

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 567
4 September 1981

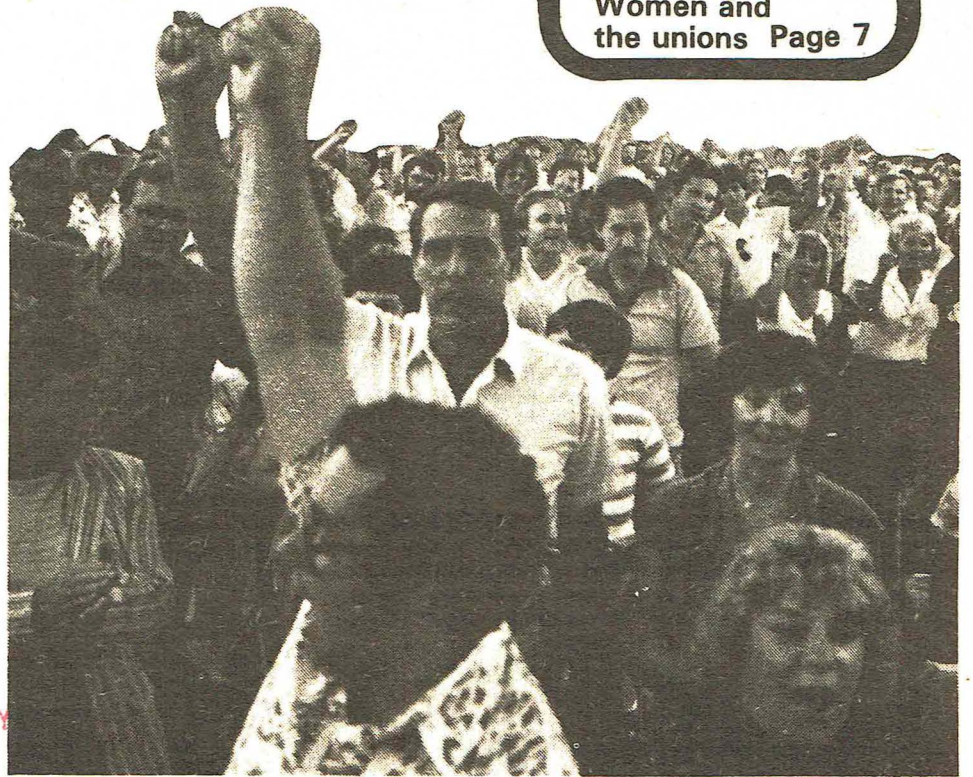
20p



Women and the unions Page 7

YOPs RIP OFF

CONTACT:
NIGEL BOND
12 AUSTRIBERRY WAY
ROWNER
GOSPORT
TEL: 25174



Air controllers in Ohio determined to fight Reagan's anti-union government

REAGAN RISKS AIR DISASTER

Far from being over, the US air traffic controllers' strike is entering a new and critical stage.

Nearly a month has passed since the Reagan Administration, in a Wild West attempt to smash PACTO, the air controllers' union, sacked 12,000 of its members who had gone on strike for better wages and conditions. Now the Administration's ability to keep the country's airways functioning and maintain safety is being put to the test.

The strain is beginning to tell on the assortment of FAA administrators, military personnel, unqualified and rejected air controllers who have been scraped together for strike-breaking.

Already half the US's internal air traffic has been cancelled, spelling financial crisis for the country's airlines, already in serious difficulties because of the recession.

Even so, the scab-run air control system is in danger

By George Collins

of breaking down. The scabs are forced to work six days a week, ten hours a day at a job which requires the utmost skill and concentration. Vacations have been stopped.

Eliot Simons of PATCO says: "Not having the normal breaks will kill the old and exhaust the young. It can't go on much longer."

The Federal Aviation Authority is blatantly putting the lives of air passengers at risk in its effort to smash the union. Reports of more than 20 "incidents" (i.e. near misses etc.) reached the FAA in the strike's first two weeks.

Airline pilots have expressed their concern over the "general deterioration of the system". At least two

pilots are known to have refused to fly as a result of their concern about controller fatigue.

The most careful and time-consuming training, lasting anything from two to five years, is needed to develop new air controllers. Proper training of the scab labour is impossible.

Trade unionists everywhere should support the stand of the US air controllers. Sympathetic action has already been taken by air controllers in several countries, including France, Canada and Portugal.

What is needed, however, is a lead from the International Federation Air Traffic Controllers' Associations to co-ordinate an international boycott of flights to and from the US.

Such a boycott could rapidly have a decisive effect on the outcome of the strike. Unfortunately, no decision to support the strike was taken at the IFATCA meeting in Amsterdam on 23 August. Instead, it called for the re-opening

Continued on back page



YOPs trainee on Tyneside

Photo: Militant

Young Socialists fight Tory exploitation

Every day brings new evidence to light of increasing abuse and exploitation of YOPs, the so-called Youth Opportunity Programme schemes.

Employers are paying off full-time staff and replacing them with YOP trainees in many cases. Trainees in many places are used for simple, menial

tasks where no training or skill is involved at all.

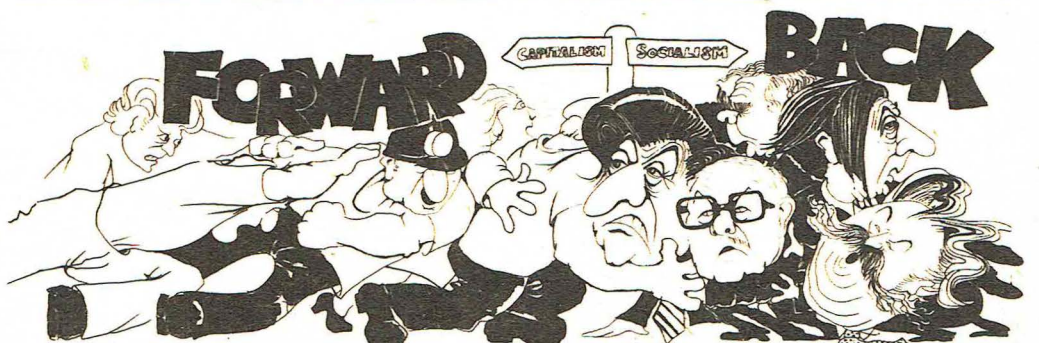
Unfortunately, very few trainees know their rights, although every new trainee is supposed to be issued with a

Continued on back page

By Dave Harris
(LPYS National Cttee,
Northern Region)

INSIDE

TUC:
Time to
take action
Pages 8-9



ORGANISE YOPS WORKERS

By Kevin Ramage
LPYS National Committee

At its August meeting, the National Committee of the Labour Party Young Socialists took a decision: to launch the "YOP Trainees' Rights Campaign".

The campaign, in which the LPYS will work in conjunction with the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment [YCAU] and local and national trade unions, will be aimed at organising the hundreds and thousands of YOP workers throughout the country into National Union of Public Employees, Transport and General Workers Union, General and Municipal Workers Union and other appropriate unions.

Biggest 'employers'

Only a few thousand YOP workers are at present union members. Yet by next year there will be about half a million on the various YOP and WEEP [Work Experience on Employers Premises] Schemes. These schemes will be by far and away the country's biggest 'employers' of youth.

Scores of people have already come to see that YOPS means cheap labour, with little or no training, and almost no chance of a job at the end.

Trade unionists, as a number of resolutions to this year's TUC show, are aware that the bosses are more and more trying to use YOPS as a source of cheap labour, even, in some cases, of black-leg labour.

Union conditions

The urgent need to organise YOPS workers into the unions and fight for trade union conditions is clear. The provisional programme being put forward by the LPYS is as follows.

- ★ Five weeks holiday a year for YOPS now.
- ★ An immediate and substantial increase in the training allowance and in allowances for work clothing, footwear and safety equipment.
- ★ Free travel and leisure facilities until a decent wage is achieved.
- ★ Trade union monitoring of all YOP schemes.
- ★ Proper disciplinary and complaints procedures—an end to arbitrary deductions and sackings.
- ★ An end to government plans to conscript or black-mail youth into YOP schemes

es [or the army].

★ A halt to firms misusing YOP trainees as cheap labour to undermine existing jobs.

★ A campaign for legislation to guarantee every school leaver a job at a decent wage OR training OR the right to stay on at school or college with a decent grant.

The National Committee is calling on LPYS branches to channel a large proportion of their time and resources into this drive. The campaign could mean a massive growth in the membership of the LPYS.

Visit the factories

In the coming period, the YOPS campaign should be the focus of branches' activity. Young Socialists should organise visits to factories where there are YOPS workers to discuss with the shop stewards; and visits to NUPE, T&GWU, and G&MWU branches to discuss the campaign.

Many young people on YOPS schemes, or about to go on the schemes, will be found at the dole offices or at the local careers offices. But the most important task will be to locate and visit the WEEP and YOPS schemes themselves, which is already being done in many areas.

Broadsheet

The LPYS National Committee will be producing special literature, including a monthly broadsheet. A YOP leaflet with the aims and demands of the campaign is already available from the Labour Party Youth Officer, Andy Bevan.

To establish a national framework for the YOPS campaign there will be a conference for delegates from the YOPS schemes in Liverpool on 21 November. This conference will hammer out a programme of action, and will prepare to build up for a National YOPS workers conference on 23 January 1982.

This campaign will mean the biggest trade union recruitment and organising drive for decades. This is no easy task. But by adopting the élan and audacity of the pioneers of the labour movement, together with the clear socialist policies of the LPYS, the National Committee is confident that the Young Socialists will succeed in organising YOP workers.

This will be an enormous step forward in the struggle to end the exploitation of youth by the Tories and the capitalist system.



PHOTO: YOPs workers present a petition at Downing Street, 22 July
Photo: D Doran

The trade unions must fight to organise YOPs and defend the conditions of YOPs workers

TUC MUST FIGHT FOR YOUTH

By Dave Spagnol
(CPSA delegate to TUC, personal capacity)

The burning issue of youth unemployment and the failure of the Tory government to alleviate this problem features predominantly on the TUC agenda.

Since the agenda came out, the August unemployment figures show that there are 277,944 school leavers on the dole. The real figure will actually be much higher in September, when last term's leavers, who have been denied summer dole by the Tories, sign on for the first time.

The August figures also show that there are 180,000 young people currently on YOP schemes. This figure, too, is likely to grow as the Tories try to conceal some of the catastrophic rise in youth unemployment.

The Manpower Services Commission estimates there

will be over 1/2 million under-18s on the dole by the end of next year.

The cosmetic Tory measures, such as the Youth Opportunities Programme and the Work Experience on Employers Premises schemes, are hammered in a number of resolutions and amendments.

These attack the use of the schemes as cheap labour to undermine hard-won trade union rights. YOPs and WEEPs are criticised for failing to offer proper training and, as the motions point out, these schemes do nothing to create permanent jobs for participants at the end.

A comprehensive motion from the Society of Civil and Public Servants calls on the General Council to "oppose military training for young people, either as part

of the YOPs or as an alternative to real jobs; oppose the WEEP's scheme and to withdraw trade union co-operation;

"to use the unemployed workers centres, in conjunction with Regional Councils, to draw young people into close contact with the organised trade union movement; pay special attention to the employment needs of young women and ethnic minority youth;

"develop links with those organisations representing young people so that they will have a say in determining their own future and as a means of combating racist and fascist propaganda amongst young people;

"to encourage affiliated unions to curb excessive overtime working and to develop and support other

initiatives in order not to lose the impetus created by the Peoples March for Jobs."

Five of the six amendments to this resolution call for the WEEPs schemes not to be totally opposed but to be transformed into proper jobs with training. As the amendment from the Transport and General Workers Union states "to increase trade union control over YOP schemes, by insisting that WEEP schemes only take place in union-organised places of work, with union agreement and by promoting union representation for YOP trainees"

It is likely that a compromise composite accepting WEEPs in trade-union organised work-places will be agreed by the TUC. But it is vital that the trade unions actively campaign to organise YOPs and defend the conditions of YOPs workers.

'A LOAD OF RUBBISH'

Sixteen year old Stephen Kennedy worked on a YOPs building scheme in Hazelrigg, a small village outside Newcastle.

Ed Waugh, Chairman of Northern Region LPYS, asked Stephen how he managed on £23.50 a week.

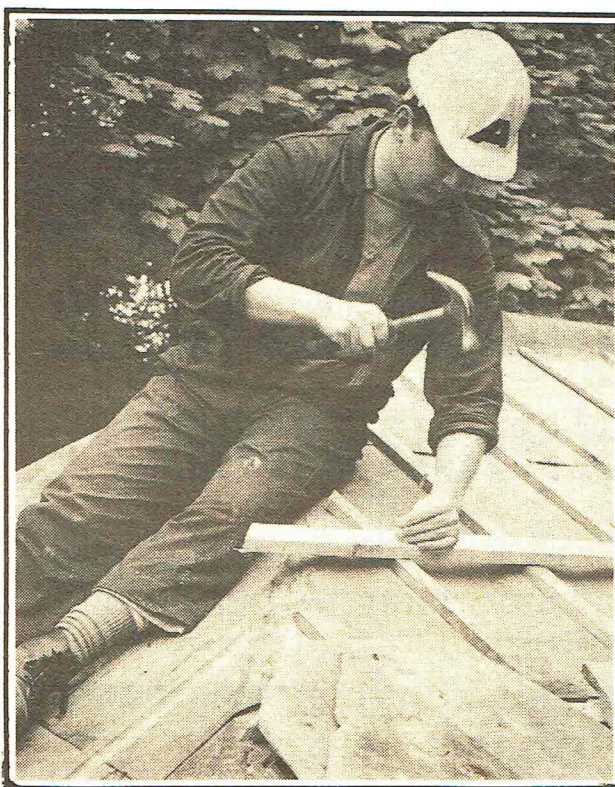
"It costs me £3 a week in fares alone. Even if the job was in Newcastle I had to travel all the way out to Hazelrigg just to load the tools, instead of meeting them beside where I live. After bus fares and board were deducted I was left with only £4."

Stephen's attitude to YOPs was clear:

"YOPs is a load of rubbish. I wouldn't go on one again. I felt I was being used. There was no attempt at training like bricklaying or plastering...just labouring, labouring all of the time...digging foundations, mixing concrete, carrying and pouring it."

"Anyone could have done that. I was nothing more than a personal slave. They made me graft like hell. That's why I only stayed on the scheme for three months."

Asked what hours he



YOPs schemes on Tyneside Photo: D Doran

worked, Stephen said:

"Three times I worked past the normal times, once until 6.45, once until 9.00 pm, but I was not paid a penny extra. When I complained to the careers centre, they said it was not their problem...they just didn't want to know."

"I support unionisation of YOPs schemes and the work the LPYS is doing towards this idea. YOPs should be paid at least £40 a week for the work they do."

"All I want is a proper job. But under this system I have no chance."

The "good life"?

Out of my old class of 32 sixth-formers, only one has got a proper job. The situation is so bad, that after obtaining good A-level results one friend of mine has gone back to sit extra examinations in a year's time!

All this comes after two years in a sixth form without adequate facilities, such as a common room. We didn't even have enough text books to go round!

Thousands of young people on Merseyside are being thrown out onto the scrapheap even before they get a chance to prove themselves as human beings.

What can you do with £19 a week social security? You can never expect to taste the 'Good Things in Life' that the Tory bosses are so fond of. It often costs you to or even over £4 to see your favourite band at the "Empire" or the "Royal Court".

These places are, of course, owned by big business enterprises. Even a simple night out to the pub is becoming a once-a-week extravagance.

By Austin Muscatelli
(Liverpool Kirkdale LPYS)

MERSEYSIDE A PERFECT DAY

It was one of the hottest days of the year. Perfect for a day at the beach. But members of Liverpool Labour Party Young Socialists had work to do.

Armed with Transport and General Workers Union and LPYS literature about Youth Opportunities Programmes (YOPs) we set off for the Victoria Settlement, a central workshop for 215 trainees. Arriving in time for lunch, we positioned ourselves by all the exits and chatted with the trainees about joining a union.

When it was clear that most trainees were staying inside for lunch, we decided to go in. In the canteen, the response was tremendous!

The woman behind the counter took our leaflets and pinned them to the wall. The trainees were unanimous in wanting to join a union. They all agreed YOPs is 'slave labour.'

Next stop were the chain stores in the city centre. A few of us swooped into Lewis's 'YOP spotting.' We would ask the youngest shopworker around who was on a scheme, find out where they worked in the shop, and then leaflet them about the 'Day of Action' and public meeting under the management's noses.

Once we were spotted by the managers. But as they gathered to evict us, we strolled out, job done. Again, the response from among the YOP workers was tremendous.

The next day saw us in Huyton and Kirkby, two areas where youth unemployment has reached a massive 65%.

By Kevin McKay
(Huyton Labour Party)

Meeting in a coffee bar at 9am, we planned out target areas. A swift check at the post office to determine the exact location of schemes, and away we go.

The first site had 12 trainees on it. We caught them at a tea break, so all sat around for about 15 minutes discussing the advantage of being in a union.

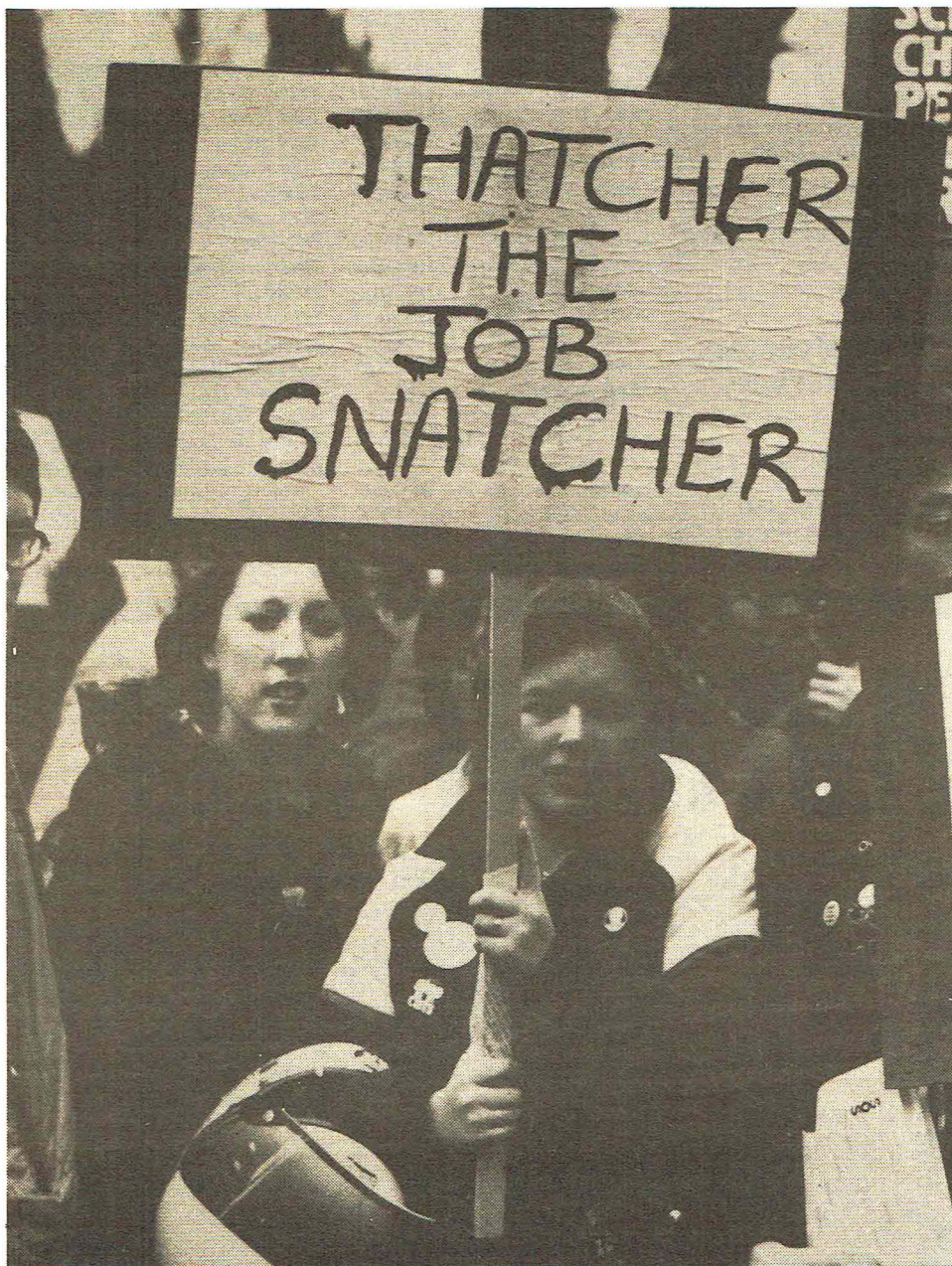
At first everyone was a bit quiet. But once they started talking about their grievances, there was no stopping. All 12 signed up to join the T&G.

They complained about conditions on the site, no toilet, no heating for the mess room in winter, no boots or protective clothing for heavy outside work, job discrimination, and, above all, the lousy pay.

We explained that we couldn't change everything overnight. By getting organised into a union, however, they would be in a position to take up some of the issues. Meanwhile, we take a note of the grievances, because we've got to make sure the union does take up all the problems on all the schemes.

The scheme next door gave us the same response. 13 out of 20 filled in union applications on the spot.

In the afternoon, Kirkby was a bit different in that the schemes were already partially organised into the General and Municipal Workers Union. After showing literature to the GMWU shop steward, he was immediately keen, and took 300 leaflets. We will keep in touch, and he will let us know who the elected trainees (YOPs) reps are on the stewards' committee.



Protests are held every week against Tory unemployment policies. Here in Solihull in February.

Photo: Militant

The next scheme, with 80 trainees, has agreed to organise a meeting next week in works time to discuss unionisation with the trainees.

Of course, it's not all rosy. Some schemes have only got one or two working, or they are out on placement. But most of the

supervisors are friendly, and will give advice of the best times and places to catch the trainees.

Looking back on the activity it became clear to me where my priorities lay. Two days on the beach compared to contacting upwards of 600 young YOP workers, who for the first

time begin to see that there is a future for them if they organise.

There is no question which is better for you and more interesting! Forget the Ambre Solaire—get out and organise the YOPs, and build the LPYS!

COVENTRY Fight unfair sackings

Jayne Purcell was recently sacked from a YOPs scheme. Last Saturday she told a well-attended meeting in Coventry of her experience on YOPs.

The meeting was part of the local LPYS's campaign to get YOPs workers organised.

Jayne said she had left school in 1980 and had had no job since, but had been on three different YOP schemes. On one of the schemes she was put to work with geriatric patients

and despite the fact that she had had no previous experience, on her first day there she was expected to do the work of the fully trained staff and bath the old people and take them to the toilet.

In the so-called "introductory week" at Community Industries, the scheme she was sacked from she spent the whole time sanding down tables. Then she was moved into the sewing workshop although she insisted that she couldn't sew.

She was told that if she worked hard she could get out of there quickly, but some girls had been there for seven months. The supervisors, who never appeared to do anything but walk around all day, had no

respect for the trainees.

The workers were told continually to treat it like a proper factory job, but everyone knew there was no job at the end. They were being treated like schoolchildren and had no rest room or other facilities.

Only two weeks before she was sacked, Jayne was suspended along with three other girls. Two girls had asked for time off to go to the hospital but their requests were refused, and they were told that they'd be suspended if they took the afternoon off. When they complained, all four were suspended.

While they were in the workshop stuffing rag dolls, Jayne's friend, Brinette Bailey, who is black objected to making golliwogs. Jayne supported her and the supervisor went to see the manager who suspended them both.

They had no union to fight for their rights, so they went to the Community Relations Council. The next day an officer from there went to the workshop but the golliwog patterns had been removed by the management.

The following day the two girls were sacked for "disruptive behaviour,"

which included playing their radios too loud. Yet neither of them had a radio.

Jayne said she was exploited on her course and sacked unfairly. She'd been to the Community Relations Council, Legal Aid and the local press but none of them had really helped.

Several people had told

NORTH EAST

"It's rubbish! It's rubbish!" shouted the crowd occupying Eldon Square in the centre of Newcastle last Friday (28 August).

The bold call of the National Union of Public Employees to YOPs, demanding improved training and pay, and union rights had met with a strong response from 350 youngsters.

While riots had been exploding across Britain in July, Consett, the town destroyed by the Tories, had seen a YOPs strike, and now NUPE—which had recruited the strikers—was organising a regional rally to push forward the cam-

her that she'd ruined her chances of getting a job by speaking at the meeting, but what chance do young people have of getting a job anyway?

Jayne ended by saying that every YOP worker should get organised and that there should be a national one-day YOP strike.

Amongst the speakers was Tony Goodall, a member of the LPYS, who described his experiences and pointed out that YOPs were just being used as cheap labour. Tony showed that Peters Stores had recently sacked 81 of its employees, some with over 20 years' service, to replace them with YOPs.

He called on all YOPs to join together, join NUPE and fight for better pay and conditions. The LPYS must step up its work in this campaign. Just in the past fortnight 200 names have been collected of YOPs around Tyneside wanting to join our fight, including 80 at the rally.

Thirty-five members of the LPYS made a major im-

BUILD OUR SALES

The next few weeks will see the TUC in Blackpool, the Labour Party demonstration in Birmingham and Labour's annual conference in Brighton.

The voice of Marxism must be heard loud and clear in the trade unions and the Labour Party during these important events.

So 'Militant' has decided to launch a special six-week drive to give an extra boost to our rising sales.

The millionaires' press and the bosses' television will be pouring out distortions and lies to try to confuse workers and blacken the labour movement. We can be sure they will particularly attack those prepared to fight the most energetically for workers' interests and who are campaigning for bold socialist policies.

This has to be countered with a workers' paper which tells the truth and offers a real, fighting alternative.

The media onslaught against 'Militant' shows that we are having a good effect! But there are millions more workers to reach.

We are appealing to all our supporters in the movement to find new readers. What a blow to the bosses if 'Militant's' sales were to double in the next six weeks.

All this would need is for every reader to find one new reader!

But why not go one better? Take out a bulk order to sell to your workmates, Labour Party members, trade union members or neighbours?

Since the arrival of the Thatcher government, 'Militant's' sales have gone up and up. More and more workers have come to see that the only way forward is with socialist policies.

Give Thatcher and her cronies something really to worry about: a more frequent, bigger 'Militant'.

Let us know about plans in your area—and your successes.

Already our supporters in East Wales have mapped out a strategy to double their pit sales from the present 130 (at just four pits!) to 250.

The sellers in Plymouth recently had a bonanza. They sold 176 in one week. In Basildon, supporters organised a sales drive on the estates and streets and sold 30.

If you are prepared to become a regular seller of 'Militant', write to the Circulation Department, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

By Dave Farrar

part selling 'Militant', a specially produced Newcastle Socialist Youth Bulletin, and leafletting for our public meeting.

As Tom Sawyer, NUPE's Northern Divisional Secretary made clear: "This is only the beginning."

By Dave Maples
(Newcastle North LPYS)

A GREAT CAMP

It is a common sight to see within the pages of 'Militant' that events held by the paper's supporters are 'bigger and better than ever before'.

This is no empty phrase with the constant growth of 'Militant's support and influence within the labour movement.

This year's South Wales 'Militant' summer camp was indeed 'bigger and better'. Nearly 400 'Militant' supporters attended the camp held over August

Bank holiday, situated in the beautiful scenery of the Gower coast.

During the camp, the money flowed into the fighting fund. Over £560 was collected in an appeal at one of the lectures, and more money was collected in a raffle for a special cartoon of the camp, drawn by 'Militant's' cartoonist Alan Hardman.

Past struggles of workers

And raising fighting fund wasn't left to the 'grown ups'. Kate Wall (12) from Bradford, Zoe Chester (9) from Rochdale, with help

from Damian, raised £10 in raffling of their work of art depicting the camp.

During the children's fancy dress, Emma Edwards (as a 'red under the bed') raised £13.70 in a 'potty' collection. Inscribed on the potty was 'flush the Tories out'!

The five lectures over the weekend centred on the struggles of the international labour movement over the past 60 years, analysing their successes and defeats.

Subjects covered were the Russian revolution 1917, the rise of fascism in Germany, the Spanish revolution 1931-37, the 1956 Hungarian revolution and finally, bringing the discus-

sion to the present day, the role of Marxism and the Labour Party.

Of particular interest to many campers was the lecture on the Hungarian revolution, in view of the recent upheavals in Poland. Leading off the discussion, Pat Wall, President of Bradford Trades Council, firstly outlined the events in Hungary after world war two, outlining how the Stalinist bureaucracy consolidated its position in control over Hungarian society, using the classic 'salami' tactics of Stalinism, cutting off opposition slice by slice.

Using graphic examples, Pat moved on to describe the uprising of the Hungarian workers, which

not only won many rank-and-file members of the Hungarian Communist Party to its side, but many of the Russian soldiers who were sent in to smash the revolution.

Don't miss next year's!

As usual, despite the forecasts of rain, the camp basked in Bank Holiday sunshine, which set the scene for many social events. The football league was won by the North London team, although in the select match, Wales beat England.

And for the fourth year running, the beer drinking

competition was won by the Eastern Region Abbots. As for the "club night" on the final evening of the camp, the printed word is insufficient to describe the performances, although the highlight was, without doubt, comrade James Bond and his performing ostrich!

This is an event not to be missed. Next year, put your August Bank Holiday aside for the South Wales summer camp!

By Bob Wade

UNEMPLOYMENT KILLS

The bosses' press was quick to denounce the Widnes coroner who made it clear that he thought the suicide of two local boys was caused by unemployment.

Sean Grant and Graeme Rathbone, both 19, left a suicide note saying, "What have we left to live for now there is no work for anyone?"

The Tory press does not like the plain truth being spelled out, any more than the Tories themselves.

Mrs Thatcher's ministers have done their best to restrict a report, commissioned under the last Labour government, on the connection between unemployment and ill-health. Ready last May, the report by Dr Leonard Fagin, a consultant psychiatrist, was produced in only 200 copies at £6 a time!

Depression and illness

No wonder! Dr Fagin's survey, according to the 'Sunday Times' (30 August) shows that "the loss of a job can trigger psychological changes which in some bread-winners result in clinical depression, hopelessness, self-blame, lethargy, withdrawal, loss or gain of weight, suicidal thoughts, violent behaviour and a greater dependence on tobacco and alcohol."

According to the study, unemployment can also produce various physical symptoms, such as asthma attacks, rashes on the skin, backaches and headaches.

Tory spokesmen are trying to pass off this study as "just one report" which "over-stresses" the link between unemployment and ill-health. But a number of other studies, all by psychiatrists, community health councils, and other experts show a similar link.

Linford Rees, a professor of psychiatry in London, has shown the clear correla-



What future do the Tories offer workers and young people? The labour movement must provide the alternative. Photo: Militant

tion historically between unemployment and suicide figures in Britain. After 1932 when 2.8 million were unemployed, there was a peak of 4,045 male and 1,760 female suicides the following year.

Unemployment maims and kills. That is the conclusion of all serious studies.

Suicide is a last, terrible "escape" for those who have lost all hope.

The labour movement

must show the unemployed that there is hope—provided workers and unemployed are organised to fight for a change in society. The TUC must demonstrate the power of the labour movement and show that it is prepared to take bold action.

In launching a campaign to organise YOPS workers, the LPYS has given a lead which must now be taken up by the whole labour movement.

Prince and the Porter

For Prince Charles' visit we had to clean the platforms for him, had to brush down the toilets. They had 200 coppers in the station.

I had to take some rubbish to the skip and I went around the corner into the West End dock and I just couldn't get moved for police, and the West End dock is canny big.

They swept the platforms, they had all the staff out cleaning the walls, they had a couple of lads painting some white fences and they've only been used for one day—that's when he comes.

They had them cleaning out the gutters, they had them cleaning the lines up—picking all the paper up off the lines. They went over the station cleaning it—believe it or not—with mops.

All of that was just for him getting off the train and just walking straight through. It was stopping us from doing our job as well. If it was some footballer we'd all be interested and we'd want to go and see him.

But if we went and stopped work, well? I was stopped by the police from doing my job, of course I reported the copper. If there had been any urgent instructions what would have happened?

Everybody had to wear full uniform or they got sent

By a junior railwayman

home. All the gaffers in their bowlers of course, looking like Bero men.

My job as a junior railwayman is very boring, very disorganised, pathetic sometimes. I can do anything from sewage work to a binman's job. I can do a cleaner's job. It's so pathetic.

I'm 17 now and I come out with £31 a week. I give £10 board and that leaves me with £21.

The shifts mean I have to get up at 4.30 in the morning, walk all the way to Heworth and wait for a bus. I worked on the Bank Holiday. I had to get up at 3.30 am and walk all the way to get there for 6 o'clock.

When you are 6 to 2 shift you have to get to bed early. You don't have any life at all when you're on shift work. Sometimes they ask you to do overtime. Well they don't ask you they tell you to do overtime—that's 12 hours.

What 12 hours means to me if I work a week of 12 hours is just an extra £5.

And that means you're shattered—literally shattered. You've got no life at all for those five days except work and sleep.

Rail pay article—p15

BACK BENN CAMPAIGN

A leaflet has been produced by NUPE members in London, which calls on members of NUPE, the local authority union, to vote for Tony Benn in the coming union ballot. This ballot will decide how NUPE's votes are cast in the Labour Party deputy

leadership elections. Outlining the programme Tony Benn is standing on, it also stresses the importance of Tony Benn's "record of consistently fighting for the constitutional reforms which are needed to keep the next Labour government in

line. We don't want the next Labour government to give us further 'winters of discontent'. Labour MPs have got to be made accountable to the labour movement as a whole." Details of how to obtain the leaflet are on page 13.



When the Tories came to power in 1979, thanks to the bankrupt policies of the '74-'79 right-wing Labour government, some extreme Tory right wingers sailed into parliament on the wave of disillusionment with Labour policies that swept the country. One such character was Harvey Proctor, MP for the former Labour stronghold of Basildon. His doctrine can be judged by the company he keeps. In July at the Caxton Hall, London, he addressed a meeting called by a new racist grouping called WISE, calling for 'repatriation'. Mixing with members of the Tory 'Monday Club' at this meeting were many racist and fascist grouplets. Racist grouplets present included the Immigration Control Association, the World Anti-Communist League and the British League of Rights. Fascist groups present were 30 members of the Young National Front, the National Front Constitutional Movement, and even members of the openly nazi British Movement. Significantly the vote of thanks from the floor to Harvey Proctor was proposed by Andrew Fontaine, a former leader of the NF. (Source: 'Searchlight' September issue).

Conditions determine consciousness, so the old Marxist saying goes. So we shouldn't be surprised to learn that once upon a time Tory minister Michael Heseltine nearly joined the Labour Party. Today of course, Heseltine is an extremely wealthy man, owning three mansions in Belgravia, Ranbury and Exmoor. But in his youth he had a hard time—well 'hard' when you compare it to the massive wealth he has accumulated today. The son of a manager of a steel works, he struggled his way through public school and then Oxford University, entering adult life with a £1,000 legacy (a tidy sum in those days). It was then he "questioned the ideals of free enterprise" and thought of switching from the Tory Party to Labour. But luckily this bout of youthful madness only lasted a few months: "I think it was the sheer awfulness of the Labour Party, even in those days, that made me stay where I was" ('Sun', 27 August). No doubt there were too many damn socialists in the Labour Party for Michael's liking, even in the early 'sixties. But this little episode gives an idea of some of the characters who crept into the Labour Party in the early 'sixties and late 'fifties, at the height of the capitalist boom.

At last, the secret of successful government has been discovered! Two weeks ago, learned gentlemen from all over the world got together at Leeds University for an international conference. There they concluded politics has nothing to do with it. The secret is—accent! And using this method, Professor John Honey and the other 'experts' of the English language mapped out a perspective for British politics. Roy Jenkins has no chance of becoming leader of the Social Democrats, they said. Why? Because he is too upper class and says 'orf' instead of 'off' (we thought they all did!). And Tony Benn hasn't a chance for leadership of the Labour Party because he apparently says 'esh' instead of 's'. No doubt at this year's party conference, when Tony Benn calls for the 'abolishment of the House of Lords', the rank and file will walk out in disgust. However, Roy Hattersley could become a national leader because he was "brought up in South Yorkshire. If he spoke with the accent of the majority of his Brimingham constituency," says the Professor, "the door to No 10 would be shut fast against him." Bad luck Brummies, no chance of any of you becoming Prime Minister. And Mrs Thatcher? "She speaks very well... Now she is at the top, people are more disposed to tolerate an accent which they would not take from anyone else because it would be thought by some people to be too posh." So stop moaning everyone. Mrs Thatcher's government may have pushed unemployment up to three million, industry may be collapsing like a pack of cards, but at least she talks proper not like what we do.

'LEAVE POLITICS TO THE YS'

By Chris Brooks
(Assistant Sec.,
Loughborough CLP)

"Let the Tories run the tea parties, but leave the politics to the LPYS". That was the message that rang out from Loughborough's Trinity Methodist Church Hall when the Loughborough Young Conservatives debated with the LPYS.

The Loughborough Y.C.s found that debating their motion "the Conservative way, not the Labour way, is the better way" (how's that for public school grammar!) was a bit more than their 'social club' could handle.

The debate was lost before it even began, when the Y.C.s National chairman said he agreed with "six of the seven points" in a local Y.S. recruitment leaflet. Had he seen the light at last? No chance. He only offered the same old Tory platitudes to achieve them.



A 'Young' Conservative speaking (?) at a recent YC v LPYS debate in London. Every time the YCs meet the YS for a public debate they are politically hammered. Photo: Militant

Other Y.C. comedians included a Keith Joseph clone (who was by far the most hilarious speaker of the night!) and one Y.C. who wanted to give every country nuclear weapons as a way of avoiding wars (honest!)

Y.S. speakers ripped into Tory policies, and to rapturous applause put forward the alternative policies of

massive re-investment, public ownership, and an end to the arms race.

As speaker after speaker denounced Tory policies, the Y.C.s became increasingly reluctant to defend their government. This was reflected in the vote when mass abstentions led to a resounding 'NO!' to the Tories awful policies!

Y.S. Secretary Martyn

Berridge said afterwards he was delighted with the result which emphasised the anger and frustration of youth with the disastrous policies of the Tories and their determination to smash this government and bring about a Labour government elected on bold socialist policies.

BOOTLE WOMEN'S SECTION

The women's section of Bootle Labour Party organised a meeting on womens rights and the future for women in the labour movement recently.

Jo Richardson MP for Barking and Allan Roberts MP for Bootle, were both greeted with loud applause from the 100 people who attended the meeting.

Jo outlined that the womens sections are organising all over the country, taking on a new role, and are beginning to organise with determination. Jo explained that womens sections have moved away from the more traditional role of 'fund raisers and tea makers' to active members of the party.

Ann Bannister, the

delegate from Bootle womens section to the Buxton conference, outlined how women's militancy was growing. This was reflected in the type of resolutions being passed at the womens conference, she said, specifically referring to those passed on the economy.

Allan Roberts spoke of the increasing violent attacks made against women. The Tory policies of cutting street maintenance etc. did little to help. He also referred to the way women were portrayed in the media as sex objects or being associated with household chores.

Both Allan and Jo discussed abortion and urged the need for readily available facilities to be provided for women.

However, despite the suc-

cess of the whole evening's discussion, the women's section were approached by a male party member to do some sewing for banners that are needed! This really shows why there is a need for women to organise separately in the party so that they can learn to cope with such sexist ideas that still exist a great deal in and outside the movement.

It is important that women continue the struggle, to organise and recruit new members to fight for what we believe in i.e. a transformation to a socialist society.

By Noreen Short
and Joan Clarke
(Bootle LP Women's
section)

Scottish police prepare for riots

Following the riots that have taken place south of the border, Rutherglen Labour Party Young Socialists called a public meeting titled, "The riots—is Glasgow next?"

The meeting concluded that conditions in certain inner city areas of Glasgow are probably worse than those of Toxteth, Brixton etc.

And if the Tory vandals continue to destroy the future of young people, rioting is not only possible, but indeed more than likely.

This view was confirmed by an article in the Glasgow Herald (18/8/81); "Scotland's police regions have now been equipped with new riot gear and protective clothing following the recent riots...the estimated cost is £250,000."



A policeman in riot gear in the recent Toxteth riots. Photo: Militant

A recent conference of chief constables, which met to assess the potential riot situation throughout Scotland, decided to re-equip the regional police forces with anti-riot equipment. It is clear that the tops of the police force are anticipating further social disturbances. Yet, unlike the LPYS, the capitalist state makes no attempt to prevent this happening. Rather it strengthens its armoury. The only way to prevent further riots is to eliminate the cause. That means kicking out the Tories and their rotten system.

By Stephen
Wright
(Rutherglen LPYS)



In Littlehampton we have been selling papers outside the dole office—even in a once prosperous area like this unemployment varies between 10-12%.

Every age group is now signing on; we are talking to all sorts of people, from 16 year olds having just left school, and those in their 50s and 60s. All tell the same story—there is little or no prospect for the future.

We have talked to bricklayers, teachers, carpenters, and men and women representing all trades and professions, and it seems that right across the board, workers have been hit by this Tory government.

Three or four of us are there most week days, and besides increasing the sales of Militant in this area, we have brought many people into the Labour Party.

Recently when we held a Readers' Meeting, eight people we had talked to on the dole queue attended, many of them, for the first time in their lives, talking and thinking politically.

One lad at the meeting was so taken with our ideas that—although only on £19 per week he gave us an IOU for £2 (which he paid) during the appeal. This was a real sacrifice.

This is the work we must do to ensure a good understanding of the present situation among ordinary working people, and through this bringing an influx of new people into the Labour Party, thus ensuring we have the mass Labour Party, armed with socialist ideas to sweep us to power at the next election.

By Tim Gibbs,
Stan Natrass
and Chris Wells

REASONS FOR SUSPICION

Three youths aged about 16 or 17 have been to a pop concert at Bradford College Queens Hall. Their parents know they will be late home and they have been given money for a taxi.

It is past midnight. As they walk into the city centre one youth crosses the road to phone for a taxi but finds the booth vandalised. As he recrosses the road to join his friends he is grabbed by a policeman and is accused of vandalising the phone box.

This he strenuously denies and with the backing of his friends' evidence he is finally released.

The attitude of the police constable was that he had the youth's name, he would remember his face and the next time he saw him in town he would have him inside.

A small incident and in the end relatively harmless, but it explains the disenchantment of large sections of youth, both black and white, with the forces of so-called "law and order".

The three youths had no criminal record, were white and well dressed. What would have happened had it been a lone black youth or a skinhead?

Bradford workers were shocked at the attempted prosecution of a West Indian security man employed

By Pete Watson
(Bradford West Labour Party)

at Bradford College, charged with obstructing and assaulting the police.

Following a spirited defence campaign, Gary Pemberton was found not guilty, but the ill-feeling over the prosecution remains.

In recent weeks the Bradford Trades Council has demanded a public enquiry into the case of West Indian Cyril Agard, who was savagely bitten by a police dog and who alleges that he was in addition severely beaten in police van, even to the extent of being told that if he was sick he would be made to eat his own vomit.

The police appear to have a different attitude to known racials and fascists. In 1974, on the occasion of the first mass anti-racialist demonstration in Bradford organised by the Labour Party Young Socialists, two senior members of the Bradford Trades Council were punched and kicked by a gang of twenty or more fascist youths from Leeds. The historic Trades Council banner which had represented Bradford workers for the best part of a century, was torn, burnt and urinated on.

During the whole of this incident police officers were at the scene, yet they made no attempt to intervene until forced to do so by the protests of local shoppers. Two youths were arrested but their case was dropped, with them merely being bound over for a year.

— Contrast that to the arbitrary arrests of leading labour movement activists such as Dave Stark and Geoff Draper who received heavy fines when they were "guilty" only of being peacefully present at an anti-fascist demonstration in Dewsbury.

In 1977 during the week of the Labour Party conference in Brighton a local left-wing activist was stabbed by a fascist and almost died. Protests were made to Merlin Rees, then Labour Home Secretary, by MPs and Bradford delegates.

The resulting action by the police was to arrest members and supporters of the Trades Council distributing leaflets in the shopping precinct where the stabbing took place. Only a mass leafletting the following week re-established the right to freely distribute literature and to sell socialist papers.

Many more incidents could be quoted. However, the events recorded explain local activists' very real suspicion of the attitude of the police. How much more must those feelings exist among the ten per cent of Bradford's population who are black?

Police powers threaten workers rights

Deep suspicion of police methods has again been aroused in the Bradford area by the recent arrest of 12 Asian youths accused of preparing petrol bombs.

This was given massive publicity nationally which implicitly, if not openly, praised the police's dramatic action.

But the 12 youths are adamant that they are not guilty and that they have been framed by the police (see Defence Campaign statement). It is ominous that conspiracy charges, which are notorious for allowing the prosecution to use all kinds of circumstantial evidence to back up vague allegations, have been brought and not more specific charges.

The labour movement must support the right of workers to defend themselves and their homes against attack, whether from vicious fascist thugs,

or from police on the rampage. This does not mean, however, that the labour movement accepts rioting as a way out. We cannot condone looting, arson and the throwing of petrol bombs.

But when considering the riots, the labour movement has to recognise a number of things.

The conflict on the streets has arisen from the conditions created by the anti-working class policies of the Tories and the rotten decay of their profit-motivated system. Too angry to take any more, sections of the youth and also some older workers have blindly lashed back.

This in itself points to the need for the labour movement to offer a real alternative. Bold policies, backed up by action, are needed to direct the anger and frustration of young people and workers into effective channels to change the system.

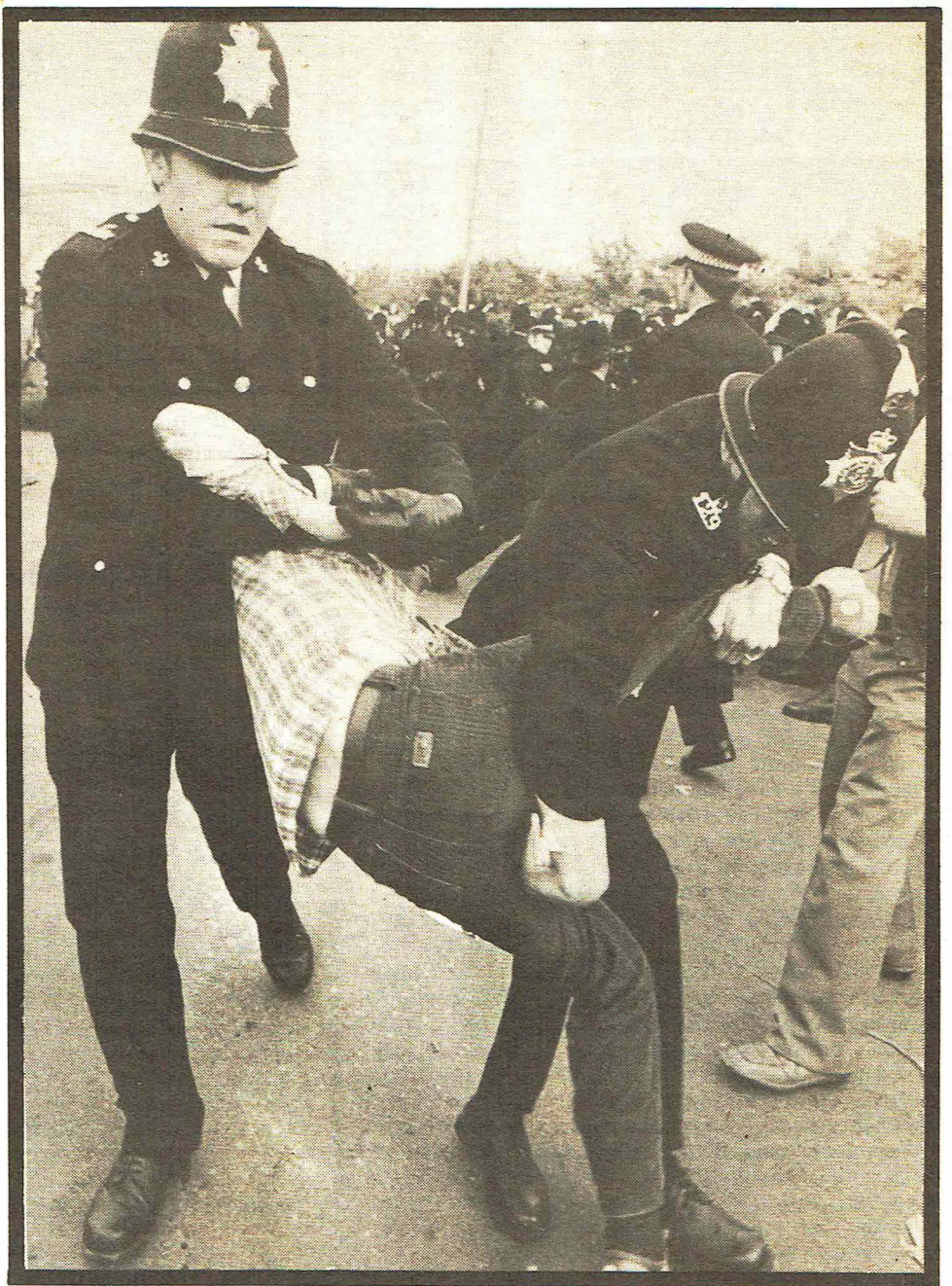
It is not just the conditions, however, but the role of the police which has led

to riots. The fighting on the streets, in the big majority of cases, has been sparked off by provocative police actions, following years of aggressive policing in many inner-city areas.

While not in any way supporting looting and arson, the labour movement must not react by standing back to allow the Tories and the police chiefs to use the riots as an excuse for even more aggressive police methods and repressive laws.

Long before the riots, it was clear that Thatcher was building up the police not, as the Tories claimed, to fight crime, but for use against workers increasingly organising and battling against cuts, unemployment and other big business measures.

Labour must take up the defence of those unjustly arrested and sentenced. Many of those arrested in the aftermath of the riots have not been the real looters, but people indiscriminately grabbed in police "mopping-up" exer-



Police arresting pickets at the Isle of Grain, May 1980. The repressive measures practised in areas like Bradford can be used as a precedent against the labour movement.

BRADFORD 12

On Thursday, 30 July, and Friday, 31 July, police officers carried out a series of raids in the Bradford Asian community. They arrested eleven Asian youths. [The eleven are named in the original leaflet, since which a twelfth Asian has also been arrested—Ed.]

They were taken to the police station at the Tyrls, where they were subjected to the constant and prolonged pressure of a police interrogation. Concerned relatives and friends were not allowed to speak or visit them, nor were they allowed to see solicitors until half-an-hour before they appeared in Bradford Magistrates' Court on Saturday, 1st August.

All eleven were charged with Conspiracy to endanger property and life, and Conspiracy to cause

Grievous Bodily Harm on or about the 11th July, 1981. The second charge can carry a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.

The police claim that the charges are based on so-called "voluntary statements", yet the defendants are all pleading NOT GUILTY TO BOTH CHARGES. These charges have been brought against a background of serious racist attacks, including physical assaults and arson, on members of the black community. The police have consistently failed to take action against those responsible.

The defendants have

been actively involved in campaigning against the police harassment and frame-up of Gary Pemberton and the racist immigration laws affecting people like Anwar Ditta and Jaswinder Kaur. All the defendants have been refused bail. [One of the 12 has since been allowed bail]

We believe that these are political charges and have been brought for political purposes. We demand: 1) That the police conspiracy charges be dropped; 2) The immediate release of all defendants.

□ This is the statement issued on 6 August by the "JULY 11th ACTION COMMITTEE", an independent organisation composed of the defendants' friends and relatives, c/o 2nd Floor, Textile Hall, Westgate, Bradford, 1.

cises.

It is also clear that the police feel that the riots justify the cutting of many legal corners.

Prisoners may eventually be found guilty. But does this justify the police beating them up in cells, forcing confessions, or otherwise denying suspects their rights? And in many cases, people subjected to such treatment, the police's own brand of "rough justice", are subsequently acquitted by the courts.

In effect, some right-wing police chiefs are claiming that "the fight against crime" (as defined by them) justifies policemen themselves bending the law and using their powers to curtail civil liberties.

We must also take a stand against savage sentences being meted out in the courts, in some cases wildly

disproportionate to the crimes or alleged crimes concerned. Such a policy will only intensify the anger and the bitterness of the youth and workers in the cities.

It must also be brought home to the ranks of the labour movement that repressive policing, summary treatment in the courts, and vicious sentences now being used against rioters, or alleged rioters, will in the future be used as a precedent, as far as the Tories are concerned, for similar measures against trade unionists fighting to defend workers' interests.

We are not against the police taking action against the real criminal elements. But the labour movement cannot just accept a police force which is more and more openly trampling on democratic rights establish-

ed by the struggle of the labour movement in the past.

The labour movement must demand that the police be made accountable.

There should be local authority police committees, including one for London's Metropolitan and City forces, which should have the power to appoint and dismiss senior police officers, control police expenditure, and publicly monitor and check policing methods.

At the same time, the TUC should take up the issue of trade union rights for policemen and policewomen, campaigning to introduce a genuinely democratic, trade union element into the ranks of the police.

WORKERS UNITY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

By Lesley Holt
(Kirkdale Labour Party)



The workers at Lee Jeans, mainly women, have given a lead to all workers.

Photo: Militant

A third of TUC affiliated members are women.

The power of the trade unions is vital to protect the pay, conditions and rights of women workers. But it is clear that much more needs to be done to involve women in the unions and to fight for their interests.

The Equal Pay Act and the Sex Discrimination Act failed to achieve genuine equal pay and equal opportunities for women, even before the recession and Tory attacks. Now the Tories are snatching the hard-gotten gains that men and women fought for in the labour movement.

Attacks on maternity rights, sick leave, nurseries, school dinners and jobs, are all part of their aim to drive women back to the home. For the bosses, women are the most expendable part of the workforce, especially the part-timers.

Women's unemployment has increased four times faster than male unemployment since 1975.

Yet for women and their families women's jobs are absolutely vital. Eighty per cent of women work at some time in their lives and their pay keeps more than a sixth of families from poverty.

The recession has hit traditional areas of women's employment, like

textiles, food, drink, tobacco, shop work, and cuts have taken away jobs in the public sector. 63% of 16-year-old girls normally go to work in these areas. What will happen to them now? All the Tories can offer them is temporary cheap-labour jobs on YOPS.

Cuts threaten 100,000 NUPE dinner jobs alone. More dinner ladies' jobs have been lost already than in the steel closures. Less dramatic, but with just as much effect on their families.

Positive discrimination would not create extra jobs, but would foster divisions and feed prejudice

Defence of part-time work is essential. A third of part-time teaching jobs have gone, compared to 2% full-time. Family commitments, and massive cuts in nursery, childcare and geriatric care mean that part-time jobs are essential to women.

The trade union movement must link the fight against the cuts to a campaign for facilities such as comprehensive, free nursery

provisions, municipal laundry services, and community restaurants to relieve women's double burden of work and housework.

The potential of trade union support for these demands was shown by the support for the anti-Corrie demonstration and for the right of women to have abortions.

To build unity between men and women in the trade union movement we must reject the idea of women's "job quotas" and the reserving of a proportion of the more skilled and more highly paid jobs for women.

Positive discrimination would not create any extra jobs. But such a policy would easily foster divisions and feed prejudice which already exists amongst male workers. Unity in fighting all job losses and for a campaign for a living wage of at least £80 a week and a 35-hour week is absolutely essential.

The 35-hour week would create a million extra jobs. Shorter working hours would allow men to play a fuller part in the home as well as reduce the women's burden, and the £80 wage is needed to lift women out of poverty wages.

In April 1980, the average wage in the cleaning, catering and hairdressing industries, which are mainly women, was £57 a week, and in selling and retailing, only £51 a week.

Neither will job quotas aid women to break out of such traditional areas of "women's jobs", badly

paid and badly organised, while control of the jobs lies with the bosses. Grading, hiring and firing must be under the control of the trade union movement.

There is no shortage of women class fighters

The trade unions should themselves monitor the taking on of people in these jobs to ensure that women are taking a fair share of the jobs. In Liverpool, for example, the city's parks and gardens stewards' committee is monitoring the number of women and blacks to encourage them to apply for jobs.

The trade union movement must also fight for special training to compensate for the lack of learning that women suffer in particular skills. Training must be at employers' expense.

The trade union movement must conduct pay campaigns to reduce the differentials.

This must be done not by attacking men's pay levels but by fighting for pay increases which improve the level of all workers.

This also means that the participation of women at every level of the unions is vital in order for them to act in their interests. How can this be done?

There is no shortage of women as class fighters. Grunwicks, Lee Jeans, and other disputes, as well as

National Health Service occupations have shown that. Women have recognised the need to join the trade union movement, and some unions like NUPE and ASTMS have had a massive increase in women members.

The present male domination of the unions will not be effectively overcome by "positive discrimination" within the labour movement. Action must be taken urgently to involve more women actively in the unions, and to ensure that women play much more of a part on local and national bodies.

But this will not be done simply by establishing reserved places for women representatives. This would be a narrow administrative approach, a form of tokenism.

Unions must take practical steps to enable women to play a full part at all levels of the movement

Changing the rules in this way will not guarantee that trade union representatives will act in the interests of women, or that more women members will be actively involved in the union.

What will guarantee this is real democracy in the unions, with the election

and recall of all officials, and the average wage of those that the people they represent being paid to those officials.

Nevertheless, the unions do have to take practical measures to ensure that women can go to the union meetings, to vote for people and put themselves forward. Steps should be taken to ensure union meetings are held in works time, that creche and child-care facilities are available and that baby-sitting expenses are paid for attending union meetings.

Facility time at work for stewards is also vital for women members.

The trade unions must ensure that women are given special encouragement to take positions in the union at all levels, through special training courses of the kind NUPE and the T&GWU have begun to organise in some areas.

Women have to be given the confidence to take on such positions.

But most important is a fighting programme for the TUC which takes up all the issues affecting women, to fight for the social and political emancipation of women as part of the socialist struggle to change society.

New threat to family allowances

By Pat Blatch

Once again Tory cuts affect women. In a bid to save wage bills the Tory government has introduced a new system of paying Family Allowance.

For those who are already in receipt of family allowances, it will remain a weekly payment. For how long is anyone's guess. But new parents will only get their payments monthly.

This may not seem too

drastic at first sight. But if your husband is on the dole and you depend on regular income it is more difficult to manage if you get this payment monthly.

The tendency is to blow the allowance within a few days. Increasingly, family allowance is used to buy food in the middle of the week, and without this many families would have to do without.

My husband is in full employment and brings home a weekly pay packet. Even so, we depend on the

£9.50 on Tuesday to get us through till pay-day on Friday.

We are considered by our neighbours to be "well off" as we occasionally have a joint of meat on Sunday. Most of the unemployed haven't seen a joint of meat for months, or years even.

What most women need is regular payment of family allowance, not at four-week intervals. We also need increases to help parents who are on the poverty line, employed and unemployed.

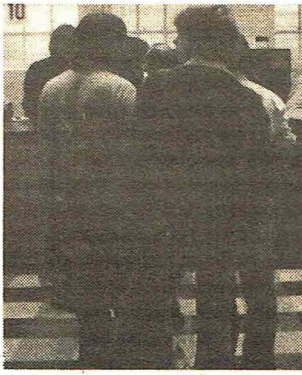
Looking for a non-existent job

By Ruth Jellings
(Ealing North CLP)

The present plight of the thousands of young school leavers thrown onto the dole from school is doubly compounded when some of them are also deprived or have personality problems to contend with.

I work in a local authority children's home. Four of our adolescents left school this year and only one has managed to get a place on a YOPS scheme.

He leaves the home at 7 am to get to work at 8 am and arrives back at 5 pm. Out of his £23.50 a week he pays £8.30 board and lodging and a mandatory £2.50 for his clothing.



One more school leaver joins the dole queue

The other three adolescents have applied for numerous jobs only to be turned down, and this

failure added to their already low self-image, results in abuse of the staff and activities like drinking and delinquency.

It is estimated that in our borough's units alone over 40 young people have left school and have no job or training scheme and therefore no money at all to spend as officially school leavers aren't entitled to pocket money paid by the council.

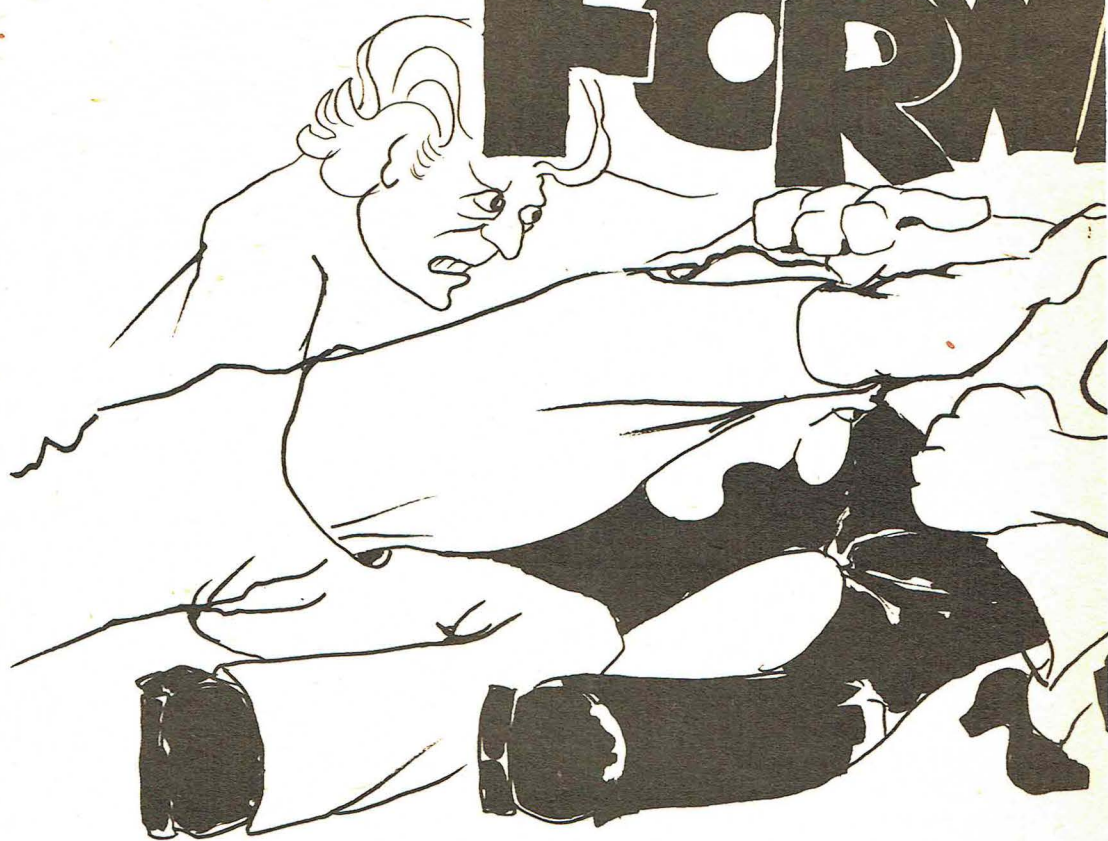
They can't even sign on until September and so all we can do is pack them off to what is laughably called the Careers Centre to look for a non-existent job.

TUC: Time to take Action

By Wayne Jones

THOSE BEHIND CRIED

FORWARD



The Tories are still in office despite two years of the most damaging and destructive economic and social policies. Unrelenting attacks on living standards and democratic rights of the working people have been carried out. Whole communities have been destroyed.

Manufacturing industry, the backbone of the economy, has been clobbered. Public-sector earnings have been held down by rigid cash limits.

The advances and achievements in health and welfare provision fought for through many years of struggle are being slashed to ribbons by Tory cuts.

Unemployment is callously used as a weapon of fear to hold down wages and attempt to cow workers to meekly accept poor conditions and lower living standards. Unemployment has doubled in two years.

The rich Tory ministers are remote from the daily

struggles and privations of working people and their families. They do not see the suffering they are inflicting. They do not feel the despair and frustration of jobless youth, the humiliation of redundant workers, or the nagging insecurity of those still at work.

Every 1% increase in unemployment, according to expert estimates, means 2% increase in the mortality rate. This means that the increase in the dole figure from July to August will claim the lives of another 60 workers.

The TUC cannot hold back any longer: words must become action

And there is more to come as long as this big business government re-

mains in power. The harsh prospect is 40,000 more redundancies every month.

This intolerable situation has strained the nerves of some youth beyond breaking point. The blind fury of a future without hope has erupted into widespread rioting.

The TUC has a responsibility to show a way out to the youth and the working people of this country. The trade unions are the decisive force in society.

Sweet reason has not moved the Tories an inch. The TUC must lead a campaign of mass protest using every nerve and muscle of its powerful body to remove this hated Tory government.

Despite mass unemployment and curbs on trade union rights, wave after wave of workers have fought back. Too often they have been allowed to fight in isolation.

Clearly, only a united and resolute national struggle embracing every section of the working class can succeed. The TUC cannot hold back any longer. Words must become action.

Need to counter Tory attacks on trade union rights

The need to campaign against Tory policies—and not just by propaganda methods—is the theme running through the 113th Trades Union Congress.

The experience of the last two years has left its mark clearly on the outlook of many trade unionists. There is a growing awareness that trade union defensive action is not enough by itself.

A political solution is necessary to deal with the crisis of capitalism. Unity of political and industrial action is more essential than ever.

This mood is summed up in a short resolution on unemployment from the Foundry Section of the AUEW, which ends by demanding that "Congress calls on the General Council to liaise with the Labour Party so that a united campaign can be mounted against the Government's economic policy which has led to so much misery for working people."

Although the many other important aspects of trade union interests are covered, from pensions to smoking, it is the question of unemployment and the social consequences that flow from it which naturally dominates the agenda.

It is no accident that the Tories have combined redundancies with renewed attempts to restrict the right to strike and picket effectively. The Tories recognise that they must shackle trade union power if their policies are to succeed.

So far, they have recoiled from using present laws to take on workers for fear of the explosive response this would provoke. They have capitulated to the dockers, miners and now railway-workers, understanding that mass picketing and widespread solidarity action would take place in support of these strikes.

Resolutions from the GMWU, the NGA and the FBU show clearly the opposition of workers to the Tories' class-based legislation, and also that such opposition would render such laws inoperable if they were actually used.

The General and Municipal Workers Union calls on all affiliated unions to 'refuse to co-operate in its [i.e. the Employment Act's] implementation', and calls on the General Council 'to continue to mount a campaign opposed to them.'

The Fire Brigades Union states bluntly that any further anti-trade union legislation must be met by 'a policy of non-compliance with any such law.'

The Civil and Public Services Association adds a timely amendment, referring to the strike in the USA of the American Air Traffic Controllers. It calls on Congress to instruct the General Council to 'unite all unions in opposition to 'no strike clauses,' either engineered or negotiated.'

In all probability, most of these resolutions will be overwhelmingly passed. But it is vital that the ranks of the trade union membership begin to exert concerted pressure on the TUC leadership to ensure that they are acted on.

Trade unions must back Labour councils fighting Tory cuts

As well as a number of important resolutions on the fight against unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, there are motions calling for a campaign against the Tories' measures to drive down the already meagre benefits of the unemployed, sick and pensioned workers.

The Metal Mechanics want an end to meanstested benefits and the return of earnings-related unemployment benefit.

The CPSA, the union organising most DHSS workers, 'rejects the unsubstantiated claims that there are high levels of fraud and abuse and agrees (with the Rayer Report on Payment to the Unemployed) that by far the greater problem is that of unclaimed benefits.' CPSA deplores the Tories' attempt

'to blame the unemployed for their own unemployment.'

The decline in the quality of life and the rise of unemployment brought about by the Tories' cutbacks in public expenditure are taken up in resolutions tabled from both the industrial white-collar public sector unions.

Re-affirmation of the TUC policy that the National Health Service 'should be funded from general taxation and free at the point of use' comes from the nurses' union, COHSE.

COHSE calls upon the General Council 'to recommend to affiliated unions whatever action they consider necessary, if the Government seeks to introduce such an alternative health-care system.'

The National Union of Mineworkers reasserts Congress's belief that 'education is both a birthright and a national asset. It is particularly concerned therefore at the effects of cuts in the education services, which result in reduced numbers of teachers and other staff; curtailed services such as the provision of school dinners, larger classes, and shortages of materials and equipment.'

'Congress accordingly calls on the labour movement to mobilise to resist the government cuts and to improve the education system, in addition to restoring cuts imposed by the Conservative Government, so as to repair the damage to university education and make it more accessible to the working class.'

'Congress insists that the next Labour government must abolish all private education and provide a system of free comprehensive education for all, from nursery to university.'

The first task: Ge



The strategy of the Tories to shift resources from public services to the profit-making private sector to line the pockets of their friends in big business is condemned by the big public sector unions such as NUPE which calls 'on all affiliated unions to unite in a campaign to defend the welfare state and the public services.'

But it is NALGO who spell out clearly the type of campaign that is needed to stop the cuts and defend those local authorities such as Lothian that are confronting the government.

'Congress recognises and congratulates those public bodies, particularly local authorities, which, in accordance with their commitment to the electorate, are resisting the present government's policies on public expenditure and accepts that industrial action is justified against authorities which accede to cuts.'

'Congress therefore instructs the General Council to seek joint action with the NEC of the Labour Party in co-ordinating the activities of trade unions and local authority Labour Groups in the fight against the cuts.'

'In addition, Congress fully supports and urges joint action by authorities and constituent trade unions in their opposition to central government directed cuts.'

The argument will no doubt be raised that this resolution advocates breaking the law. However, if such arguments had prevailed in the past the TUC wouldn't even be holding a Conference to discuss these issues!

It is now trade union folklore that workers' rights, including the right to organise in trade unions, and living standards can sometimes only be protected by breaking unjust

laws formulated by governments as a tool to maintain the interests of the class it represents.

This government has made it patently clear that it stands for the wealth and privilege of a few over the interests of the majority of working class people.

The Tories have made no compromise to their class interests. The labour and trade union movement must have no hesitation to do the same for ours.

Complete rejection of incomes policy

This point is backed up by the Furniture Trades workers on the question of incomes policy, which they reject. They say 'government imposed limitation of wage increases results in gains for those who live by owning, at the expense of those who live by working and so increases inequality in the distribution of wealth and income.'

For the first time in a number of years there is an unequivocal opposition to incomes restraint—whether 'with this government or any organisation,' is the way ASTMS put it.

Clearly, the promises that sacrifices on wages and incomes would lead to higher investment and a redistribution of wealth have been finally exposed as hollow on the basis of the experience of the last two years and the previous Labour government.

The backdoor incomes policy through the use of cash limits in the public sector is condemned by the civil service unions, with the bitter memories of a prolonged struggle for decent pay still fresh in their minds.

Once again, the question of unity in action against

the common enemy is put forward by the Civil and Public Services Association, NUPE and the Society of Civil and Public Servants.

The NUPE resolution 'instructs the General Council to develop a co-ordinated campaign which will include the use of industrial action, to unite all public sector unions in opposition to the government's policies.' This sentiment is echoed by CPSA and SCPS.

Shorter hours and longer holidays with retirement at 60 are urged by several unions to combat unemployment and create jobs. The Transport and Salaried Staffs Association reminds the TUC of its policy, agreed in 1973, of a 35-hour week for all workers.

However, it will be to section 5 on Economic Policy that most activists will turn to in their Agenda booklets to look for a worked-out economic and social strategy to provide an alternative to the chaos of the present capitalist system.

Economic policy: can reforms last in a diseased capitalist economy?

Unfortunately, most of the unions, including the TGWU, fall into the trap of looking for a way out of the bankrupt capitalist system by policies which only seek to trim some of the branches rather than pull up the rotten roots.

Despite the many valuable reforms advocated in these resolutions, such as shorter hours, restoration of cuts, increase in old age pensions, control of prices, rents and fares, more and better retraining, more public investment and greater investment, there is

no explanation as to how such advances are to be achieved whilst the capitalist class still own and control over 80% of the economy.

The experience of the previous Labour government graphically illustrated the fate that awaits any government that attempts to take piecemeal measures against the interests of big business, without tackling the fundamental question of ownership of 'the means of production, distribution and exchange.'

The domination over society which ownership and control confers on a tiny handful of boardroom tycoons was demonstrated with the point-blank refusal of industry to co-operate with a duly elected Labour government in 1974.

Harold Wilson, then Prime Minister, in his memoirs, admits this.

Such undemocratic sabotage by unelected millionaire industrialists and financiers would follow as night follows day if the next Labour government attempted to carry out similar policies.

Without a plan of production and control over the financial institutions, a massive increase in public expenditure would lead to further inflation. This would mean taking back from workers with one hand what had been given with the other.

Several resolutions advocate import controls as a solution, or at least a partial solution, to stem the tide of redundancies and closures.

Not only will import controls fail to solve the economic problems, but they have very dangerous implications for the working class.

However selective import controls would be, they would inevitably lead to retaliation. Protected

markets for the capitalists would mean they would simply put up prices, especially given the highly monopolised nature of British industry. Fifty firms control 80% of all exports—and with the current slump on markets giving no incentive to invest.

Above all, the slogan of import controls is dangerous because it reinforces the myth that bosses and workers have common 'national' interests. It allows the bosses to hide their failure and uses foreigners as scapegoats.

Import controls would not only export unemployment but also create unemployment here, such is the interdependence of world trade.

Call for a campaign to bring down the Tories and return Labour on socialist policies

Import controls would cut across workers' unity, allowing the bosses to divide and rule, and to shift the blame away from where it really lies.

Instead of import controls we must link the fight against redundancies to the demands for nationalisation and socialist planning.

Import controls cannot, under capitalism, deal with the underlying problems caused by the very nature of the capitalist system and its production for profit.

The Bakers' resolution shows the way forward:

'Congress recognises the vicious attempts of the Tory government to make the workers pay for the capitalist crisis.'

'Congress demands that the TUC mount a campaign jointly with the Labour Par-

ty against the cuts in social spending and the anti-union legislation.

'This campaign should clearly aim to bring down the Tory government and bring to power a Labour government pledged to the socialist policies contained in Clause 4, part 4 of the Labour Party constitution.'

The adoption of this resolution by the TUC would be a milestone for the working class of Britain.

Translated into the language of a modern British economy, this would mean the nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, banks and finance companies, with compensation only on the basis of proven need. It would mean running the industry under democratic workers' control and management.

A Labour government, linking the day-to-day struggles and immediate reforms as outlined throughout the TUC agenda with such a policy of fundamental economic change, would have the means of transforming society.

The mood of the working class, angry and bitter at the Tories, is reflected in the resolutions to the Conference. The TUC must gather together all the demands for action and galvanise the trade union movement by calling a 24-hour general strike.

The Tories do not represent working people. After the election of Mitterand in France no one can say that bold policies of nationalisation and radical reforms have no attraction for workers.

A campaign of industrial action and socialist policies together with the Labour Party can lead to the transformation of society that is long overdue.

The TUC must act now.

Get the Tories out!

INDIA

From a
correspondent in
Bangalore

Struggles in Karnataka

Karnataka, a small state in the south of India, has been the focus of attention of the whole country of late.

There has been a spate of struggle by the people who are groaning under mass unemployment, poverty, hunger and inflation. To cap it all a reign of terror has been let loose on them by the capitalist rulers. The masses have come on to the streets to voice their protest and they have been answered by bullets.

Shooting by the police has become rampant. In a period of nine months since the Congress (I) party assumed power in the state, as many as 25 police shootings have taken place, claiming 48 lives.

The volcano erupted when the farmers of Naragund and Navalgund started an agitation in July 1980, demanding the abolition of water cess, writing off debts, subsidised fertilisers, minimum agricultural wages etc.

The peaceful struggle turned violent when the police intervened. Two peasants were killed by police bullets on 21 July 1980.

The wrath of the peasants was so great that they chased a police officer and axed him in the hospital. There followed a spate of agitation in all important towns, followed by ruthless police actions.

The peasant unrest has sent shock waves down the spine of the ruling class. For it is an ominous indication of its crumbling traditional base in the rural parts.

In utter bewilderment, the ruling party had to concede certain demands. The bourgeois opposition parties, Congress (Urs) and Lok Dal, and the left parties, the Communist Party of India and the CPI (Marxist), have been overtaken by the mass movement.

In order to salvage their reputation, the left parties organised a long march on 5 February. Over 250,000 ryots (peasants), covering a distance of more than 500 kms on foot, reached the state capital Bangalore to a tumultuous welcome by the Bangalore working class.

The workers distributed food packets to the ryots. They came out of the factories to join the rally, braving all sorts of intimidation by management.

Over 100,000 people marched through the streets of the city, reverberating the air with full throated slogans. An old timer was heard commenting that the procession was reminiscent of the anti-imperialist "Quit India" agitation held in the city in 1942.

But the greatest threat to the government began when

125,000 workers at public sector undertakings, viz. Bharat Electronics, Hindustan Aeronautics, Indian Telephone Industries and Bharat Earth Movers went on indefinite strike from 26 December 1980.

The main demand of the workers was parity of wages with the workers in Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL), another public sector undertaking, as the government had promised.

The workers exhibited an enormous amount of patience and waited over 11 months for the management to settle the issue through negotiations. Exasperated by the intransigence of the factory managements, the unions eventually called for an indefinite strike from 26 December 1980.

The workers responded magnificently. A Joint Action Front (JAF) and area committees were formed. Street corner meetings were held. There was total Bundh (closure) of Bangalore city on 21 January 1981 in support of the workers. Even the cigarette and tea shops closed their shutters.

Huge numbers of police were pressed into service in all parts of the city. Tremendous tension prevailed. A spark was enough to ignite the situation.

And it happened on the morning of 21 January. Residents of the HAL workers' colony who were queuing for milk were asked to disperse by the police. The angry workers protested and a stone was hurled at the crowd.

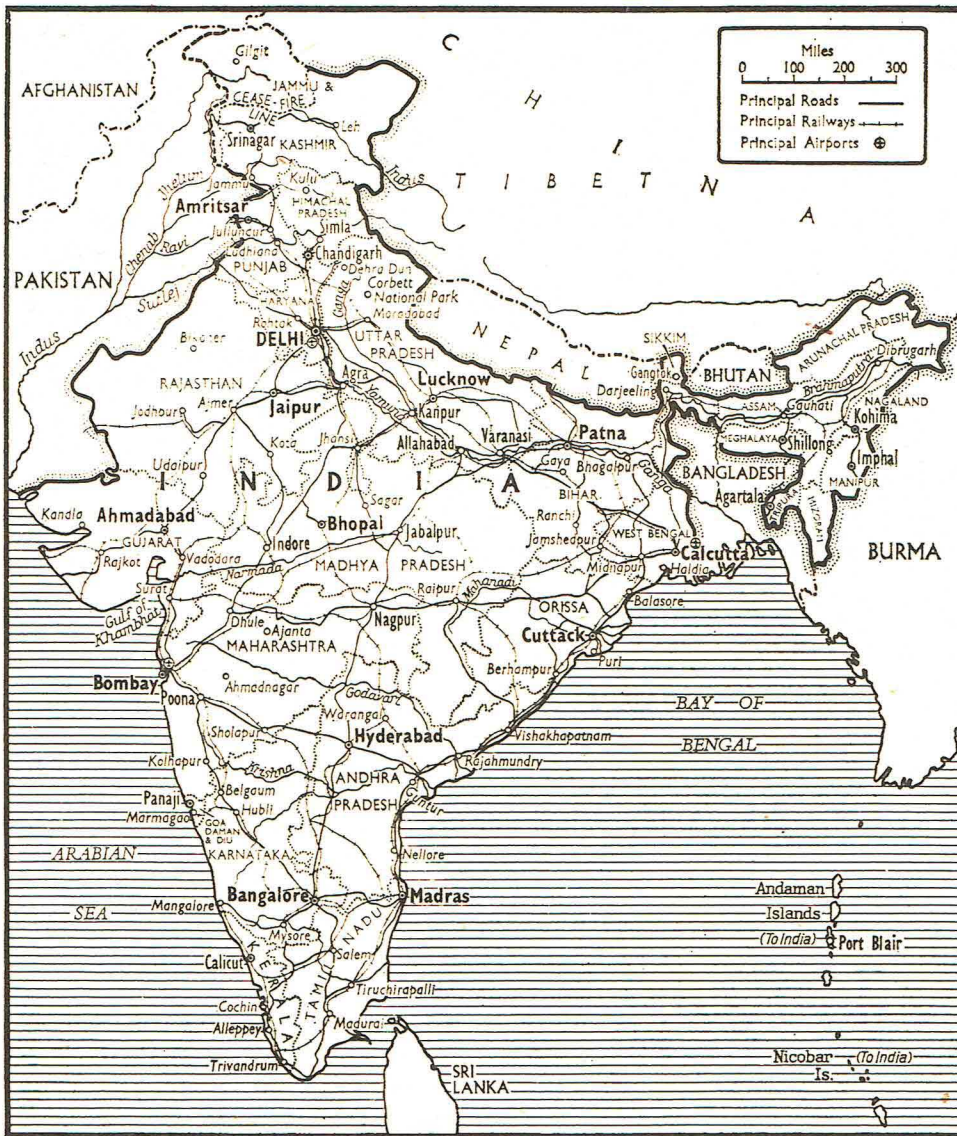
That was enough to turn the police into brutes. There followed a merciless assault on the workers, their wives and children. The workers pelted stones at the police. The police had become mad and firing orders were issued without a warning.

When the shooting stopped, two bodies were lying on the ground in a pool of blood. The Peoples Rights Committee (PRC) Bangalore, which conducted an investigation of this ghastly incident, found that there was no provocation whatsoever for the police to open fire.

The strike lasted for 78 days. The workers suffered trials and tribulations. They were paid no wages for 3 months.

The government was determined to break the strike by starving the workers. The Congress (I) used its trade union—the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC)—to break the strike. Thus were employed to terrorise the workers. 'Loyal' workers were promised wage increases.

But the workers stood as one man, undeterred by the enticements and undaunted



Police launching attack on demonstrators. In a nine month period alone, police in the state of Karnataka opened fire on 25 occasions, claiming 48 lives.

by intimidations. In fact, the workers in the ITI colony burnt the car of the INTUC agents (who had gone there to canvass the workers to return to work) and chased them out of the colony.

The adamancy of the government was clear from its conspiratorial silence. It was a do-or-die battle for the workers. The very survival of the trade union movement was at stake.

Workers pawned their belongings to survive, starved, but continued their struggle with grim determination. They stopped the trains in the railway station and they filled the jails.

The situation was getting worse. The Chief Minister of the state and the opposition parties' leaders appealed to the JAF to call off the strike and to resume negotiations in a "congenial atmosphere". The JAF unfortunately yielded to the pressure.

At first the workers shouted a unanimous "No" to the union leaders' proposal to suspend the strike. However, the leaders ultimately succeeded in get-

ting a reluctant "Yes" from the workers. The heroic struggle thus came to a tame end.

But the workers became restive when there was no sign of the government resuming negotiations even after a month had passed.

It was a horrid time for the trade union leaders. Their leadership was at stake. In an attempt to appease the workers, they launched an indefinite hunger strike.

Then came May Day. Writing a new chapter in the recent history of the Bangalore working class, a joint May Day rally was organised.

The government had a hectic time to control the tense situation. On 5 May the police made a midnight swoop and arrested the fasting union leaders. The news spread to the shift workers who took the factory buses in the morning and converged on the new bus station which was to be inaugurated by the Chief Minister the same morning.

The workers set ablaze the furniture and the buses.

The violence spread to the whole city. Three post offices were burnt down. Many buildings were damaged by the angry crowds.

Management declared a lock-out. The workers suffered privations for another 45 days. At last the government instructed the managements to hold negotiations with the JAF. The agreement that followed met the workers' demands only half way.

Though the strike cannot be termed successful in terms of economic gains, rich experience has been gained by the workers in the course of the struggle, which will serve as a reservoir for the future battles.

The strike has revealed the general mood of the workers in India, a mood to fight to the end and against all odds. The sceptics, who term the struggles of the Indian working class as merely "economic, isolated and scattered" have been answered.

Above all the workers have exposed the limitations of the trade union leaders

who have appeared to be more legal and constitutional-minded than the members of the ruling party itself.

The government imposed a ban on holding meetings within a radius of 15 kms from the city. The leaders implicitly obeyed it. They tried to hold meetings on the outskirts of the city. The government banned meetings there too. No more meetings were then held.

The leaders could have and should have asserted the workers' rights. Instead they injected sedatives into the workers by accepting deceptive legal niceties.

It will not be long before the workers will develop a new militant leadership, who can fight for the workers' democratic rights and for the socialist policies which are needed to consolidate them.

Mrs Gandhi and her sycophants have realised that the threat to their power lies not in parliament but outside it. The splintered bourgeois opposition parties hardly exist. The left parties—CPI, CPI(M), the Revolutionary Socialist Party etc—are frantically trying to save their administration of West Bengal and Kerala. Outside these states they are trying all sorts of combinations to locate their "Democratic allies".

Thus the mantle of the opposition has squarely fallen on the shoulders of the working class, and therefore the ruling party has determined to suppress the trade union movement. The ruthlessness with which it has been trying to smother the mass movement is an indication of the barbarity to come.

But equally determined are the workers and peasants. The unprecedented convention organised by the trade union federations AITUC, CITU, UTUC, INTUC (Faction) and forty other all-Indian Federations and associations in Bombay on 4 June 1981 has raised big hopes among the working class.

The convention has resolved to fight the growing problems of unemployment, hunger, inflation and other ills of capitalist society. The unity of workers is appearing on the horizon. The giant power of the working class is waking up and sounding a death knell to the ruling class.

Now it is time the rank and file in the workers' parties reassess the situation to unite around common demands and fight for socialist policies. If they succeed, the taking of power by the Indian working class will be placed on the order of the day, the class struggle throughout Asia will be transformed and indeed around the world the labour movement will be inspired by the onset of the Indian revolution.

Mass Rally on 19th September

LABOUR AGAINST REAGAN

A mighty Labour-led peoples' challenge to the Reagan Administration's cuts is having a profound effect on the United States.

Led by the AFL-CIO, the United Auto Workers, United Electrical Workers, United Mine Workers, the Railroad workers, the West Coast Longshoremens and other trade unions, mass protest demonstrations are sweeping across the country in dozens of cities and state capitals, as well as in Washington, DC.

This action has been set in motion by the AFL-CIO Executive Council call for a "grass roots" rank and file "solidarity day" demonstration in the capital on Saturday 19 September. The aim of the demonstration will be to "protest the Republican administration's assault on vital social programmes, to assert demands for jobs and justice and to reaffirm the labour movement's historic commitment to social and economic justice".

All sections of the trade union movement are called on to participate, as well as labour's allies who have "common concerns and share a common commitment". Among over 200 organisations directly invited are the National Council of Senior Citizens numbering several million members, the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), the National Urban League of organised black people, the American Agricultural Movement (the farmers), the League of Women Voters, all the womens' groups seeking passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the constitution, the Sierra Club (the Environmentalists), and affiliates of the major religious denominations.

The AFL-CIO Executive Council sees a vast turnout on 19 September as giving the lie to Reagan's arrogant claim that he has a "mandate" from the people (based on a 26% vote from eligible voters!) to pursue his reactionary policies. They expect that the Washington rally will mark a watershed for the labour movement that will influence events well beyond 19 September.

Those organisations

From Betty Traun in New York

which are working towards the founding of a third party based on labour expect to broaden their contacts with many other organisations participating in this event and looking to wider coalitions to lay the foundations for a labour party.

This is a head-on attack against a wide range of reactionary policies of this government. The call for mass action in Washington is a complete reversal of the AFL-CIO political tactics of the last thirty-six years.

There has always been class collaboration, and high-level lobbying in Washington was used as a political strategy. The rank and file were never directly involved. A change has now been forced because the desire of the labour bureaucracy for "class peace" has been overwhelmed by the harsh reality of the corporate offensive against organised labour, led by the Reagan Administration.

At the root of the labour upsurge is the monstrous anti-labour, racist, anti-people offensive which seems to know no bounds.

Big business has been beating the drum for a "union-free environment" for years. Union-busting outfits have sprung up like poisonous toadstools, advising corporate heads on how to break up the unions.

Union branches are being decertified by the national Labour Relations board as everyday occurrences before union contracts even expire, corporations are demanding wage cuts under threats that the plant will close otherwise, and even then the plants close down.

To top it all, a swaggering Republican President, aided by a moribund Democratic party which only gives lip service to the needs of the people, pushed through Congress a series of budget cuts designed to damage or destroy every single social programme adopted in the last fifty years.

Reagan's second act of vandalism is a phony "tax cut" scheme, similar to that

of Maggie Thatcher in England, which will deliberately transfer tons of millions of dollars from the pockets of the low and middle income workers into the already overflowing coffers of the rich.

Reagan states that it is an "across the board" tax cut for all. The facts show otherwise. For example, 33% of the workforce makes \$10,000 a year or less. These will end up receiving a tax cut of \$84 but they will be paying a tax increase of \$200 on social security payments deducted from their paychecks, and so will be over \$100 out of pocket for the year. However, the 0.7% of the population making \$100,000 and more per year will enjoy juicy tax cuts of between \$5,000 and \$20,000 per year. Reagan says he wants it this way because the rich will bring this money to the bank and save it, while the poor will only fritter it away.

In 1960, 23% of all federal taxes collected came from the corporations. In 1980, their contribution was whittled down to 11%. Under Reagan this will be further reduced to a puny 7%. **Only the rich, the corporations, and the military will benefit from Reagan's budget and tax cut programmes.**

The 19 September demonstration will be the last in a series of actions that have been taken by organised labour. Outstanding was the two-day strike action of the coal miners and their 10,000 strong picket line at the White House that forced Reagan into a fast retreat when he tried to cut black lung (pneumoconiosis) benefits. It acted as an inspiration to workers who are looking for militant leadership. This was followed by a 72-day strike by the rank and file in the coal and oil industries in spite of a divided and retreating union leadership to fight union busting by the coal and oil barons.

It also inspired 40,000 railroad workers to come to Washington to fight for their jobs and for the continued existence of the country's railroads, which Reagan wanted to cripple.

In early June, the textile workers came to Washington to fight Reagan's sabotage of brown lung legislation. A Supreme Court decision upheld them.

During the same period very important labour-led coalitions began to go into action. With Reagan's attempt to wreck social security for the aged, labour



The dole queue in Detroit, the once-booming centre of the American motor car industry.

and the senior citizens joined in a stunning and dramatic action that forced a mainly Republican and reactionary US Senate to vote 96-0 against the proposal. For a moment it looked as though it would be the pensioners who would lead the American revolution! It slowed Reagan's attempt but it hasn't stopped him. We shall see what 19 September does to him.

Labour-led coalitions have held massive

demonstrations in Illinois, the state of Washington, Iowa, New York, Minnesota, California, and elsewhere since last year. These were mainly against job losses and plant closures.

However, the emphasis has now shifted to much broader issues, e.g. the defeat of the Reagan budget cuts, in which the question of jobs is deeply involved.

When in June the AFL-CIO announced that there would be national action in

Washington on this issue, the response around the country was overwhelmingly positive. Hundreds of buses from all cities and many chartered trains from around the country will be converging on Washington.

In New York, one union alone has ordered 350 buses to bring members to the capital! Others are going by car or any other conveyance on wheels. September 19 will be a huge success, and it will not be the last one.

SUPPORT ROWNTREES WORKERS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A bitter dispute has been in progress at Rowntree's factory in East London, South Africa, for the past six months.

The struggle began in February with the unfair dismissal of three black workers. In the following weeks 500 more workers—mainly members of the SA Allied Workers' Union—were dismissed after taking solidarity action.

The workers' struggle for reinstatement has attracted widespread support among the black population and also among sections of whites. Trade union support has been forthcoming from all the major independent trade unions in South Africa. In Britain, the TGWU and other unions have expressed solidarity.

A consumer boycott of Rowntrees products has been organised in South Africa, drawing behind it a shopkeepers' association and other groups.

The reaction of the Rowntrees management in



South Africa has been to try and promote a company union, the "Sweet Workers' Union". The South African state and their puppets in the Ciskei Bantustan have come to the bosses' assistance by arresting two leading SAAWU officials,

T Gqwetha and S Njikelana, and 70 of the strikers.

In the UK, Rowntrees chairman K Dixon at the recent AGM in York gave his verdict—he praised the South Africa subsidiary for its "excellent" and "enlightened" industrial relations!

Pressure by the labour movement needs to be stepped up to break down the reactionary position of the Rowntrees bosses. The campaign in South Africa will continue until full reinstatement has been won and SAAWU, the workers' union, is recognised by management.

The Boycott Support Committee in South Africa calls on the trade union and labour movement internationally to support the campaign by putting pressure on the Rowntrees management and taking any further action that can have a positive effect.

Messages of support to: SAAWU, PO Box 7002, East London 5200, South Africa.

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Capitalist 'justice'

Dear Comrades

At 11.35am on 17 August, 1981, Judge Rudolph Lyons sentenced Peter, aged just 18 years, of Rusholme, Manchester to Borstal. "So what?", I can hear you say.

Peter was simply another working-class youth ravaged by unemployment and boredom. Now he is an unfortunate but predictable victim of the right-wing reaction stemming from the riots in July in the Moss Side area of Manchester.

Peter was charged with causing an affray—throwing a stone through a window!

Even the prosecution, along with Peter, admitted they could no be sure that it was actually his stone that broke the window. Nevertheless, Peter pleaded "guilty" to this offence—obviously on his solicitors' advice.

Earlier, scandalous trumped-up charges of Peter having assaulted police officers and having rode round with his car full of petrol-bombs making equipment were ever so quietly skipped over and dropped in court.

The prosecution offered

no evidence, nor did the police officers who realised that the charge of affray would also be dropped if they dared to enter the court with such farcical evidence.

Peter, prior to his trial, had been refused bail and had spent five weeks in Manchester's Strangeways jail. Surely, punishment enough for anyone!

In court, it was sickening and disgusting to hear his solicitor plead for mercy, patronising his working-class parents for being "decent" people. The judge contrived to confuse Peter's case with the previous defendants', adding to the horrible effect of this grotesque pantomime.

This trial really brought home to me the iniquities inherent in the law. There never has, never is, and never will be a law that favours working people.

The Tories and their capitalist system are the real criminals. The only opportunities they can offer working-class youth are unemployment, the army or prison.

The Tories stand accused of committing unpardonable crimes against the working-class. The punishment must fit the crime: The "short, sharp, shock" of socialism.

Yours fraternally
A Wythenshawe
Young Socialist.

Group's newspapers)...we are broadly conservative and the successful candidate will be in sympathy with the paper's views."

So it would seem that however able and experienced the editor of the "Militant" is, he won't be considered for this job, so the Tories can for the moment sleep soundly at night in the knowledge that 238,000 South London homes will be receiving unsolicited through their letter boxes not the ideas of Marxism, but the same brand of Tory drivel they have had to put up with in the past.

So it is up to us to awaken the Tories rudely from their beauty sleep with the news that the sales of the "Militant" are doubling and redoubling, and to throw them and their system into the dustbin of history so that future generations can laugh at papers like the 'Tooting and Mitchem Guardian' as historical curiosities from a barbaric age.

Yours fraternally
Keith Gow
Tooting CLP

When you can't pay the bills...

Dear Comrade

I would just like to point out something which happened to my family during the late sixties when, I believe, a Labour government was in power. It also involved the London Electricity Board which is a nationalised industry.

My mother was unable to pay the electricity bill because my father was in prison. So the L.E.B. turn-



The Heseltine Circus surveys housing conditions in Liverpool recently. Heseltine has returned home to his three mansions, and the slums remain. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

New Tory visit for Liverpool

Dear Comrades

Hot on the heels of Heseltine comes one more Thatcher equerry to Liverpool, pretending that he comes to help further the cause of the people, helping the health service, so we are informed. But beware! Conservatives do not help the people they help only themselves.

ed the electricity off.

For a mere £20 they kept it off for nine months—even when it went down to seven they refused to re-connect us. Even when it was fully paid it took a lot of time and hassle to get it back on.

The biggest joke of all was the situation my mother was faced with. She was eight months pregnant, the eldest child was five, and there were three others of us who were under that age. So when the baby was born she had to use an open fire to boil water for the baby's bottles. Imagine the danger of the open fire with five small children running about.

The money my mother was getting from the Social Security was going on the bill so she had to go to the child welfare to feed us. We got no help at all because we looked too well fed.

This is all in the past. However, to prevent it happening to others we must not only get rid of the Tories but make sure that we get a Labour government willing to put forward a true socialist programme.

Dr. Vaughan has come to decide how best to carve up the health service gradually, and eventually cripple it so he can replace it with a private health service.

But as with the steel mills and the railways they, the Tories, will have to arrange for some one to take the blame when the health service is ready to be sold off. No doubt the nurses and other health service employees will be blamed

for a strike that the Tories will force them into by lowering their wages or lengthening their working week.

The National Health Service must be guarded against private enterprise. Railways, Steel, Medicine—what next Maggie? "Slavery?"

Yours fraternally
J Darcy
Bootle CLP.

No party, no matter whether Labour or Tory, is ever going to be able to do much under this rotten bosses' system.

Yours fraternally
Mary Hartigan
Barking Labour Party
Young Socialists.

£80,000 for GEC open-day

Dear Comrades

Marconi Space and Defence Systems Ltd, of Hillend, one of the largest GEC employers in Fife where 1,500 workers are employed, have just recently spent a total of something like £80,000 on an open day, which took place on the factory grounds. Many activities were planned by management which included the opening of a new building (this will not mean jobs for people on the dole) where a new contract has been started. The secretary of state for Scotland, George Younger, opened the factory while 30 members of the ASTMS union picketed. The local

Lord Provost Mr Wood also crossed this picket line and shouted 'You should have voted Labour!' These workers were at this time in dispute with management over a wage increase of 7%.

There were fascinating displays by the Army and Navy, bands played, majorettes marched the management and visitors ate and drank—total cost £80,000.

ASTMS later accepted 7% with 1% in November.

Surely this is not acceptable to the working class while 3m people in Britain alone are on the dole, to say nothing of the homeless and starving. In my opinion this ridiculous waste of money only goes to show the need for nationalisation under workers' control of all the monopolies, where it would then be possible to plan production in a human and acceptable way. We could then be rid once and for all of this diabolical system.

Yours fraternally
A member of
Dunfermline LPYS
(name supplied)

Reporting a success

Dear Comrades,

Although many comrades write to the paper explaining fund-raising activities and paper sales they are about to undertake, we never seem to hear of their successes or failures. I think this report-back is very important because other comrades can learn from their experiences and not make the same mistakes.

For this reason I am writing in regard of my letter in issue No 550 (May 1st). I am very pleased to report that we have succeeded in getting the 'Militant' into the college library.

After the first few weeks students were not very hopeful of achieving our objective but although we have a very 'conservative' teaching staff we did in the end succeed.

The lesson is that if there is the pressure, organisation and the militancy within the rank and file there is absolutely nothing all the Tories in the world can do!

Yours fraternally
Nasim Aslam
Leicester South LPYS

Unemployment kills!

Dear Comrades

An unemployed man on the estate where I live tried to commit suicide last week. His story is almost classical.

Unemployed for 18 months (in the "affluent South") he got accepted for a Tops course to learn carpentry. He was very enthusiastic, and his wife and two kids were looking forward to the days when Dad would get a job after he had completed his course.

He spent 13 weeks on the course, making bookshelves, pot plant holders, a coffee table, and so on. He completed the course, got his certificate, and signed back on the dole.

The dole, however, messed his payment about, claiming they couldn't find his papers, and no money was sent out for two weeks. They had to call in the emergency officer to make an urgent payment.

The man went to a building site to get a job as a rough carpenter, but he got laughed at. They told him they would sooner employ apprenticed carpenters than TOPS

So he went home and took an overdose of tablets.

Fortunately, his wife arrived home unexpectedly and found him. He was pumped out and is now alright.

In the past few months there have been numerous suicides in Southampton, many of whom were unemployed. If we multiply this nationally, how many of our unemployed and/or their wives are taking this drastic step which is caused totally by the pressures of society?

Yours fraternally
Pat Blatch
Southampton
Labour Party.

Closed shop

Dear Comrades

The recent attacks on the closed shop by the Tories and their counterparts, the Commission for Human Rights—which cost many thousands of pounds, more than you or I will earn in a lifetime—makes me sick.

Do these so-called men of Justice care about ordinary workers getting the sack for wanting to join a union? Do they care about people working all hours and doing split shifts for peanuts? Do they care about people working when they are sick?

Do they, hell! All they care about is making sure their profits are secure from workers.

Yours fraternally
Kevin Zignam
Peterborough LPYS

Freedom of the press

Dear Comrades

How many times have Labour Party members, fed up to the teeth with the Tory bias of the newspapers, pointed out that the bias of the press will always exist while it remains in private ownership in the hands of a few millionaires?

And how many times have the Tory apologists scoffed at our "naivety", answering that ownership is one thing but that editorial freedom and control is another?

Well, a job advertisement I saw recently gives the lie to this argument. A political editor is required for the Guardian group of newspapers which covers part of South West London. While space "is given to all views (the Guardian

Build Militant ads

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 10 Oct	Target for year
Eastern	3585		4970	7100
East Midlands	2649		3850	5500
Hants & Dorset	1912		3640	5200
Humberside	1310		2450	3500
London East	3738		5320	7600
London West	2155		3360	4800
London South	3237		3850	5500
Manchester & Lancs	2308		4060	5800
Merseyside	2735		4620	6600
Northern	3013		6020	8600
Scotland East	1550		3080	4400
Scotland West	2848		5250	7500
Southern	3918		4970	7100
South West	1720		2450	3500
Wales East	1065		1820	2600
Wales West	1571		3220	4600
West Midlands	3556		6020	8600
Yorkshire	3806		6300	9000
Others	9166		8750	12500
Total received	55,842		84,000	120,000

YOUR CASH FIGHTS THE SYSTEM

The £1,000 that's come in this week, added to last week's total, brings the amount so far this year to £55,842. This means that £28,000 or £4,500 a week is needed over the next six weeks.

If you think that's not possible, read on...

"Comrade Lynn Harrison of Wavertree LPYS walked over 20 miles from Kirkby Town Centre to Liverpool city centre, a lesson to all comrades on Merseyside, especially as Lynn is not yet 16 and has been a YS member for less than 6 months..."

Lynn's walk was worth £16 to us. If the majority of our readers were prepared to go to the same lengths to assist *Militant* we would pass all our targets, with no difficulty!

The Eastern line on our chart has benefitted from the catering at the LPYS summer camp, courtesy of Con Pie Enterprises, organised by Ian Campbell, Bedford. Is this a case of having your cake and eating it?

£46 from *Militant* T-shirts raised by Gateshead supporters and another £12 from 'Mole' T-shirts (Lancashire) illustrate the *Militant* summer fashions.

Meetings in Leyton, Littlehampton and Kingston, and a discussion group in Barnsley raised £88, whilst Jill and Brian's wedding social (Southampton) left us £79 better off. £56 came from a 'leaving party' in

Tyneside. Telford's 'Bolshevik Barbeque' was worth £10 to us and another £1 came from B Bott.

£10.50 came from Fire Brigades Union supporters, and LPYS branches to donate included Walton, Merseyside and Stockton.

Militant readers working on the railways help us regularly; included this week donations from H Menson, G Hensby, D Dodson, N Godbeer and R Chesterman.

A Staffordshire reader sent us \$100, K Langley (West London) £10, M Averell (Blantyre) £9, and J Causey's tea, coffee and soft drinks (Macclesfield) raised £8.

Fivers this week include those from Adjuna (Barking LP) and D Jansen (IOU from the YS summer camp—this is a hint to other readers who put in IOUs).

Last but not least, £2 from G Rymer (Grantham LPYS) and £1 from K Walsingham (on account of press attacks on *Militant*). These are just two of the many donations of this size we receive every week.

However, if we are to reach our target by 10th October, we must ask every regular reader whether our paper means as much to them as it obviously does to Lynn Harrison. We're not asking everyone to walk 20 miles. But what we are saying is that we're sure that our readers have got the energy and the imagination to be able to think up ways of helping our funds.

One of the easiest, after the first time, is to ask your mates what they like about the *Militant* and asks them to send us what they can.

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

THIS WEEK:
£1,101

Show them this page!

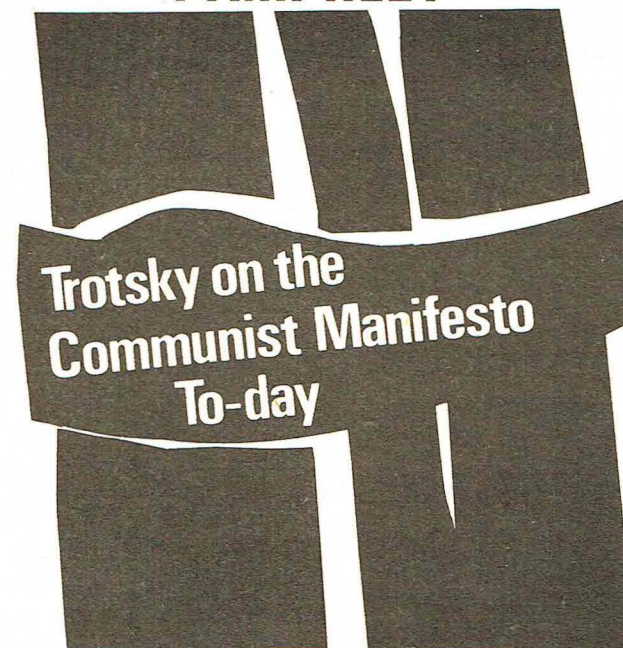
This month the TUC and Labour Party Conferences will ensure the alternatives open to the labour movement will get discussion. The TV pundits, on their five and six-figure incomes will lecture the working class on the superiority of the ideas tried in 1964-70 (and failed) tried again in 1974-79 (failed) and which are now being put forward again by the SDP outside the Labour Party, and the

right-wing inside it.

We can't afford to let them try for the third time lucky! It's not their living standards they're trying to smash—it's ours!

Send off to-day as much as you can afford to. Fighting Fund, *Militant*, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. And raise the need for a donation to the fighting fund in your trade union, Labour Party and LPYS branches. Thanks.

NEW MILITANT PAMPHLET



Leon Trotsky on 'The Communist Manifesto today'

Available price 15p plus 15p postage and packing from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

SOCIALIST EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (Cardiff Branch) Public Debate, 'The Future of the Labour Party'. Allan Williams MP (Swansea West) versus Peter Taaffe for 'Militant'. On Friday 11 September, 7.00 pm, at Transport Hall, Transport House, Cardiff. All welcome. Plenty of time for discussion.

NEWCASTLE Militant Readers Meeting. 'Turkey, the secret military state'. Speakers: members of Turkish Solidarity Campaign, and Dave Cotterill. Also slide show and exhibition. 7.30 pm, Monday 7 September, Bridge Hotel.

NUPE MEMBERS VOTING FOR BENN have produced a supporting leaflet for use in branches. Order now from J Warne, 67 Rozel Court, De Beauvoir Road, London N1 (Tel 01-254 6096. Donations appreciated.

STOCKPORT Militant Readers' Meeting. Friday 4 September, 8.00 pm. 'South Africa'. Speaker from SALEP. At The Nook, Reddish Road, Stockport.

Congratulations to comrades Gail and Charlie Duffin (Coventry SE LPYS) on the birth of their son Thomas Peter. His future is our fight. Love from all 'Militant' supporters in Coventry.

SOUTH HERTS Readers' Meeting 'The next ten years' Speaker: Ian Ilett. Room 6, Alum Hall, Borehamwood (opp. Elstree Station). 8.00pm, Wednesday 16 September.

'Socialism and the Welfare State'. Jeff Rooker MP. 7 September, 8.00 pm, Peel Most Upper School, Buckingham Road, Heaton Moor, Stockport. Arranged by Andrew Bennett MP and sponsored by Stockport North Women's Section.

Rank and File Mobilising Committee for Labour Party Democracy. Speakers: Tony Benn, Reg Race MP, Pat Macintyre (Durham CLP). Chairman: Tom Sawyer (Divisional Officer, NUPE). at the City Hall, Newcastle, on Wednesday 9 September 1981 at 7.30 pm.

EDINBURGH LPYS Public Meeting—Saturday 5 September. Trades Council, Picardy Place (Top of Leith Walk), Room 2.

Morning: 'Jobs not YOPs' with speakers from YOP and NUPE—hear the alternative to slave labour!

Afternoon: Film 'Look back at Grunwicks' followed by discussion—all welcome!

WANTED—ANY old copies of 'Militant' from 1 to 209. I Hunter, 28 Findon Hill, Sacriston, Durham, Tel. 711424.

TUC Conference MILITANT PUBLIC MEETING Socialist policies for Labour and the Trade Unions to bring down the Tories

Speakers: Wayne Jones (Militant Industrial Correspondent)
Terry Fields (FBU NEC, personal cap.)
Dave San (CPSA delegate, personal cap.)
Chairman: John Kelly (TGWU delegate, personal cap.)

Wednesday 9 September, 7.30 am
Kings Arms, Talbot Road, Blackpool
(opposite Blackpool North Station)

LESSONS OF CHILE

Read this Marxist analysis price 50p [+15p p&p]

From World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN

MILITANT PAMPHLET

'The Marxist Theory of the State'
By Ted Grant

Price 70p (including postage)
from World Books
1 Mentmore Terrace
London E8 3PN

OUT NOW!

'A fighting programme for the NUR'. Price 25p [+10p postage] from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace London E8 3PN

WORLD BOOKS

A book service for the labour movement. For a full comprehensive booklist write to World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

For AUEW members, this September's round of postal ballot elections will be of particular importance in deciding the type of leadership we will have in our struggle against the Engineering Employers Federation and their parliamentary representatives, Thatcher's government.

The present composition of our Executive Council gives the right-wing a total majority of the seven EC divisions. However, four of these positions are up for re-election, along with the vital position of General Secretary, due to the retirement of John Boyd.

The opportunity is therefore open for AUEW members to replace the right-wing with a fighting leadership which will genuinely represent the interests of the membership.

With almost half a million jobs lost in the engineering industry since the Tories came to power, many of our members are experiencing the misery of unemployment for the first time in their lives. Most have little prospect of securing work in either skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled jobs.

The collapse of the British engineering industry has resulted in thousands of skilled AUEW members being unable to continue their trades and their engineering skill developed over many years. They have been thrown on the scrap heap amongst steelworkers, dockers, transport workers, teachers and even doctors!

The large engineering construction contracts which many of our members relied upon as a "stop gap" between more permanent work have completely dried up throughout the U.K. Even the opportunity for our members to pick up some rich pickings on contracts abroad are ex-

By Alec Thraves
(Sec. W. Wales
AUEW Broad Left)

tremely limited, with multinationals using the surplus of skilled labour to boost their profits by offering lower wages.

Contracts in Saudi Arabia, for instance, are now paying fitters less than they were three years ago, but still thousands of applications pour in from desperate engineers with no hope of work at home.

We need a new leadership

Terry Duffy, John Boyd and Co. have done nothing to prevent the Tory onslaught on our jobs and living standards. On the contrary, our Executive Council unanimously recommended an increase on minimum rates of just 8% in October 1980, when inflation was then running at 19%.

The National Committee's decision to put in a claim for a "substantial increase" this year, avoiding putting forward any hard figure, is no doubt intended to allow the right-wing Executive to compromise and sell us short, leading to a further erosion of living standards and jobs.

The right-wing have also moved to undermine our democratic constitution by deciding that the AUEW's delegates to the Labour Party Conference and the T.U.C. will be elected by the predominantly right-wing divisional committees instead of by our branches.

These, along with other

ENGINEERS NEED LEFT LEADERSHIP



organisational manoeuvres, are being implemented in order to attempt to consolidate their grip on the leadership of our union.

The attempt by the right-wing to return our union back to the dark days of "Carron's Law", when Lord Carron ruled everything from the top, will be defeated as more and more members, such as the Laurence Scott workers, see the lamentable role our leadership is playing.

Vote for Broad Left candidates

The only real way to counteract their methods is

for AUEW members to become active within their districts and build up the embryo of the AUEW Broad Left into a fighting organisation.

In both West Wales and East Wales the Broad Left has been reactivated and we have already made a big impression on the work in the AUEW, with regular meetings and energetic campaigns.

Those members looking for an alternative to Duffy and Co. will be quickly attracted to an active Broad Left which is seen to be more than just an "election machine", which the old Broad Left restricted itself to being.

Our members need more

than Biblical stories and moralistic preaching in order to combat the Tories and their profit system which is the cause of our present crisis! We need a leadership prepared to confront the Tories and return to power a Labour government committed to implementing socialist policies.

The formation and revitalisation of District and Divisional Broad Lefts with such a programme would mean the start of the AUEW becoming once again an organisation that defends and advances the interests not just of AUEW members but of working people generally.

The election of the Broad

Left candidates listed below for the forthcoming postal ballot will assist in this transformation;

General Secretary—
Ken BRETT

National Organiser—
Harry CUTTS

E.C. member No 3
—**Dave WALTERS**

E.C. member No 4—
Stan COLE

E.C. member No 6
—**Les THOMPSON**

E.C. member No 7
—**Roger BUTLER**

GREATRIX

A 64 year old transport manager at the Graham Greatrix depot in Liverpool was told at 4.15pm on a Friday that he was to be redundant at 4.30., after 27 years service. He died 17 days later of a heart attack. The doctor blamed the shock of the redundancy.

This horrific incident was in June. Four out of eight drivers were also to be made redundant, all trade union activists including the steward, Pete Dwyer. After a meeting they came out on

strike, joined by the warehousemen.

In retaliation the next Monday, management made eight out of 30 warehousemen redundant, including seven activists in the T&GWU.

This is no doubt an attack on trade union organisation. Only three depots scattered across the country, all part of the American multinational Tilling group, are organised. These are Liverpool, Wallsend, and Manchester.

Picketing has been organised by the sacked men. Wallsend has agreed not to cross any pickets.

Unfortunately in Manchester the attitude of the shop stewards and the regional official was not so helpful.

There, the stewards refused to come and speak to the pickets. No clear instruction has come from the regional secretary or the regional transport official.

In fact, seven drivers led by the shop steward crossed the picket while manage-

ment stood by and laughed.

This has made the men more determined. At the Huddersfield depot, which is non-union, pickets have successfully turned lorries away despite the dirty tricks from management. This includes a six foot poster outside the warehouse saying there was no dispute. They were also in lorries which drove at the pickets.

Money and support urgently needed — to Pete Dwyer, c/o T&G, Islington, Liverpool.

By Tommy Smith
and Jimmy Hackett
(T&G unemployed
branch)

EVERSHED

After eight weeks on strike the workers at Evershed and Vignoles, Acton Lane, Chiswick, have achieved the reinstatement of two trade union members who were to be made compulsorily

redundant.

Two days ago the management were still refusing to discuss the issue. Now they have totally climbed down.

One of the compulsory redundancies was to have been Frank Curtis, a senior TASS shop steward, an obvious attempt at victimisation. Both he and the other trade unionists have been offered other jobs.

During the eight weeks' strike, production has been at a standstill. Support has been forthcoming from the local labour movement. During the strike weekly mass meetings were held to discuss developments, with a well-supported rota for the picket line.

TUC
Conference
preview —
pages 8 & 9

£48 take-home pay

According to a letter in 'The Times', "manual railwaymen already earn £121.38." John Bell, Chairman of Nottingham and District Rail Branch, NUR, and an engineer at Toton Workshops, explains the true picture:

"There are members of this branch who take home £48 a week. Out of that some pay £4-£5 bus fare to come into Nottingham every day. One guard, with our children, takes home £62 a week.

"As an engineer I'm on £80 plus £20 bonus. It's time that was brought into the basic rate so we can attract workers who won't come into the industry at present because of the poor

pay.

"Some railwaymen, though, have to work 7 days a week to make a living wage. A guard does 54 hours a week average, including working rest days.

"Members of the 35 group joint branches wholeheartedly supported the NEC's decision to call a strike. I'm confident we will win through. With the Triple Alliance in operation there is no way any Iron Lady can defeat us."

By Chris Ridge
(West Nottingham
Labour Party)

RAILWAYS -

If the open station concept is accepted, collectors' jobs will go. Photo: Militant



Battle postponed not lost

In the mess rooms and at branch meetings, rail workers will be discussing and digesting the recent pay settlement.

The full 11% awarded by the Railway Staff National Tribunal (the industry's arbitration body) has been granted. 8% will be paid from 20 April 1981, but the other 3% will be paid from 1 January 1982, instead of the tribunal's decision to pay this amount on 1 August.

Under the agreement this will now be backdated to this date. The three rail unions, NUR, ASLEF and TSSA, have also agreed to delay the implementation of the 39-hour week, already secured in a previous wage settlement, from October 1981 to January 1982.

Most members, albeit reluctantly given the 29% slide in earnings levels since 1975 (which this award fails to meet), will be prepared to accept this part of the agreement. What many will find unacceptable is the links in the agreement between pay and productivity.

The NUR and ASLEF leaders who called off the all out strike action, due to begin on 31 August, have stated that a 'separate

By Geoff Hensby (NUR)

understanding on productivity has been concluded.

Yet this includes acceptance of the 'open station concept' as well as agreement to further discussions on such fundamental issues as the ending of the guaranteed day by flexible-rostering, one man operation on trains, and the 'associated trainman' concept.

The British Rail Board (BRB) has been quick to take this as the go-ahead to sharpen their axe ready to cut off their pound of flesh in return for the pay award.

The effects of such measures if implemented would result in hard-won traditional working conditions being disregarded, and important safety procedures being further undermined.

The introduction of open stations would mean a massive increase of fares collection on trains, overburdening train crews, with collectors' and booking clerks' jobs going to the wall.

Flexi-rostering could destroy the principle of the five-day week in one swoop, with varying hours of duty

being introduced on different days. Sunday could be classified as a 'normal' working day with the elimination of enhanced payments, thereby increasing the unsocial aspect of jobs.

One man operation of trains would eliminate hundreds of guards' jobs, with safety considerations being further sacrificed.

This would represent a dramatic departure from the slogan that NUR leaders have been mouthing of 'no trading jobs for cash' and 'railwaymen will not pay for their wage increases'. It also flies in the face of the firm demand that the tribunal award be met in full and kept totally separate from any productivity criteria.

The NUR and ASLEF leaders should have rejected this deal, categorically stating that they were not prepared to enter into any discussions on productivity deals.

Sid Weighall has declared that changes would be brought about providing they were feasible and 'the price was right'. He went on to demand that the government keep its side of the bargain and announce firm proposals for more investment, particularly for the electrification programme.

The government has made no such promise. The lesson of the miners' victory is that the only way a firm guarantee of investment in the nationalised industries can be reached is by firm use of strike action.

The Tories may yet, for their own reasons, give money to electrify the

railways but it will not be because of the goodwill of railworkers or the illusion, still held by some NUR leaders, that selling jobs yields higher wages. In 20 years about 300,000 jobs have been lost but the high paid 'super-railman' has not materialised!

The opportunity to rebuff the Tories' plans to devastate the industry was there to be taken. If the determination of the membership had been matched by the leaders of the NUR and ASLEF, then a clear cut victory against the plans of the BRB and the Tories would have been achieved.

The belief of the Tories that they could inflict a defeat on the 'moderate' NUR as an example to others, very quickly changed into one of panic when the strength of the railworkers and the widespread support they would have received became evident.

This was shown by the calling in of ACAS, the arbitration body a week before the strike was to begin. This was the start of 21 hours of talks which eventually led to the settlement.

Railworkers, especially NUR members, have now seen the industrial strength they hold.

Had the strike taken place, it would have given inspiration to other sections of the working class, reeling under similar attacks, to link arms with the nation's railway workers, directly challenging Thatcher and her cabinet. The Triple Alliance could have provided a firm lead to the escalation of solidarity action, with the real possibility of the development of a 24-hour general strike.

However, the NUR leaders, who called a strike under pressure from its elected National Executive, realised that the consequences of a rail strike of these proportions, in the present economic and political climate, would have exposed their limitations and short-comings.

The decisive and directive

action to win the strike would have come from the strike committees at rank and file level.

Confronted with such a situation, the leaderships of the NUR became determined to secure a 'peaceful' way out rather than show their incapacity to give a bold and firm lead to the members.

Many activists will now want to know the voting records of the EC members, as it has been reported that the NUR vote was 22-2 in favour of the settlement. No doubt some very searching questions will be asked of those executive members who say they stand on the 'left' in the NUR and yet voted for this deal, particularly those EC members most vocal in their outright opposition of one man operation and the open station concept.

However, cracks are already showing in this fragile 'agreement'. Even before the ink was dry Ray Buckton, the leader of ASLEF, declared that his union was not committed to any productivity issue, but only to continued talks on those issues.

The BRB responded immediately, muttering that if the unions did not deliver on productivity, then they might withhold payment of the 3% increase.

A frantic attempt to seal the yawning gap produced by the differing interpretations of the settlement has been made by Pat Lowry, Chairman of ACAS, who has offered to mediate.

Having already used ACAS to get the Tories off the hook once he is ready to do their bidding once more, rather than let the BRB face the full anger and might of railworkers that would inevitably explode if one penny of the award is tampered with.

What is clear is that railworkers are in no mood to retreat. On the contrary, the major battle, about the whole question of productivity and the future of the industry is merely postponed. Hard won rights and conditions will not be given up without a fight.

This struggle will be brought forward by the further savage cuts in passenger services throughout all regions this October.

In preparation, the battle lines must be maintained and built. The rank and file must now through their branches and district councils clearly spell out to their executives their determination to fight against productivity implementation.

Organised rank and file railwayworkers, flowing from their traditions of struggle, are emerging with the same fighting determination as their forerunners who fought the Taff Vale judgement at the turn of the century and Heath's Industrial Relations Act in 1972.

But we must be clear that to guarantee the future of our industry the railways must be taken out of the hands of the Tories and the bosses' class. They must be replaced by a Labour government pledged to socialist policies, including an integrated transport system, with all branches of transport nationalised and under democratic workers' control and management.

If the industry is to be expanded, technology used for the benefit of the workforce, and proper rates of pay with associated working conditions fully achieved, there can be no alternative.

ROBB CALEDON

By Pat Craven

In Dundee 270 shipyard workers are fighting for their jobs. British Shipbuilders intend to close Robb Caledon on 18 September. The workforce are determined they will not.

BS have tried to get them to accept voluntary redundancy or transfers to other yards. But 120 white collar and 150 manual workers, including 30 apprentices, have refused. If BS now issue compulsory redundancy notices, they will be breaching a national agreement with the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions.

The Confed's Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee has already agreed to call a national delegate conference to decide on national action if BS declare any compulsory redundancies, either at Robb Caledon or Clarke Hawthorn in Hartlepool, which is also threatened.

This was scheduled for August, but was postponed to give time to discuss a bid for the Dundee yard by Kestrel Marine Ltd, a firm producing modules for the oil industry and other marine engineering products on an adjacent site.

The trade unions see this as a "diversionary tactic", as Harry McLevy, AUEW District Secretary put it. Kestrel wanted the existing workforce to be made redundant, and was mainly interested in taking on steelworkers, who form the smallest proportion of the remaining workers. For the majority, Kestrel would have nothing to offer.

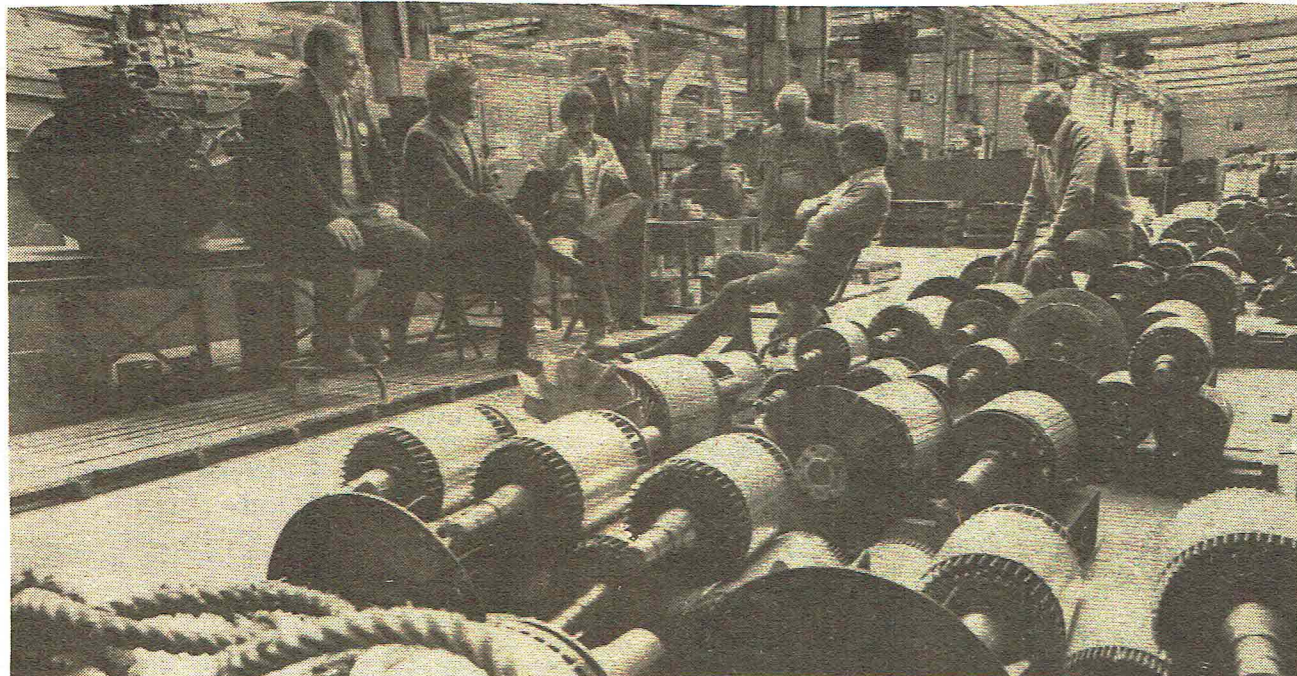
Yard Convenor, Bob Barty, says Kestrel are "more interested in the yard's equipment than the workforce." Like vultures, they are looking for cheap morsels from the carcass of one of Tayside's former major industries.

There is now no way of avoiding a head-on confrontation. The yard workforce are committed to strike action the moment the first compulsory redundancy is announced. This will almost certainly mean an occupation.

Nationally the delegate conference must be committed, at the very least, to a national overtime ban throughout the industry. There should be a one-day token strike to rally support for the Dundee and Hartlepool workers.

If BS management get away with compulsory redundancies at Robb Caledon not one job in the whole of shipbuilding will be safe.

An USDAW Broad Left meeting has been called for Sunday 13 September at 2 pm. Venue—GLC County Hall, London (room booked under V Wise). All Broad Left members should attend.



Workers at the start of the Laurence Scott occupation in May

Photo: John Smith (IFL)

LAURENCE SCOTT

AUEW Must restore full backing

After 18 weeks of strike action at Laurence Scott the Executive of the AUEW have attempted to end the dispute by withdrawing official support.

The strike followed the decision of the new owners, Mining Supplies, who took over the Manchester site in November, to give the 650 workforce 90 days' notice of closure, after a period of short-time working. This was despite the guarantee given at the time of take-over, that there would be no closure.

The workers went into dispute and occupied the factory. They were all dismissed and told they had forfeited their redundancy pay. Despite all this, there was no clamour to get the redundancy pay.

Union advice

As the dispute began to bite and gain support, the employers sent all the workers their redundancy pay. The strike committee wanted to collect this money and deposit it centrally. But they were advised by the AUEW Legal Department that this was not necessary, as acceptance of this money did not mean they had terminated their employment.

Given the dispute was by then two months old, and the workers were facing real hardship, this advice was accepted. Following pressure from the picketing of the Doncaster factory,

By John Byrne
(North Manchester
AUEW District Cttee,
personal capacity)

the employer came to the negotiating table, with the national leaders of the Confed unions.

The 'offer' included: no guarantee against compulsory redundancies, a return to work on a two-day week, a review of the situation in three months' time without a guarantee that there would be no closure, the return of the redundancy pay minus a £200 loan to be repaid at £5 a week!

With this came the threat of liquidation of the whole Manchester plant and associated company plants. However, given that Laurence Scotts has been profitable over the past nine years and had projected orders worth £8 million for 1982, it is more than likely this was an empty threat.

"Offer" accepted

Even on the face value of the threat, the leadership should have rallied its members throughout the whole group to bring the employers to heel.

Yet incredibly, the executive of the AUEW and the Confed unions voted to accept the 'offer', and withdrew official support, despite overwhelming oppo-

sition from the Laurence Scott's workers.

Scandalously, in an attempt to justify their action the AUEW executive in a circular to all District Committees emphasised how the workforce had cashed their redundancy cheques. It conveniently forgot to mention the advice given by the union's legal department, for which the leadership must take full responsibility.

The withdrawal of support by the executive is clearly against the rules. Rule 28/9 states that where a claim for dispute benefit has been approved, nothing shall be construed as giving power to any council, committee or branch to stop payment for a maximum

period of 52 weeks until the members become employed.

Rule 14/16 states that the EC is not allowed to complete an agreement with an employer unless the terms of the agreement are first submitted to the district committee concerned.

In cases of disagreement, the whole case should be put to the National Committee for decision.

There is a clear need for all AUEW members to flood the executive with demands that it fully restores official support to the Laurence Scott dispute. Similar action should also be taken by members of Confed unions to ensure their executives support the dispute.

AUEW elections, page 14

YOPs

Continued from page 1

booklet containing this information.

Frustration with the exploitation, with dead-end work, and with the meagre "allowance" paid (£23.50) is now reaching boiling point. There have been strikes, rallies and attempts to organise YOP trainees to fight for improved conditions in many areas of the country.

Now the National Committee of the Labour Party Young Socialists has taken the important step of mobilising LPYS branches nationally in a campaign to help recruit YOPs workers into the trade unions and to fight for their demands.

Highlighting this struggle was the recent strike in Derwentside near to Consett. There the YOP workers demanded free transport and an immediate increase in the weekly allowance.

After paying for bus fares of up to £4 a week many were finding themselves with less than they would have received on the dole.

The main demands were for:

- * Free travel.
- * An immediate and substantial increase in the allowance paid to YOP trainees.
- * The right of YOPs to organise themselves.

In Sunderland, the Springboard Project did a survey amongst the YOP trainees to see what expenses they had or thought were legitimate. The result was that the majority felt that £67 would be needed as a living wage.

But as a first step they were prepared to accept £45—seeing this as a reasonable, realisable demand.

Undoubtedly, the demand for a minimum allowance of £45 would find a wide echo

amongst YOPs throughout the country.

Such a campaign has to be taken up within the framework of Trade Unions and has to have the support of the whole of the movement through the Trades Union Congress.

The demand of the Transport and General Workers Union that schemes should only exist in union organised workplaces and that union representation amongst YOPs should be promoted is a real step in the right direction.

This backing from the Trade Union movement is absolutely essential. YOPs have no real power by themselves. Withdrawing their labour from the schemes simply saves the Tories money.

Shop stewards

The organisation of YOPs into the trades unions must first and foremost be in the hands of the youth—but within the framework of the unions.

YOP trainees have recently asked that a given district be allowed to meet once a month to discuss their training and any problems which may arise.

At such meetings they could elect shop stewards, who could meet once a week to discuss union activities. It would then be possible to build regional and national councils of YOPs to take up the issues and campaign to further their interests.

Only by building campaigning bodies of this type will it be possible to mobilise the YOP trainees and mount an effective campaign to improve conditions.

As a first step, the unions could take up the issue of Labour controlled authorities providing free bus passes, and for these authorities to provide a decent rate of pay for trainees on local authority schemes.

Subscribe Now!

BRITAIN & IRELAND	13 issues... £4.00
26 issues... £8.00	52 issues...£16.00
EUROPE (by air)	REST OF WORLD (by air)
26 issues... £9.00	26 issues...£14.00
52 issues...£18.00	52 issues...£28.00

Name

Address

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

Reagan

Continued from page 1

of talks between PATCO and the US authorities.

This, however, has been turned down flat by the US Administration, which refuses to recognise PATCO any longer.

Also the AFL-CIO, the co-ordinating body of US trade unions, has given only verbal support to the strike, even though a defeat for PATCO would open the way for new and savage attacks by the Reagan Administration.

Trade unionists in Bri-

tain, especially the CAA Group of CPSA, should make every effort to strengthen support for the American air controllers.

The importance of the air controllers' strike is shown in the world-wide media coverage. It is a sign of the enormous power of the working class in the highly centralised modern economy that an action by 12,000 workers can have such far-reaching repercussions.

That is why the capitalists, not only in the US but world-wide, are so determined to see this strike defeated. The labour movement internationally must not allow a union defeat in this trial of strength.