



Dole Queues 4% Limit Attacks on Unions

THATCHER STEPS UP WAR ON WORKERS

"Thatcher has done to the West Midlands in one year what Hitler couldn't do in four."

This was one worker's comment on the Tories' destruction of the area's manufacturing industry.

Mass unemployment has reached every corner of Britain but has had a particularly shattering effect on the West Midlands which has never before been plagued by such levels of unemployment.

Even in the 1930s, workers from traditionally high unemployment areas flocked to the West Midlands for jobs.

Feature on Birmingham—page 9

For youth, the situation was bleak enough even before this year's school leavers joined the dole queues. Well over 9,000 youngsters are without jobs in Birmingham alone.

Another 4,392 rely for their income on the cheap labour allowance which masquerades as a "wage" on YOPs and WEEPs courses.

Every job in Birmingham finds 48 young people challenging for it. At these odds no wonder desperate youth are turning to violence, crime and even suicide. Such is Thatcher's Britain.

It is unbelievably just over a year ago that West Midlands bosses complained about a shortage of skilled workers.

By Les Kuriata
(LPYS NC member)

British Leyland, while opening its new body shell at Longbridge, spent thousands on a massive recruitment campaign concentrating on Scotland, the North East and Merseyside.

One electrician who worked at Longbridge for a couple of weeks between jobs, said that just a year ago he applied for six jobs within walking distance of his home. He was offered employment at every one.

Today he would be lucky to find half those firms still open. The Tories have "closed the West Midlands down" almost overnight.

Coventry was singled out for destruction by the Nazis during the war due to its wealth of industry. A large billboard next to Coventry's main train station still cynically advertises, "Coventry, the city of skills and opportunity."

These days are gone, but Midland workers will not be prepared to sit back and watch Thatcher take away their livelihood. Thousands will be on Birmingham's streets on 19 September in the Labour Party demon-



Photo: Militant

Robb Caledon NO Shipyard Closures!

By Ewan Duncan
(EETPU—Robb Caledon, Dundee)

"We will occupy the yard." That was the unanimous decision of the workers at Robb Caledon shipyard in Dundee, which British Shipbuilders have threatened to close this Friday 18 September.

The previous day in Blackpool, a National Delegate Conference of shipbuilding workers had voted 100% for "whatever form of action is necessary" to pursue the policy of total opposition to compulsory redundancies.

Support of other yards

The stage is now set for confrontation between the whole trade union movement in the shipbuilding industry and the management of BS and the Tory government.

The yard's white collar

workers, whose jobs are not immediately threatened have agreed to go along with their unions' national policy. There is even a rumour in the yard that two managers will join the occupation as they have been told there are no jobs for them.

At Thursday's mass meeting, the workers' confidence was given a great boost when a letter was read out from the workers at Cammell Laird shipyard on Merseyside.

The letter said that a mass meeting there had pledged full support for the Caledon and agreed to take whatever action is necessary. Similarly, Southampton shipyards

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ON THE SIDEWALK SUNDAY MORNING
LIES A BODY OOZING LIFE
SOMEONES SNEAKING ROUND THE CORNER
COULD THAT SOMEONE BE MAG THE KNIFE

Alan Hudson

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Militant

Thatcher's Collision Course

The sacking of three so-called 'Wet' cabinet ministers, with the replacement of Prior by Tebbit as Employment Minister, heralds an intensified attack upon the trade union and labour movement.

Thatcher has given clear notice that she will not be dissuaded from her disastrous policies, which have resulted in three million unemployed, massive cuts in living standards and destruction of major sections of British industry.

Despite growing social conflict on the streets of Toxteth, Brixton and other major cities, she is determined to soldier on.

Policies which were meant just to "trim the fat" off British industry have in reality reduced much of it to the state of a skeleton.

Under the direction of the Tories, a world recession, or small slump, has become, in Britain, a major national slump.

Industrial production has fallen by 15% since the Tories took office, while in

the rest of the Common Market it has at least remained stagnant. While unemployment has doubled in Britain, its rise in the rest of the Common Market is under half as great.

Manufacturing output has fallen 20% since May 1979. There are now fewer cars and houses being built and steel produced than in the 1950s.

No long-term recovery is in sight. Only higher unemployment. It is possible that even a short-term international recovery next year will not be reflected by a corresponding rise in British industrial production.

The policies the Tories have introduced are stoking up explosive fires. If there is some short-term economic recovery next year, workers will undoubtedly want to get back what they have lost in recent years.

The new Employment Minister, Tebbit, has declared "all the talk about less hours and more money is moonshine." He will be shaken—as his counterparts in Australia have been shaken—by the workers' movement. In Australia, a partial upswing of the economy of 4% brought about by a rise in mineral

prices, has led to massive battles by workers for shorter hours and greater pay.

Neither upswing nor recession can solve the problems for British capitalism. And it is this fundamental crisis that has prompted the unparalleled public divisions in the Tory Party.

Normally, the differences are settled in the clubs, genteely over a glass of brandy. But not now. The crisis at the top reflects the wholesale crisis within British society.

Commenting on the reshuffle, *The Times* (17 July) declared: "The Conservative Party is deeply divided over general philosophy, broad strategy and its particular policies. In this sense it has grown much similar to the Labour party. Only a minority (in the Cabinet) agree with the prime minister on all the major issues of the day."

A whole section of the ruling class is worried about the opposition which Thatcher's policies are generating. However, there is no fundamental difference between the so-called "Wets" and the "dry" Thatcherites, the differences are only about the

ways the attacks on the living standards of the working class should be mounted.

The so-called 'Wets' want to gradually bleed workers' living standards, while Thatcher wants to slash them with a razor. The worry that Thatcher's course is heading for disaster came in a blistering attack from Gilmour, one of the ousted cabinet ministers.

In a statement drawn up a month before, in preparation for his sacking, he stated: "It does no harm to throw the occasional man overboard, but it does not do much good if you are steering full speed ahead for the rocks. And that is what the government is now doing."

In other words, it is far more important to change the policy than to change the cabinet...

"There must be changes in economic policy, if only because the social consequences of what is being done are not acceptable. It will also soon be quite clear that the Conservatives can-

not win a general election on such policies. That means that whatever the government is trying to do will be completely undone in two years unless changes are made...

It is still likely that Thatcher will be replaced before the election by a more

stylish Tory. With the lost-deposit collapse of the Tory vote at Warrington, and a probable defeat impending in the Croydon by-election, the ruling class will probably switch to a less abrasive, more flexible or astute leader (such as Carrington, Whitelaw or Pym?) to go into battle against Labour.

At present, strategists of capital are hedging their bets, wondering whether Thatcher can succeed in her new offensive. But when she gets into difficulties, it is unlikely that her Cabinet will support her then she will be ditched.

At a cabinet meeting on 17 July, Thatcher was defeated when she called for massive public expenditure cuts. Even supporters such as Nott and Biffen deserted her.

Still in her cabinet are Pym, Prior and Walker, who have in the past publicly agreed with Gilmour. Waiting in the wings for an appropriate moment to strike are Whitelaw and Carrington, who have been more circumspect in their

disagreement with Thatcherite policies.

For the moment, the ruling class will probably wait and see what comes from Thatcher's new attacks on the trade union and labour movement. Thatcher thinks that because last year saw the lowest number of strikes for 40 years, coupled with a decline in overall trade union membership, the Tories now have a great opportunity for ruthless attacks on basic trade union rights.

If Tebbit and Thatcher try it on, they will find how mistaken they are. The proposals they are discussing, which include attacks on the closed shop, the right to strike and picketing, compulsory balloting of union members and interference with the trade unions' link with the Labour Party, will arouse massive opposition.

Despite the attacks of recent years, the power of the British trade union movement remains unbroken. It is not like the 1920s and the 1930s when mass unemployment devastated trade union membership.

Now, despite the depression, 55% of those in employment are members of trade unions. Rank and file workers will be determined to fight attacks, and will force their leaders to respond.

Even right-wing union leaders such as Duffy of the engineers, threatened the new cabinet that they will not necessarily obey Tory laws.

Tebbit's casual statement on 'Today' (BBC Radio 4, 15 September) that he found attacks on trade unions "attractive" shows the Tories' aims. The gauntlet which this government has thrown down to the trade union and labour movement must be taken up and returned ten fold.

It is now essential that verbal opposition to the Tories is translated into industrial action.

A campaign to mobilise the full power of the movement must be mounted to drive this government from office and replace it by a Labour government committed to end unemployment and cuts in living standards.

This would mean a campaign for a clear socialist alternative to plan society by taking into control the major monopolies and banks, so that the wealth of society would be used for the benefit of all.



MY OLD MAN SAYS EVERYTHING HE TOUCHES SHUTS DOWN

LABOUR'S 'SOLIDARITY' CONFRONTS 'MILITANT'

Over three hundred and fifty people plus the 'Panorama' cameras crammed into the Transport Hall, Cardiff, last week to hear Peter Taaffe of the 'Militant' debate with Swansea Labour MP Alan Williams of 'Solidarity'.

The meeting began on a good note, with Chairman Andrew Price (from the Socialist Education Association) urging the comrades to discuss in a friendly and fraternal manner. Alan Williams had a stage managed entrance, suddenly appearing from the wings to whirring cameras, and applause from his supporters, despite having arrived over ten minutes earlier.

Peter Taaffe began his opening remarks by welcoming the debate, and pointed out that in the course of the clash of ideas, the whole labour movement

could benefit and ponder the correctness or otherwise of the ideas put forward.

He pointed out that the Solidarity leaders had been recent bed-fellows with the Social Democrats. It was untrue that Militant supporters had parachuted into the Labour Party. The reason why our ideas were gaining influence was because we were prepared to argue with, and convince the rank and file in the course of discussion.

The shift to the left in the Labour Party came about from the inability of British capitalism to provide a decent life for working people. The right believe we should return to the old discredited ideas of the 1974-79 Labour government.

They are even attempting to blackmail the rank and file of the Labour Party into not supporting Tony Benn by saying that his election as deputy leader would lead to other MPs deserting the Labour Party. If that was the case, he said (to loud applause) the sooner those

potential traitors leave the better.

Alan Williams, in his reply, accused the 'Militant', as supporters of Tony Benn, of wanting to introduce East European democracy.

By Lynn Cuthbert
(Caerphilly LPYS)

He accused 'Militant' of destroying the Labour Party from inside by binding MPs to conference decisions. He said it was impossible for the Labour government to carry out its manifesto and that the last government failed because it was in a minority.

He defended the wage restraint of the last Labour government. If the left gained control of the Labour Party, he stated, it would never gain power in Britain and would mark 'the end of democracy as we know it.'

The discussion that followed was dominated by supporters of 'Militant'. The Chairman was cons-

tantly barracked by supporters of 'Solidarity' complaining of his bias, even though at one time he had to ask for a 'Solidarity' speaker as none had their hands up.

Alec Thraves, of Swansea Labour Association showed how the policies of the right wing had failed: "We would pay MPs like shop stewards, they should be elected, and get the average wage of a skilled worker."

One comrade from the audience said he had never been a member of a political party, and had become disillusioned with the right wing Labour government: "What an advert for Labour, when a right wing Labour MP writes in a Conservative paper, shame on him." He was referring to Alan Williams' article in the 'Daily Telegraph' comparing 'Militant' with Hitler.

Frank Cuthbert from Caerphilly Labour Party accused the right wing of double standards when they pretended that they accepted the 'legitimate' Bevanite left. He pointed out that

Gaitskell had compared Bevan to Hitler, and described what happened in 1952 when right wingers Hugh Dalton, Herbert Morrison, were replaced on Labour's National Executive by the then Bevanite, Dick Crossman and Harold Wilson.

George Brown accused Conference of going mad: "the defeat made the acolytes of the Labour establishment smart and they came to the platform to counter attack Bevan, in particular Roy Jenkins, Christopher Mayhew and Denis Healey."

In replying, Alan Williams accused Trotsyists of infiltrating the Labour Party, and challenged the 'Militant' to stand on its own platform.

Peter Taaffe, summing up, said we were putting forward our ideas and 'Militant' supporters would be standing as Parliamentary candidates in three constituencies at the next election. His speech was interrupted by constant heckling from the right wing but to no avail.

As Peter Taaffe said: "no matter what organisational steps can be taken, Marxism will continue to be a part of this movement."

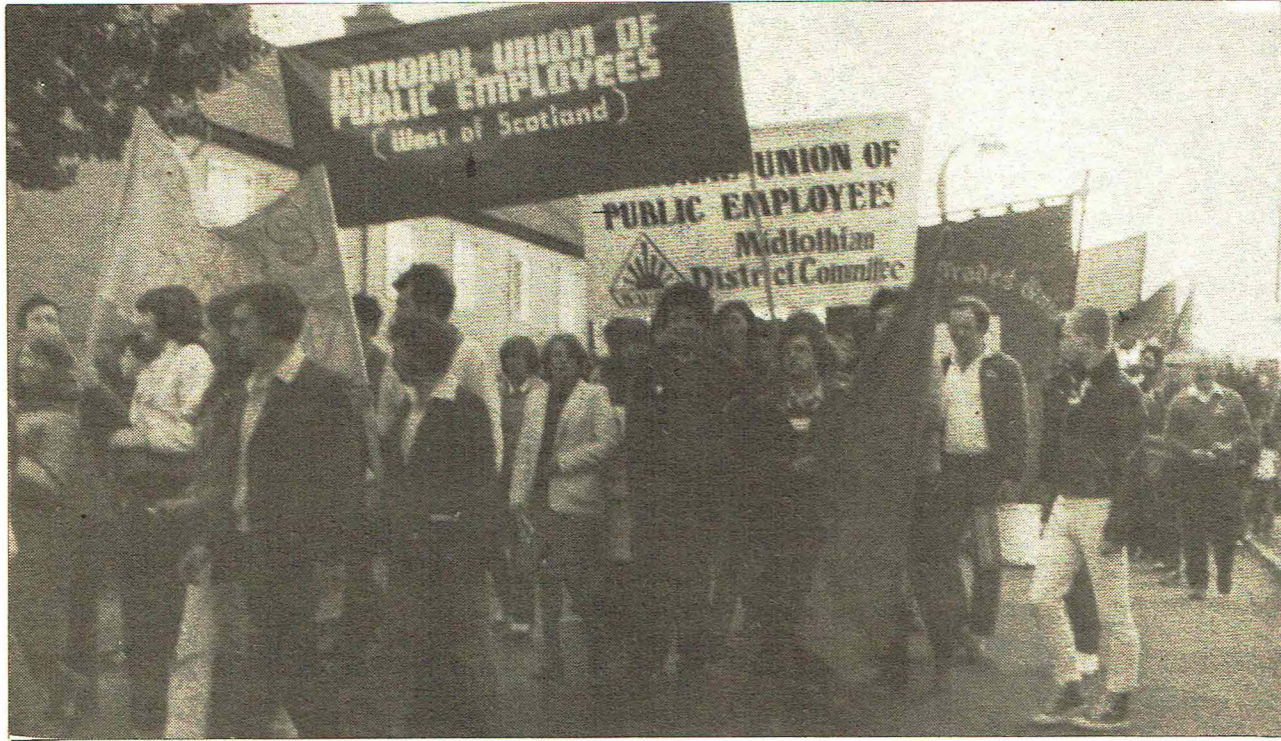
During the meeting two 'Militant' supporters were assaulted by ageing right wingers. They had clearly lost the debate.

'Panorama' will probably be showing part of the debate on Monday, 28 September.

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE MILITANT MEETING

Tuesday 29 September, 6.30 pm
Wagner Hall, Regency Road, Brighton
Speakers: Ted Grant, Tony Mulhearn (Labour PPC, Toxteth), Rod Fitch (Labour PPC, Brighton Kemptown)

YOPs: ORGANISATION STOPS DICTATORS



In the West of Scotland, the National Union of Public Employees are setting up a YOPs trainees branch.

I recently went along to a NUPE Shop Stewards meeting of nineteen YOP trainees representing 200 trainees to ask for support for the YOP—Trade Union Rights Campaign. (YOP—TURC).

When I joined the meeting they were discussing the establishment of disciplinary procedures with the Manpower Services Commission to end the arbitrary sackings and suspension of trainees.

They were keen to fight for change. When the TUC 'jobs express' was discussed, almost everyone wanted to go on the train. And NUPE organiser, Alan Wilson, raised the idea of a strike by all YOP trainees in the West of Scotland to coincide with the "Jobs Express" arriving in Glasgow

By Willie Griffin
(Bothwell LPYS)

on 23 November.

After I had explained the objectives of YOP-TURC, to organise 550,000 Yopsters into trade unions and get support for the founding conference on the 21st November, the response was magic. Everyone was interested in coming along.

With the main business over, two 'Sunday Mail' reporters came in to ask about YOPs.

They were told of how on the Briget YOP scheme, the trainees worked on "an archaeological dig—with archaeological conditions" whilst at Haghill the workshop was condemned by the cleansing department

for being too dirty! At Onslow the trainees drank their tea from milk bottles!

"Are there any good points about YOPs?" they asked. A stony silence greeted this question until someone remarked "Aye the sausage rolls at our canteen are no bad." (Laughter all round)

"What about the supervisors?" "They treat you like weans" (kids) said Brian McLeod. Peter McFarlane explained how in Larkhill training workshop "you get 7 minutes to go to the toilet, you have to ask permission, then report back when you've finished".

More articles on YOPs—page 5

Only two trainees were known to have been offered jobs as a result of their course! The MSC estimate 40% of Yoppers don't complete their training—(because conditions are so bad) and of those who do only 25% get a job at the end of it.

By getting organised the

trainees have already curbed the worst excesses of individual supervisors who act like little sergeant majors and won concessions on work clothes.

With national organisation the YOPs trainees could win concessions on allowances, proper training and on the provisional programme of the YOPTURC for:

★ Five weeks holiday per year

★ An immediate and substantial increase in training allowance and in allowances for work clothes, 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.

★ 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 on full pay or the right to stay on at school or college with a decent grant.

SELL THE CASE FOR SOCIALISM

The drive to boost our sales has got off to an excellent start. Two Tony Benn meetings, one in Swansea and one in Newcastle, each netted 100 sales each, while the recent LPYS demo in Edinburgh added hundreds to our regular sale as well as protesting about unemployment.

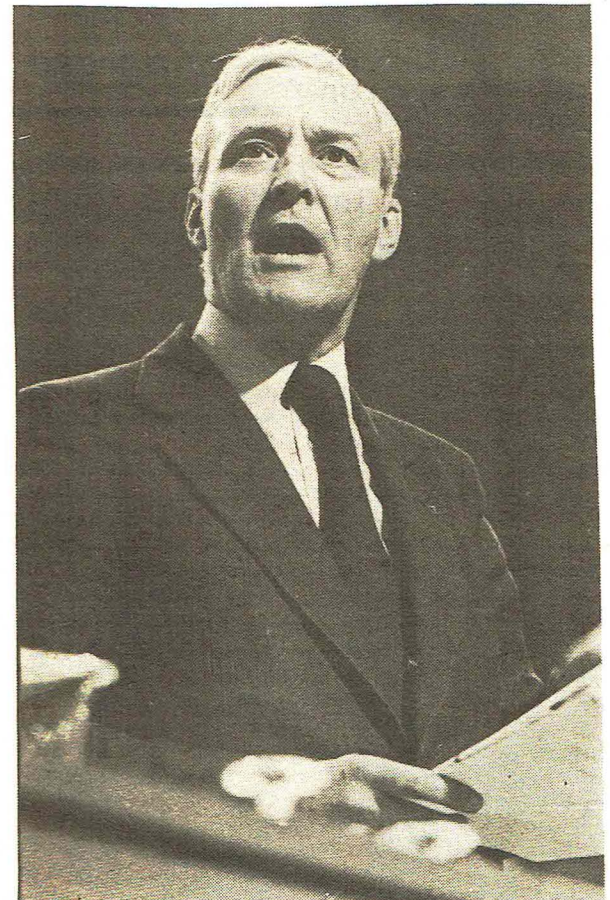
Our sellers in Torbay are taking advantage of the Indian summer and having beach sales—how about it, sellers in other seaside resorts—"tan the Tories"! Sales at the TUC look set to break all records, make sure

our special report of the TUC reaches all the activists.

As our editorial stated last week "a campaign is needed to take the argument to all these activists. The right are getting massive support from the Tory press—Duffy of the AUEW for example using "The News of the World" to make dark hints that as well as more Labour MPs, "a trade union" could defect to the SDP if Benn wins. The counter-argument must be taken to every section of the movement."

Take 'Militant' to every section of the Labour movement and make sure the workers read the case for socialism.

By Dave Farrar



2,000 HEAR BENN

Over 2,000 packed into Newcastle City Hall last Wednesday to hear Tony Benn outline his alternative to the policies of the Tories and the last Labour government.

One of the largest political meetings held in the North East since the war heard of how the struggle against nuclear weapons and mass unemployment were linked to the battle within the Labour Party for democratic change to ensure that policy on those subjects was carried out.

Benn condemned attacks

By Steve Sanderson
(Chairman, Newcastle Central LPYS)

on the LPYS, reporting how many older Party members had told him that the LPYS were carrying through the original aims of the labour movement. After the meeting 100 *Militants* and thirty *Socialist Youths* were sold and 140 people expressed an interest in joining the LPYS.

Brixton: Deportation threat

Black and white, workers and youth, who were arrested during the Brixton upheavals in April and in July, continue their lengthy passage through the courts.

One Italian school teacher, Patricia Giambi, who was found guilty of "threatening behaviour" (in a magistrates court) is now under threat of being deported.

British citizens found guilty of such offences so far have been fined or given prison sentences. The police are using the tactic of drop-

ping charges which would lead to trial by jury, and keeping charges which would only allow a hearing before an individual magistrate.

Court hearings have shown that police have built up a large file of photographs of the events of mid April, and can pin point where particular individuals were at particular times on the streets during the events. Between them and the press, the police are singling out individuals to be "conspirators" of events which the police themselves ignited.

According to Robin Auld, Lord Scarman's QC in the government's inquiry, it was insensitive action by two policemen who questioned and searched a

black cab driver in Atlantic Road on 11 April, which was the immediate cause of the upheavals in Brixton.

Auld last week went on to say that the bad relationship between the blacks and the police was caused by "saturation policing", the legacy of the SUS law, and the ignoring of complaints. However, in the final analysis, Auld absolved the police of their brutal tactics during Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th of April.

Scarman himself is due to

report in October and his conclusions will probably follow similar lines.

The events during the summer have provoked a heated debate within the police force itself. Hardliners, such as Anderton in Manchester have demanded tougher measures. Whilst Alderton (Chief Constable in Devon and Cornwall) has opposed police training in the use of CS gas and rubber bullets, and has called for greater community involvement in policing policy.

But neither Alderton nor Scarman can guarantee an end to police harassment. The labour movement must campaign for democratic control over the police, with the right to hire and fire top officers and vet operations.

By Kevin Fernandez

NEW
LPYS
LEAFLET

NEW Labour Party Young Socialists recruitment leaflet: 'Whose side are you on?'

Available from Andy Bevan, Labour Party Youth Officer, 150 Walworth Road, London S.E.17. £4 per 1,000.

UNIONS LOOK TO POLITICAL ACTION

This year's Trades Union Congress decisions to abandon incomes policy and support unilateral disarmament were a break with the past.

In fifteen years there has not been such a clear rejection of wage controls as an economic solution — despite the impassioned pleas for 'understanding' from Michael Foot.

The dominant themes: the need for change and for united struggle, were linked.

In particular, delegates were looking to the next Labour government bring forward socialist policies based on public ownership and control of capital.

Opening congress, Alan Fisher, TUC president, castigated the Tories for their savage and dramatic destruction of jobs. It fell to David Bassnett (G&MWU) to articulate the feelings of every delegate, that defensive industrial action is not enough to protect workers from Tory anti-trade union laws: political action is necessary.

The importance of unity in struggle was stressed, particularly by the public sector unions. They called for a powerful 'triple alliance' of the public sector and went on, with unanimous support from Congress to 'instruct the General Council to develop a co-ordinated campaign including industrial action' against government cash limits to hold down public sector pay.

The scandal of youth unemployment was dealt with in a composite motion which squarely blamed the government for the recent

**Wayne Jones,
industrial
corres-
pondent,
sums up the
TUC
congress**

violence and riots of jobless youth, and called for reform of cheap labour YOP schemes and more centres for the unemployed. The General Council and member unions were pledged 'to develop and support other initiatives in order not to lose the impetus created by the People's March for Jobs.'

Conference demanded shorter working hours, proper and adequate industrial training, and many other important reforms.

The potential for joint action was shown by Emylyn Williams, South Wales Miners leader. He promised, to loud applause, that if the teachers unions acted to defend education, 'our birthright', then they would receive the miners' full backing.

The right wing and their ideas—of the capitalist mixed economy—were isolated.

The attempt by John Boyd, General Secretary of the Engineers, to swing the vote against unilateral disarmament was in vain; the defence of incomes policies by Bill Sirs (Steelworkers), Tom Jackson (Postmen) and Roy Grantham (APEX) were ignored and when Eric Hammond launched a vitriolic personal attack on Tony Benn, Arthur Scargill and Ken Livingstone, he was booed and heckled, and a section of the rank and file EETPU delegation walked out.

The right wing had only one success—nevertheless an important one. The

structure of the TUC is to be changed, with automatic selection of larger unions to the General Council, the TUC's ruling body. Unions with less than 100,000 members will elect eleven representatives to the Council from amongst themselves.

This was a blatant attempt to stem the advance of the left by organisational means. Some long standing left-wingers will be turfed off the General Council.

The status of the industrial and manual trade unions will be downgraded, a retrograde step which must be reversed. It would be a mistake to over-react, however—Jim Slater, the Seamen's leader, even talked of forming a separate manual TUC.

The timetable for the introduction of this new system has yet to be agreed. But structural changes will not reverse the moves to the left amongst the ranks of trade unionists, seeking an alternative to the failed policies of the past.

In the election for the new TUC General Council the 'hit-list' produced and circulated by Roy Grantham of APEX to remove some left wingers from the General Council backfired. Grantham's own vote was halved and he came bottom of his trade group.

(Under the new selection system, the leader of the white collar union APEX will be guaranteed a seat.)

Complaints that canvassing for votes is in breach of TUC rules were not pursued. Grantham's own union will no doubt now be questioning the stringent rules in APEX forbidding canvassing, and the ruthless punishment inflicted on any member who infringes these rules.

The hypocrisy of trade union leaders canvassing for selected right-wing candidates in election, and holding secret meetings, while persecution is heaped on individual, especially left wing, members who come together openly to campaign for alternative policies, will not be lost on trade unionists.

The political character of the Congress was reflected in the fringe meetings. Len Murray's often

repeated and mistaken judgement that the 'Labour Party is no concern of the TUC', did not deter delegates. As Alec Kitson, chairman of the Labour Party, pointed out in his fraternal address, the Party is 'inextricably wedded financially and structurally to the labour movement'.

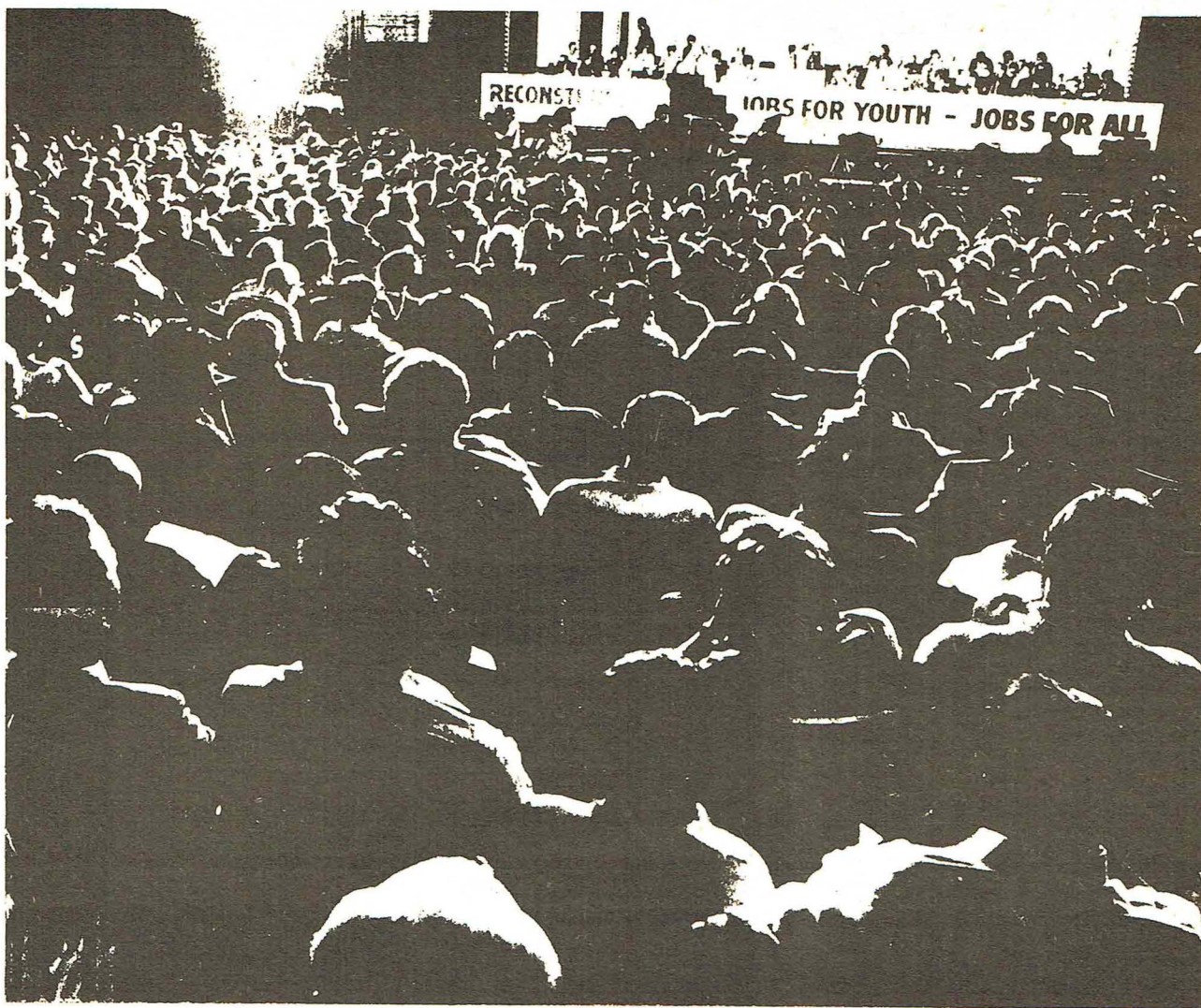
The televised debate between the candidates for Labour's deputy leadership attracted well over half the Congress delegates. Benn's call for fundamental change: widespread public ownership

to curtail the exploitation and misery of capitalist ownership and control, won the most enthusiastic response. Denis Healey's defence of the last Labour government and his attacks on individuals campaigning for democracy in the Party were met with silence or heckling.

At the Congress the composite motion passed on economic policy included many essential and urgent reforms but it did not deal with the underlying issue of ownership and control.

Only in *Militant's* public meeting, attended by sixty delegates and visitors, was this spelt out. There, a clear, bold socialist programme, around a mass mobilisation of the working class was clearly explained.

The 'old cart horse' of the TUC is undoubtedly being rejuvenated. The task remains to weld the TUC affiliates into a leadership for the whole working class, in the war against Tory destruction.



Decent grant for all F.E. students

"Useless Bribes". That's how former Tory education spokesman, Dr. Keith Hampson, once described the proposal to give every 16-18 year old in full-time education a guaranteed grant.

By Clive Heemsker
(*Militant* supporter,
NOLS National Committee)

Only a minority of 16-18 year old students get any grant at all, mostly completely inadequate. Tameside council gives a maximum grant of £60 a year to students under 18. Wakefield, on paper at least, is better with a maximum grant of £333 or £6.40 a week to students aged 16 and 17. (NUS Grants Survey 1980/81).

But the majority of students receiving a grant get far less than the maximum due to stringent 'means tests'. Wakefield stipulates that the students' parents must earn less than £1,813 a year, or £35 a week, before the maximum grant is paid! Not surprisingly, the actual amount the Local Education Authority paid out in discretionary awards totalled £114.20 per award or £2.15 a week!

The number of working class students at university has continued to fall. The

Universities Central Councils on Admissions reported that fewer than 5% of last year's University entrants came from unskilled or semi-skilled manual workers' families, although they account for a third of the population.

Militant supporters in the National Organisation of Labour Students have demanded that all students get a decent grant. If the government believes that working on YOP schemes is training for the future, then isn't it equally the case for those learning in full-time education?

There should be a guaranteed grant for all further education and sixth form students at least equal to the rate for YOP trainees (at present the Manpower Services Commission recommends a rate of £26 a week for YOP trainees.)

But if this demand is to be achieved it must be fought for by FE students, alongside the Labour movement. The capitalists are not prepared to concede such reforms without a

struggle.

A grant of £26 a week for the 554,000 sixteen and seventeen year olds would cost about £725 m a year.

The Tories are able to spend millions of pounds on the Trident missile programme, or give away millions to the 'top people' in tax handouts. They must be forced to give a grant to all 16-18 year olds in full time education.

YOPs itself, was introduced out of fear of the response of the labour movement against the growing levels of youth unemployment. In the same way a fighting campaign for a £26 a week grant, involving lobbies of council meetings, protest street meetings and pickets, can link school students, parents, college students, YOP workers and, above all, the ranks of the Labour Party and trade unions in the fight to end poverty income in the colleges.

LPYS branches and college Labour Clubs can play a crucial role in this campaign. By approaching the labour movement, especially the teachers and college staff unions, and linking grants to fighting education cuts, pressure could be placed on local councils, especially Labour controlled, to concede this demand.

Michael Foot addressing Congress—his plea for compromise on incomes policy did not convince delegates. Photo: Militant



YOPS — UNION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

Face to face with Manpower Services

During the Liverpool Day of Action on 28 August, a deputation went in to see the Manpower Services Commission about conditions on YOP schemes.

Seven of us walked into the office, Kevin Ramage, Labour Party Young Socialists National Chairman, began by outlining our demands to the MSC "Special Projects" Manager.

- ★ A decent rate of pay;
- ★ All bus fares to be paid to and from work;
- ★ Full provision of protective and outdoor clothing;
- ★ The right to join a union, and to form trainees' committees with the right to meet in works time;
- ★ The establishment of proper grievance procedures.

By Kevin Ramage and Shareen Blackall
(West Derby LPYS and TGWU 6/612)

The MSC manager replied and politely told us that he and the area board had no say over pay and travel allowances: "It's all decided nationally."

"You mean by the Tory government?" "Yes," he admitted.

Then one of the trainees pointed out: "I get £23.50. I would get £19 on the dole. After paying £3 bus fares, I end up working 40 hours for £1.50."

Gary from Kirkby added: "My boss says we are not working, that we are trainees, so why can't we get travel passes like students?"

Again the manager's reply was illuminating:

"When the MSC last went to the MPTE (Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive) it flatly refused." However: "There has since been a change in control on the County Council and Labour might well be more sympathetic."

That's an area we'll have to follow up with pressure on the County Council. We'll not wait for the MSC to think about it. If we could get that in Liverpool, it would be an example for other areas to take up until a proper travel allowance is won nationally.

"Why can't we get our travel paid by the local MSC? After all it would be less than £1m out of your £16m budget?"

"Ah! But it's public money," we were told. "But aren't we the public?"

There are trade unionists on MSC area and national board. Perhaps they can put pressure on to sort out

some of these things, even if it means breaking their 'guidelines'.

We'll have to get in touch with them, and their unions, because most of the unions are beginning to come out for proper conditions on YOPs now. The trade union reps on MSC boards should fight for that too.

With the MSC manager we moved on to some of the other issues:

"Protective and outdoor clothing? Yes there's no reason why not. We can finance that as we authorise the schemes."

That's a victory for the 12 lads we met the other day cleaning up a churchyard in all weathers. We'll have to make sure the T&G sorts that out straight away.

"The right to join a union?" He said he wasn't against it, that everyone should have the right to join or not to join. Our experience shows the big majority of YOPs can be won to the trade union movement, especially when they begin to see action, even on small issues.

And trainees' committees? Surprisingly the MSC manager thought they were a good idea. This is one of

the most important issues, because it gives trainees the right to meet and discuss grievances, and work out how to take them up.

But the demands don't stop there. One YOPster said, "We need a proper grievance procedure. Where I work at BDA (a brickworks) about three lads a week get the sack for little things, like losing things, and you get stopped money for nothing."

Then the question of training came up: "On my scheme, we are on Parks and Gardens. We are not trained how to use tractors and mowers. All we are doing is digging, and that's not training is it?" It's a question of safety, replied MSC. But the trainees all agreed that "Safety is fair enough, it's important, but you're never going to be safe unless you know how to operate equipment properly, and are aware of its dangers."

"There is always the temptation to use the gear when a supervisor is not around, so we should be trained. Anyway, if you go for a job at the parks and gardens with the corporation they are going to ask if you can use the gear aren't they? We've got to get pro-

per training, and we need a union to check on it."

After 40 minutes with the MSC we had got just about as much as we could out of them until we've got properly organised.

So we suggested the agreements are put into writing.

Then the MSC man started to hedge. "Of course, the MSC is sorting many of these things out with the TUC, and I don't want to pre-empt those discussions."

This is a lesson to us. We've got to get straight to Len McClusky, the T&G officer, and get everything put into writing, above all, we've got to get organised so we have got the muscle to back our demands up, and get the movement pushing our case.

Still it was a pretty useful 40 minutes. We've all learned a bit about negotiation and what the tasks are in front of us.

We shall probably be able to get the MSC to agree some of the points locally, which will help our organising drive locally, and an encouragement for YOP workers around the country.

WORKING FOR 30p A WEEK

By Laurence Coates
(LPYS National Committee)

"30p for 40 hours."

That's how one YOP worker on Merseyside summarised the advantage of working. "I get £23.50. I have to pay the first £4 of my bus fares. That leaves £19.50. I could get £19.20 if I was just on Supplementary Benefit."

If you're living away from home benefit is even worse, just £21.30 a week plus rent.

YOPs 'pay' has been frozen for two years at a miserly £23.50; even the Manpower Services Commission (which runs the schemes) recommended a rise to £26 last year. Yet the then Tory 'Employment' Minister James Prior (in charge of MSC) had a payrise this year taking his salary to £27,825 a year; he now earns more in three weeks than a YOP worker in a year!

Although the MSC is now recommending a rise to £28, this is far below the real value of YOP when it was first introduced; and there's no guarantee that

the Tories will pay it at all!

The Tories and the bosses are forever begging that they can't afford to pay a decent wage because their profits are falling. But although his company lost £6 million last year, this didn't stop Lord Grade giving his former managing director Jack Gill a £500,000 pay-off. As always it's one law for the rich...

Other bosses are taking a lead from YOPs in trying to drive down the wages of working class youth. The National Conference of the Federation of Master Builders will discuss cutting apprentices' pay by 10%.

The Tories and the employers are making a concerted attempt to drive down the living standards of working class youth. If they were to succeed, all workers would suffer tomorrow, as the bosses would bring in youth to replace older workers. The labour and trade union movement must stop youth being used as a pool of cheap labour.

The gains in living conditions, won over the last 30 years, must not be taken away. YOP workers are now beginning to join trade unions and fight for decent rates of pay.

In Sunderland YOP trainees thought that £67 was a fair living wage, but as a first step they were prepared to accept £45, as a reasonable, realisable demand. Where clear demands of this nature are



YOPS worker Terry Goodall and Labour MP Harry Cavan meet Michael Foot with YOPS petition

Photo: Denis Doran

put forward by YOP workers the labour movement must assist them to organise.

But at the same time we must not lose sight of the crucial fight for full trade union rates of pay for YOP workers. On average, local authority manual workers get £37 at 16, £44 at 17, and £68 at 18. While these rates in themselves leave a lot to be desired, nevertheless they would be a massive step forward for YOP workers, and would open the way for a combined struggle of YOP and local authority workers to improve these rates.

The key to the struggle for a decent rate of pay is for YOP workers to join the trade unions. It is to assist this that the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign has been formed.

MANCHESTER CAMPAIGN

The Manchester LPYS YOPs recruitment campaign is off to a flying start!, with a series of public meetings on YOPs in Denton, Wythenshawe, Bury, Rochdale, Royton, and Heywood.

NUPE Tameside area have given the LPYS full authority to organise YOP workers in their name, supplying the YS with a list of all YOP schemes in the area, and the names and addresses of everyone on YOPs in the Tameside area.

In addition, when NUPE send a leaflet to every YOP worker in the area, they will also be including an LPYS YOPs recruitment leaflet.

The supervisors of one big scheme, where there are over 200 YOPs, have agreed to the LPYS and NUPE sending representatives all over for a whole half day to meet and discuss with the YOP workers.

The local Trade Unions have warmly received the LPYS campaign, and plans

are now being laid to establish an office for the YOPs Trainees Rights Campaign.

A meeting is being organised of unemployed YS members to plan a campaign of action, to visit all the YOP schemes, systematically working through all the different areas of the city, one at a time. To draw the campaign together, an initial meeting of a Manchester YOP Workers Council is planned in October.

Report from Malcolm Clark
(National Committee member for North West)



'Militant' is now on the map! It seems we are producing some good clues for Fleet Street's crossword writers. A crossword in the Guardian [September 1] featured a clue which read, 'Inclination, could be militant'. The answer was of course 'tendency'. But while that was a jolly little puzzle, the rabid Tory propaganda sheet, the Daily Telegraph, couldn't keep its paranoid fear of Militant out of even its fun and games page.

In its crossword of September 4, clue 10 across read, 'Produces an idea calling for expulsion of Militant Tendency [5,3]'. While many Militant supporters had trouble fitting 'Lord Underhill' in the space provided, the answer was in fact 'Trots out'! Ah well, at the rate Militant is growing in support and influence withing the Labour movement, we should be appearing in the Times crossword by Christmas.

●
Singled out as models for Britain to follow by Thatcher were Japan and Singapore. Speaking on the Jimmy Young show last week, she said that these countries allowed industrialists the freedom to invest. Japan, ruled by the corrupt Democratic party, surely cannot be the example that Thatcher wants her Tory party to follow. And Singapore? Well its contribution to freedom has been special. Its Prime Minister, Lee Kuan Yew has been in power since 1959. There are no opposition members in Parliament and trade unionists face severe restrictions. Under the Internal Security Act [based upon British colonial legislation] the government has very wide ranging powers of arbitrary arrest and detention.

Although a member of the United Nations, Singapore has not signed or ratified the International Covenants on Economic Social and Cultural rights nor on Civil and Political Rights. So when Thatcher talks about freedom for industrialists to invest, remember the kind of society she has in mind.

●
The 'Times' in a recent editorial called the Marchioness of Northampton a "model of creative enterprise." She has started up a shoe business making up market wellies at up market prices. Despite her name her shoes won't be made in the centre of the British shoe industry, Northampton, but in South Korea, where wage rates are extremely low and union activists are imprisoned.

The Marchioness claims that this is because no British manufacturer can make her boots, thought she is believed not to be too upset about the poverty wages she pays.

The good lady is perplexed at union anger at not making the shoes in Britain. People complain at the reluctance of the upper classes to engage in trade, she says. "But look what happens when they do"

Like the numerous jobless shoe workers she has plenty of spare time. Unlike them she lives in two stately homes set in 10,000 acres, is "joint master" of the Warwickshire hunt and can contemplate her wealth estimated as at least £25 million in company with her butler, cooks, secretaries etc who look after her massive estate.

'The Times' is right. She is the 1981 model of creative enterprise, making useless products and creating vast profits out of slave labour.

●
"I've always been slightly uneasy about people who talk about an irreversible change in power." So says Denis Healey in a new pamphlet "Socialism with a human face."

But who was this speaker at Labour Party conference in 1973? "We join battle armed with the most radical and comprehensive programme we have had since 1945. Its aim is honestly stated; to bring about a fundamental and irreversible shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people and their families." The speaker, doubtless making Denis Healey uneasy was—Denis Healey.

TRAPPED WITHOUT A UNION

By John Sharpe
(Bristol NE
Labour Party)



Grunwick workers showed their resolve to fight low pay in 1977. The strength of the unions must be used to the full

My sister works as a typist/telephonist/receptionist for a small company producing plastic pipes. It is unorganised and pays low wages.

Recently the company advertised for a labourer, and the switchboard was jammed for a week.

Before being offered an interview each had to answer a list of questions, some of which are listed below.

"Are you between 25 and 40?"

"Have you ever worked shifts?" (The company doesn't work shifts).

"Have you a car?" (If you've been made redundant recently you would have sold your car).

Most important of all, "did you work for St Anne's Board Mills?" (a large local factory recently shut down. It was organised with relat-

ively good pay and conditions and would give workers ideas).

Answer one question the wrong way and no interview. People called round because they couldn't get through on the phone and they were sent away and told to try again. A 41 year old argued and pleaded in desperation.

Someone insisted that although he didn't have a car he had a push bike and it would be no trouble getting to work because he lived very near, not realising the meaning of the question.

One person had been made redundant three times in four years. Most of the people applying had worked at St Annes Board Mills. None of these people got an interview for a job sweeping the floor and cleaning the toilets for £50—£60 a week.

One worker, with 35 years service, always worked from 6.30 in the morning instead of the 7 o'clock start i.e. ½ hours overtime. Occasionally he clocked off early and was under the impression this was alright.

The company, without telling him, decided to pay him from 7 and for weeks he didn't notice. When he did notice he complained and later, when he was out sick, they sacked him for bad timekeeping.

A woman had a morning's money stopped while attending her mother's funeral. The workers in the factory (the staff consists of three office girls) recently decided not to join a union, it's obvious what was in their minds.

Now the 'directors', in their mid '30s, are more confident and more arrogant than ever.

My sister answered all the phone calls and typed all the letters. "They know they can pay what they like and do what they like because they know they can get away with it," my sister sums up, "it's degrading."

Millions of workers are trapped in this vice like grip of frustration and anger in these so called small businesses that Thatcher raves

about.

The sickening choice of either super exploitation under appalling conditions and low pay, suffering indignity and degradation at the hands of the upstart whizzkids or face the rest of their lives in misery on the dole, of rejection and isolation, like the workers who applied, in vain, for the job as a labourer.

The responsibility for ending the plight of many of our brothers and sisters lies with the organised ranks of the trade unions and Labour Party.

A strong lead, a clear, serious move towards resisting low pay and unemployment and the response from the unorganised workers will be "and put the boot in for us too!"

The confidence of the big battalions will give confidence and hope to every oppressed layer of society. Despair can take a holiday—and good riddance.

Conditions determine consciousness. Both are ready for socialism.

When the questions begin

By Anne Spiller

(Secretary, Tower Hamlets LPYS)

From birth a working class woman is oppressed by the capitalist system. At home she is encouraged to play with dolls (no tree climbing!) and help mother with the chores.

Above all, she is expected not to think too hard except of course, which colours suit her best or how to wear her hair.

All this to prepare her for her role in the capitalist system—that of someone's wife and someone's mother and above all—the home maker.

That way she won't be another voice demanding the jobs that the crisis ridden system is making fewer and fewer. She won't cry out for creches in the

workplaces, nursery schools for the under fives or decent hospitals for her sick and ailing relatives.

No. She will be there, in the home, to prop up the decaying profit system. She will perform the "caring" tasks that capitalism can no longer afford to take on.

At school her conditioning will continue, she is encouraged to specialise in "feminine" subjects, home economics, biology (to teach her how to have babies), and English, (because it's easy).

Woe betide her if she expresses an interest in metal work, physics or maths. She will be made to feel unfeminine or be told that girls have no "head" for figures or sciences.

Everywhere she looks, glossy magazines will tell her how to look beautiful and catch that husband, get that wedding dress, that engagement ring—and those babies.

Her parents can't afford their council rents as the Tories have put them up and her father's been thrown on the dole so she has to

leave school with no qualifications though she would have loved to have gone to college.

She works in the local factory (if she's lucky!) 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. At work the girls talk about their boyfriends and she dreams of meeting a rich man to whisk her off to paradise.

But of course she doesn't, she meets a boy and becomes pregnant (because they weren't told about contraception at school). She'd like an abortion but she hasn't got £100 and the cuts mean no one gets an NHS abortion. So she gets married—just for status—at last she'd be someone!

She dreams of a nice semi-detached house—well furnished, with a garden—but all she can afford is a council flat.

Five years and three kids later she's 22 but looks 40. Her husband's now on the dole, the council rents have risen, the kids haven't any decent clothes, so she never goes out. She resents her husband, feels trapped by her kids and that bloody

council estate.

She goes back to the factory and manages to get a job. She's hardened from the starry-eyed teenager she was, after five years of drudgery and poverty.

Now, more than ever in the past, she joins a trade union to fight for better wages and working conditions. She begins to think again.

She questions the bosses' system that gave her no option but marriage, but then refused here a decent home to live in, a decent education for her children and a job for her husband.

She realises that her oppression is not due solely to her sex, but even more to her class. She decides to fight.

If we, in the Labour Party, LPYS and unions put forward a socialist alternative, she'll be in the forefront, fighting for the socialist transformation of society where working women and men have the right to determine their own futures.

WHY WE'RE STANDING FOR LABOUR'S NEC

The following leaflet has been written by 'Militant' supporters Ray Apps and Pat Wall, who are standing for the constituency section of the Labour Party NEC.

We are standing for election to the NEC and seeking the support of your Constituency Labour Party.

Workers and their families are currently faced with mass unemployment, falling living standards and attacks upon the trade unions.

The brutal monetarist policies of the Tory government with the economic crisis facing capitalism are making life a nightmare for working people.

The Labour Party must offer a new alternative and lead a struggle to bring down the Tories at the earliest possible opportunity.

Annual conference demands for such radical policies as the 35-hour week without loss of pay, a guaranteed minimum wage, a massive increase of expenditure in health, education, housing and other essential services need to form the basis of a mass campaign by the Party throughout the country.

We must ensure that resolutions of Annual Conference are transformed into reality by a concerted struggle of the labour movement.

Yet we must ensure that the pitfalls of previous Labour administrations are avoided. *Mild

monetarism'', remaining within the strait-jacket of capitalism resulted in a disaster.

The reforms promised in the 1974 election manifesto were completely abandoned at the insistence of the CBI, banks, and other institutions of capitalism.

Major decisions of conference, the nationalisation of the banks, abolition of the House of Lords, on nuclear disarmament and withdrawal from the Common Market continue to be opposed by the parliamentary leadership.

It is essential, if the next Labour government is to implement reforms in favour of working people, that the employers' grip over the economy is broken.

A socialist plan of production, necessitating the immediate implementation of Clause IV, part IV of the party constitution, is the only way to ensure a radical programme of reform is implemented and retained.

In reality today, it means the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy, banks and insurance firms, controlling 80-85% of industrial production, under democratic workers' control and management with compensation paid only on the basis of proven need.

With such a democratic socialist plan the mass unemployment, misery and poverty currently being thrust upon the backs of the mass of the population could be ended and the way opened for the building of a socialist society.



Pat Wall is a member of Shipley Labour Party and ASTMS. He is president of Bradford Trades Council, and has been a councillor in Liverpool and Bingley. LP member since 1950.

These are the socialist policies that Labour must be campaigning for. Only with such radical socialist policies is it possible to inflict a crushing defeat over the Tories and their shadows in the Liberal and Social Democratic Parties.

Tremendous gains in both policy and democracy have been secured by the Labour Party membership over the past years. These gains must be defended and built upon. We must ensure Labour's parliamentary representatives are prepared to fight for working people and for the socialist aspirations of our party.

Mandatory re-selection of MPs and the Wembley conference decisions must be fully defended.

Indeed they must be built up through the election of the Cabinet and shadow cabinet, taking place by the electoral college and for similar methods of democracy and accountability to be applied at local levels in relation to Labour councillors.

We must ensure that those elected to positions of office on behalf of the Labour Party are fully in touch and accountable to the day to day problems faced by working people and their families.



Ray Apps is a member of Brighton Kempton Labour Party and TGWU. Member of NEC working party on re-selection and signatory to the minority report. Campaign organiser for Kempton's prospective parliamentary candidate.

The Labour Party has turned towards becoming a campaigning party. This needs to be strengthened. Conference decisions and our socialist objectives must be taken to the factories, door steps, streets and dole queues.

We must increase the industrial base of our Party through the establishment of work place branches.

These policies for which we are seeking your support are the policies which, we believe, will result in the building of a mass Labour Party with an accountable leadership and socialist policies essential to solve the problems of working

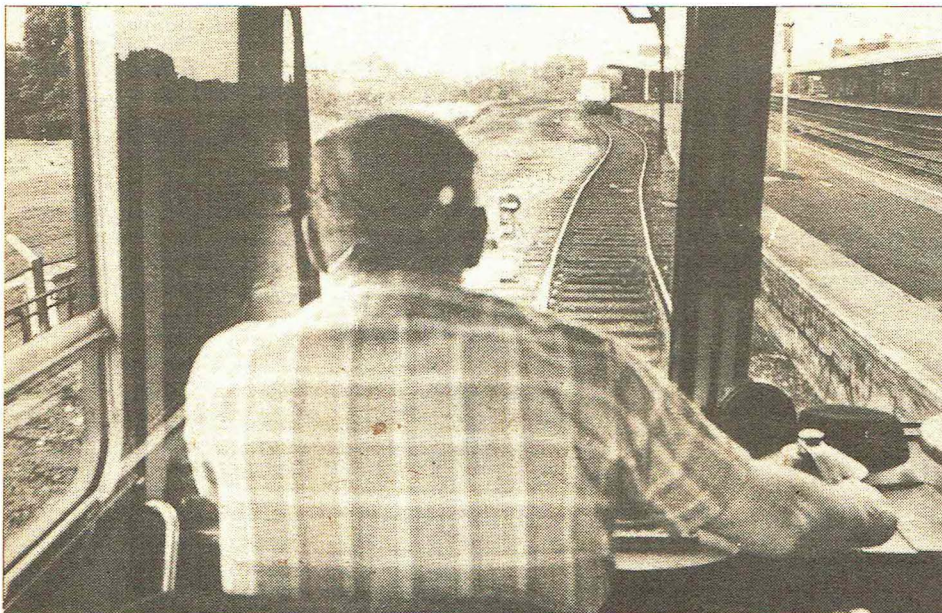
people and their families. It is on this basis that we ask your Constituency Labour Party to support our candidature for the NEC.

Yours fraternally
Ray Apps (Brighton Kempton CLP)
Pat Wall (Shipley CLP)

Copies of this leaflet are available from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

DANGER ON THE RAILWAYS

By Dave Cotterill



Working on the railways can be as dangerous as down a mine. And as John Davies says of the Tories' planned cut-backs in staff: "Someone has calculated how many deaths these will cause and have decided it is acceptable." Photo: Laurence Sparham (IFL)

John Davies works as a supervisor in the Tune marshalling yard. He is a member of the National Union of Railwaymen, formerly branch secretary, and has clear ideas about

the consequences of the squeeze on spending and Tory staffing cuts:

Overmanning is really under-use. Take the Newcastle to Carlisle line—they'll say it's overmanned. With underinvestment over the years, you've got signal boxes every couple of miles. To send one train to Carlisle

from Newcastle, those boxes must be staffed for 8 hours, all the way.

That applies whether you've got only one train or one every three minutes. You still need the same amount of staff.

At the moment our maintenance staff—again because of underinvestment—are running from one danger point to another in our marshalling yard. Our permanent way (rail track) team haven't done any maintenance as such for

years: they are rushing from one derailment to another to put the track right.

On productivity, nobody can touch the railwaymen. In 1979, with half the staff, the railways transported just as many people as it did before the Beeching era, (in 1966 the railways employed roughly half a million; by 1980 this was halved.) This is a tremendous achievement, under any circumstances.

From 1966 to about 1976 you had a dead summer, things would begin to build up from September onwards. December, January, February was a lot of hard work on the railways.

During the winter months this year it's been like summer—that's the measure of how bad the recession is.

You can't cover over a railway marshalling yard: no matter what the weather is you're out there.

It sometimes amazes me that the men that I supervise—whose take home pay is £56—come out and actually do the work I ask them to.

You don't just have to contend with the weather. Most of the traffic will be scrap iron or coal or iron pirrates for the steel mills: there is obviously a lot of spillage.

Our workways are fouled

up with all sorts of rubbish—even bits of ships that have fallen off wagons

The job of shunter men is more dangerous than the trawlers or face men in the pits—and of course we are only getting half their money.

Getting down off an engine, a chargeman slipped on iron pirrates, about the size of marbles, rolled over a sleeper and cracked his back. He's wearing a corset now and he'll be wearing it till he dies.

The management say that's his fault for not looking.

Another example: a train was coming down from Consett with three guards—two trainees and a very experienced guard. As it was going over a bridge the guard saw one of the centre wagons had derailed and told the two trainee guards to get into what we call the duck seats, where you have some measure of protection.

He got on to the bottom step and jumped off. He crippled himself; he'll never be a guard again.

The train came off the road, demolished a signal cabin, hit a signalman, the guard jumped and was crippled—and management say it was his fault.

At work, people are say-

ing 'I'll believe it when I see it,' when you talk about a pay rise. Our union's research unit figures say we need a 32% rise to stay level with our position in 1973. That makes people roll about on the floor laughing.

We've heard Sid Weighell: "the day of the cheap railwayman is over". He said that about three years ago, and the present take home pay is £56.

He also said "as long as I'm general secretary there will be guards on trains"—one of the things the Tories are pressing for is that there should be no guards.

Somebody, somewhere has sat down and made clever calculations about how many deaths are going to be caused by not having a guard and they've decided the increase in deaths and injury is acceptable.

The union's got the ludicrous situation where seventy-seven people direct policy for 120,000. That's crazy.

Our branch will be putting up a motion next year—which incidentally is Rules Revision year—and we'll be asking for the officers of the union—general secretary, deputy general secretary and divisional officers—to be elected every five years.

BIRMINGHAM

DEVASTATION OF THE HEARTLAND

Chelmsley Wood

Behind all the unemployment statistics are people—ordinary men and women, young people and families.

In formerly prosperous Birmingham, unemployment has doubled but how do you measure the increase in unhappiness, tension and worry for those thousands of Midlands families to whom the dole is a completely new experience?

Barbara Burke, a member of Birmingham Yardley Labour Party, spoke to Jeremy Birch about what unemployment has meant to her family. Both her husband and her three brothers are out of work.

"Unemployment can change people's lives, create such disorder and tension, people shouldn't have to go through that."

"My mother is 62 and she's worried sick about unemployment for her sons. She shouldn't have to be worrying about them at her age."

Up until four years ago the whole family was in work, with no more than the ordinary everyday problems of all working class people to concern them. But then Barbara's father, through ill health, had to retire early from British Leyland's Castle Bromwich plant.

He had worked there for more than twenty years, helping to build the car industry that came to dominate Birmingham. But it was only to build it so that when his own children wanted jobs of their own there, the doors were closed in their faces.

By Jeremy Birch

His middle son, Brian, was a skilled man at Castle Bromwich. He served his apprenticeship there, in fact it was his only job from leaving school.

But after nine years, when the crisis hit the motor industry and Birmingham, he was out, as nearly half the workforce were made redundant.

Now he has been unemployed for a year. Barbara explained: "He doesn't stop applying for jobs, filling in forms. Most of the time he doesn't even get a reply. It must have cost him a fortune in stamps alone."

But how does he feel, having a trade and still unable to find anything?

"He hates it now when people ask him 'have you got anything yet?' He feels he must explain to people that he really is writing after every job. he seems to feel guilty that he is unemployed."

Brian still lives at home with his parents, along with Andrew the youngest brother. So the household has to survive on pension and social security.

Thanks to the recession there are no wages coming in.

The Social Security told Andrew that as he lived at home he was not entitled to so much. So according to the state, says Barbara, you are "not even classed as an independent person. As if a couple on a pension can afford to pay for clothes and so on!"

He literally has holes in his shoes, and can't afford another pair. But more than anything, at 19 he just gets so bored stuck at home. Without the money to move out, with everyone living on top of one another, the atmosphere in the household has to be tense.

How Andrew lost his job makes a real life horror story. Working in the jewellery quarter, he lost his right index finger in the faulty machine.

Andrew was persuaded to accept a compensation payment from the firm, rather than take up the lack of safety further. The management also made a gentlemen's agreement, guaranteeing him a job for life.

But 'gentlemen' must be a thing of the past. Within a year, when the work was not coming in, Andrew was made redundant. Now he has been a year out of work, and with a permanent disability, jobs will be hard to come by.

As for the third brother, he was moved down to South Wales almost ten years ago, along with his section of the Metro-Cammell bus plant.

The firm helped him financially to move, and he settled down in Wales, got married, and now has four children.

A year ago, in quick succession, his wife lost her job from a hotel and Metro-Cammell, finding the market shrinking even for buses, made him redundant.

From a family with two reasonable incomes to live on, they suddenly had none.

"They thought about coming back here," said Barbara, "but it's almost as bad here anyway."

That's the change. Welsh workers were forced to suffer unemployment between the 1920s and 1930s and

Birmingham is the heartland of British industry.

□ Birmingham produces a quarter of the country's exports in its 5,000 factories and workplaces.

□ The West Midlands accounts for 10% of the national workforce, but for 26% of Engineering Employers' Federation Employees.

□ One in six West Midlands workers is involved, directly or indirectly, in vehicle production.

YET

□ Every month over 12,000 workers are being added to West Midlands dole queues, which now stand at 310,135 excluding new school leavers.

□ Birmingham's unemployment has reached 15.8% of the workforce. Six years ago, the Sandwell district had 1.1% jobless, now it has 14%.

□ There are 9,367 unemployed young people registered in Birmingham, but the city's career offices have 286 vacancies.

□ There are another 4,329 young people on YOPs or Work Experience schemes.

□ Half the firms in the West Midlands are currently drawing on the government's temporary short-time working subsidy.

□ These are the statistics of economic disaster. The disaster is caused by the crisis in the profit system. It is made worse by the policies of the Tories who are trying to solve the crisis at the expense of working people.

now it has been visited on them again.

In the past, they would have moved to the Midlands where the new motor-related industries offered some chance of work.

The labour movement in Wales had its national Labour Party march for jobs in July. On 19 September it is Bir-

ingham's turn.

Barbara and her husband have already been out leafleting the doles and the streets for the march. Together with her youngest brother, they will be marching on the 19th., along with thousands of other Midlandsers, determined to start the fightback against unemployment.



Workers marched in 1979 against massive threatened redundancies in BL's West Midlands plants. Just under two years later, with unemployment doubled, they are marching again.

Photo: MILITANT

Chelmsley Wood is on the outskirts of Birmingham in the "posh" borough of Solihull. It was built in the boom days of the late 1960s to house over 40,000 "refugees" from Birmingham's massive slum clearance schemes.

Now, in the slump of the 80's, this "move to better things" is turning into a nightmare for thousands of workers.

Solihull, the home of Birmingham's rich, has one of the lowest rate levels in the country. It's social services have 40% less funding than the national average.

The local Tory controlled council slavishly follows the dictates of Heseltine. It has cut free bus passes for the blind and disabled, as well as closing down a special school for the disabled.

In March, such was their glee in making the cuts, that it aroused enormous opposition from the local unions and workers, culminating in the biggest ever march through the town.

But it is on the question of jobs that there has been the sharpest change in Chelmsley Wood.

From July 1979 to July 1980 unemployment increased by 64% to 3,500.

But since then it has gone up 104% to 7,146, and that's before the school leavers sign on.

Yet to come are at least a further 2,000 from the closure of Rover Cars. About 1,000 of these workers live in Chelmsley Wood.

If Thatcher starts to hand out medals for enterprising entrepreneurs then one local employer must be in with a good chance. He recently advertised for a van driver. He charged would-be applicants £1 an interview.

Not to be outdone, Ian Mills, Tory MP for the Meriden constituency which includes Chelmsley Wood, called for the government to spend money in the town. He wants the Tories to build a "short, sharp, shock centre" to curb "Chelmsley youth".

For the thousands of Chelmsley unemployed youth the only future they have under the bosses and the Tories is exploitation and repression.

The workers of Chelmsley Wood, like workers everywhere are angry and ready to follow a real lead in bringing down the government.

By Bill Mullins
(Meriden
Labour Party)

CHILE 1973-1981-



Chile under Allende: the working class shows its power on the streets

Eight years ago this month, the Popular Unity government of Salvador Allende was overthrown by Pinochet's military junta, and a reign of terror was unleashed against the Chilean labour and trade union movement. Thousands were killed, thousands more fled the country, and for eight years Chile has been under the jackboot of a brutal and repressive military dictatorship.

The defeat of the Allende government at the hands of the army and navy chiefs, with the aid of American big

business, was of immense international significance. It demonstrated in practice, in the clearest way, what

Marxism has always taught—that capitalism cannot be overthrown nor socialist policies implemented by gradual, parliamentary reforms.

Allende's reforms, immensely popular with the workers, enraged the bosses and landowners, who saw their wealth and power being threatened. What saved them was that the repressive organs of the state machine were left intact; indeed the

government tried to win the support of the army chiefs through pay rises and cabinet seats, and consistently swore that it would not interfere with the autonomy of the armed forces.

So long as the ruling class was left with its armed wing, it was only a matter of time before they would act as they did in September 1973. By refusing to disband the armed forces and arm the workers (as his own party, the Socialists, had begun to demand) Allende was dooming his government and the working class to a

bloody defeat.

Pinochet showed no such hesitation in acting in defence of his class. Any potential source of opposition to his junta was crushed, the political and trade union organisations of the workers were dismembered, and activists rounded up in the football stadium to face torture, imprisonment and death. All the apparatus of a military-police dictatorship was mobilised to terrorise the working-class areas.

At the same time, another no less brutal line of attack was being launch-

ed on the economic front, through the application of the then 'new' theory of 'monetarism'.

Eight years after Pinochet's bloody seizure of power, it is worth examining the effect monetarism had on Chile, the model for the nightmarish, so-called 'recovery' doctrine of Thatcher and Reagan.

By Pat
Craven

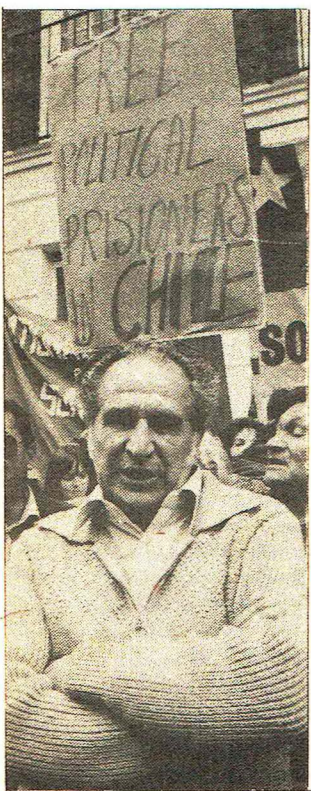
POLICE DICTATORSHIP MONETARIST HELL

CHILE RALLY

Trafalgar Square
2.30 pm, Sunday
20 September

Speakers:

M Foot
A Scargill
R Hayward
K Livingstone
L de Sebastian
(El Salvador FDR)



Monetarism has served primarily the interests of the ruling class in Chile whom the junta allow to plunder the country's phenomenal wealth.

The improved balance of payments and the reduction in inflation under Pinochet's military government disguise not only the increasing deprivation for the vast majority of Chileans but also the catastrophic de-industrialisation of Chile under monetarism.

Capitalists abroad are quick to recognise the advantages of an import/export open door for a 'third world' country that is rich in resources and controlled by a military clique that can enforce low wage settlements and suppress insurrection.

But foreign investment in Chile is increasing at a much slower rate than the junta expected. There is still a great shortage of foreign capital—with resultant economic difficulties.

But what is more serious is the wholesale restructuring of the economy under monetarism, causing increased concentration of wealth in the hands of a small minority at the expense of millions of the

population, and the military repression required to maintain this trend.

The few areas of the economy which are enjoying an upsurge are mainly those connected with primary products for exports. Copper no longer accounts for the 80-90% of total exports and in 1978 was down to 48.5%. This is because of expanding exploitation of other resources, particularly wood, fish and fish meal, plus wine and fruit.

Banking and retailing, particularly of luxury imported goods, are doing well in the capital, Santiago, as is the construction of luxury

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flats. Farming, which at one time was capable of satisfying the home market in a number of products, has

been transformed. Now farmers are abandoning traditional crops for wine production and growth of fruit for export, meaning that Chile is forced to import food. Inevitably, food is dear these days, while an imported transistor radio is becoming increasingly cheap.

In every other area of the economy the picture is very bleak. Industry has always been unevenly distributed between regions in Chile, but now virtually all of the once highly industrialised zones are like ghost towns—populated by the redundant and desperate.

Coal mines have been closed, so have car and electronic assembly plants; iron and steel factories have been run down; the porcelain, glass and textile industries are rapidly being destroyed along with many of the smaller industries such as leather goods and furniture.

Chile is now importing much of what she used to manufacture and exporting her natural wealth to be manufactured as commodities abroad, thus allowing industrial potential to be squandered.

The tight monetary controls, particularly during 1975-77, made it difficult for any business except those with easy access to international sources of finance to survive. Consequently, six Chilean cor-

porations now control two-thirds of Chile's total assets. The two largest—Cruzat-Larrain and Javier Vial—are renowned for their speculative and asset-stripping tactics. The newly installed British ambassador in Santiago, incidentally, is father-in-law to a member of the Cruzat-Larrain group.

Unemployment, the bedfellow of monetarism—is very high, running nationally at approximately 30%, with higher percentages in the traditional industrial zones. There are no social security payments or welfare services for the unemployed, the poor, the sick or the elderly any more. Even free state primary schooling has been abolished under the economic doctrines dictating savage government spending cuts.

The stark poverty in which the majority of Chileans are now living is worsening. So is repression. The military take-over in Chile gave monetarism its first opportunity to test its doctrines. Monetarism needed the military junta to apply its 'shock' treatment to the economy. Monetarism in Chile has necessitated repression of the increasing number of 'have-nots'.

There is one flaw in the monetarists demands for cutting spending—Chile, like Britain, is forced by these economies of deprivation to spend more and

more on the internal security forces which are needed to support these policies.

No amount of guns and police, however, can hold back the workers' struggles which have already begun to shake the regime. Organised on a socialist basis, the workers' movement could rapidly make an end to the horrors of the capitalist system and lay the basis for the socialist transformation of society.

This article is based on information supplied by the Chile News Group which exists to inform the British public of the current situation in Chile and to actively support resistance publications in Chile. Further information/donations to Chile News Group, c/o 307 Euston Road, London NW1.

POLAND IN CRISIS

— an eye witness report

At the end of July and the beginning of August I spent two weeks in Poland. Just at that time there was a new wave of protests over food shortages.

We were told that for the last six months the supply of food had been getting continually worse. Even with ration vouchers people often went away empty-handed, particularly with meat.

At the same time, meat is still being exported. The workers often refuse to load meat for export.

In the North of the country Solidarity posters draw attention to the underhand way in which the government tries to get around workers' control of exports—for example, falsely labelling meat shipments.

Every ordinary family has to spend several hours a day buying the most important provisions. We saw shopping queues more than a quarter of a mile long.

As there is more money in circulation than goods, prices rise, the black market flourishes and the run on Western currencies plagues every Western tourist.

Many restaurants and cafes are closed. In those that are open there is often nothing to sell and the waitresses have nothing to do but kill time.

The inability of the ruling bureaucracy to develop the economy is obvious. For example, there is a universal shortage of houses. We met a young couple with a baby: they have a tiny flat consisting of one room, a small kitchen and a bathroom. They have no prospect of getting a bigger flat within the next ten years.

On the other hand the landscape is covered with half-completed buildings gradually deteriorating.

A lorry-driver told us that they had started to build a paint factory near Gdansk a few years ago. Suddenly they ran out of building materials. The factory is still today incomplete.

In the meantime, however, the machines have been installed. They are already rusted because they are not sufficiently protected against the weather.

The Gulf of Gdansk was developed as a holiday resort. This year, however, bathing had to be banned because of pollution in the water by industry. As a result, the hotels and other newly-built facilities have remained almost unused.

This year throughout the country the crop looks promising. However, there is a danger that the harvest will not be brought in—too many broken-down combine harvesters cannot be used due to a lack of spare parts.

The list of shortages and

By a recent visitor to Poland

examples of mis-management goes on and on. Every worker can relate many instances.

The shortage of important commodities, the rushing to shops where there just happens to be more than bread, milk, tea, vegetables or apples and then the hour-long queuing—all this has led to an angry atmosphere.

This anger at the miserable supply situation could easily be taken up by the independent trade union leadership and used to overthrow the whole bureau-

cracy. The population have absolutely no confidence in Kania and Co.

The workers have long ago recognised that the government is not prepared to carry out last year's promises. On the contrary, they are trying step by step to take back the concessions.

In spite of this the national leadership of Solidarity seem more and more ready to compromise. Their energies are directed not at mobilising the workers for struggle, but at holding them back. This causes increasing confusion, resignation, desperation and anger.

Already at the beginning of July working women in Lodz wanted to strike because of food shortages. They were talked out of it, however, by the Solidarity leaders with the argument that no food could be created by a strike.

Instead the women were promised that a demonstration would be organised for them at the end of July. The head of the demonstration was to consist only of women with their children. The demo was supposed to be only a moral appeal to the government. The women and children, and

the repeated singing of the mournful national anthem, were supposed to melt the hearts of the bureaucrats. Many women cried with grief and others could only just hold back their tears.

Such a demo could not make its participants aware of their power. It rather had a demoralising effect.

Apart from that, even the biggest demonstrations at the moment represent a retreat. Throughout the country there is still a willingness to strike. Solidarity has the power to prevent all exports of food and could overthrow the government without much trouble.

If even the strikes so far have not been able to achieve any fundamental improvement of the situation of the working people, what will demonstrations achieve? Many Poles even suspect that the government is consciously disrupting supplies in order to wear down the population. What justification can there be for the existence of the bureaucracy under these conditions?

There is naturally still the

very recent strike in East Berlin, and that even in the Soviet Union a committee has been in existence for four months which aims to form an independent trade union in Russia.

The Solidarity leadership, however, is far from making clear to the Polish workers the instability of the other Stalinist bureaucracies and the hopeful attention and support of workers in East and West alike for the workers' struggle in Poland. They are also failing to strengthen the workers' resolve to stand firm against the ruling bureaucracy.

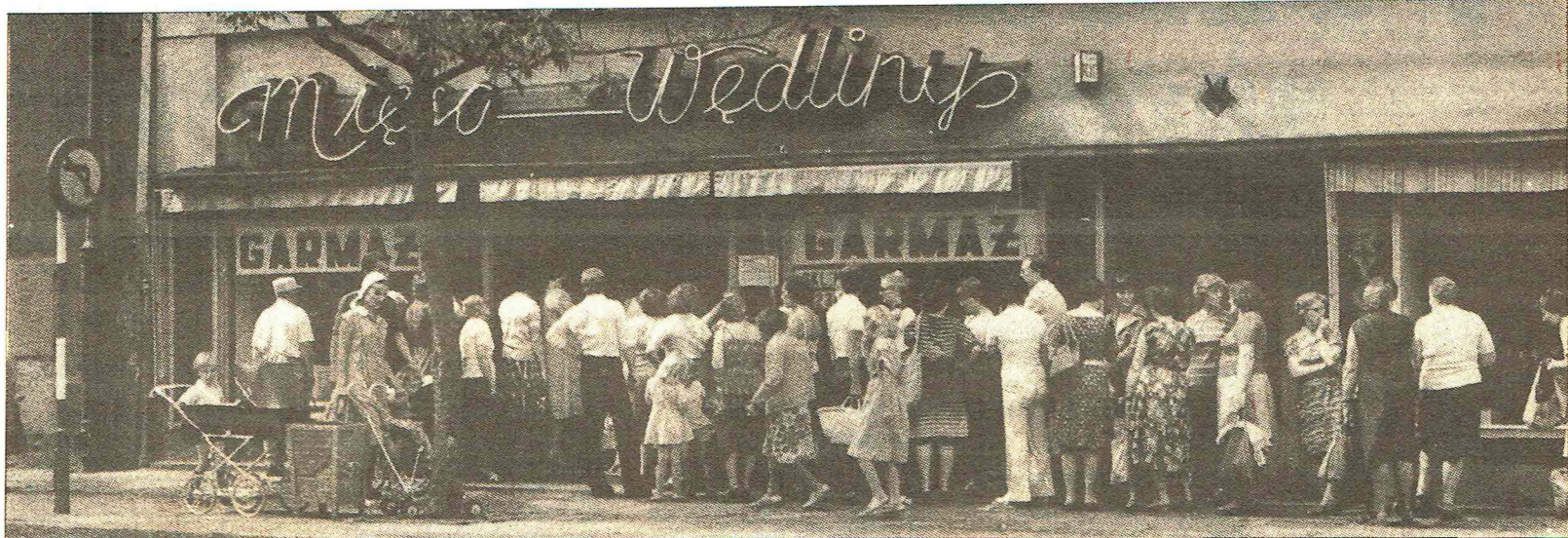
Instead the Solidarity leaders do everything to weaken the self-confidence of the workers and to misuse their willingness to struggle. More and more they adopt the government's arguments.

The government can already afford to act more firmly against the workers' movement. Solidarity posters are torn down. Anybody caught fly-posting is locked up for a day.

Hardly had the



(Above) Solidarity poster. The caption reads: "First effect of the 9th Congress of the Polish CP is a cut in food rations!" (Below) Food queue



argument of Soviet military intervention. This fear of intervention seems to be the main reason why the Polish workers stop short of overthrowing the bureaucracy.

In particular it is the reason used by Solidarity leaders, and their intellectual advisers who have no confidence in the strength of the working class, for holding back from struggle.

The Polish workers know that they have no chance against the "Big Brother" in purely military terms. The danger of Russian invasion can only be removed by international working class solidarity.

We heard examples, also from Solidarity members, of how workers in other Warsaw Pact countries are beginning to settle accounts with their own national bureaucracies and how these workers are reaching out towards an alliance with their Polish comrades.

One Solidarity full-timer told us that many comrades from other Stalinist countries—above all Hungary—come to the Solidarity offices to learn and to discuss. And this in spite of their enormous difficulties in crossing the border.

We heard reports of a

demonstration in Lodz finished than the army appeared on all the streets. One worker showed us a parcel from abroad which had been opened by the authorities.

The political vacuum in Poland is enormous. The population regards the "Communist Party" and the whole bureaucracy with hatred and cynicism. All the bureaucracy has achieved in over 30 years of rule is to make the ideas of socialism and Communism laughable for a large part of the population.

Their claim to the name of Marxism has built up a barrier against socialist ideas in many peoples' minds, although everybody knows that there can be no return to capitalism.

Many workers have, however, recognised that socialism and communism are in the interests of the workers and have been scandalously misused by the bureaucrats.

In a dock worker's flat we saw a sticker, printed by Solidarity. It showed a picture of Lenin with a quote from him. The gist of it was: a police state exists when a policeman earns more than a teacher.

On the evening before we

The present tragedy of the Polish revolution is that the workers' leadership have no programme to bring it to a successful conclusion.

A Solidarity full-timer complained: "We have no perspective." Yet the hunger for a political perspective is great.

We met with lively interest for our evaluation of Stalinism and the present situation, our criticism of the Solidarity leadership and our view of the absolute necessity for the overthrow of the bureaucracy, democratic control and management of society by the workers and links with workers in other Stalinist states and in the west.

A member of Solidarity explained to us: "Many workers think the way you do." Even people who dreamed of the creation of a bourgeois parliamentary democracy (naturally without the return of industry and land into private ownership), who refused to distinguish between Kania and Lenin—even they took our ideas very seriously. Their own confused conceptions collapsed like a house of cards.

On the evening before we

left the country we watched, together with a Polish family, the news on television. The negotiations between the government and Solidarity about meat rationing had been broken off.

Our hosts explained that the government had never before agitated as much against Solidarity as in this broadcast. Even articles from West German bourgeois newspapers were quoted, in which Solidarity was held responsible for the "catastrophe".

Not one trade union representative had the opportunity to reply—against the agreement of last year.

We left the country with the feeling that for the time being the bureaucracy was gaining the upper hand due to the failure of the Solidarity leadership to mount an effective alternative.

But I cannot forget the words of one worker: "We have worked for thirty years and have nothing to eat, we cannot work for another thirty years in order then to have no clothes."

To follow: Inside Solidarity—a first hand report

To follow: Inside Solidarity—a first hand report

THE BERLIN WALL

Monument to Stalinism

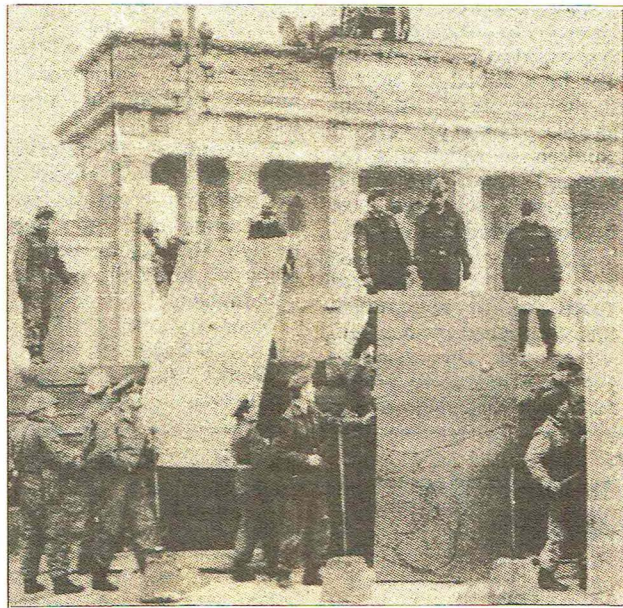
Last month the capitalist media celebrated the 20th anniversary of the Berlin Wall with a spate of anti-socialist propaganda.

Over the years the Berlin Wall has proved not only a barrier to escaping East Germans but has also been used as a weapon to hold back the growth of socialist ideas. The capitalists, especially in West Germany, crow that the wall is a symbol of 'socialism' and use this bogey to confuse the workers' aspirations for a socialist future.

Indeed, in barring routes to the West with a grim prison wall, East Germany's ruling bureaucracy erected a monument to the nationalist, totalitarian character of their regime.

But the wall was built without serious opposition from the Western powers (the US, Britain and France).

The division of Germany was agreed by the Western Allies and the Russians at the end of the Second World War. The country was split up into occupation zones, with the Eastern part and



Building the Berlin Wall

the Eastern sector of Berlin falling to the Russians.

At first the policies of the Western Allies and the Russians were very similar. 'Reparations' were extracted from the shattered German economy, while separate poverty prevailed, and German 'leaders' favourable to the occupying forces were carefully installed.

By Dave Farrar

to be led for the next 20 years by Adenauer's right-wing Christian Democratic government. A week later the Russian zone was proclaimed the German Democratic Republic, a Stalinist state in the image of Moscow.

Although the means of production were nationalised and a plan of production established, the bureaucratic regime installed by the Russians and the liquidation of the workers' democratic organisations meant that East German 'socialism' could be no pole of attraction for the workers in the West.

The East German workers were the first in Eastern Europe to rebel against the Russian occupying forces in 1953 when a building workers' strike rapidly spread into a country-wide conflagration. The rising was only put down with the help of Russian tanks.

Stalin's policy of stripping East Germany of industrial plant was continued up to 1954. It is estimated that 40% of its industrial capacity was transported to Russia in this way.

The massive injection of capital into West Germany, coupled with the world boom of capitalism, meant rising living standards. The vision of prosperity, along with the democratic rights secured by the workers in the West, proved an enormous attraction to the population of East Berlin and East Germany as a whole.

The introduction of the Marshall plan by American imperialism led to massive US investment in Europe. West Germany was built up as a bulwark against 'Communism' and to prevent a revolt by the discontented workers.

In 1949 the US, British and French zones were amalgamated into the Federal Republic of Germany.

\$3,200 million in 1980/81.

This bonanza has made possible limited concessions to the masses, e.g. price cuts and higher state expenditure. At the same time, the enormous inflow of currency has fuelled inflation while the basic problems of a capitalist economy too weak and undeveloped to compete on the world market, remain unchanged.

A measure of the impoverishment of the working class is the increase in the legal minimum wage conceded by Sadat in May last year—from £10 to £12 per month.

"That is the petrol. Any match can light a big fire."

Horrific conditions prevail in the urban slums where millions are jammed

into putrid, crumbling tenements. The *Times* correspondent describes a street scene in the Zawya al-Hamra quarter of Cairo where street fighting between Moslems and Christians erupted last June: "two tiny children ... playing with the fly-encrusted corpse of a beheaded scavenger dog that looked and smelt as if it had been dead for days" (14 September).

An Egyptian guide, pointing at this terrible poverty and squalor, commented: "That is the petrol. Any match can light a big fire." Left-wing opposition has been suppressed by Sadat since 1971. In the absence of a healthy working-class leadership, criticism of the regime among religious leaders has come into the foreground.

The Islamic clergy are strongly opposed to capitalist modernisation, which (as in Iran under the Shah) is a threat to traditional Moslem values, especially to the small capitalists, the bazaar merchants and money-lenders, to whom the mullahs are closely linked. For the same reasons they are opposed to the Sadat's pro-American policies, and especially to his reactionary compromise with the Zionist

In the period 1949-1961 over 2,700,000 voted with their feet and left for the West. Most of the refugees were skilled and educated people. The vast exodus therefore created a shortage of skilled labour and a political crisis in the East.

The possibility of the East German economy collapsing was real and the consequences of that were unpalatable not only to the Russians but also to the West. The capitalists feared that a collapse of the East German regime could create a dangerous vacuum in the middle of Europe, with the danger of a workers' revolt spreading into West Germany.

The creation of a complete barrier between East and West, on the other hand, was no threat to the capitalists. The extra work force for West Germany, previously supplied by the refugees, could be obtained even more cheaply from Southern Europe.

The wall was erected on the night of 13 August 1961 without any hindrance from the troops occupying the western sectors. From the point of view of the East German bureaucracy, the wall has served its purpose in keeping the population within its borders.

On the basis of the planned economy, the bureaucracy has created one of the most prosperous economies in the Eastern Bloc. East Germany is now the fifth-ranking industrial country in the world and has surpassed Britain in per capita income, gross national product, social benefits, education and health service.

But these steps forward have been gained at great cost to the workers. A massive bureaucracy is maintained at their expense. The ruling party has 50,000

full-time staff and 300,000 part time staff; the Central Committee alone has a secretariat of 1,000!

With the growth of world trade, the Eastern bloc has become an important trade area for the capitalist countries. This explains why the West German government now tries to discourage would-be escapees from the East and support organisations in West Berlin. It does not want to 'rock the boat' by assisting East German dissidents to escape.

The present crisis in next-door Poland has had repercussions in East Germany.

Recently there was a strike by East German railwaymen working in West Berlin. Leaflets in support of the Polish workers have spread to East German colleges. The signs of future struggles against the Stalinist regime are present.

The demolition of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany can only be carried out by the working class. The bureaucracy in the East and the capitalist class in the West will not wither away of their own accord but will fight to the last to hang on to their positions of power and privilege gained at the expense of the workers.

The pressure to the left in the West German SPD and trade unions augurs well for the future. The potential strength of the working class in the East was demonstrated by the recent May Day demonstration in East Berlin numbering 500,000 people out of a population of 17 million!

Lenin once said, "Whoever controls Berlin controls Germany, whoever controls Germany controls Europe." Once the German working masses understand their power, the prospect not only of a socialist Europe but a socialist world will not be far away.

EGYPT - SADAT REGIME SHAKEN

1,600 opponents of the Sadat regime in Egypt, including many religious leaders, have been arrested in unprecedented police swoops over the past two weeks.

They are likely to be prosecuted under Egypt's "Ethics Law" which forbids violations of "national unity", "social stability" or what is called "the main values of society".

In fact, serious economic problems underlie the political tensions and the renewed flare-up of communal violence between the Moslem majority and the 10% Coptic Christian minority.

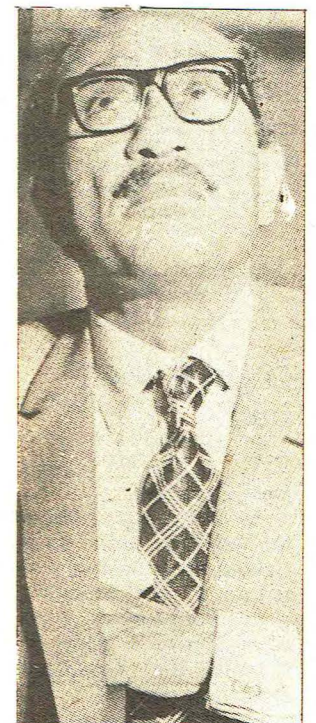
Since Sadat became President in 1970, private capital has been fostered, with Egypt once again being opened up to exploitation by the capitalist multinationals. Now Egypt is as much a client of American imperialism as Saudi Arabia or even Israel.

Coming at a time of world recession, however, the main effect of these policies has been to expose Egypt all the more to the cold winds of capitalist crisis.

By George Collins

A small upper layer have managed to enrich themselves while for the vast majority real income has declined. Industry is described as the "sick man of the Egyptian economy". "The Financial Times (23 July 1980) describes the fundamental problems of the Egyptian economy as "poor housing, a collapsing infrastructure, a costly public sector, a trade deficit and inflation now running at about 40% for the middle classes."

The past few years have seen a dramatic increase of Egypt's foreign earnings, mainly from oil, tourism and the Suez Canal. Oil sales alone shot up from \$321 million in 1977 to



Sadat—a crumbling Bonaparte

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Fawly Towers Lives

Dear Comrades

Being unemployed, I took the chance of a job as a barmaid in a hotel for the summer. My wages dropped for the first four weeks in succession and have finally settled at a disgusting £48 for 55 hours.

The boss said the drop in pay is because I am now on the living-in rate of £1.04 an hour (before tax). The accommodation is a shared caravan with a cracked window and a dodgy lock, at the top of a muddy slope in total darkness.

There is no water or toilet. The food is rotten as well.

Other staff have been working for a year and a half without a wage rise and can hear plenty of stories of workers

who have complained and simply been replaced. The staff have no form of representation to deal with management, and feel at the mercy of the bosses whims.

Organisation of workers with no experience of union activity is not easy. I think the labour and trade union movement should offer some kind of guide to allow hotel workers—permanent and seasonal—to have their voice heard and use their strength to achieve a decent wage for decent hours in liveable conditions.

I'd like to see the boss here cook a meal or pull a pint if the staff walked out. He'd take long enough to sober up.

Yours fraternally
A hotel worker
Isle of Lewis

'Improving' education—

Dear Comrades

I wish to draw your readers' attention to the scandalous dealings of my local Tory council, who have cut education capitation allowances so much that headteachers have become "fund raisers".

The Market Drayton Branch of the National Association of Head Teachers issued an appeal to the parents of two thousand primary school children, in which they explained that the head teachers in this area have become "fund raisers".

Yet while state schools are dying from lack of funds, the Tory government has announced fresh expenditure for the Assisted Places Scheme, to enable "brighter" pupils to attend

private schools, paid for by the government. This means £55,000,000 will be spent on the education of a tiny minority while the majority flounder in unheated, overcrowded and substandard schools.

I believe this is a deliberate attempt to undermine the present state education system by a savage and ruthless Tory government.

The Tory manifesto of 1979 promised that "The quality of education will be maintained and improved": another broken Tory promise.

Personally I believe teachers' unions, students unions and socialist movements must combine to fight the vicious attacks being made by the present government.

Yours fraternally,
John B Taylor
Wem, Whitchurch and Shawbury Labour Party.

—restoring youth

Dear Comrades

As an example of the Scrooge-like meanness of Tory-controlled councils, I don't think this one could be beaten. (I may be wrong!)

At the local authority children's home I work in, we had a circular sent round a couple of weeks ago that staff who accompany children on public transport should have their fares reimbursed at the children's rate.

Talk about taking back every penny they pay you: now we are expected to hand over our hard-earned cash to London Transport.

Yours fraternally
Ruth Jellings
Ealing North CLP

Watch this

Dear Comrades

On 28th September there is a programme on BBC1 called "going to work—repair and maintenance". It is on at 9.12 in the morning for school students to watch.

I was interviewed for it because in Haringey I have got an apprenticeship with the council at a training centre which is the only one of its kind in the country.

The training centre was set up due to the pressure of the trades unions. The whole of Birkenhead will probably be watching the programme!

I had to get some points in about unemployment in Merseyside where I came from. To have any chance of a job me and my brother had to move down to London. That's how we got the apprenticeships.

I said that the system so far for young people is wrong.

It was not easy at first. We were getting £29 a week and our rent was £30 between the two of us. We could never have survived without the help of our parents.

One Christmas we went home with only £1 to last 14 days. Our parents came back with us and immediately went down to Sainsbury's to buy £40 worth of food.

If you get the chance watch the programme.

Keith Eakins
UCATT
Haringey Direct Labour Organisation



Young workers on Tyneside—government YOPs schemes, or even apprenticeships, offer little hope of full-time jobs on a living wage.

Neither does the 'Mail' attempt to justify their claim in the light of the fact that these same Marxists have, for the most part, lived and worked for years in an area before deciding to join their Party, to defend living standards from the savage attacks of the Tories.

Perhaps a cartoon series in the 'Daily Mirror', called 'Garth', provides the 'Mail's' answer. The story goes that one woman scientist attempts to overthrow society by replacing strategic members of the ruling class with robotic duplicates controlled by her.

Is this what's happening in the Labour Party? Are honest, hard working trade unionists being killed off and replaced by robots under the control of some unknown sinister madman bent on the destruction of society as we know it?

Far fetched it may be, but it's only the logical conclusion to the 'Daily Mail's' 'serious' analysis!

Yours fraternally
Andy Zaple
E. Nottingham LPYS

Gas workers fight (at least most of us...)

Comrades

The workers in Scottish Gas unanimously showed their opposition to Tory plans to denationalise the industry in their support of the July one-day strike.

In Glasgow North West, the only scab to cross the official picket line was the engineer in charge of the depot. Before lunch-time an anonymous picket closed and padlocked the gate, leaving the engineer to entertain the picket line for an hour or so cutting through the chain on the padlock.

Unlike other employees of the British Gas Corporation, he seems unaware of the disastrous effects of government plans, and that any form of cuts will be bitterly opposed by the workforce.

Yours fraternally
Gerry McGreery
G&MWU

Is Benn the issue?

Dear Comrades

In the aftermath of the Warrington by-election, the Tory press trumpeted the assertion made by Doug Hoyle MP that the prospect of Tony Benn leading the Labour Party was a vote loser—i.e. that working class voters don't want socialist policies.

A rather different story was presented in *New Society* (30.7.81) by a political correspondent, Simon Hoggart. He wrote, "In the delicious despair which followed Warrington, Benn of course received most of the blame. When I visited Warrington Labour canvassers assured me, with every appearance of sincerity, that Benn was scarcely an issue."

"One of them estimated that, at all the thousand houses he had visited, the subject of Benn had been raised six times. Now these same people had discovered that Benn was the direct cause of the poor Labour vote."

Not only does this give the lie to the assertions of Doug Hoyle and others; it also casts an interesting light on the mendacity of some people in the Labour Party who quite clearly seize on any misfortune to blame the left wing, no matter how removed from the truth this may be.

Yours fraternally
Ian Pollock

Boom zones fall out

Dear Comrades

Capitalism in its decline has taken the appropriate road of the emergency operating theatre—the Enterprise Zone. However, this desperate attempt to revive the dying patient has created divisions among both landlords and big business.

In a report of the *Financial Times* (7 August) they point out that companies in Swansea and Manchester moving into the Zone are facing higher rents from landlords, while those landlords outside are seeing rents fall and the areas left to become blighted.

Also, those businesses outside the Zone who own their premises are at a competitive disadvantage, without any of the benefits of the Zone.

The Tories' policy is intended to help resuscitate capitalism but has only accentuated the contradictions of the profit system. For working people, however, this only reveals one aspect of the parasitic nature of capital when the Zone employers are allowed to stop paying rates etc.

This, of course, creates another burden for workers and their families, particularly when as the report notes—the Enterprise Zone has not provided any new jobs.

There is only one antidote to capitalism—socialism!

Yours fraternally
Jim Greer
Edinburgh.

Rights: if you fight

Dear Editor

I am one of the many unemployed. About a month ago I received dental treatment, and a bill for £9.

I only receive £21.90 a week and I thought it was rather a big chunk to be taken out of my dole money as well as having to pay weekly digs money to my parents.

I picked up a leaflet in the local Post Office, which informed me that people on low incomes are allowed free treatment. I subse-

quently went to the unemployment office to make inquiries, whereupon I was informed by a girl at the counter, after she had asked around, that I was not entitled to free treatment.

Not content with her answer I visited the DHSS, where I queried it and, to my satisfaction, found that in fact I was right. But just think how many people might have accepted the girl's 'no' and been done out of £9.

What it really boils down to is, time and time again, you have to fight for your rights.

Yours
A North Yorks reader.

Daleks are back

Dear Comrade

According to 'Militant' the leftward shift in the Labour Party is due to the failure of the policies of right reformism, as proposed by Shirley Williams etc., to solve the problems of capitalism in crisis.

Recently however the press, and particularly the 'Daily Mail', have disputed this. Their considered opinion is that a group of Marxists rent a flat and then proceed to 'take over' the local Constituency Labour Party.

We are not told how they go about it, where these agitators come from, or go to once their task is complete.

No jobs in bleak south

Dear Comrades

The recent unemployment figures showed that the south is better off than most other parts of the country. Yet here in Hampshire it was revealed that youth unemployment had risen 50% in the last year and 166% in the last two years.

There are now 12,500 youth unemployed chasing after 73 jobs in the county. That's without any of those on YOPs. With the recent decision that Portsmouth dockyard is to lose 6,000 of its 7,000 workers the job prospects in the previously prosperous south look really bleak.

No apprentices are being taken on in the yard and those finishing their time have already been told that they will not be taken on.

Local careers advisers are already concerned about trade union criticism of YOPs, they commented that if trade unions raised difficulties over schemes then thousands of Hampshire youngsters would be "really in trouble."

Currently there are 5,000 on YOPs in the Greater Portsmouth area (including Havant, Gosport and Fareham) alone. The careers adviser commented that "Obviously some of the unions are getting very concerned and if there are going to be union problems then we're really in trouble."

Presumably by 'union problems' the adviser is referring to union complaints against young people being used as cheap labour and replacing employed staff.

It is vital that the TUC now follows through the work being done by NUPE and the TGWU to unionise YOPs workers and fight for full union rates of pay and conditions.

Fraternally
Andy Allenby
Southern Region
LPYS Committee

Build

Militant

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 10 Oct	Target for year
Eastern	3716		4970	7100
East Midlands	2776		3850	5500
Hants & Dorset	2009		3640	5200
Humberside	1371		2450	3500
London East	3780		5320	7600
London West	2215		3360	4800
London South	3337		3850	5500
Manchester & Lancs	2337		4060	5800
Merseyside	2763		4620	6600
Northern	3203		6020	8600
Scotland East	1608		3080	4400
Scotland West	3022		5250	7500
Southern	4052		4970	7100
South West	1753		2450	3500
Wales East	1087		1820	2600
Wales West	1616		3220	4600
West Midlands	3774		6020	8600
Yorkshire	3903		6300	9000
Others	10381		8750	12500
Total received	58,703		84,000	120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

Don't let Recession bite us

The bosses never give up! At Hoover's, they want workers to take a 10% wage cut or they'll close the plants.

Charlie Hagarty and Liz McKelne from Cambuslang, one of the threatened Hoover factories, see the need to take a bold stand against the bosses. They each sent a much-needed £4 to the paper that arms workers for the fight ahead.

But Militant's Fighting Fund seems to be suffering from the pressure of the recession on workers' pockets. If fewer workers are in a position to make substantial donations, two things follow.

Firstly, every supporter must go more energetically after the pence. (A Hull reader has just sent us £8 collected by putting ps and ½ps in a jam jar!)

£26,000 by 10 October

Secondly we have to appeal to those workers who are in a relatively "better" position to make extra efforts to help Militant. Like Hoover workers, we must not allow the recession to beat us when socialist action is most needed.

Militant is now faced with the task of raising another £26,000 by October 10th. These are the steps that must be taken:-

1. Every organisation of the Labour movement must be asked to help. Specially written letters and appeal sheets are available for circulation in your area. An excellent example from the

THIS WEEK: £1,634

South-West shows the potential for support from Labour Parties: Bridport (Dorset) branch has just sent £50 for Militant! Very many thanks for the cash and the inspiration it gives to others!

LP Young Socialists should follow this week's examples of Neath, Littlehampton and Plymouth (Sutton) where regular collections are now being made.

Trade Unionists should not only approach their branch and shop stewards' committees but collect from their work-mates; this week a Crosville busman in Liverpool raised £2 for us this way. Any union expenses or shop stewards' commission should also be sent our way, as readers in Bridlington have done this week.

2. Everyone who buys the paper must be asked for a donation and regular readers asked for a bumper amount in the next 4 weeks.

Collector's Cards and Appeal Sheets help with this task but again this week there are many examples to follow: A Dewar of East Kilbride donated £20, M Hay gave £3, £2 came from B Clarke. P Taylor of Chelmsford gave £15, S Griffiths (N. London) £12, and M Beasley (S. Wales) £10.

£5's came from M Holt (Liverpool), S Turner (AUEW Fords) C Ranson (Cardiff LPYS) F Broom (CPSA)

and F Coghill (Basildon LP). £4's came from a Luton reader and from 'Burnley-Rossendale'.

Supporters A Harrison (EETPU), S Jackson (Musicians Union) and B Fee gave £4, £3 and £2 respectively. T Ward (Dagenham YS), G Cantwell (Perth), D Moss (Brixham LP) and P Gordon of Basildon all gave £2.

Final fling!

M Fitchett (ASLEF) gave £1.50, S McAlister (EETPU N.Shields) £1.40, G Heath (Havant Councillor) £1.40 and £1's came from G Clark (Newcastle CPSA), P Goodwin (USDW), an OAP (met on a street sale of Militant in Leicester) and County Councillor P Bahia (Southampton).

If each area of the country followed the example of the Nottingham area, we'd be well on target, donations this week came from:- J Baxter (AUEW Alan Smith Group), Miners-J Maxfield and A Dudley and S Chambers, P Collins, V Rosslyn and M Griffiths, (LP members) B Denton and M McGinley (NUPE) and G Young (FTATU).

3. Record collections must be made at every Militant meeting!

An excellent £480 was raised at the TUC Conference Readers' Meeting, over £600 (all told) was in the S.

Wales Camp collection, £300 was donated at a special meeting in the Northern Region, £72 from a school in Folkestone, £12 from a meeting on the Portsmouth Dockyard closure, £6.66 raised at a Walthamstow meeting and £10 and £3.30 from Marxist discussion groups in Brent and Brixton.

4. Last but not least must be fund-raising efforts on and before October 10th. A large amount of the money received this week has come from sales of badges, T. Shirts, Jeans (!), Coffee, Cigarettes, Jam, second hand books, hair-cuts, "doing jobs" (in Sunderland, where there's no one else to work for!) and raffle tickets (£20 each from Kent and S.E. Lancs.)

A stall at a Cardiff CND rally enabled supporters to raise £10 and a 'Paris Commune Social' in the Medway area meant another £14.71, with an 'October Revolution Social' already planned.

Every area should try to have a 'Final Fling'—fund-raising cum social event or big meeting—on October 10th to ensure every penny and £ is collected in towards the ¾ year target.

Next week we will spell out just how much each area has to find within the two weeks left. Life is hard for workers today; So step up the fight for a better—i.e. a socialist tomorrow!

LEICESTER Militant Readers' Meeting. 'A Labour Party for Northern Ireland'. Speaker: Peter Hadden (NI Labour and Trade Union Group). Monday 21 September, 7.30 pm, at Secular Hall, Humberstone Gate, Leicester.

COVENTRY Labour Youth Federation public meeting. 'Smash the Tories—jobs for youth'. Wednesday 23 September, 7.30 pm, Hertford Tavern, Hertford Place. Speaker: Derek Hilling (Labour Party Young Socialists National Committee).

NOTTINGHAM Militant Readers' Meeting: 'What future for Northern Ireland?' Speaker: an executive member of the Northern Ireland Labour & Trade Union Group. At the International Community Centre, Mansfield Road, Nottingham. Friday 18 September, 7.30pm.

BASILDON LPYS Public Meeting: 'Which way for Labour—or how to stop the Tories'. Bulls Eye pub (upstairs). Speakers: Reg Race MP, Kevin Ramage (Chairman, LPYS). Tuesday 22 September, 7.45 pm.

MERSEYSIDE Militant Readers' Meeting. 'Where to after Labour Party Conference?' Speakers: Peter Taaffe (Editor, 'Militant'), Tony Mulhearn (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Toxteth), Chris Williams (Delegate, Tobacco Workers' Union). Chairman: Councillor Derek Hatton. All speakers in personal capacity. Thursday 8 October, 7.30 pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

ads

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SCOTTISH LPYS WEEKEND SCHOOL

* Debate: Solidarity vs. LPYS

* Film: 'The War Game'

* Lecture: 'The Life and Times of James Connolly': speaker Benny Adams (Northern Ireland Young Socialists)

* Plus Disco

* Plus five-a-side football

Date: Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 October. Venue: Douanans Centre, Aberfoyle.

For further details contact: Francis 041-771 8961 or Jackie East Kilbride 23371

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Industrial

BA what the papers didn't say

British Airways management have announced sweeping cuts which would decimate the industry as it now exists.

Sixteen International routes, eight 'On-line' stations including Prestwick, and Rhoose and Manchester engineering bases are facing the axe.

Aircraft, including the whole of the cargo fleet, are to be put up for sale or lease, while Heathrow Northside catering centre and all catering staff are to be contracted out.

Worst of all is the threat of 9,000 redundancies, the suspension of engineering apprentice and other trainee

The convenor quoted in the report cannot be named for fear of victimisation. As he stated, "you have more democratic rights in the army than in BA!"

intakes, and a pay freeze until this time next year. This will have a disastrous effect on unemployment levels in the Heathrow area.

These draconian measures are designed to meet what chief executive

Roy Watts describes as 'the worst financial crisis in the history of BA.'

What he fails to mention is that the £141 million loss is a direct result of government policy. As one leading union convenor at Heathrow pointed out, "other airlines are getting over the recession through government subsidies—even the American airlines get subsidised indirectly. We haven't had a penny!"

"Instead we are faced with paying £100 million in interest charges, while we lost £60 million in the air traffic controllers dispute which the Tories deliberately provoked.

"We have also been subjected to the results of other political decisions concerning landing fees, fuel prices and the transference of some routes to Gatwick, which makes it impossible

for us to compete on level terms.

"And we need more workers than other airlines—we do a lot of third party work, maintaining engines for other airlines. That is something that the newspapers never mention when they compare staffing levels."

The situation at Heathrow was confused at first as most people first heard of the cuts via the TV or newspapers. However, at the time of going to print, the executive of the Joint Shop Stewards Committee will have met to draw up plans to fight management proposals. Total opposition to compulsory redundancies must be the first demand!

A final word from the convenor; "the direction BA is heading, we won't have an airline soon. We are not going to stand for that."

Steel town to toy town

The fate of Corby just about sums up the past two years of Tory government.

A busy and proud steel town when the Tories came to power in 1979, Corby's steel plant is now shut with thousands thrown on the dole—and the bosses' plans for Corby? A 'Disneyland' style pleasure park and hotel complex. But then we are living in the Mickey Mouse world of monetarism.

The local rag, the 'Northamptonshire Evening Echo' presented this news with the headline 'Dream World', and congratulated the Group Five company, who are putting forward this scheme, for bringing 3,000 jobs to the area.

But we'll have to wait until 1985 for these '3,000' jobs, by which time there will be more than Corby's

present 7,000 unemployed, Kettering's 4,000 and Wellingborough's 3,500 on the dole. And with these type of figures, no doubt Group Five will plan to get their workforce on the cheap.

Once again the bosses have shown that they are willing to invest their money wherever they can make a quick buck, rather than put it back into manufacturing industry, the basis of real wealth in society. One thing is for sure. If the 'Evening Echo' thinks this is the way out of the recession for Corby, they are the ones living in a 'Dream World'! The next Labour government should wake them up—with socialist policies to provide real and lasting jobs.

By Dave Buss
(Kettering LPYS)

BIP

Workers at one of the biggest employers in Newton Aycliff, County Durham, are learning the real nature of their capitalist bosses.

British Industrial Plastics, a subsidiary of the mighty monopoly Turner and Newall, were able to get the workforce to accept a pay award of 7.2% backdated to May.

This was mainly due to the relatively high wages BIP pay in the area, most of which is for the de-humanising continental shift system, and the long record of good industrial relations.

However, management also pleaded that they lost a 'massive' £600,000 this year, have broken their

agreement on back pay (£200) and offered £50 taxable in its place!

Being 'realistic' the workforce said they would accept £75 non-taxable. But when management rejected this the workers did get realistic! For the first time in the company's history, they decided on unanimous industrial action at a mass TGWU meeting last week.

A 'work to rule' and overtime ban would mean the plant would have to close down—chemical industries need to be manned 24 hours a day.

While the management's offer amounted to £4,500, workers were angered to find management received eight new cars at a cost of £50,000!

By John Gowland
(Newton Aycliffe LPYS)

Rail—no deals

The strike call over this year's annual pay claim was met with enthusiasm by the membership everywhere.

The Eastfield and nearby Polmadie depots (both in Glasgow) were no exception.

We called a Branch Committee deciding this would form the basis for a strike committee. In addition other workers from the depot would be brought onto the committee.

This would have to form the backbone of the local strike organisation.

At Eastfield we had problems getting strike committee rooms, so arrangements were made to obtain a 'Portakabin'.

When it was reported that the Confed were calling out their members in BR Engineering workshops, links began to be built with the nearby Caley Works. We also planned to visit the few pits in our area to contact the National Union of Mineworkers, as well as Ravenscraig to ensure help from the Steelworkers' union.

The links between NUR and ASLEF are improving all the time and the preparations for a strike have aided this.

The mood was generated amongst the activists, but it had only just started to

percolate down to the rank and file. Many members expected a compromise, but were prepared for a long strike of months if need be.

Had the strike taken place, there would have been mass participation by the rank and file.

Calling in ACAS showed that the Tories realised that now was not the time for having a go at railwaymen, when they saw the support we were generating.

What sort of settlement has been reached? It's alright for Mr Buckton to say that he has 'agreed to nothing.' But the Open Station concept has been accepted in principle, even though the other items are still for discussion.

It is important that every Branch and District Council makes clear its views on the pay deal. We'll accept the pay rise, poor as it is, but our respective executives must be told in no uncertain terms, that we want no further talks on the BRB's proposals.

Get resolutions in and make clear, no productivity deals, no cuts in manning through redundancies—voluntary or otherwise—and no changes in working practices.

By Davy
Champman

HOOVER

We have become used to the big multinationals' blatant attempts to impoverish their workers in the pursuit of profit.

But last week Hoover [UK] Ltd. made even the most hard-nosed commentators sit up in disbelief as they unveiled their latest programme to 'save' what is left of their operation in the UK.

The package they are proposing includes a 10% wage cut for 1982, no wage rises in 1983 or 1984 without productivity acceptable to them being achieved, major changes in established work-

By

Jim Cameron

(Rutherglen CLP
personal capacity)

ing practices, and a reduction in the range of products.

In short, a company which has consistently failed to invest in anything like the degree required, is now trying to bail itself out at the expense of its workers.

At the Hoover plant in Cambuslang where jobs

declined from 5,400 to 2,100 in six years, acceptance of this package would inevitably lead to further job losses as well as the wage cuts proposed.

However, if Hoover think they can get away with this kind of blackmail they are in for a shock. As Eddie McAvoy, AUEW Convenor at the factory told me: "The workers will not accept this, they will fight. There has been some apathy in the past, but people now realise they must fight or give in."

Undoubtedly management will attempt to try to set the UK factories against each other. To prevent this, Eddie McAvoy has been down to the Perrivale site for discussions with other Shop Stewards Committees to ensure a united fight against the company.

Eddie is clear that the

Shop Stewards must give a strong lead; "We must lay down a clear strategy and point out exactly what action is required if we are to save Hoover Cambuslang and its 2,100 jobs."

The company has argued that profits are down and wages have more than kept pace with inflation. Eddie McAvoy has analysed the figures and has found that the company's argument is untruthful. "Between 1977 and 1980," he explained, "the retail price index went up by 64% while my members wages went up by only 58%. It's different for the directors of course. Their salaries have gone up by 115.9% and the highest paid director now gets £58,000 per year."

RENOLD VICTORY

An important victory has been won in the fight against redundancy by workers at Renold Fluid Power in Bradford.

Following recent re-organisation it was obviously decided by the top management that the recession could be used to implement a cost cutting exercise. When the workers at Bradford exhausted procedure in pursuance of their wage claim, they were faced with a demand for 35 redundancies.

The decision of the workforce was to occupy the plant. The dispute was made official by the AUEW district committee, and support was canvassed from the joint site committee and the Renold combine committee.

Support was promised from outside factories and the appeal sheets were just about to be distributed



Renold Convenor John Brown addresses a mass meeting at the factory at the close of the dispute when management caved in and offered an improved pay offer of between 7 and 9%.

This is the first victory against a company which has low wages, a Victorian outlook and extensive overseas outlets. Already, following the recent one-hour strike in support of

Croft Gears wage claim, the company has hinted at shifting jobs abroad. Favourite must be the South African subsidiary of Renold, where unions are banned and wages on the poverty line.

But this victory has demonstrated that once the workers take possession of the machines on which the

wealth is created, with support of the workforce and the labour movement, the bosses are helpless.

By Keith Narey

(Secretary, Joint Union
Committee, Renold)

ST. STEPHEN'S STRIKE

An overwhelming decision to continue strike action was taken at a mass meeting of ancillary workers at St Stephen's Hospital in Fulham on Monday.

This followed severe provocation by House Governor Howard Lyons.

The incident occurred when two general porters were asked to bring a patient to the operating theatre, whereupon they told the sister that the theatre department porters were on duty and they had work to do elsewhere.

The sister concerned rang the governor to complain. Mr Lyons then confronted the first two porters he saw, assuming they were the pair involved! He asked them where they were going, but before they had time to answer he ordered them both into the head porter's office.

When he arrived, he told them to get out and pushed the porter (who had not yet said anything) out of the office (in front of three witnesses).



Hospital workers on the picket line at St Stephen's Hospital this week

Mr Lyons then wrote a statement about the porters' supposed "breach of discipline" which he told the deputy head porter to sign saying "he would look after him if he did so".

A hearing has since been held by the Area Health Authority without any consultation with NUPE (the union concerned), at which the deputy head porter admitted he had been

pressured into signing the false statement, which he has now withdrawn.

However, one of the porters concerned, who has worked in St Stephens for fifteen years without any

trouble, has been issued with a final warning.

Mr Lyons and the AHA have refused any right of union appeal or independent enquiry.

This was not an isolated

incident. As staff on picket duty have said, "there has been a whole series of harassments and provocations. Once a porter was not allowed to go to the toilet because he was late."

Mr Lyons was in for a shock though when he jeered at union representatives that only 20 workers would come out in support of the porters. In a united show of strength, 300 ancillary staff have come out, leaving only a few scabs inside.

Morale on the picket line has been really high.

The workers are demanding:

★ A withdrawal of the porters' final warning.

★ An independent inquiry board, made up of an equal number of trade union officials and management reps.

Send messages of support or donations to: the 'Picket Line', St Stephen's Hospital, Fulham Road, London W.8.

By Sue Pearce
(NUPE North West London District Cttee., personal capacity)

MINES — JOBS STILL GOING

Following the Coal Board's withdrawal of its pit closure programme after the Tory government's capitulation in the face of the threatened national coal strike, many members were suspicious of the suddenness of the 'U'-turn.

Miners in Kent were at the forefront of the unofficial strike action that took place. One of the three pits, Snowdown, had been near the top of the Coal Board's list of closures.

Nigel Simpson (Snowdown NUM) and Steve Bewick (Canterbury CLP) talked to Laurence Knight a leading union activist who spoke in a personal capacity.

"The suspicions of many miners have been borne out by events since the February strike. Within weeks of the strike being called off, the first acts of the Coal Board was to present the amended redundancy scheme with announcements in the national press that miners would receive redundancy payments of over £42,000. This has become the Coal Board's pit closure charter.

"In fact the real level of payments has been deliberately exaggerated.

But, nevertheless, as a result, as well as the failure of the Coal Board to offset the natural wastage, something like 600 jobs have been lost every week—equivalent to a medium size pit closing every week.

Over 11,000 jobs have been lost in the last 12 months and this figure is rapidly escalating.

"There is no doubt, however, that the strike in February was the biggest victory the working class has had against this Tory government. It was a political strike averted at the 11th hour after gaining a momentum that could have well turned into a general strike. The government realised that this was a situation very similar to 'Red Friday' in 1925 where the unity of the working class was there and it was no good the government taking it on in full at that time.

"For above all, what this government fears is the united action of the working class. As long as this government remains it is possible that a general strike situation might develop arising from industrial action, with other groups of workers coming out in support. These are the possibilities inherent in the 'Triple Alliance' of the miners, railwaymen and steelmen.

"But unfortunately, what has been happening is the failure on the part of the leadership of these unions to campaign to build up grass roots support and link with other unions.

"In the NUM we can

quite clearly see the failure of our leadership. After having achieved such a victory in February they have completely failed to halt the rundown in manpower and the Coal Board's general attempt to slim down the industry.

"At present the situation in the industry is one where coal stocks have continued to increase and where the cash flow situation has grown progressively worse. This even despite a £500m investment programme.

"This means they will not be letting up on their attack on miners' jobs and living standards. This is why the election of Scargill to president of the NUM is so important. This election and the defeat of Trevor Bell would be a great victory not just for the miners but for the whole of the working class."

SAVE LLANGENNECH

As a consequence of the recent defence review, 650 jobs are planned to go with the closure of the Royal Navy's depot in Llangennech over the next six years.

It is fitting that during this so-called "Year of the Disabled" the Tories' contribution in this area will be not only the decimating of services and facilities but also the beginning of the closure of a depot which is the largest employer of

ROWNTREE'S

A victory for striking Rowntree's workers in South Africa would be a victory for all workers in the combine.

That is the growing feeling among workers in York, the headquarters of Rowntree Mackintosh, in solidarity with striking workers in Rowntree's factory at East London, South Africa.

Already one of the unions at Rowntree's York, AUEW-TASS, has passed a motion supporting their South African brothers in their struggle and moved to spread the support amongst the other unions representing the firm's 8,000 workforce in the city.

The key to building effective solidarity with South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU) really lies with the GMWU, which represents the majority of Rowntree's UK workforce.

Through supporting SAAWU's struggle the way would be cleared for

building real international links between Rowntree workers in Britain and South Africa.

Rowntree workers, wherever they work, have the same basic problems to contend with. The building of real links at shop steward and convenor level would represent a real step forward for both workforces.

Common interest

The common interest between South African and British workers can be seen from the issue that sparked off the dispute. Three workers, members of SAAWU, were dismissed for refusing to fix a machine when it broke down. This was a skilled job normally requiring a titter, and in fact the workers had been reprimanded three months earlier for doing similar work which could have damaged the machinery!

This problem of machinery breaking down and requiring skilled workers to mend it is common to York's Rowntree workers. Attempts to use unskilled labour represent a threat to both the AUEW and the GMWU in the British factories.

In South Africa, seventy of the strikers have been detained since the dispute started, including the branch secretary of SAAWU in East London and the National Chairman of the union.

A victory for Rowntree workers in South Africa would be a major defeat for the South African regime in attempts against the non-racial trade union movement, which now is at the forefront. It would be a victory to Rowntree workers not only in South Africa but in Britain as well.

By Alan Beynon
(York LPYS)

By a
Militant reporter

disabled people in the Llanelli area.

The trade union response to the closure was unanimous! Immediately a Joint Action Committee (JAC) of all depot unions was formed, which only a few years ago would have been impossible due to the management fostered mistrust between unions.

So far the JAC has organised a contingent which took part in the national lobby of Parliament over defence job losses. A delegation also met Peter Blaker (minister for the

armed forces) who politely told us we were being closed down on 'economic grounds'.

When asked to substantiate this with facts and figures he said he might provide them for us...by the end of the year! A blatant case of making a decision and then tailoring the facts to justify it!

The campaign to save the depot is well under way. Support has been given from the local movement.

The message from Llangennech is simple. Trident, if introduced, will cost

the workers at Llangennech and our brothers and sisters at Chatham, Portsmouth and elsewhere, their jobs. However, Labour Party policy on defence at the next election can and must include not only a commitment to disarm, but also a clear call to channel the huge technically sophisticated resources wasted on defence at present into socially useful production ensuring no jobs are lost.

This demand will be readily accepted by defence workers.

Milton Keynes

WONDER CITY - GHOST TOWN

CPSA Election

By
Brian Ingham

There has been widespread enthusiasm among activists within the biggest civil service union, CPSA, following the announcement that national official, John Macreadie, will be a candidate in the election for the new general secretary.

John Macreadie has a long record inside CPSA as a consistent left wing fighter. Since 1964 when he joined the civil service he has fought to build CPSA as a fighting democratic organisation.

As a lay member he helped build the left wing at a time when the right dominated the union at all levels.

He became a full-time official of the union in 1971, and continued to openly support moves to democratise CPSA. He was in favour of the introduction of election addresses, the circulation of NEC minutes to branches and the election of full-time officials.

In fact John was one of the only two national officers who publicly identified with the long cam-

paign to bring in elections of officers inside the CPSA. John's record of activity includes the time when he led the Air Traffic Control Assistants in the battle against the incomes' policy of the last Labour government.

He also had a proud record in the recent civil service strike. As acting chairman of the Civil Aviation Authority trade unions, John led the industrial action of the civil aviation workers.

At CPSA meetings he consistently argued against the hesitant tactics implemented by the right wing CPSA NEC and the other civil service trade union leaders, and put forward demands for positive action.

He strenuously opposed the final settlement of 7% plus £30 which meant a severe cut in the living standards of civil servants and related workers.

He pointed out that victory would still have been possible if the government was made to feel the full force of civil service trade union power.

There will be a special CPSA Broad Left Conference in October where John Macreadie's election campaign is expected to receive massive backing.

Robb Caledon

Continued from page 1

have voted to support the Robb Caledon workers with industrial action at a mass meeting.

The Dundee workers are confident that a national overtime ban

will force management to come to terms and save shipbuilding on the Tay.

Once the occupation begins, we will be looking to the whole trade union movement to really begin this fight for jobs.



-a monument to monetarism!

The new 'wonder city' of Milton Keynes has had another nail driven into its coffin.

The Scots Meat factory in Bletchley—a major employer of the Milton Keynes population—is to shut down if the bosses get their way, shedding 1,500 jobs.

The news stunned the workforce. The first they heard of it was when one worker returned from holiday, and showed a copy of the magazine, the 'Grocer'

By Phil Barnard
(Chairman, EETPU
Milton Keynes,
personal capacity)

to the stewards. In it was a 2" column article which casually mentioned that the factory, part of the Unigate group, was to close!

But after the initial shock, the workers are now

prepared to fight. A mass meeting decided they were 'not in the business of selling jobs.'

Top level negotiators will be brought in by the five unions involved, which includes the T&G and AUEW, and a demonstration has been called for Saturday with many union and Labour Party coaches stopping off to join the protest on the way to the Birmingham Labour Party march. Tony Benn will address the demonstration.

If this closure goes ahead, Milton Keynes will become another Corby. Unemployment will be pushed up to 8,000—nearly 16-18%! The closure will take about £7 million out of the new

town's local economy through lost wages, and will have a domino effect on the small service industries and shops in Milton Keynes.

This closure must be stopped—the victory at Renolds in Bradford (see page 14) shows that a determined action by the workers can secure victory.

Support the Scot Meat workers—get your coach for the Birmingham demo to stop off en route at the Milton Keynes protest: Assemble 10 am outside Scot Meats [off A5 at Bletchley, Denby Industrial Estate].

Send messages of support to; JSSC, Scot Meats, Bletchley, Milton Keynes.

to solve the problems of unemployment.

Join in the fight, which has been taken up by the Marxists in the Labour Party Young Socialists, the Labour Party and the unions for real socialist solutions.

Join our fight for a 35 hour week with no loss of pay as a major step to reducing unemployment.

Join the fight for a minimum wage of £80 per week. The Tories now want to limit public sector wage increases to a maximum of 4%! Yet inflation continues in double figures.

While millions have been turned out on the dole queues, working class people suffer from poor housing and from old schools and hospitals which are often close to ruin. We call for a massive programme of useful public works, both to give a livelihood to the unemployed—and to improve our living conditions.

We can only achieve these reforms on the basis of a socialist plan of production. We call for the nationalisation of the commanding heights of the economy under democratic workers' control and management.

The Tories system is one

of destruction. Billions of pounds worth of production have been lost through unemployment which could improve living standards for all workers.

More important still, the ailing profit system wastes the lives and talents of millions of workers. The bosses' system is dying on its feet, and it threatens to pull us down with it. Don't let that happen.

Join us in the fight to kick out the Tory government and elect a Labour government committed to socialist answers to the problem of unemployment.

WAR ON WORKERS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

stration against unemployment.

The demonstration must be a lively start to a massive campaign, around demands

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