate all victimised trade unionists
- Drop all trumped up charges against trade union and political opposition leaders
- On to a socialist Sri Lanka and a socialist world!



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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Spain's poverty struggle

Dear Comrade,

Reading Peter Taaffe's interview with Diego Munuz Garcia (Militant 536, 23 January), reminded me of my holiday in Spain last summer.

Although the south of Spain has traditionally been the poor counterpart of the north, there is ample evidence of poverty in the streets of Madrid.

On numerous occasions my girl friend and I came across grown men begging for money. They would kneel on the pavement facing the crowd with a placard explaining their situation (no job, family to support, etc).

We went to see Athletic Madrid playing and outside the football stadium was a young boy begging—he was blind and needed money for an operation to restore his sight.

In this world recession, the less developed nations will be far worse affected than Britain. Unemployment in Spain, especially the south, makes it a life or death struggle for many.

In Britain it took years of struggle on the part of the labour movement to provide the services many take for granted, which are unheard of in Spain. However, under the Thatcher government even these gains are threatened and millions of workers face a future of poverty while the rest barely scrape by.

It is only an economy planned on the basis of need and not profit that can rid us of this capitalist nightmare.

Fraternally,
David Brown,
Edinburgh East LPYS

Get us read!

Dear Comrades,
Having achieved some degree of success selling 'Militant' I feel it very important to urge fellow college students to follow suit.

Within the college, there is a sixth form council and last week I, along with some fellow students, proposed to have not only the usual 'Guardian' etc, in the college library, but also papers for political students.

My aim was to have the 'Militant' as one of the papers in the library and I was able to explain what the paper is and who it is produced by. This way I have made these students aware of the paper whereas before many of them were unaware of its existence.

I immediately volunteered to take full responsibility to provide the college with a copy of the paper every week and received a unanimous vote in favour. Of course, we now have to tackle the principal, but having got the students behind us this will hopefully not be such a great task.

I urge fellow comrades to make college students aware of the 'Militant' and try and get the paper into the building where it will be read.

Yours fraternally,
Nasim Aslam
Leicester South LPYS

Labour and disarmament:

Peace and pacifism

Dear Comrades,

Ron Williams (Militant 548) raises two related questions: should socialists "wait for socialism before we disarm"? Should socialists oppose all violence, whether used by workers or agents of capitalism?

'Militant' can scarcely be accused of "waiting for socialism". Many supporters have been actively campaigning for socialist policies in the labour movement for many years.

But who does Ron mean by "we"? The ordinary working people do not have nuclear weapons. You cannot renounce what you do not own.

The effect of action by civil servants on the Polaris bases points the way forward. Concerted action by the working-class movement could disarm the Tories, but let's follow this to its logical conclusion.

The Tories have already threatened to use service personnel to break the strike insofar as it affects military installations. It is a short, though serious, step from this to the use of troops to break picket lines to ensure that these weapons of mass destruction can still be used. Where would Ron stand then?

Or suppose a Labour government came to power and the ruling class attempted a "Chilean solution", rather than renounce their power and privileges peacefully.

How should the labour movement meet the guns and tanks, Ron? With open minds?

This is not an abstract theoretical question. Kitson, who trains the officers of the British army, makes no secret of the fact that the main enemy is not the Warsaw Pact but the "enemy within"—the trade unions and such "subversives" as Walsall CND!

Socialists don't choose violent methods of struggle. On the contrary, acts of individual terrorism tend to hold back the movement of the working class.

The slogan of the Chartists, "peacefully if we may, forcibly if we must," is just as true today. For the 'democratic' mouthings of capitalist politicians are just that—under pressure, the British ruling class are about as democratic as a cornered rat!

Finally, Ron is making the age-old error of trying to be "impartial".

To put legitimate acts of self-defence on the picket line on a par with nuclear warheads capable of killing millions is just plain ridiculous. Nobody who lives in the real world can afford to be impartial about issues which directly concern them.

It is a battle of classes. The ruling class "defend" the working class about as much as their police "defend" picket lines.

It is a battle, not just to disarm them of their nuclear toys, but to take away all

their power and privileges.

That done, the workers of this land could appeal, over the heads of the Reagans and Brezhnevs, to the workers of America and Russia for assistance. International brotherhood is not an "ideal", as Ron states, it is a practical necessity.

Yours fraternally,
Derek McMillan
East Grinstead

A banner to fight under

Dear Editor

Saturday and pouring rain did not deter hundreds of people from demonstrating in a Norwich shopping area, with banners and leaflets against Cruise missile bases in the UK.

Later in the day, many more took part in a massive public debate on a unilateralist motion.

The two Tory speakers against the motion were convincingly trounced and scarcely a single hand was raised to support them. But, said a speaker for the motion, not only was there no hope to be expected in this matter from either the Tory or the Liberal Party; he was not sure about the Labour Party's position on the subject either.

Later in Norwich a meeting of no more than fifty

Lords in the clouds

Dear Comrades,

"Allegations that the government is dismantling the welfare state were described as 'myths' by Health and Social Security spokesman Lord Cullen of Ashbourne in the Lords last night...It was 'nonsense' to talk about cuts seriously affecting people who depended on local authority personal services, he told peers."

This report appeared in a tiny corner of the 'Glasgow Herald', (9/4/81). Who is he trying to fool?

As public spending cuts bite even harder, teeth marks on working class flesh are becoming deeper and more frequent.

It is clear that Lord Cullen and the rest of the old boys know on what side their bread is buttered. What right does this unelec-

ted, anti-working class bunch have to make decisions which affect working people?

The decision of the 1980 Labour Party Conference to abolish the House of Lords when the next Labour government comes to power, can only work in our favour. But this would only be a first step in removing the rest of that undemocratic clique who run Britain, the heads of the banks and finance companies, the heads of the civil service, of the army and the police etc, who represent no-one but themselves.

We must constantly fight to rid ourselves of these people and their rotten system, starting with the House of Lords.

Yours fraternally,
Frances Curran,
Glasgow Provan LPYS

Most recently, Tom Litterick opposed government defence policy and the increasing threat of nuclear weapons. It would be an appropriate tribute to him to gather support for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, both locally and nationally.

Selly Oak Constituency Labour Party has set up a fund in his memory. In the first instance this will be used to sponsor the activities of CND in the Birmingham area. In the constituency, a memorial meeting will be held after Easter, in co-operation with CND.

Please contribute to this fund by sending donations to: Anne Crawford, Treasurer, Selly Oak CLP, 265 Dawlish Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham 29. Cheques should be made payable to "The Tom Litterick Memorial Fund."

Fraternally,
Naaj Hafeez
Secretary, Selly Oak Labour Party.

Yours
P Darby
Highmoor NUM,
Bolsover Labour Party
& Ault Hucknall parish council

their followers who have left the Labour Party can do nothing but good. Over the years people of such beliefs have drifted into the party just to stop a true socialist government from carrying out a true socialist manifesto.

The time has never been better under Labour's present NEC and leadership to fight the Tories on just such policies.

Yours
P Darby
Highmoor NUM,
Bolsover Labour Party
& Ault Hucknall parish council

Everything was thrown onto the backyards till the horse and cart arrived to remove it—little wonder at the high rate of fevers. The labour movement and the unions have helped to rid us of such stigmas. In my opinion, the so-called gang of three and

Northern Ireland: going down the same drain

Dear Comrade

"Behind [Ulster's problems] lies an awesome accumulation of social deprivation and outright poverty which can fairly be said to be a disgrace to western civilisation."

"On the protestant Shankill Road the benefits of being British seem as remote as the Battle of the Boyne its murals celebrate."

"The social situation is explosive because of all the poverty here. People could get killed because of this."

"Every cut has a disproportionate effect on us. Deliberate discrimination on religious grounds is fading; everybody's going down the same drain now."

Quotes from the 'Irish Militant' or their pamphlet 'Common Misery, Common Struggle'? No, these passages are from an article on Northern Ireland in 'The Times' on 18 March.

What the article doesn't say is that the inescapable conclusion is that capitalism stands condemned and that the only solution to the horrors facing working people is the unification of the country along socialist lines.

Fraternally
Marcus Hosgood
NATSOPA

Tom Litterick memorial appeal

Dear Comrade,

Tom Litterick, Labour MP for Selly Oak, Birmingham from October 1974 to May 1979, died suddenly on 4 January from a heart attack.

In his short period in parliament, Tom became a national figure. He pursued a tireless campaign on a variety of issues, notably civil liberties and Northern Ireland.

He was an outspoken MP—he did not compromise with the establishment or put expediency before principle, and many of his actions were in support of the individual, especially his constituents in Selly Oak. Tom Litterick worked and died for the working class—a socialist.

Most recently, Tom Litterick opposed government defence policy and the increasing threat of nuclear weapons. It would be an appropriate tribute to him to gather support for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, both locally and nationally.

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Fraternally,
Naaj Hafeez
Secretary, Selly Oak Labour Party.

The suffering boardroom

Dear Comrades

As many of us face further attacks on our living standards with a Tory-imposed six percent pay ceiling, it is nice to see that someone in the boardroom is pulling his stomach in.

The chief executive of Fisons, the UK chemicals group, got his cards last summer.

He got a five percent pay-off for his troubles. But as you and I know, five percent of nothing is nothing, but five percent of the company's pre-tax profits is almost certainly going to be better than a poke in the eye with a blunt stick!

In this case it worked out at £193,000. After all, he

was only earning £60,000 a year.

When Fisons suffers further financial difficulties and sends a few more down the road, I wonder what their redundancy payments will be?

And just in case you are wondering about the recent addition to the dole queue, the chief executive did manage to get another start, as financial director to another multinational.

You might think I'm being a bit unfair to this particular company; well, that could be true. Fisons only managed £10,000 last year for the Tories' fighting fund before financial troubles dried up the hand-outs.

Fraternally
David Churchley
Glasgow Cathcart
Labour Party

The time is ripe

Dear Militant

As a relatively new reader to our paper I would first of all like to congratulate everyone concerned in printing a great weekly.

My father, a retired colliery worker, has also become an ardent admirer. After fifty years he was retired with the pittance they call early retirement pay and still finds enough to buy and donate a small amount to your fighting fund.

In his own words he sums

it all up by saying he has learnt more in eight months of reading 'Militant' than in fifty years of reading the daily press.

The improvements won in the last forty years are being swallowed up by the policies of Thatcherism.

People who say the trade unions are too strong should remember the past, when miners were herded up like cattle and then told, you, you, and you—go to work and the rest go home, some getting one or two shifts per week and others none.

I can also remember as a

ads

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All advertisement copy should reach this office by **SATURDAY**

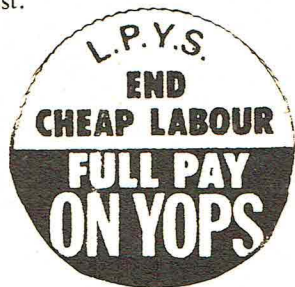
CLASSIFIED

MILITANT BACK NUMBERS Some copies of all issues 300-545 still available. These papers contain material no labour movement activist can do without! Only 25p per issue (including postage). Reductions for bulk orders. Cheques or POs to Dave Brandon, 29 Lime Avenue, Peterborough, Cambs. Tel 67310.

Dave and Anne San—baby daughter Jeannette, born 7 April. Let us hope that she and her generation will inherit a society where unemployment, poverty, racism and Tories no longer exist.

SHEFFIELD PARK LPYS Public Meeting. Young Workers Against the Tories. Hear Pete Skerrett (Sec. Coventry AUEW Jun. Workers), 7.30 pm, Tuesday 19 May, AEU House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield

SHEFFIELD LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS Public Debate with Sheffield Young Conservatives. 7.00 pm, Tuesday 2 June, AEU House, Furnival Gate, Sheffield. All welcome.



NEW YOUTH CAMPAIGN AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT BADGE:

“LPYS—end cheap labour.
 Full pay on YOPS”
 20p each. 10 for £1.10
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 Order from: YCAU,
 PO Box 104, London E9 5TP

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] 464013.



Badges—“A woman's place is in the Labour Party” + logo. 20p each + s.a.e. Ardwick CLP Women's Section, 15 Cawdor Road, Manchester M14 6LG.

Socialist Folk Night, Trade Union Centre, Carlton Place, Glasgow. Tuesday 5 May, 7.30 pm. Entrance £1. Tickets from G Stevenson (041 770 5892), or at door. All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund.

SUNDERLAND Limited Draw 1st: No. 99; 2nd: No. 36; 3rd: No. 22.

MANCHESTER Easter Draw winners: 1st prize: Clock radio —S Moore, Rochdale; 2nd prize: Cassette recorder—M Harbour, Stockport; 3rd prize: Flight bag —L Jones, Rochdale; 4th prize: Travel alarm—G Horridge, St Anns.

Southern Region LPYS Committee 'Militant' supporters send May Day greetings

Andy Allenby(Chairman) **Alan Huyton** (YS NC)
Jim McEwan **Sarah Cooper**
Clive Walder **Paul Chettle**
Jacqui Beadle **Ian Walker**

Dump the Tories!

Owing to pressure of work in producing the special 20-page 'Militant' we regret we have been unable to produce the new chart. It will definitely appear next week!



The LPYS Conference, and in particular the Militant Readers' Meeting, generated enormous enthusiasm. Translate it into cash for Militant's fighting fund.

GIVE US THE CASH- WE'LL DO THE JOB!

The determination of 'Militant' supporters to see our targets met was shown this week by over £1,000 coming in.

The week after the Labour Party Young Socialists Conference is traditionally not the best time for the 'Militant' Fighting Fund, as many comrades are catching up with domestic chores, sleep, etc., and many readers are very hard up after generous donations at conference.

The £1,009 that has come in shows the enthusiasm generated by the Young Socialists' Conference. We are sure this enthusiasm will be enormously boosting our resources over the so-called 'spring'(!) period.

Northern region supporters' 'Geordie Night' at Bridlington netted us £212, and nearly £70 has come in donations at the NOLS and NUS conferences with other IOUs still to come! Donations have come in, too, from Littlehampton supporters (£20) and Feltham & Heston LPYS members (£30).

Over £25 was raised at a meeting in Manchester, and £37 at a Militant meeting in

By Steve Cawley

THIS WEEK £1,009

Pontypridd, which will no doubt be the first of many. Other meetings as far apart as Sunderland and Pontefract, and Militant supporters in the Labour Parties in Liverpool and Bristol (to name only two) held collections for us totalling over £45. Coventry supporters sold teas at meetings too!

An industrial tribunal payment of £34 from a Yorkshire reader was the largest individual contribution this week, followed by £20s from R Shepherd (Bristol, union Conference expenses) and B Short (Sunderland). Thanks also to Sunderland supporter M Dodds, Boilermakers shop steward, for his tenner. Merseyside fivers this week were from print industry readers (NGA/SOGAT) and T Cummings (Kirkby).

Smaller amounts, which are still very valuable,

included £2s from R Stein (OAP, Cardiff), and K Morgan (TGWU), also £1s from South London readers S McKenzie (NUPE) and J Hogan (Erith & Crayford LPYS).

A whole variety of fund-raising ideas have been undertaken by our readers in the last few weeks. Why not see whether there are any that you can copy, or modify, for use in your own area?

Top of the bill must come Bracknell badges, raising £99(!) but Nottingham Trotsky posters netted £20. 15, closely followed by Blackburn 'Mole' T-shirts (£13), and Shipley rock (as in peppermint) £12.

A Torbay supporter, B Shaw, has been making rosettes for the election campaign, and has now sent us the third instalment from this venture, while H Shi-

elds, a Birmingham reader, has donated back copies of Militant that have been sold off. £40 from Yorkshire comrades has been the price of foregoing usual pleasures ie. drinking (£25—Leeds comrade) and smoking (£15—Sheffield comrade).

We've just over two months now to the half-year mark: this means we really need over £3,000 per week on average to reach £60,000. Although of course we urge all our readers to take advantage of fund-raising schemes to generate cash for us, the sort of sums that we need can really only be guaranteed if all our readers are prepared to make regular donations each week to assist our funds.

This May Day issue of our paper and the demonstrations and marches point the way forward for a resurgence in the labour and trade union movement, starting with a Labour victory in the local elections and continuing throughout the summer at all the major trade union conferences.

We appeal to readers looking at this column for the first time to appreciate that this paper could not have been produced over the years without regular help from its readers, and that its future is in the hand of present readers such as yourselves.

We need a more regular workers' paper more than ever. Give us the cash—and we will be able to do the job.

Industrial

PADDINGTON RAIL STRIKE

A significant display of solidarity was shown on Wednesday, 15 April, when railway workers in the Paddington Station and the Old Oak Common depots of the British Rail's Western Region responded to a recommendation from their local Staff Representatives to join in a 24-hour stoppage of work.

The action was in support of 150 carriage cleaners who have been locked out by management since April 1st over a dispute concerning revised timings for carriage cleaning operations.

Management for some time have been attempting to impose new timings which increase work loads, with no additional staff or pay. This came to a head on 1st April when they insisted that the carriage cleaners either work the disputed timings or be sent home.

The answer from the cleaners was quite clear; no way would they accept more sweat under these conditions. Most are on a rate of pay less than £59 per week!

The workers at Old Oak Common are resolutely maintaining that management's intention of speed up is contrary to the terms of their national agreement, agreed between BR and their union, the National Union of Railwaymen, in 1974.

However, at a lower level of the industry's negotiating machinery, the trade union side and management agreed that cleaners would have to operate the new timings, even though these timings have been rejected at local level.

This had the immediate effect of seriously weakening the position of the cleaners, who have argued throughout that this local agreement violates a criteria in the national agreement. So far, the union leadership has failed to provide support for the cleaners, but merely upheld the disputed local decision, which management are hiding behind to sledge hammer conditions.

A formula for a return to work on April 11 apparently agreed between management and the NUR, was decisively thrown out by the carriage cleaners as it failed to give support to their position or demands.

Every member in the area, irrespective of grade, realises the paramount importance of the carriage cleaners securing victory in this fight. Management have deliberately attempted to pick off a weak section of staff, who on their own have no significant industrial muscle. If the BR bosses win it could signal a broader attack on shop floor working conditions involving other grades.

The NUR branches in the area and elsewhere must demand that the union executive give immediate official backing to this dispute and use the industrial strength of the membership through the medium of strike action, including the Panel signalmen at Old Oak Common.

By Dave Dodson
(Guards LDC rep,
Paddington NUR)

TRADE UNION CONFERENCES

USDAW

By Chris Ridge
(West Notts LP)

A mood of anger and determination to fight growing unemployment was reflected in the debate on wages and economic policy at the annual delegate meeting in Blackpool this week of USDAW, the shop workers' union.

In particular, delegates criticised the replacement of full time workers by youth on 'work experience' schemes, being used as cheap labour.

Composite 44 calling for trade union protection and trade union rates of pay for youth on these schemes was passed overwhelmingly.

Shop workers, who make up a large part of the union's membership, have

traditionally been amongst the lowest paid, with many still on a basic rate of £55 or less. Support was given to the call for an £80 minimum wage and a 35-hour week. A determined campaign around these demands must be fought this year if low wages and unemployment are to be ended.

But as delegate Dave Kennedy pointed out, such a campaign must be part of the fight to bring down the Tories and return a socialist Labour government.

One of the features of conference was the tremen-

dous meetings held by 'Broad Left' and 'Militant' supporters, on the way forward for USDAW and the Labour Party.

Five hundred delegates and visitors heard Tony Benn explain at the Broad Left meeting why the next Labour government must break with capitalism "which can't deliver the goods" (full report to follow).

After explaining he was standing for the deputy leadership of the Labour Party on the basis of policies passed at recent party conferences, he received a standing ovation at the end of his speech.

The 'Militant' readers' meeting was the best ever at conference. Over 60 attended and £125 was raised for the fighting fund.

STOP PRESS

Given the former right-wing traditions of USDAW, the discussions on Labour Party democracy marked a tremendous step forward. Conference fully endorsed the present electoral college formula of 40/30/30 by two to one.

NUT

By Felicity Dowling
(Liverpool Teachers' Association,
personal capacity)

Once a strike ballot has been held successfully, union members should be instructed to take action, rather than 'advised' to do so.

The National Union of Teachers made this clear by supporting a reference-back of a section of the union executive's annual report.

The reference back was moved by Nottingham, the area where Eileen Crosbie was dismissed.

The issue of Labour Party affiliation was also discussed at conference through an amendment to the annual report. The close connections between NUT and Labour Party policy

was drawn by the mover of the amendment, and although the amendment was defeated it received a respectable vote.

The salary memorandum was approved. This instructs the executive to renegotiate the pay structure to include automatic progress from scale one to scale two.

But the conference accepted the inclusion of comparability in future pay claims, an issue which could prove to be a weakness in later years.

Conference was marred, however, by the disgraceful 'spectacle of 'moderate'

members from London provocatively insulting and baiting left wingers also from London during a discussion on divisional annual general meetings.

Unfortunately certain delegates reacted to this. Uproar followed, leading to one delegate being asked to leave.

Nonetheless there is a generally radical mood in the NUT, expressed in the Nottingham amendment, and in conference accepting disarmament, and also in the closeness of the voting.

The Liverpool amendment for a national one day strike in the event of redundancies being announced, was rejected. The executive advised 'local action'—this leaves the union only as strong as its weakest local area.

The reinstatement of

APEX

By Lal Bharadwa
and Keith Narey
(APEX)

While blizzards blasted this year's Association of Professional, Executive, Clerical and Computer staff conference, not so the 'winds of change' sweeping the Labour Party!

A resolution with an amendment calling for the composition of the electoral college to be altered from the 40/30/30 formula to 50% for the Parliamentary Labour Party and 25% each for the CLPs and the trade unions was passed.

However, the amended resolution included the following line: "The manifesto to be drawn up by the NEC and the Parliamentary Labour Party with final approval to be by the National Executive Committee."

Consequently, the APEX delegation at this year's Labour Party conference should support any resolution calling for the final control of the manifesto to be in the hands of the NEC.

Michael Foot in his speech on Sunday stated that "It was never intended that there should be elections for the posts of leader and deputy leader each year" and added "it would be better if there were no contests." (Times 27 April).

It is not and never has

Lambeth officers (see 'Militant' 549) must be campaigned for throughout the country.

What is needed is an effective Broad Left able to organise to ensure this radical mood is expressed in conference. In this year's elections, we have to ensure the return of a new executive, committed to fighting redundancies and turning our union against this destructive Tory government.

OCCUPY TO SAVE JOBS!

VICKERS

Determination marks the occupation of the Non-Ferrous Metals plant, part of the giant Vickers engineering company, in Elswick, Newcastle. As one lad told me, since he has been on 24-hour sit duty, he looks forward to 'coming to work' for the first time in years!

The workers responded to the threat of closure of the plant with 200 jobs to go, with an occupation. A mass meeting endorsed this action by a massive majority.

Many messages of support were received in the first couple of days. Workers at Rolls Royce, recently bought up by Vickers, sent a telegram; "We fully support your fight, it must be done to stop Vicker's redundancy policy."

The entire workforce of Vickers Elswick operation

voted to raise a weekly levy to support the occupation, and stated that any attempt to break the action will be met by industrial action.

Jim Murray, works convenor, demolished Vickers argument that the plant was 'unprofitable' by merely referring to the company's accounts rather than the doctored figures given to the workers. The demand was raised to call in an independent team of auditors to open the books.

Support on legal and benefit rights questions is being given by the West End Resource Centre and the Newcastle Trades Council Centre for the Unemployed, but your support in terms of messages and donations is vital to continue the occupation. Send to: Jim Murray, works convenor, Vickers Elswick, Scotswood Rd, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

By Chris Edwards

LAWRENCE SCOTT

Workers at Lawrence Scott and Electro Motors at Openshaw, North Manchester, have made a firm stand against the threat of closure.

A mass meeting last week on Friday decided by a substantial majority to accept the stewards' recommendation to occupy the factory, after talks with the management broke down.

Lawrence Scott's company director, Arthur Snipe, has refused to involve himself in negotiations. He says that the closure decision is "irreversible" and that he intends to ship production to another Lawrence Scott factory in Norwich.

Convenor, Bob Tenchion, told 'Militant', "We think we have a very good case for keeping this factory open, especially as we made £70,000 profit for manage-

ment last year.

"We have 2 to 3 million pounds worth of unfinished orders in the factory, including motors for Polaris and the nuclear fleet, as well as National Coal Board orders.

"Support from local factories has been tremendous. The phones haven't stopped ringing all day! We're determined to continue this action until we win."

The victory of the Gardeners workers last year demonstrates the determination of workers in occupation must be backed up by support from the trade union and labour movement throughout the country.

Please send donations to: Lawrence Scott appeal fund, c/o George Fryer, Lawrence Scott, Louisa Street, Openshaw, Manchester.

By John Hunt
(Moss Side, LPYS)

been the right of the leadership of the Labour Party to ignore conference decisions. Therefore we should welcome the challenge for Tony Benn for the deputy leadership.

On the economy only one resolution dealt with the solution to ailing British capitalism. This pointed out that only with control of the economy through the nationalisation of the 200 monopolies that jobs for all, a 35-hour week, and a decent minimum wage could be guaranteed.

However, this was defeated in the subsequent vote. Dennis Howell, APEX President, in his reply stated that it would take a five year parliament to nationalise the 200 monopolies, and years to abolish the House of Lords, who would be a barrier to this policy!

Obviously he forgot how in the early '70s, even the Tories managed to nationalise Rolls Royce in 24 hours!

APEX has adopted a policy favouring the TUC alternative economic policy and added to it a return to the disastrous policies of wage control of the last Labour government.

However, moves to the left within the ranks of the union were indicated in the sales of over 100 *Militants* and 80 'A socialist programme for APEX' pamphlets.

UNITED GLASS

Glass workers in St Helens, Merseyside, have taken the bull by the horns—in response to the threat of compulsory redundancies by management, 560 workers at United Glass have occupied to save jobs.

Over the past four years the plant at Teasley Cross has lost over 1,000 jobs through either voluntary redundancy or natural wastage.

However, management threatened 81 compulsory redundancies. The union concerned, the General & Municipal Workers Union balloted its members, and 57% came out in favour of strike action. But it is the policy of the G&M that over two thirds must vote for strike action before it is made official.

What nonsense! Even before the ballot was announced management in a typical underhand manner, offered cheques to some young workers.

This was the last straw. Shop stewards decided they would kick the management out instead, and organise a 'work-in' until the bosses agreed to withdraw the redundancy notices. Messages of support and donations to Alan Atherton, 106 Marshalls Cross Road, St Helens, Merseyside.

By Steve Higham
(Bootle LPYS)

Reports

Civil Service Strike

Escalate the fight

The national civil service dispute is now in its third month. The efforts of the Tories to inflict a rapid and humiliating defeat on civil servants have been confounded.

The Tories and the millionaire press initially hoped to isolate the civil servants with a torrent of anti-civil service abuse, believing that the spirits of the civil servants would be broken with the action quickly collapsing.

But this tactic was soon dropped as it became clear that the resolve of civil servants was hardening daily and, rather than isolating civil servants, the dispute was being seen as an important trial of strength between the Tories and the trade unions.

The Tories are hoping to take their revenge for the defeat they suffered recently at the hands of the miners. Should they win against civil servants they would be encouraged into further attacks against other workers. That is why workers throughout the trade union movement have increasingly sympathised with and supported the civil servants.

The action that has been applied so far has un-

By Kevin Roddy
(Broad Left,
Presidential candidate,
CPSA)

doubtedly bitten deep into the financial resources of the government but a conspiracy of silence is now operating on the part of the press in order to hide from civil servants the full effects of their action.

In this situation regular information from the national union headquarters is absolutely vital. At times this has been almost non-existent. This must change immediately. At the very least a weekly bulletin must be produced throughout the dispute explaining the progress of the action.

The determination of civil servants to fight for their just demands has been amply demonstrated in the one day and half day strikes which have been called in response to the suspensions and to the provocation of the government in employing military personnel to do strikers' jobs in Scotland.

But the feeling has grown that such tactics have now been used almost to the full. More and more civil ser-

vants are looking for a speedy and successful victory.

The rolling programme of action in the airports will be seen as a major contribution with the effect that this will have upon trade and communications. But as this is only partial action it could well take some time to have a decisive effect on the government's attitude. Also, as it proceeds, the Airport Authority may find ways of curtailing even this present action.

To prevent this happening and to ensure a speedy settlement all points of major strength should now be used to the full.

All civil servants in airports, ports, customs and immigration should be brought fully into the action and all section executive committees should meet to identify other areas of strength which could have a major impact in helping the progress of the dispute.

'Militant' supporters agree with the call for a full week strike of all civil servants. While many civil servants feel that saturation point is being reached with the tactic of one day strikes and that therefore there would be no enthusiasm for another one day (or even two day) strike at this stage, a week strike is seen as a completely different matter.

The entire civil service on strike throughout one week would be a powerful demonstration of the united resolve to win this dispute. Thousands of civil servants who previously have never contemplated industrial ac-

tion would be ready to play their part in such action.

However, given the scarcity of communications from the union headquarters a certain period of preparation before this action would be essential to enable mass meetings to take place in all offices and all areas of the country.

During such a week of struggle a massive show of strength should be organised with a united demonstration and lobby of Parliament involving all civil service unions.

It would also be necessary to organise for the Department of Employment and the Department of Health and Social Security to be kept open on an emergency basis. Not only would this maintain a lifeline for the most needy, it would also undermine the inevitable attempts of the media to use the claimants—once again—in an effort to whip up hysteria against civil servants.

Such measures may prove sufficient to win this dispute. But the determination of this government to make an example of civil servants may mean that the ultimate sanction will have to be applied of an all out indefinite strike of civil servants (again with emergency cover in DE and DHSS).

This ultimate step should therefore now begin to receive serious consideration. Discussions should take place at all levels and in all unions on this issue so that should the call prove necessary, civil servants are ready.

CAA

April 27, 1981 will long be remembered by the Civil Aviation Authority and the trade union movement.

Picket lines went up at 6.30 am at the Scottish Air Traffic control centre Prestwick, and the London Air traffic control centre West Drayton. Unity was the watchword of the air traffic controllers, air traffic control assistants, air traffic engineers, specialist teleprinter operators and communications officers, as the morning shift at the two units began the five week programme of action being taken by CAA workers in support of the civil service pay campaign.

The pay of CAA employees is directly linked to the pay of civil servants.

At the Scottish control centre, the strike was absolutely solid, bringing airports like Glasgow and Edinburgh almost to a standstill.

Air traffic controllers and assistants stood on the picket line together shoulder to shoulder. Only four years earlier the two groups had stood on opposite sides of the picket line during the Air Traffic Control Assistants' strike.

This time, surprisingly joint picket lines were also set up at the two entrances to the London air traffic control centre. Here again the support of the morning shift members of the four unions called out was tremendous.

Air traffic controllers were prominent on the picket line and shouts of "Scabs" were heard at the few air traffic control staff who crossed the picket line.

The strike at the London control centre caused serious disruption to flights in the UK. Many flights were cancelled. Inter-continental flights bound

for UK airports were diverted to France, Germany and Holland and delays of up to four hours aboard were commonplace at many airports in England.

Heathrow and Gatwick traffic levels were down to about a quarter of the normal business.

The five week rolling programme of action now affecting every airport in the country, will have an important impact on the national dispute.

The unity between the CAA workers will be further forged in coming weeks and groups of workers like the air traffic controllers who are involved in industrial action for the first time in their history will learn invaluable lessons.

The programme will have a tremendous effect on trade business and communication. It will therefore put extra pressure on the government to return to the bargaining table.

The programme, however, has inherent weaknesses. After each morning shift strike, air traffic services will resume, albeit slowly. This, together with the 48 hours notice the unions are giving the CAA and airlines, will reduce the effectiveness of the action.

To make sure that our action has maximum effect the least we should do is to refuse any co-operation with the handful of staff crossing picket lines. But also, an idea now being raised by some members is that if the government does not concede the demand of the Council of Civil Service Unions in coming weeks, then serious consideration must be given by the unions in the CAA for an all out stoppage at airports and air traffic control units, together with fellow workers in the customs and immigration services.

By Frank Bonner
(CAA Prestwick branch,
personal capacity)

Banks - 12,000 join strike

Last Wednesday 23 April saw the first strike by at least 12,000 bank workers in which 300 bank branches were forced to close.

The strike was called by the bank workers' union, the Banking, Insurance and Finance Union.

On the picket line in Paddington, young clerical workers—most of them previously never involved in any kind of strike action—were angry at the bank bosses' refusal to give a 13% increase to the staff.

One 17 year old told me he gets £60 a week before tax, and is expected to work unpaid overtime, which brings his hours to 40-45 hours a week.

This kind of wage is an insult to workers, especially when last year the bank bosses were sitting back counting their profits—£1,500,000,000!

Since the one day strike, bank staff have been working to rule and refusing to work overtime. At the Midland Bank in Oxford Street, nine workers have been suspended for sticking to rules laid down by the bank itself. These workers must be reinstated im-



Bank workers, members of BIFU, join the picket line outside a Lloyds bank branch in the heart of the City of London

mediately without loss of pay.

BIFU has balloted its 72,000 members in the clearing banks on whether to accept the offer of 10% or to call a national strike. Bank workers should de-

mand an £80 minimum wage for a 35-hour week and call for the nationalisation of the major banks and finance houses.

Only then can the millions that now go to the pockets of the money grab-

bing ruling class be used to pay for a programme of useful public works.

By Liz Floyd
(Paddington LPYS)

POEU

At the last national executive meeting of the Post Office engineers' union, the POEU, with less than one hour left before the end of the meeting, the important issue of the 1981 wage claim was discussed.

Members have already been informed that the POEU Negotiating Committee turned down a 6% offer made by the Post Office. The general secretary was questioned about the figure claimed by the POEU negotiators in reply to the offer.

Despite efforts to obtain this information it was not forthcoming.

A proposition was then placed before the NEC which stated that;

"The 1981 pay claim should be as follows: 1) an increase in the basic rate of at least 15%; 2) in addition, the 2% bonus of the 1980 pay claim should be consolidated in the 1980/81 pay year; 3) in addition a claim should be submitted for our continuing co-operation in productivity improvements."

This resolution, supported by the left, was discussed but due to the lack of time the debate ended before a

vote could be taken.

Also on the agenda was a proposition on the defence of the Post Office, to stop Tory plans to hive off sections of it to private enterprise.

This called upon the NEC to prepare for industrial action and initiate a national approach to other unions for joint action, to coincide with a series of area meetings to develop the strategy, raise the awareness of the membership of the seriousness of this issue and stimulate activity by the members through every level of the labour movement.

It should include propaganda aimed at the public and other trade unionists on how the service and their jobs would be affected. [See 'Militant' 545 for fuller details].

Despite the fact that this motion was placed before the NEC at its previous meeting, on both occasions the motion was not discussed because of lack of time!

The motion will once again be on the agenda at the next NEC meeting.

By Wayne Jones
(Industrial
correspondent)

Northern Ireland-Stop sectarian upsurge TRADE UNIONS MUST ACT

By Peter Hadden
 (Northern Ireland Labour
 and Trade Union Group)

Unless a last-minute compromise is found, it is virtually certain that hunger striker Bobby Sands will be dead by the time this goes to print.

After 58 days of fasting, Bobby Sands is reported to be only semi-lucid and partially deaf and blind. Last Saturday evening he almost died.

If Sands dies, responsibility will lie with the intransigence of the Tories, who for years have used the most brutal methods to try to break the H-Block prisoners' protests.

In Britain, the H-Block issue has already been taken up in the labour movement. The Labour Party's National Executive condemned the ill-treatment of prisoners, and has called for decent conditions for those in H-Blocks and Armagh, and for prisoners generally.

Before Christmas, Republican hunger-strikers gave up their protest on the basis of the authorities' vague promises of improved conditions—promises which were not implemented, or implemented in an offensive and high-handed manner.

This has led to the second hunger-strike, and the dramatic escalation of sectarian tension in Northern Ireland. Yet if just two of the Labour Party's demands—the right of all prisoners to wear their own clothes and the right of the prisoners to negotiate a choice of work, training and educational facilities were implemented—the issue could be resolved.

At the start of this hunger strike, the prisoners and their republican supporters concentrated on the sole demand of 'political status' for all prisoners. They received little support, even in the main Catholic areas.

More recently, H-block demonstrations have focused on the humanitarian aspect, which, as previously, has received a greater echo. Sands himself, in discussion with three Euro-MPs from the South, reportedly stressed that political status was not the central issue.

If the Labour Party's position on clothes and work were implemented, there would be a solution. The British and Irish labour movement, whether or not Sands dies, must immediately take up this question with direct pressure on the Tories to implement these demands and with meetings to explain the issues to labour's ranks.



Police arrest demonstrators at an H-block protest in Kilburn, London, 26 April
 Photo: Carlos Augusto (IFL)

The labour movement must defeat sectarianism, poverty and repression with class unity and socialist solutions

This would in no way imply support for the Provisional IRA, whose terrorist methods we implacably oppose, nor would it give credence to the sectarian based H-block committees. These bodies can only divide working people.

Silence by the labour and trade union movement, however, whether on H-blocks or other forms of repression, can only benefit the sectarian organisations.

Until recently, there was little enthusiasm for the hunger strike, even in Catholic areas. But as its climax is reached, this has changed. Anger at the callous killings of two youths in Derry, run over by an army Land Rover has increased with last Sunday's death of a 15-year-old, hit in the head by a plastic bullet. Another youth has just lost an eye, after being hit by one of these bullets.

Such atrocities have brought the crowds onto the streets. In Catholic areas all over the province there has been sporadic but intensive

rioting for over a week. The H-block parade in West Belfast on Sunday brought out over 15,000.

The conflict will escalate if Sands dies. Ominous noises, too, have come from some of the Protestant paramilitaries, with reports of gun and bomb-making activities by the Ulster Defence Regiment.

These events come when working class issues are to the fore in Northern Ireland. Strikes, occupations, anti-Tory demonstrations, and other activity by the trade unions have united catholic and protestant workers.

A number of NI trades councils are preparing to challenge the Tories and bigots in local elections (on 20 May). Through the recent rioting of the catholic youth there has been an under-current of class anger at poverty and unemployment.

But this class unity and class anger could be temporarily engulfed by a sectarian onslaught. Behind Sands there are three others

on hunger strike, with Francis Hughs only a couple of weeks from death. If Sands dies, a second Fermanagh/South Tyrone by-election with a prisoner standing could pose grave dangers.

All this should be a cue for the labour movement to act.

The trade unions alone have the capacity to act to protect working-class people, Catholic and Protestant, from sectarian intimidation and attacks.

A decade of sectarianism and of the Provisional IRA's

campaign have shown that these are no way out. The only answer is a political and industrial mobilisation of the workers through the unions and through a Labour Party—which must immediately be built.

The anger of the youth, is entirely understandable given the poverty and repression. But only the labour movement can give that anger the expression required—a class expression which will challenge sectarianism, poverty and repression with class unity and socialist solutions.

SACK TOWN HALL TORIES

Continued from page 1
 "The latest round of council house rent increases has been nowhere near sufficient."

By 1983/84 the Tories plan to cut £2,500 million from the housing budget, if they are allowed to get away with it. This would mean disaster for working people. In addition to a virtual freeze on new house building the Tory-controlled Commons Environment Committee estimated that Heseltine's plan means a sixty-six per cent cut in housing aid for Councils plus a real rise in rents of 16 per cent.

At the same time they plan to massively increase expenditure on arms. In 1973-4 for every £1 spent on 'defence' 96p was spent on housing; by 1983-4 for every £1 spent on 'defence' only 33p will go on housing.

Such is the cutback on money to clear the slums that a report last week from the London Housing Aid Centre calculated that "the average London house will have to stand for 2,000 years on current trends." With housing starts last year at their lowest since 1927 and more cuts in the pipeline the report concluded that unless those on council waiting lists get housed in the next two years they will never get a home.

That is all the Tories can offer to the homeless and those living in slums.

When Highgrove tenants confronted Hillingdon Tory Councillor Lally, his remedy was to go to evening classes and get better jobs. He told the tenants who included a nurse, who had just ended her shift and two pregnant women to work harder and produce more.

In the local press the Tories always describe the Highgrove estate as "the notorious blue roof estate." Tenants have renamed it as the NoToryus. And that's how millions will be voting in the May local elections. We know who the real scroungers in society are and they are not the council or building society tenants.

We are fighting for a Labour GLC and government which will end the housing misery once and for all.

- Cancel all interest charges
- Take over the banks and money lenders so that 'no interest' loans can be made to local authorities
- Plan a crash housing programme of a million houses a year
- Clear the slums
- Nationalise the Construction Industry and employ the 350,000 unemployed building workers
- Take over the major monopolies under workers control and management so that the economy can be planned in the interests of working people and not of profit.

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