

Militant

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TORIES IN CRISIS SDP-LIBERAL THREAT?

BUILD A MASS SOCIALIST LABOUR PARTY



Labour Party members demonstrate against the Tories on 19 September. Photo: Militant.

CONTACT:
NIGEL BOND
12 AUSTERBERRY WAY
ROWNER
GOSPORT
TEL: 25'74

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

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“We are getting more competitive” was the brutal, mindless comment of Norman Tebbit, Mrs Thatcher’s new minister for union bashing.

The “suburban skinhead” was commenting on Tuesday’s official unemployment figures which came within a hair’s breadth of three million.

The official figure is 2,998,789. The real number is more like 4 million, if women and other jobless people who don’t register and workers on special “job-saving” schemes are included.

Tebbit would be right if Britain was competing in an all European unemployment championship.

Unemployment in Britain almost doubled (up 88%) between April 1979 and April 1981. In twelve other West European countries hit by the world recession, however, the average in-

By Ray Apps

(delegate
Brighton Kempton
Labour Party)

crease was about one third (30%).

With cretinous confidence in “free market forces”, Mr. Tebbit thinks mass unemployment is good for business. But Thatcher and company have not received a vote of confidence from the City financiers and big business.

Quite the contrary. Overseas investment in stocks and shares is currently running at £900 million a month. Since the Tories removed exchange controls, British investment in overseas stocks and shares has jumped from quite a low level to £5,000 million over the last year.

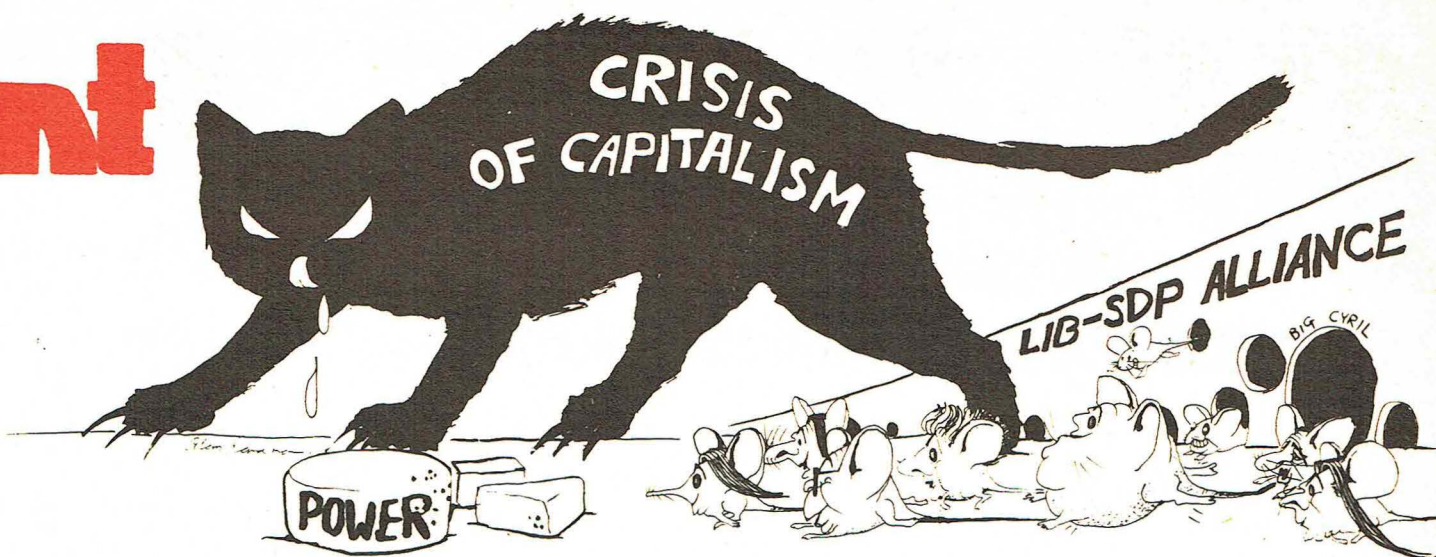
British businessmen have
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IT'S ALRIGHT DENIS IT WAS MISTAKEN
IDENTITY—
THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE A TORY!

Militant

SDP- How big a threat?



The threat posed by the Liberal/SDP alliance will undoubtedly be one of the themes of the right wing at the Labour Party Conference at Brighton.

While the holy trinity of Jenkins, Steel and Williams wallowed in the hero worship of their supporters and the adulation of the press at Llandudno last week, their political blood brothers within the Labour Party, the right wing, have attempted to turn the SDP's apparent success to their own advantage.

In a desperate attempt to prevent the election of Tony Benn as Deputy Leader and halt the massive shift to the

left that this would represent, the right wing have invoked the spectre of the alliance "crushing Labour" by capturing the so-called "middle-ground".

The Warrington by-election result and some recent local government results have been adduced as proof of the potential which exists for the SDP.

By using the Warrington result in this way the right wing are playing the same game as the capitalist press. They have sought to obscure the fact that the most important feature of the Warrington by-election was the shattering of the Tory vote. They were reduced to a mere 7½% share of the vote.

Imagine the headlines if we had had a Labour government and a Labour

candidate receiving a derisory vote! The same result could come from the Croydon North-West by-election.

Jenkins received 12,000 votes at Warrington. At least 7,000 of these came from former Tory voters, and another 3,000 from former Liberal voters.

No more than 2,000, who were either former Labour voters, predominately from the middle class or those who had not voted in the previous election, swung over to support Jenkins.

Nevertheless, Jenkins should not have received this vote. Unfortunately, the campaign was in the hands primarily of right-wing Labour Party regional officials, and no serious attempt was made to unmask the SDP as another Tory-Liberal Party in disguise.

The capitalists have filled the coffers of the SDP to the tune of a reported £15 million—because they are terrified of the possibility of a landslide for Labour in the next election.

They realise that millions of Tory voters, and those who abstained in the last election, are threatening to swing over in support of Labour at the next election.

Against the background of more than 3 million unemployed, with the British economy brought to the brink of ruin, a new Labour government will be under terrific pressure to carry through radical measures in the interests of working people.

In the past the Liberal Party has been kept as a safe haven for disillusioned Tory voters. But now the Liberals have become tainted as an "establishment" party and are therefore not looked on as a real alternative by discontented Tory voters.

The capitalists have therefore decided to create a new "safety net" in the form of the SDP.

They have not disguised their intentions: "it (the SDP) must wreck Labour at every turn, and fast,"

('Economist', 19 September 1981). In order to achieve this objective the SDP must appear 'radical' and 'fresh'.

Their leaders are in effect attempting to capitalise on their own past crimes. There is widespread disillusionment not just with Thatcher and the Tories but with past right wing dominated Labour governments.

Jenkins, Williams, Owen, etc. were the dominant members of a Labour government which carried through a watered-down version of Thatcherism and paved the way for the return of the present Tory government. In the past 35 years we have had 17 years of Labour governments, but British workers are immeasurably worse off than before.

You cannot defeat the SDP by returning to the bankrupt policies of the 1974-79 Labour government

Labour can unmask the SDP for what it is, a pro-capitalist anti-working class party. But not on the basis of the policies of Labour's right wing who are virtually indistinguishable from the SDP.

The SDP wish to return to the policies of 1974/79. The right wing of the Labour Party also wish to serve up the same warmed-up dishes, spiced with a few radical phrases which will be easily dispensed with once they take power.

The discontented millions of former Tory voters can only be won, not by occupying the "middle ground", but by the adoption of radical socialist policies.

Labour must establish in their minds that the present system can only offer more of the same medicine which

Thatcher has been dishing out in the past two years—rising unemployment, increased inflation (stagflation), and further cuts in living standards.

It is a measure of the desperation of British capitalism that they are even flirting with the idea of building up the SDP as an alternative to the Tory Party.

They have embarked on a very dangerous game from their point of view. If they are not careful, their manoeuvre to destroy the Labour Party will end up crushing the Tories.

Conscious of this, the 'Economist' warns the SDP leaders: "the alliance must not go for Mrs Thatcher's fair-weather friends but for the votes of disillusioned socialists away from Mr Foot."

However, most of the support flowing to the SDP at the moment comes from precisely disillusioned Tory voters. If the SDP were to get the kind of support promised in recent opinion polls this could shatter the Tory Party.

Discontented Tory voters who go over to the SDP will not easily return to the Tories. On the contrary, they will later swing over even more massively to support a left Labour Party.

At the same time, the Labour Party and the trade union movement will become even more radicalised than at present. In the unlikely event that the SDP, either through its own efforts or through an alliance with the Liberals and Tory 'wets', manage to push through proportional representation this will not crush a radicalised Labour Party as they seem to imagine.

Despite similar attempts on the part of De Gaulle in France, when he framed his constitution in 1958, a radical and left-wing Socialist Party has just achieved power with almost 56% of the vote. Events will move much faster in Britain in the next few years.

Moreover, if blocked on the electoral plane the working class in Britain would assert its muscle on the industrial field.

Even 'The Times' has warned, "without prospect of government to restrain them, the traditional parties will follow the extremists, especially at constituency level." (15 September 1981). In the perjured language of 'The Times', "extremists" means "socialist" as far as the Labour party is concerned.

Fears of such a development may yet convince the capitalists to draw back from massive support for the SDP.

They will not lightly or easily undermine the Tory Party which has been a reliable instrument for them for over 100 years.

Moreover, the big industrial battles which loom in Britain in the next period could lead to a huge confrontation between an aroused and bitter working class and the new hard nosed Tory cabinet.

The 4% limit of Thatcher, together with the threatening noises from the "half-trained pole cat", Tebitt, against democratic and trade union rights, is itself a formula for confrontation between the classes.

This polarisation could shatter the basis of the new-found confidence of the Liberal/SDP alliance.

The labour movement can help this process along by a campaign of propaganda, explanation and action both against the Tory government and against the threat posed by the SDP-Liberal alliance.

One thing is certain: the attempt to "out moderate" the SDP, as the right wing advocate, would have disastrous results for Labour.

If the left is victorious in the deputy leadership this must be the first step in re-arming the labour and trade union movement in Britain with a fighting socialist programme to defeat Tory, Liberal and SDP reaction.

LABOUR'S RIGHT BACKED BY NATO

Last Monday, James Callaghan launched another well-broadcast attack on the Labour Party's policy on nuclear disarmament.

This came at a press conference to launch a new pamphlet, "The case against unilateral nuclear disarmament," published by the Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understanding.

This committee and the Labour and Trade Union

This committee and the Labour and Trade Union Press Service are, according to ex-Labour MP Alan Lee Williams, one of its 'Editorial Committee', "entirely funded by the information service of NATO, although (as he puts it) we are free to receive donations from individuals and trade unions."

On the platform with Callaghan this week were Frank Chapple and Terry Duffy, respectively Treasurer and Secretary of the LTUPS.

Only the Saturday before

Terry Duffy, had launched an attack on the campaign of the Broad Left in the coming AUEW elections. Raising the old smear of "Moscow Gold" ("Challenge to the Reds: Who gives you the cash?" as the 'Sunday Express' headline put it), Duffy said "I am most concerned that money may be coming from outside this country."

Yet Terry Duffy is quite happy to sit on a body financed by NATO, a capitalist military alliance dominated by American imperialism and fundamental-

ly hostile to the aims of the labour movement.

Significantly, the press conference was held at the exclusive Reform Club in London. One of the secret weapons used by the LTUPS to promote "closer links between the labour and trades union movement and the members of the Atlantic Alliance" is "organising...luncheons and dinners."

We would like to hear from rank and file members of the EETPU and the AUEW how many lunches and dinners they have been invited to.

Strange allies

"The Conservative are very unpopular, probably more so than they have ever been," confessed Ian Gilmour, Thatcher's sacked "wet" writing in "The Times" (23 September).

Gilmour also confirms our view of the SDP:

"It is possible to regard the SDP as a safety net for the Conservatives..."

"It is far from certain that the SDP will do Labour more damage than they will do to the Conservatives. They might indeed facilitate a Labour victory. They appear...to be a net

more likely to ensnare Conservative voters than to save Conservative politicians."

It is ironic, that while Gilmour is slating the Tories, ex-Labour Prime Minister, Sir Harold Wilson, should be praising the Tories on a US lecture tour.

According to "The Times" (22 Sept), the Tory Party (as well as Reagan) "came in for approbation" as "the best he had known in his 35 years in the House:

"It is a much more professional back bench. The Conservative Party now has a considerable number of people with industrial experience and a number who have worked in the City, not in honorary posts."

THE LESSONS OF BIRMINGHAM



Applause during Tony Benn's speech at rally.

Photo: Militant

The Labour Party demonstration in Birmingham at the weekend was yet another massive demonstration against this Tory government.

At the height of the march in the city centre, it swelled to nearly 20,000, made up mainly of trade union and Labour Party members from the Midlands.

By Bob Wade

anti-Tory speeches.

At this point whole sections of workers present in the audience—angered not only by these provocative statements but Mr Healey's role in past Labour governments—joined in the booing.

The 'Militant' and the Labour Party Young Socialists make it clear that it is not the method of Marxism to barrack a speaker to the point where they cannot carry on. Indeed, at this year's LPYS annual conference, the Young Socialists were addressed by the right wing Labour MP, John Golding, who, despite his pro-

vocative speech, was not interrupted once. Rather he was treated to silent contempt.

To 'howl-down' a speaker gives ammunition to the bosses' press to peddle the myth that Marxists are undemocratic; the day after the Birmingham incident the 'Sunday Mirror' stated on its front page, "Uproar broke out when about 50 militant supporters of Tony Benn tried to storm the platform in a 'gag Healey' move."

This is untrue. No "militant supporters" took part in any such action.

And many activists present were suspicious why Mr Healey chose not to finish his speech (unlike at the recent Cardiff demonstration and the 'People's March' Rally in Hyde park, where he continued his speech despite similar barracking). Needless to say, the next day the Fleet Street press had screaming headlines denouncing 'left-wing bully boys' etc.

However, on the Sunday TV programme 'Weekend World', Mr Healey went as far as to name the secretary of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, Mr Jon Lansman, as actually

'orchestrating' the heckling. This red herring was soon squashed, when Mr Lansman pointed out he was at neither the Cardiff or Birmingham marches!

But what hypocrisy by the press. Now the truth has come out, the press talk of Healey's 'blunder' or 'boob'. But had the tables been turned, and Tony Benn made such an untrue accusation, imagine how the headlines would have screamed 'liar' and poured abuse on Tony Benn!

The march itself was good humoured and full of confidence that Thatcher could be stopped. As usual, the LPYS made excellent preparations for the demonstration, with factory gate meetings and 'soap-box' orations in the city's famous Bull Ring, in the days leading up to the march. The route was plastered with YS and Militant-posters.

A banner proclaiming 'Join Labour's Youth' stretched above the route near the entrance to Aston Park. Many names were taken from youth wanting to join the YS, and paper sales flourished—even a motorcycle cop bought a Militant!

If your first culprit fails...

Reeling from the collapse of Denis Healey's claim that Jon Lansman, secretary of the Rank and File Mobilising Committee, led the heckling of Healey at the Labour Party's Cardiff and Birmingham demonstrations, the Healey camp and the media began a frantic search for a new culprit.

During the next day the word went out that Bob Labi, a Militant supporter

on the Executive of the Greater London Labour Party, was the person whom Healey had meant to name. (Incidentally Bob Labi is bearded unlike Jon Lansman). Photographs and unused ITN film of the Birmingham march were scanned for Bob Labi's face.

The 'Daily Star' telephoned Bob Labi and asked if he had led the heckling.

Despite being told that he had not actually attended either the Cardiff or Birmingham march the 'Star' immediately telephoned Bob Labi's parents to ask if they knew what his movements were!

This small incident only goes to illustrate the close co-operation between the media and the right-wing within the Labour Party.

TOXTETH -WHO GAVE POLICE HOSPITAL RECORDS?

News headlines about Toxteth may have died down but police repression continues. Last week Paul Conroy was hauled before the court in dressing gown and pyjamas, with the top of his body and neck in plaster.

By Ron Burke
(Toxteth CLP)

was when police began using their hit and run tactics.

When Liverpool 8 Defence Committee members and 'Militant' reporters went to see Paul there was a police guard on the hospital ward and only certain members of Paul's family were allowed in.

Last week in court the police even asked for Paul to be sent to Risley Remand Centre. Despite the fact that he is still in plaster, he has been granted bail of £500 and put on curfew.

He had been arrested in hospital and charged with petrol bomb offences. Neither he, his family or his solicitor had any warning that he was due to be discharged from hospital.

Paul's injuries had been inflicted by a police land rover. Eye witnesses have reported how a police jeep in the St Nathaniel Street area rammed him against a fence. This, the night before David Moore was killed,

But how did the police know that Paul was about to be discharged? Trade Unions must investigate how this confidential information was leaked to the police and demand that hospital records are not used in this way.

CHILE DEMO



Photo: Militant

Over 3,000 people in Trafalgar Square last Sunday heard Michael Foot, Arthur Scargill and others attack the aid the British government is giving to the military dictatorship in Chile, and other reactionary regimes in Latin America.

US LABOUR DEMONSTRATE

At least 250,000 people—60,000 more than expected—joined the AFL-CIO (American TUC) march in Washington last Saturday against Reagan's monetarist policies.

Reagan chose to "slip out of town", as the 'New York Times' put it. The biggest demonstration in Washington for 20 years, it reflected the growing anger of a genuine cross-section of

America.

Converging on Washington from every corner of the US, the demonstrators used trains and coaches, to avoid breaking air traffic controllers' picket lines.

But most significantly of all, the mass demonstration was called by organised labour—a sign of the role that a party of labour could play.

Inside: Report on the Labour Day march in New York—page 16.

John Wobey

We are sorry to report the death last Sunday of John Wobey, a member of Hackney Central LP and a Hackney Councillor. John was a reader of the 'Militant' for many years, and

regularly contributed generously to our Fighting Fund. We offer our condolences to his wife, Hilda Wobey, and their children Bob, Jane and their families.

Tribute next week.

UNION RIGHTS FOR YOPS WORKERS

Who wants to be cheap labour?

LPYS launch campaign

Launched only three weeks ago the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign is proving a great success.

Set up on the initiative of the Labour Party Young Socialists and the Youth Campaign Against Unemployment, it has as its aim, bringing the half a million YOP workers into the trade union movement.

Amongst its initial trade union sponsors are Bernard Dix, Assistant General Secretary NUPE, Bobby Owens, Chairman region No 6 TGWU, Colin Barnett of the North West TUC. Already the 6/612 unemployed workers branch in Liverpool has sent £10 to the campaign, which we hope will be the first of many such donations from Trade Union branches.

The campaign marks a new turn in the development of the Labour Party Young Socialists. It comes after a year of campaigning activities which has seen the active membership grow from 5,000, at the last Labour Party conference, to about 9,000.

That year began with the massive campaign for the demonstration in Liverpool, for which 900,000 leaflets were given out, and over 8,000 marched in the LPYS contingent. Subsequently the LPYS has conducted major campaigns for the Glasgow, Cardiff, and Birmingham demonstrations.

1981 has also seen the biggest and most representative LPYS conferences since the early 1960s; 295 branches were represented with a total attendance of about 2,000. That conference saw the launch of the 'Youth Charter', a 10 point programme of demands to be included in Labour's next Manifesto; this gained widespread support in the Labour and Trade Union movement.

The LPYS has now founded the YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign, because it felt the time was ripe to help organise YOP workers, who are mostly being used as cheap labour with little or no training. The LPYS is demanding:

- * 5 weeks holiday per year for YOPs now
- * An immediate and substantial increase in the training allowance

By Lawrence Coates

(LPYS representative -elect on NEC)

- * Full trade union rates of pay
- * Proper disciplinary and complaints procedures
- * Free travel until a decent wage is achieved
- * Proper training under trade union control
- * A guaranteed job at the end of the scheme

A founding conference of YOP workers and representatives of trade union branches involved in the organisation of YOP schemes will be held in Liverpool on November 21st. Speakers will include Colin Barnett, secretary of the North West TUC, YOP workers representatives, and a member of the LPYS National Committee.

In the next couple of weeks a YTURC Union recruitment leaflet, posters, and 'Get Organised', the new monthly bulletin of the YTURC, will be out; so local LPYS, Trade Union and Labour Party branches should now be planning an organising drive among local YOP workers.

Areas which have begun to do so have met with a tremendous response among YOP workers. In Liverpool, Manchester, Yorkshire, Glasgow, and many other areas, YOP workers are getting organised.

In Glasgow, with the help of NUPE, ten sites are organised into shop stewards committee. Edinburgh YOP workers have approached the local LPYS to help them organise a protest strike.

The message is clear! Adopt the same elan and audacity which helped build the trade union movement in the past and link it to a clear fighting programme. Then the over 500,000 YOP workers will be in a position to fight alongside the trade union movement against cheap labour and exploitation, and for socialist policies to end unemployment.

Details of the founding conference and statement can be obtained from A. Bevan, Youth Officer Labour Party, 150 Walworth Rd., London SE17.



Part of 8,000 strong LPYS section on last year's Labour Party demonstration in Liverpool. Photo: Militant

Support Conference resolutions

The fight against youth unemployment will be one of the major issues facing this year's Labour Party Conference. Virtually all of the 17 resolutions on Youth Unemployment [242-259] are highly critical of the YOPs schemes.

They argue that the schemes which were introduced as a palliative by the last Labour government, are not creating real jobs, nor offering youth proper training. Resolution 243 (Isle of Wight) points the way forward:

"This Conference, whilst pledged to fight for a job for all school leavers, considers that the Youth Opportunities and Work Experience

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS National Chairman)

Programmes are totally inadequate in relieving youth unemployment and that they contain many dangers for the Labour and Trade Union movement as a whole.

"Conference notes that young people on such schemes receive £23.50 per week paid by the government, providing employers with cheap labour, that they are denied trade union rights, which weakens trade union influence in their place of work, and that the experience they receive is of the most menial jobs available inside factories, offices and shops. Conference pledges itself to fight for real opportunities for youth:

- "a) a job for every school leaver with appropriate trade union rates of pay
- b) A 35 hour week with no loss of pay
- c) The right to join and participate in a trade union.
- d) Adequate training and apprenticeships.
- e) Where less work is available, work sharing without loss of pay."

Resolution 244 from Glasgow Provan adds the demands for: "trade union control over the vetting of training schemes," for "proper training schemes of at least one year, with a guaranteed job at the end, for a minimum of four weeks holiday."

These demands must be taken up by the conference, so that the vast number of youth unemployed or on YOP schemes are won to the labour and trade union movement.

I got confirmation, in a 'negative' way, of the unpopularity of cheap labour YOP schemes.

I had turned up at 8am outside a YOP scheme in Nottingham armed to the teeth with LPYS YOP leaflets, NUPE union application cards, Militants and Socialist Youths. There was nobody going in, and so after forty minutes I decided to go in myself and have a nose around.

I went up to the instructor and asked if there were any Yopsters about. He pointed to one young lad and said "there's only him, we can't get anybody else to come on it. You can't make them you know. We'll have to keep going around the careers office until we fill the scheme up."

A real sign of the times. Youth are no longer willing to put up with these so-called "opportunities schemes." They want a real training, real jobs and decent pay and conditions.

By John Fahey

Unions give backing

What's your idea of opportunity and training? Hull LPYS were unconvinced that sixteen and seventeen year old girls breaking concrete was an adequate preparation for future employment.

That's just one example the LPYS found when they leafletted YOP schemes in preparation for a rally in October. In conjunction with trade union officials from the TGWU and NUPE they have held two meetings resulting in large numbers of YOP trainees joining the unions and the LPYS.

Throughout Yorkshire the campaign has got off to a great start with excellent help from the unions. Huddersfield LPYS is organising a demonstration for 24 October, and NUPE have contacted their branches asking them to invite LPYS speakers to explain the YOP Trainees Union Rights campaign. Wakefield LPYS have organised a public meeting and have as their target the unionisation of the 250 YOP workers employed by the council.

In Leeds a TGWU official has taken 200 LPYS 'End cheap labour' leaflets to circulate to branches. And in Bradford the local government unions are organising a lunchtime meeting for YOP trainees working for the Council.

By John Goodby



When a society begins the slide to collapse, its rulers increasingly degenerate. 'Womens Own' magazine recently highlighted the upsurge in these displays of sickening extravagance held so far this year. While Michael Heseltine was shedding crocodile tears about the plight of Merseyside during his recent visit, he had to keep an eye on his watch to make sure he didn't miss his daughter's 'coming-out' Ball! After all, he had splashed out £10,000 on the party. Another grand affair was held by Iranian exile Mrs Mazandi. After heaping pink champagne, lobster and caviar on her 200 guests, she presented her daughter with a gift—a fully gift-wrapped Volkswagen. When unwrapped though it turned out to be 'clapped-out' (which by the aristocracy's standards probably meant the ash trays were full up). However, when the guests had stopped hee-hawing over this little wheeze, the real present was presented—a brand new VW. But the biggest occasion was of course the party thrown for the wedding of Viscountess Rothermere's daughter. The cost? A snip at £100,000. While the 'Womens Own' apologised for their cavorting saying the rich did it in "the same spirit that Skinheads overturn deckchairs in Southend" (!). A Greek millionaire put it more bluntly: "The rich are hated by everyone. Living well is their...revenge." It seems that while the rest of us go without, that is not enough for the bloated parasites of the ruling class—they want revenge as well!

Question: what costs over one and a half million pounds a year to keep. **Answer:** 26 of the highest paid company directors in the country. But when you consider that one of the highest paid company directors, Sir Graham Wilkins of the Beecham group, gets around £2,200 a week, you can see why the figure is so high. But this is only one side of the picture. The Times (August 18) described the sort of perks the average company director receives: "For a start, (he will) have a company Daimler or Jaguar (64% mentioned a car costing about £15,000). He is likely to have most of his private petrol costs paid, with a credit card for running costs, and possibly a second car. The company will contribute more than 20% of his earnings to his pension plan, while he contributes about 5%. He will have free life assurance cover of four times salary and his widow will continue to receive at least half of his pension..."

Fancy stopping a train? It's quite easy—if you come from the right class. Last week British Rail arranged for the Holyhead to London boat train to make an unsheduled stop in order to pick up Roy Jenkins, one of the leaders of the self-proclaimed 'egalitarian' Social Democratic Party.

Now Jenkins could have waited thirteen minutes on Llandudno station for the next sheduled train, but that would have made him late for an important meeting in London and would have meant having "rather a long wait" at Crewe for the connecting train. A BR spokesman explained that "We wouldn't do this for any Tom, Dick or Harry. It all depends on who you are and, of course, your reasons."

Now Mr Jenkins could not of course have left the Conference like anyone else would have done in order to get an earlier train. But as he and his party settled into their first class seats, and had lunch, they probably reflected on the breakthrough for 'ordinary men and women' which had been made at the Liberal Party Conference.

But what would have happened if an ordinary worker had tried to get a train to stop for their pleasure?

No prizes for the answer.

Jenkins' democracy was always only speech deep. In reality, he and the bosses he wants to represent, are light-years away from the lives of 'ordinary' people. It's not so much what you say as what you do that show your real political commitment and the small example of Jenkins and the train tells you more about his attitude than poring through his speeches.

Decent Housing Now!

Enough bricks to build a new city the size of Derby. That's the amount stockpiled by the London Brick Company alone. But still thousands of workers find themselves homeless!

Similarly, hundreds of students leaving home for the first time to go to college and university this month will be faced with sleeping on floors or paying extortionate rents to private landlords.

Even in college-owned accommodation in halls of residence, rents have exploded. This term, students in many colleges will be faced with rents of £35 a week for a room the size of a prison cell, and one meal a day.

Last year students in London were left with less than £20 a week after paying hall fees, to pay for travel, clothing, books and some meals. In many cases, students are only allowed to spend one year out of three in college accommodation, and for the others are expected to search for decent furnished accommodation at cheap rent.

Now, with Heseltine's freeze on new council house building, less private accommodation is available.

The 'Times Higher Education Supplement' (17 Ap-

ril) spells out the prospects for students looking for accommodation: "Halls of residence will be forced to close during the next academic year as the gulf between what students can afford and what colleges and polytechnics have to charge becomes too wide."

Already, at London's Queen Mary Colleges' Halls of Residence, the utility rooms, where students could cook food, make a cup of tea, etc., have been turned into extra bedrooms to increase the colleges' revenue. Newcastle Polytechnic has already decided to close two halls of residence.

Against this backdrop, it is no surprise that rent strikes took place in a number of colleges last year, including Goldsmiths, Manchester University and LSE. Direct action is no longer a "fashionable toy" for many students, but is becoming a concrete necessity to defend living standards.

By Peter Mumford

(NOLS National Committee, personal capacity)



Queuing all day for the few council flats available in Hackney, East London.

At the London School of Economics, the Union General Secretary claimed that students had been forced to turn to prostitution in order to pay hall fees. Certainly, thousands of students found it almost impossible to pay the rent.

More rent strikes are certain to break out in the coming year. Dave Aarano-vitch, President of the National Union of Students, has already pledged the unions backing for those who take action by saying: "If students find the only way to stay on at college is refusing to pay their rent we will support and encourage them".

It is essential that NUS are pushed from a local level to back up these words with a concerted campaign for decent accommodation for students, at a fair rent, linked to a wider campaign against the Tories.

Labour students in coll-

ege Labour Clubs should be ready to give a lead if their is a groundswell of support for direct action.

Rent strikes can play an important role in drawing students into the fight for socialism, if they have the support of the students, and also of the local labour and trade union movement.

Students could get a ready echo amongst workers involved in the construction industry for a joint campaign on housing. Approaches should be made to workers in the local authority direct labour departments, who themselves are faced with possible redundancies as a result of Heseltine's cuts.

In this way, it would be possible to link the struggles of students and workers, in a common fight for socialist plan of production, to provide decent housing for all.

TORIES HAMMER POLYS

'All non-vocational courses in Polytechnics should be abolished and at least three polytechnics should be closed!' That is the prospect held out for Polytechnic students by Peter Young, former Chairman of the Federation of Conservative Students.

His reactionary 'Monday Club' faction still control the Tories' student organisation. And the reality facing Poly students is grim indeed!

The cuts announced in the Tory White Paper in March this year will be felt with drastic effect when the Polytechnics go back this September. One in six Polytechnic and College lecturers' jobs could disappear by 1984.

In 1980 spending by the Polytechnics on books fell by 14.5%. This led to a situation of shortages in Polytechnic libraries im-



portant books often only available on a one day or 4 hour loan basis.

From September a £20 million subsidy for catering

and residence has been withdrawn. This will further squeeze the limited possibilities of finding decent accommodation in Halls of Residence. With a cut of £481,000, Newcastle Polytechnic has decided to close two small Halls with the loss of 50 places. Another northern Poly, Sunderland, faces a cut of £620,000.

How can Polytechnic students fight back?

How to fight back

It is doubly important to take the struggle for decent conditions into the labour movement. Firstly, because many of the problems students face can only be solved by the mobilisation of the labour movement. Unemployment amongst Polytechnic graduates rose from 7.3% last year to 11.8% ('Guardian' 8/9/81). Only determined action by the labour movement could end the scandal of graduate unemployment—by bringing down the Tory government and replacing it with a Labour government com-

mitted to socialist policies!

Secondly, because many Labour councils are submitting the limited possibilities of finding decent accommodation in Halls of Residence. With a cut of £481,000, Newcastle Polytechnic has decided to close two small Halls with the loss of 50 places. Another northern Poly, Sunderland, faces a cut of £620,000. How can Polytechnic students fight back?

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By Dave Curtis
(Teeside Poly Labour Club)

POLAND

Which way Solidarity?

Poland still hovers on the brink. For fourteen magnificent months the Polish workers have, step after step, challenged the power and privileges of the ruling bureaucracy, asserting their own rights and demands.

The first part of the Solidarity Congress held in Gdansk earlier this month clearly confirmed that the struggle could not be confined to trade union rights.

Reflecting a concentrated year of struggle against a ruling Party which has attempted to present a new,

liberal face, granting concessions while still attempting to restore its control, Solidarity branches came to the Congress with demands for genuine workers' control and management of industry, democratisation of the media, and free elections for the parliament, local government, and other bodies now controlled by the ruling Party.

These demands strike at the heart of the bureaucracy's rule. However, Solidarity's leadership around Lech Walesa, the intellect-

uals in KOR, and Catholic spokesmen have all urged the workers to restrain their demands, to be content with trade union rights and "participation", and accept the "leading role of the CP," i.e. accept the continuation of the Stalinist regime.

But at every stage the workers have come into renewed collision with the bureaucracy, as the Party leadership attempted to go back on earlier concessions and curb the workers' movement.

The economy declined 15% last year because of gross mismanagement and the blunders of the bureaucracy.

Unless the workers throw the ruling caste off their backs, and establish genuine workers' democracy, the bureaucracy will inevitably re-establish its position.

Kania and the Solidarity leaders have used the threat of Russian invasion to try to dampen the workers' movement. But moderation by the workers is no insurance

against bureaucratic reaction.

If the bureaucracy cannot restore its power through cunning and force it will ultimately resort to brutal force.

In 1968 the Russian bureaucracy intervened for far less in Czechoslovakia. Things are much more difficult for the Kremlin now. If they invaded, they would face massive resistance, they would have to feed the Polish people and take on the country's enormous foreign debts.

Above all, the political repercussions on Russian troops and on workers throughout Russia and Eastern Europe could be explosive, triggering an even greater threat to their rule.

The political revolution, no less than any other revolution, cannot stop half way. To avoid defeat the Polish workers must carry it through to completion, not as a purely Polish phenomenon, but appealing on a clear class programme to the workers of both Eastern Europe and the West.

No visitor to Poland can miss "Solidarity".

The first things I noticed were posters everywhere and an exhibition at the Railway Station showing the workers' rising of 1956. Many people wear "Solidarnosc" T-shirts and badges. Every town has a big Solidarity office.

By a recent visitor to Poland

tion is made of the Pact. "Other popular illegal books are Orwell's *Animal Farm* and *1984*."

Solidarity has bookshops in many of its offices, where they sell such 'illegal' books mentioned above. In one city they also have a café.

One young worker saw my LPYS 'The People's Flag is Deepest Red' T-shirt and asked if I was a Communist. I replied in broken Polish: "No, I'm a socialist from England." His answer was "Great! Socialists good, Communists..." and he gestured an 'execution' sign across his throat!

This shows both the hatred of Stalinism and the faith in socialism despite their experience.

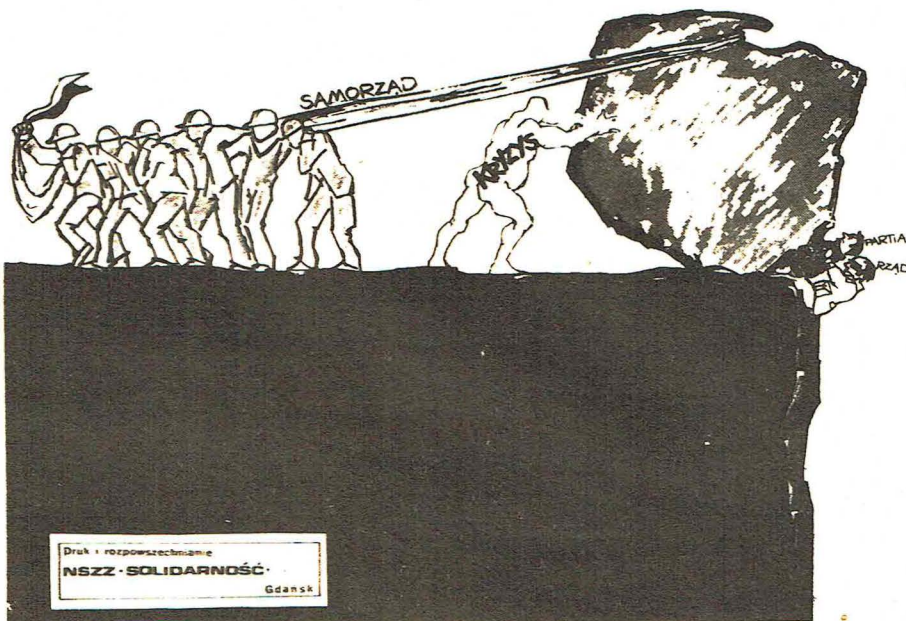
Other statements from Polish trade unionists:

□ "The trouble is that the Bolshevik comrades (i.e. Stalinists) keep telling us that we have to work harder if we want more supplies in the shops. But here in the shipyards we've gone well over targets. We've used some of our surplus to build homes here for the workers." (Senior steward in the shipyards).

□ "The government have objected to our claim to control food distribution because they say this is equal to total control over the country. But they forget that we have 10 million members, and they only have 2-3 million (CP members)" (Research work full-timer for Solidarity).

□ "When an ordinary worker hears a so-called expert praised by the government, he just shrugs his shoulders, because he sees straight through these people!" (Leading steward at a heavy engineering plant in Poznan).

□ "We're used to the Party calling us names like "Anti-socialist" and "counter-revolutionary", but that doesn't worry us any more. The biggest 16 firms in Poland have formed a joint Union Committee for the setting-up of 'Samorzad' (workers' control and management) throughout Poland. So



(Above) Solidarity poster calling for workers' management; (below) mass meeting in Gdansk.



we're just carrying on this fight for workers' management." (Senior Steward, Poznan).

□ "In old bookshops you can sometimes find old books by Trotsky from the 1930s which aren't printed any more."

□ "At school we were told that Trotsky was a very bad party member. At first he was good, but later he became 'anti-party'. But we were never told why or what he had done."

□ "Maybe the next time you visit Poland we'll have organised Young Socialists here!"

The demand for workers' management (samorzad) is the most popular amongst Polish workers at the present time. Together with demands for access to the press and the media, these slogans have been painted, for example, on the walls of the Gdansk shipyards, and along the roads around the site.

One Solidarity poster

shows the Party and government as two dwarfs being crushed by a rock shaped like Poland which is being pushed over the edge of a cliff by a giant ("kryzys"), while the workers pull in the opposite direction with 'Samorzad' as their solution.

A senior steward in Poznan traces the struggle for workers' management back to the uprising of 1956. Reforms were granted at that time which gave some rights of democratic election within Polish factories. This gave the workers the confidence to demand complete self-management, so these rights were crushed by Gierek after 1958.

But groups of workers have remained committed to workers' management, despite the illegal conditions they faced. Now the movement is in the open it can use the experience of 25 years of struggle against Stalinism.

The workers place their faith in the inter-factory 'network' involving the 16

biggest factories in the country. Every two or three weeks representatives from these factories meet to discuss demands.

In the opinion of the steward I discussed with, workers' management involves "all questions of production; buying and selling, trade, hiring and firing. 'Samorzad' should get rid of the bureaucracy in Poland. It should create direct contact between the workers and the union, and between individual factories."

One aim of the union, through workers' management, is to end the vast wage differentials which the government deliberately imposes to divide the workforce.

Throughout August, endless negotiations took place in Warsaw and Gdansk between the government and the union. But it was clear that the government was not seriously negotiating. It was playing games with the union.

Despite this, the union

leadership apparently keeps its faith in these talks. A full-time research worker for the union who was present at the Warsaw talks explained how the 'liberal' CP spokesman, Rakowski, accused the union of illegal acts, and was not really prepared for discussion.

Instead, he deliberately forced the union into a position where they could not sign an "agreement" and then blamed them for breaking the talks.

There are many other examples of the typical old Stalinist 'dirty tricks department' being used against Solidarity.

Earlier this year, for example, some leaflets appeared with Solidarity's name, stating that they got support from rich Polish exiles in West Germany.

As one union member explained, "the quality of the paper was so good that the only people who could have printed them were...the government themselves!"

The Party and the government have lost the battle of ideas within Poland many times over. They complained, to no avail, that the union was distributing too many posters. Then they tried posters themselves, but "they were so complicated that no one could understand them! At the 'official' notice boards near the station you'll see lots of people crowding round the 'Solidarity' board because they speak simply and to the point. But hardly anyone will be round the government's board".

This is just another example of the total lack of support for the Party. 'Solidarnosc' has the support it needs to establish workers' democracy—but it needs a crystal clear programme and leaders prepared to fight for it.

Lech Walesa has standing as an effective public speaker. But especially since the sell-out over Bydgoszcz many activists, especially amongst the youth, have become critical of him.

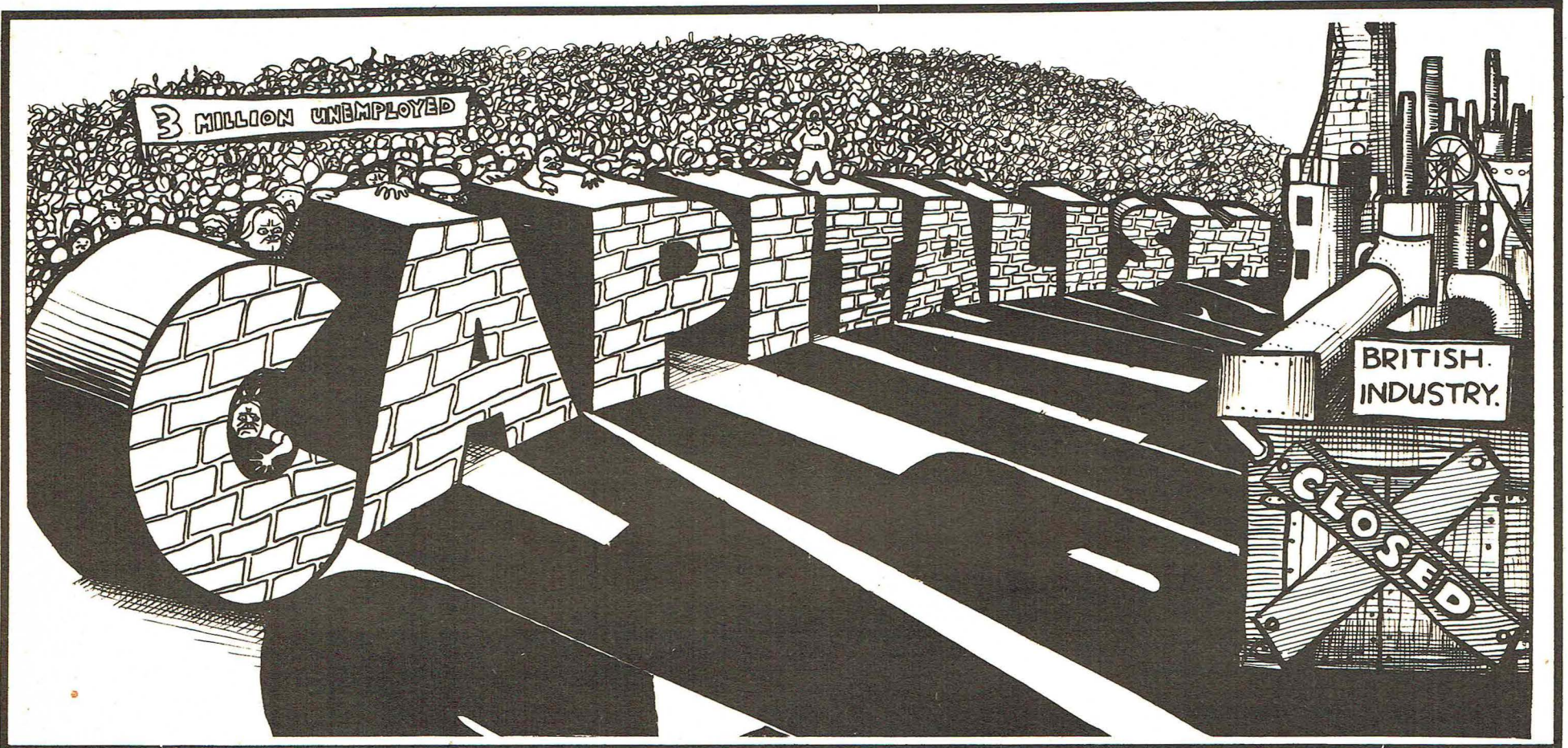
As a hospital worker explained: "Walesa seems to think he can say one thing to the union members, and then something else to the government. Once he is behind closed doors, he claims the right to speak for himself instead of us. Do you have people like that in your trade unions?"

I laughed, and explained our problems with TUC leaders. We agreed that there is a common struggle!

'Transformation in a socialist direction' is not enough.
Labour must start with...

BOLD SOCIALIST CHANGE

By Andrew Glyn (Oxford Labour Party)



The disastrous economic policies of Labour's right wing have been completely rejected by the great majority of Labour Party members and active trade unionists.

The attempts of the right-wing 'Solidarity' spokesmen to justify the record of the last Labour government, claiming that it implemented most of its manifesto policies, cut no ice with Labour's ranks.

Amazingly, Denis Healey himself, interviewed recently in 'New Socialist', says he now supports an expansion of demand, increased public spending, "new public enterprise and a strengthened NEB", "reshaped" financial institutions to provide cheap long term credit, selective import controls and a massive expansion of industrial training.

All these are elements of the Alternative Economic Strategy (AES), originally put forward as an alternative to Healey's monetarist policies during the 1974-79 government. The Party has moved left and, it seems, Healey has moved left with it.

The main components of the AES are now restated in the NEC's conference document, 'The Socialist Alternative'. The overwhelming majority of the Party supports the reforms proposed, reforms which would be an enormous step forward for the working

class—if they could be implemented.

Does Labour's economic programme really present a socialist alternative to monetarism? As the NEC's new document (Statements to conference pp1-33) quite rightly says:

"Our whole economic strategy should be the subject of widespread discussion and debate in the labour movement. Unless our policies are widely understood and supported both within and outside the party, we cannot hope to carry through the radical transformation they entail..."

"The crisis we shall inherit cannot be met by cautious tinkering or piecemeal measures. It demands an imaginative and sweeping programme, based on a coherent strategy and guided by socialist values."

The statement begins with a vivid and well-argued account of the effects of Thatcher's policies. Scorn is poured on the theoretical pretensions of monetarism: "Milton Friedman's equations have had a more devastating effect on British industry than Hitler's bombs."

It points out the absurdity of policies costing £18 billion a year in lost output (a less conservative estimate would be more than double that

figure).

Moreover, in contrast to some previous denunciations of it as absurd and "outdated", the political purpose of monetarism, an all-out attack on the labour movement, is clearly recognised: "Unemployment is not an accidental side-effect—it is the central weapon."

The document boldly says: "Just as the government demobilised three million servicemen and women returning from the war, so the next Labour government must demobilise the three million who have been conscripted onto the reserve army of the unemployed."

It knocks on the head the idea that we cannot afford more public spending to provide jobs.

But it also admits that in the past the hostility of the capitalist class, expressed in a "fall in business confidence and the flight of capital has created an atmosphere of crisis in which Labour governments have been forced to abandon their social priorities in favour of economic orthodoxy...we must be prepared to counter this disruption when it occurs."

But how? The NEC calls for exchange controls and the "monitoring" of foreign investment; but even preventing the outflow of capital does not mean the controllers of finance will lend to the government to finance an expansion.

A "strike of finance" is in their power. How can what the document calls their "unwarranted degree of control" be ended?

The answer must be nationalisation of the major banks, insurance companies and other financial institu-

tions. But unfortunately this vital component of any socialist programme is now dropped from Labour's plans.

All we have in its place is the news (p17) that "we are looking at the possibilities for orderly sales of debt through agreements (our emphasis) with lending institutions."

This would be how the Labour government would finance the increased public borrowing which the statement says would be necessary "in the short run" to finance increased public spending. The new arrangements would cut through the monetarist mystifications now surrounding monetary targets and the PSBR (public sector borrowing requirement) and reduce the "unwarranted degree of control by the financial institutions".

But what price would the Labour government have to pay for such agreements? Surely it would be the abandonment of social priorities in favour of economic orthodoxy...

The NEC believes that the risk of retaliation to import controls should be minimised by proceeding "through negotiation" with trading partners. But negotiation implies something is offered in return for closing markets to further import prevention. What has the NEC in mind?

The NEC points out that expansion will help to curb inflation as costs are reduced. It argues for price controls to "prevent companies taking advantage of new economic conditions just to increase profits."

But providing a market is not simply a question of generating demand at any old price. There is enough demand in the world from the

point of view of people's needs to keep all Britain's factories blasting at full stretch, if only they could produce profitably.

Increasing profits will be necessary to induce the capitalists to expand production in many of the worst hit industries. And even if a system of price control would be cunningly juggled to make an overall expansion worthwhile, what about increased investment, without which any expansion will peter out?

There is no way that the capitalists would contemplate ploughing back extra resources into their businesses in the absence of a significant increase in the rate of profit—now standing at around 2% and only a fraction of the rate even of the mid-1960s.

The establishment of a "publicly owned stake in each important sector of industry", whether that is intended to mean a nationalised company or some form of government holding, certainly will not encourage the rest of the capitalists to invest. On the contrary big business—and they will not have to read Labour's programme to understand this—will see it as a first stage to "the common ownership of the means of production".

They will show how they feel by refraining from investment, which would be

throwing good money after bad as far as they were concerned. Nor will planning agreements with major firms in each sector succeed in creating jobs and new investment unless this is profitable.

Indeed, the document seems to regard planning as a dialogue between government, trade unions and business:

"While some big companies will make political objections to Labour's plans, they have good business reasons for welcoming arrangements by which industrial realities can be fully taken into account in government..."

We have had plenty of experience in past of Labour governments taking into account "industrial realities".

The problem raised in implementing socialist policies are not unique to Britain. Proposals very similar to those in 'The Socialist Alternative' are currently being put into practice in France.

Already, important reforms, in terms of a higher minimum wage, a shorter working week, better pensions have been brought in. The government is proceeding with its plans to nationalise a number of impor-

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LABOUR PARTY

CONFERENCE 81

WHAT WE STAND FOR

By Ray Apps
(Brighton Kemptown Labour Party)
and Pat Wall
(Shipley Labour Party)

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 Con-

ference are transformed into reality by 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 con-

ference, 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.

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.

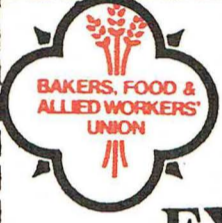
We must ensure that those elected to positions of office on behalf of the Labour Party are fully in touch and accountable to the day to day problems faced by working people and their families.

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, a 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.



**SUPPORT
EXTENSION
OF PARTY
DEMOCRACY**

**Bakers, Food and Allied
Workers Union**

LABOUR COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENCE OF BRIXTON

appeals to all delegates and visitors to LP Conference:
SAVE OUR CITIES FROM TORY VANDALISM AND POLICE HARASSMENT!

Step up the fight for jobs, homes and social amenities for all!
For full democratic control of the police and complaints procedures!
Disband the SPG and the Tories!
Help the hundreds still in hardship as a result of police action. Pass resolutions of protest and give as much cash as you can!

Contact LCDB, c/o 167 Railton Road, London SE24

Greetings to the 1981 Labour Party conference
Benn for party leader!

Uxbridge South and Hillingdon West Ward

**END CHEAP LABOUR!
FULL PAY ON YOPS!**

Fraternal greetings from Bournemouth West LPYS

Sheffield Brightside LPYS Fraternal greetings to delegates and visitors at the Labour Party conference 1981.

Greetings for LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

FIRE BRIGADES UNION



greet all delegates to conference and calls upon the labour movement to totally oppose Tory anti-trade union legislation

Govan and Craighton branches LPYS socialist greetings to all delegates 'Dump the Tories in the Clyde'

Fraternal greetings from BARNSELY LPYS Get thissen joined. Support the socialist republic of south Yorkshire.

Wythenshawe LPYS say no compromise with capitalism. Victory to Tony Benn and to socialist policies

Doncaster District Trades Union Council sends fraternal greetings to delegates. Kick out the Tories

For a deputy leader who supports Labour Party conference policies!

Forward to a mass socialist Labour Party. Greetings from the London LPYS Regional Committee.

Sunderland 'Militant' supporters send greetings to conference
Defend conference decisions Sack the Tories Forward to socialism

FRATERNAL GREETINGS FROM DRUMRY/SUMMERHILL LABOUR PARTY
"We have nothing to lose but our chains"
"Labour to power on a socialist programme."

TOWER HAMLETS LPYS

says:- **Fight the Tory cuts remember the lessons of Poplar 1921**

.....
Save dockyard jobs! Fight for a real alternative—Fight for socialism!
GOSPORT LPYS

For democratic workers organisations with socialist policies—an irresistible combination in Britain, Poland everywhere!
CATHCART LPYS

Fraternal greetings from Clydebank LPYS. Socialism or Tory hell—the choice is ours!

St Peters Ward, Sunderland sends fraternal greetings to conference
Forward to a socialist Labour government!

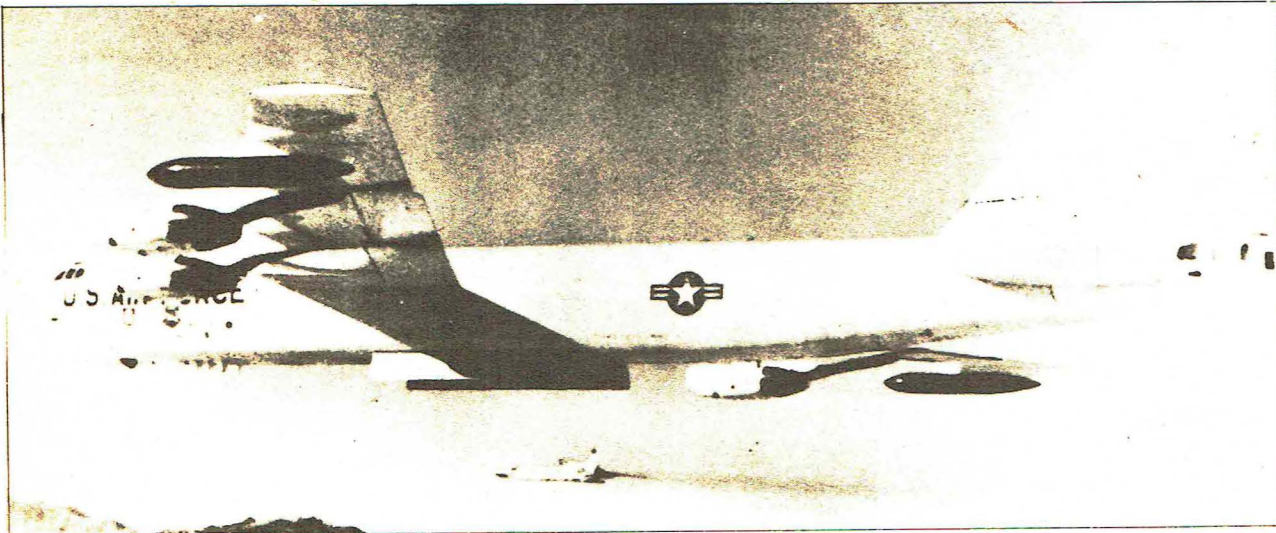
.....
BRISTOL SOUTH EAST LPYS
Back Tony Benn for Deputy

.....
UCATT Doncaster BC 143 branch sends fraternal greetings. Building for a socialist future. UCATT says housing cuts mean homeless families. We need construction not destruction

SOCIALISM OR NUCLEAR WAR

By Peter Taaffe

Disarmament is a class question



ABOVE: The Cruise missile BELOW: Labour Party members protest at arms spending



In its statement 'Nuclear weapons and the arms race', the NEC states: 'The Labour Party recognises that the threat of annihilation for the people of Europe and the world is greater than ever before.'

These sentiments are echoed in the record number of resolutions on this year's conference agenda. The TUC, for the first time in its history, has come out clearly in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament.

There has also been a spectacular growth of CND and END (European Nuclear Disarmament) over the past few years.

Moreover, opinion polls have shown a marked shift towards support for unilateral nuclear disarmament. A BBC poll last year showed that 30% were in favour of unilateral nuclear disarmament, while almost half (47%) opposed the siting of Cruise missiles in Britain and 52% opposed the purchase of Trident missiles.

This expresses the growing horror at the massive stockpiling of fiendish weapons of destruction against the background of increased poverty, misery and mass unemployment for the world's population.

More than £1 million million is spent every four years on arms throughout the world. There are now enough nuclear bombs to kill the world's population 690 times over. This is equivalent to 1,300,000 Hiroshima bombs.

In the northern hemisphere there are now 1,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs for every city with over 50,000 people. One Polaris submarine has an explosive power equal to 9,600,000 tons of TNT—more than all the munitions used in the second world war! In a nuclear war more explosive power would be released in one second than in the whole of the second world war.

The Russian SS20 missiles has the power of 100 Hiroshima bombs.

Without doubt, if the effort which goes into the construction of these instruments of death were used for the benefit of mankind through a

socialist plan of production the whole of the planet could be transformed and poverty eliminated. One jet fighter, for instance, would pay for 40,000 village pharmacies in the third world!

The 'balance of terror'

And yet one of the biggest growth areas for arms exports for the merchants of death in the capitalist west has been in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Their percentage of total world military expenditure has increased from 9% to 16% in the past period.

Not content with covering the earth's land mass and the seas with these horrendous weapons, space has now become a new arena for an intensified arms race.

It is against this background, together with the coming to power of Reagan in America, with his threats to "take on" Russia, and Thatcher in Britain, and the call for nuclear disarmament

has found increasing support.

It is particularly obscene in Britain that 3 million people are out on the stones while the government is spending more than £12,500 million on arms and a projected £5,000 to £6,000 million is to be spent on the new Trident missiles.

Undoubtedly, the Labour Party conference will support the NEC's call for unilateral nuclear disarmament and opposition to all nuclear bases in Britain.

But this step, if implemented, as welcome as it would be, would not, by itself, avert the threat of nuclear catastrophe.

What is missing from the NEC's document is a class analysis of the causes of war and the policies to avoid it. Wars are not the product of some deranged madman—a Hitler or a Mussolini. The second world war came only after a series of defeats for the working class in Italy, Germany, Spain and elsewhere.

Both the first and the second world war resulted from the blind alley of the productive forces, science, labour and technique, which

resulted from the contradictions of capitalist private ownership and the nation state.

A struggle for markets and sources of raw materials between the capitalist powers was the prime cause of these wars.

This has now been superseded by the basic antagonism between two different social systems, American imperialism on the one side and the Russian bureaucracy, resting on a planned economy, on the other.

What has prevented a conflict between these super powers is not "detente", as the NEC argues but the class relationship of forces in the capitalist countries, and the consequences for the capitalists themselves of such a conflict at this stage.

They are conscious of the fact that now war would inevitably take the form of a nuclear conflict—and would lead to their own destruction. Russia has a superiority in conventional weapons and parity in nuclear weapons.

The capitalists do not wage war for the sake of it, but in order to gain markets, raw materials, etc. A nuclear war would mean the destruction of the source of their wealth, industry and working class. The neutron bomb may leave the capitalists' buildings intact but there would be no workers to run the factories.

It is for these reasons that the capitalists talk about "the balance of terror". The right wing of the Labour Party, like Healey, echo these ideas and place their trust in imperialist alliances such as NATO.

However, they are always attempting to alter this balance in their favour. This is what Reagan is trying to do at the moment with his feverish arms building programme.

Moreover, there is now open discussion in America of the need to give the generals the capacity for a "first strike" against the Russians.

However, even if they possessed such a capacity, which they don't, it would not be possible, given the class relationship of forces and the power of the working class in America, for them to use this at the moment.

It is the democratic rights and power of the working class and the labour movement in the capitalist countries which stays the hands of those madmen who would wish to unleash a nuclear war.

But if the labour movement fails to take power in the next decade or so, then it is possible that the capitalists, faced with a worsening crisis and the consequent revolt of the working class, will take to the road of their Chilean counterparts and resort to military-police dictatorship.

If the generals in America, in Britain and other capitalist countries succeeded in carrying through a coup and destroying the labour movement then undoubtedly we would be faced with the prospect of a third world war.

An American Pinochet at the head of a military-police dictatorship, using the methods of fascism, could attempt a "first strike" against Russia.

Therefore, the alternative before the working class and the labour movement of the world is either socialism or nuclear annihilation.

Even if nuclear bases were eliminated and unilateral nuclear disarmament carried through, Britain would not therefore be immune from the effects of a nuclear holocaust. In a conflict between the super-powers, the whole of the planet would suffer through fallout.

Nor will this nightmare be avoided, as the NEC imagines, by "multilateral international disarmament with agreements between different countries involving both nuclear and conventional weapons." The statement says: "Labour believes that there should be urgent serious international negotiations—not simply preliminaries to talks or talks about talks."

The authors are, in effect, pleading that Brezhnev and Reagan "should be nice to one another". But such homilies have fallen on deaf ears in the course of the last 35 years.

As the NEC hints, despite the SALT I and SALT II agreements and the endless round of negotiations, the nuclear and conventional arsenals have risen inexorably.

In the post-war period of "peace", moreover, millions of people have perished in "small" wars. Between 1955 and 1979 there were 125 armed conflicts involving 65 states.

No trust in 'agreements'

It is not excluded that temporary agreements to limit or even lower arms spending can be achieved. The massive expenditure of American imperialism and the Russian bureaucracy is an enormous incubus on both economies. Perhaps after the demise of Reagan in America, and maybe even with Reagan still in the White House, such an agreement is possible.

However, even in this eventuality the threat of war would not be thereby eliminated.

History has shown that agreements between rival capitalist powers are not worth the paper on which they are written. As soon as one power feels it is in a stronger position it breaks such agreements and issues are settled by force. In the conflict between two antagonistic class systems it is even more impossible for any long-term agreements to achieve "disarmament" or even to limit arms expenditure. Both super powers will still retain the capacity to develop arms when the need arises, even if temporary limitations are imposed.

In the present situation, the prospect of a spiralling of arms expenditure is very real and the pleas to Reagan and Brezhnev will not have the slightest effect.

No conscious worker would trust the word of his boss to stick to agreements. It is only the power of the workers and their organisa-

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LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

By Peter Hadden

(Northern Ireland
Labour and Trade
Union Group)

NORTHERN IRELAND. NO CAPITAL ANSWERS - PARTY OF L



PHOTOS:
Left: The aftermath of rioting in Derry, after Bobby Sands' death in May highlight the repression, the poverty and the threat of massive sectarian divisions. Labour must fight for class solution.
Below right: Workers show the potential for a Party of Labour in an anti-Tory demo in 1980.

Photo: Militant

After years of the Parliamentary Labour Party's "bi-partisan" approach on Northern Ireland, the NEC's conference statement on the question is to be welcomed.

A full discussion on the issue throughout the ranks of the labour movement is long overdue.

This NEC statement is doubly welcome because it begins at least to point the party in the direction of an independent class position.

The statement recognises the need for the unity of the working class. It adopts the objective of the reunification of Ireland "by consent", and points out that a "prerequisite of this consent is the creation of greater unity between and within the working class of Northern Ireland."

Implicitly the report rejects the utopian notion of capitalist re-unification, and explains that a united Ireland "will be achieved with the introduction of socialist policies."

Above all, it is the section which deals with the building of a Labour Party in Northern Ireland which stands out as a clear class statement.

Among the trade unionists

in NI there is a growing feeling that a Labour Party should be built in order to cement a political bond between catholic and protestant workers.

Analysing groups such as the old Northern Ireland Labour Party and the Social Democratic Labour Party, it correctly unmasks their pretence to be Labour organisations, and concludes that "no working class party exists, which is capable of bringing catholics and protestants together inside a single political organisation to further their interests as workers."

It ends with a firm declaration of support for the principle of a Labour Party and a clear statement of how such a party can be created. Every section of the labour movement should echo and re-echo these sentiments so that this call is deafeningly and unanswerably heard throughout the movement.

It is worth quoting this conclusion, so that it can become the basis of a campaign by Labour Party and trade union activists.

"We recognise the need for a class based party of Labour in Northern Ireland in order to give a clear political lead on the social and economic issues which unite catholic and protestant workers. The formation of such a party, however, must be rooted in the trade unions in Northern Ireland.

"We therefore believe that interested trade unions in Northern Ireland should support a Conference of trade unions, trades councils, shop stewards committees and other labour movement organisations in Northern Ireland to discuss whether it is possible to form such a Labour party."

This conclusion, together with the general thrust of the argument towards class unity, is incompatible with the policy of bi-partisanship which has been the only consistent policy of the parliamentary Labour Party over the past decade.

Bankrupt political parties

Bi-partisanship has manacled Labour to Tory policies on this question. The statement's implicit rejection must now be made explicit if a socialist approach is to be adopted.

The NEC statement, however, does not represent a full socialist analysis of Northern Ireland. Rather it contains elements of an independent class position. But these are closely sandwiched between strong echoes of the party's past policies.

This is an uncomfortable and unappetising mix which will break the teeth of anyone who bites hard upon it. What it fails to recognise is that class solutions are incompatible with capitalist 'solutions'. By attempting to put forward a crude mixture of both, the statement tries to look in two opposite directions at once, an impossible feat to accomplish.

This is clearest when so-called 'short-term' and 'medium-term' solutions are put forward.

For example, it proposes in the 'medium-term' that there should be an understanding with the political leaders in NI on the need for closer co-operation between the parties, as a step towards 'sharing responsibility in government' and building 'a bridge between the communities.'

Yet the need for a Labour Party is accepted because it is understood that only within such a party can catholic and protestant workers be united. A declaration for a Labour party is a declaration of the bankruptcy of the existing Tory and sectarian parties.

And with good reason! One leading Unionist Party member recently joined the controversy over plastic bullets. He agreed they should not be used—provided there was an alternative. Instead, he suggested that low-velocity lead bullets should be used so targets could be more precisely

picked out and eliminated.

What 'constructive discussion,' 'understanding' or 'shared responsibility' can there possibly be with such people?

A Labour Party is needed to destroy the hold of the Paisleyite Democratic Unionist Party, the SDLP, the Official Unionists and others. From its inception it can expect only the most ferocious opposition from such quarters.

To propose a government of these parties in the same breath as proposing a Labour Party, is to simultaneously propose that they be supported and destroyed.

The reality of Northern Ireland is that there are no capitalist solutions. No adjustment of constitutional arrangements will cause the violence to evaporate. Direct rule, independence, power sharing, integration with Britain, capitalist re-unification would all merely alter the stage within which the conflict is fought out, not end it.

The British ruling class created the problem. They used the weapon of religious division to set catholic and protestant apart and maintain their rule. As a part of this policy the 1920 Government of Ireland Act was passed and the country partitioned.

Now the present representatives of capitalism are incapable of undoing their predecessors' destructive

handiwork. They cannot achieve peace or stability, whether in the 'short', 'medium' or 'long' term.

The NEC Report itself gives some eloquent reasons why this is so: 19% of the workforce are without jobs; 14% of houses are totally unfit for habitation. Average earnings are only 90% of those of the UK, while costs are much higher.

Poverty, sectarianism and repression

Northern Ireland is the UK's poorest region, and one of the poorest in Europe. More than half NI children are growing up in families whose income leaves them on or below the official poverty line.

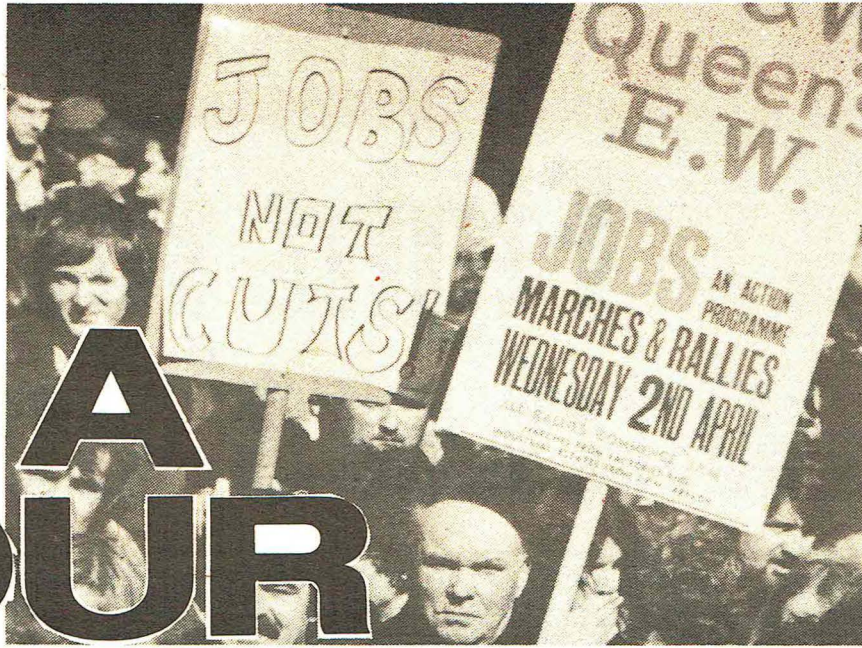
Brixton, Toxteth, Moss Side and in other British cities have now felt the violent consequences of deprivation and mass unemployment. Northern Ireland no longer appears so peculiar or so unique.

Capitalism, through its Tory representatives, can only worsen the social and economic problems.

While tens of thousands are on the dole and on the breadline, while the youth have no jobs and no prospects whatsoever, while there is an environment of destitution, there will be

Photo: Derek Speirs (IFL)

LIST FOR ABOUT



social upheaval of one form or another.

The question in Northern Ireland is not whether this inevitable discontent can be dissolved by waving a wand of constitutional change. It is whether it can be directed by the labour movement into positive class protest or whether it will be squandered as in the past in fratricidal sectarian violence.

The unity of the working class in struggle for a socialist solution is the key.

The mistake of the NEC document is to uphold this aim on the one hand, while on the other proposing 'immediate' answers based on capitalism. The only 'immediate' answer is class unity in action. Twelve years of so-called 'practical' solutions should have made this evident.

As the NEC implicitly accepts, a capitalist united Ireland is ruled out. It has no attraction for NI's one million protestants. Attempts to bomb and shot them into submission will only intensify their resistance.

Capitalist unity forced on the protestants would precipitate a civil war, the expulsion of the Catholics from the north and the likely repatriation of the country. It would set both the working class movement and the prospect of re-unification back for years, if not for decades.

Intensified sectarian fighting in the North, moreover, could spill over into Britain, raising the ugly spectre of sectarian conflict in Liverpool, Glasgow and other cities with big Irish populations. That could have horrendous consequences for the labour movement.

Only as part of the struggle for socialism based on the unity of the working class, Catholic and Protestant, north and south, can there be the removal of the border.

If, however, the unity of Ireland is the only real answer, as the NEC accept, then neither direct rule nor power-sharing will solve anything. And since re-unification is possible only through the building of a socialist movement, the question comes back to the key and immediate issue of the unity of workers.

When it comes to dealing with sectarianism, with repression and with the miseries of poverty and unemployment, there is only the struggle to build and strengthen the labour movement against these evils. There are no interim, no short-term, no long-term, capitalist palliatives.

In the inflamed situation in NI to move even a quarter of an inch from such a class standpoint is to move a mile. This is vividly demonstrated in the section of the NEC document which deals with

repression, H-Block and the role of the army. The ruling class's lack of any of any answer is spelt out in the language of naked repression: Repressive legislation, plastic bullets, non-jury courts, police torture.

The labour movement has a fundamental responsibility to oppose such state repression.

This is in no way to condone the totally false methods of struggle of individual terrorism adopted by the Provisional IRA and INLA. Their activities have not only further divided and weakened the working class, they have also given the Tories the excuse to step up repression.

One year of hunger strikes in the H-Blocks has also demonstrated that groups like the Provos and those associated with them are totally incapable of resisting the repression their activities incur.

But while standing against individual terrorism, the labour movement cannot afford to give the slightest credence to the limitations of freedoms and rights imposed by the state. These restrictions can be used against the working class and their organisations as they move into struggle.

The NEC statement, because it does not base itself consistently on class and socialist solutions, gives guarded support to the military tactics of the state, condemning only the most severe excesses of that policy.

It does not stand for the total repeal of the Emergency Provisions Act, but only for the repeal of sections of it. It does not demand the closure of the non-jury courts, but their modification. It opposes any call for the immediate withdrawal of the troops.

Such positions flow from the statements' acceptance that there can be some short-term capitalist solution. It upholds the continuation of Direct Rule for the time being. But Direct Rule also means the methods by which

the army retain their hold. Here the NEC are forced to swallow the bait with the foul.

In the intensity of Northern Ireland it is a question of either standing four square for an independent class approach or of being forced into the arms of the ruling class and into the embrace of their military policy.

Ten deaths in the H-Blocks are the fruits of Thatcher's brutal intransigence. The NEC calls for basic reforms of prison conditions for all Northern Ireland prisoners. These reforms would indeed provide for a settlement to the hunger strike, and must be supported.

However, on H-Block and on repression generally, it is necessary to go further.

An inquiry into all aspects of repression should be set up by the labour movement, and its findings used as a basis for a campaign to repeal all repressive legislation, close the torture centres, and scrap the Diplock courts. This would bring down the edifice out of which the horrors of H-Block emerged.

With regard to those now in prison convicted of offences arising from the troubles, and the associated question of political status which the NEC simply opposes, there should be a review by the labour movement to establish who has been framed or tortured and who could be regarded as political prisoners. The labour movement would fight on behalf of such people but not those who have committed conscious sectarian atrocities.

On the question of British troops, a decade of killings has shown that the army cannot perform even the minimal function of preventing sectarian attacks. However the statement correctly says that the withdrawal of the troops, without an alternative, would open the way to bloodshed on a far worse scale than anything yet witnessed.

From this the statement

concludes the army must stay. But this means the working class must continue to suffer.

If the removal of the army without an alternative means bloodshed, the answer is not to support the retention of troops, but to pose and build the alternative.

The trade unions in Northern Ireland are 300,000 strong. This mass force, mobilised in action against sectarianism through a defence force based on the trade unions, could do what the army can never do: protect the working class from the bigots of all sides.

The NEC statement is a step along the road to a class approach. But it is a step shackled by the retention of capitalist solutions. Nonetheless, it is an implicit rejection of bipartisanship and the past policies of Labour's spokesmen on NI.

Above all, because its call for a conference of Labour could be of historic significance for the cause of class unity within Northern Ireland, the statement should be adopted despite its limitations.

Such adoption must be the beginning of a campaign for the convening of a Conference of Labour in NI and the working out of a socialist solution.

A fighting labour Party in NI would open the way to the unity of the working class throughout Ireland, a socialist united Ireland and a socialist federation of these islands.

Delegates to the Labour Party Conference have an opportunity to open a new chapter in the history of the Irish working class.

The 1970s were a decade of sectarian division. A conference of the Northern Ireland labour movement and the creation of a Labour Party could open a struggle to make the 1980s the decade of the unity of the working class throughout Ireland.

Photo: Derek Speirs (IFL)



LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

CAMPAIGN FOR MASS MEMBERSHIP

By Tony Saunois
(LPYS representative on
Labour Party NEC)

“The 1981 Labour Party Conference meets after twelve months of intense campaigning activity. Mass Labour Party demonstrations against unemployment have been held in Liverpool, Glasgow, Cardiff and Birmingham.

These demonstrations, together with the campaigns organised by many CLPs against cuts in public expenditure etc. signify a very welcome development.

This represents the beginnings of a major change in the Party's activities. Last year's level of campaigning work has not been seen for decades.

The press, echoed by the right wing within the Labour party, have denounced Labour over the last twelve months for its ‘lurch towards extremism’. The reality has been very different.

As a result of the radicalisation of the party, especially in relation to democracy and policy, far more emphasis has been placed on the question of campaigning to win support for Labour and its socialist aspirations. The result has been a large increase in the active membership of the party.

This has been an important break from the lack of activity by the Party when under the stewardship of the right wing. Indeed, when the right dominated the party, they regarded it merely as an electoral machine to secure the return of MPs who in turn were content to preside over inactive and small rumps of CLPs.

This, however, is rapidly changing. Central to the development of a mass party is the need for a fully rounded-out socialist programme. Labour must not only protest against unemployment but campaign on bold demands such as the implementation of the 35-hour week, linking them to the necessity for the implementation of Clause IV, part 4, of the party's constitution.

Labour has begun to move towards being a mass democratically controlled socialist party. This is the only way it can provide an effective challenge to the Tories and the system they are defending.

It is vital over the next year that Labour conducts a

major drive to build a firm, active base amongst workers and their families.

Conference will have the opportunity of supporting the establishment of workplace branches. These could be used as campaigning bodies for socialist ideas and to build up solid links between the Party and trade union organisations within the factories.

If Conference endorses the establishment of workplace branches they must not be allowed to be smothered by the right wing—who are merely demanding that they should not be allowed to discuss industrial matters!

Over the past three conferences major gains on party democracy have been achieved. These must be defended against any attempts to overturn them. This particularly applies to the method of electing the party leader and mandatory re-selection of MPs.

These democratic gains, however, still need to be strengthened. The right of the democratically elected NEC to decide the contents of the election manifesto, based on the decisions of party conference, should be fully supported.

It is especially important, too, given the necessity of a real struggle against the cuts in public expenditure that the gains on democracy made nationally are also made in relation to local authorities.

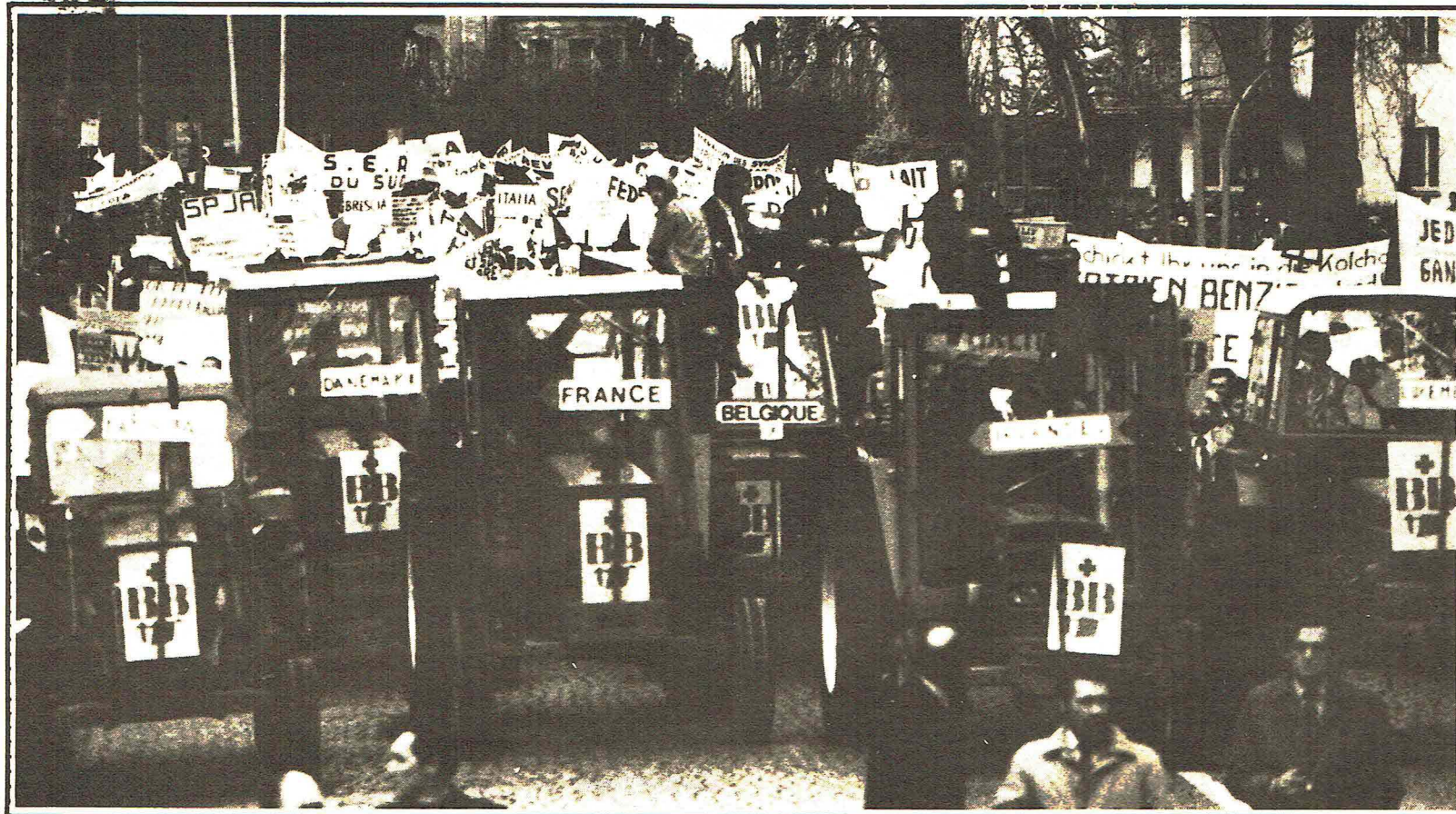
The most important of these are that local election manifestoes should be decided by the District Labour Parties or equivalent organisation, and that the group leader and committee chairman/spokesmen should be elected by the DLP.

It is vital that the Labour Party now builds a mass membership. This will be achieved by the party adopting a radical socialist alternative and then campaigning for it at local and national level.

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

LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE 81

PHOTO BELOW: Farmers demonstrate in 1980 against Britain's plea for lower food prices. The EEC has totally failed to overcome national capitalist interests at times of crisis.



With the help of an almost unprecedented press and propaganda campaign, British big business managed to secure a 'yes' vote for EEC entry in the 1975 referendum.

But how many people, especially working people, now favour the Common Market?

All the promises from big business and their right-wing supporters in the labour movement that EEC entry would produce a miracle recovery for the British economy have been exposed as a hollow fraud.

Workers particularly blame the EEC for the enormous rise in food prices. The cost of living has soared to French or German heights, while British workers are being paid some of the lowest wages in the industrialised west.

British capitalism left entry too late to share fully all the advantages of an integrated European market. The Tories entered when the post-war boom was already on the wane, and Britain had already entered into an "irreversible decline" vis-a-vis its main rivals.

The claims from Labour's right, and now being made by the present Tory government, that the EEC can be "reformed from within" are also empty. Negotiating strength is ultimately decided by economic power, and Britain has slipped to the bottom of the Euro-league.

Thatcher, for instance, trumpeted her victory in gaining a reduction of the UK's EEC budget contribution. But this is being more than

paid for by the rises her agriculture minister accepted for EEC food prices.

There can be no solution to the problems of British capitalism within the EEC. But it will find no solutions outside, either.

The NEC's statement itself accepts that "withdrawal from the EEC will not solve all of Britain's economic and industrial problems." But we must go further.

Over 40% of Britain's trade is with EEC countries. The location of industry, transport, finance and commerce have all been increasingly geared towards the EEC.

For British capitalism withdrawal now would have devastating consequences. This, in turn, would have enormous repercussions for a Labour government. Labour would be attempting to implement the radical reforms outlined still in "the socialist alternative", but would be trying to work within the framework of a diseased capitalism.

Today a majority of workers would almost certainly favour withdrawal from the EEC, the course forcefully advocated by the NEC statement. The labour movement, however, must carefully examine the consequences of withdrawal.

What is the argument of the statement?

The NEC document argues that the EEC has not only worsened Britain's economic position, burdening the British economy with enormous budget contributions (£3,000 m net over 5 years) in return for limited advantages, but that the EEC is also a major obstacle to the implementation of socialist policies in Britain.

The document seems to attribute an enormous weight

and solidity to EEC laws and institutions: the NEC apparently takes them much more seriously than the national capitalists, who have little veneration for "supranational" bodies.

The EEC is essentially a glorified customs union or free trade zone. It was established on the basis of a post-war boom, with its unprecedented expansion of production and especially trade.

But whenever there have been serious differences over trade, production, or the money system, the member states have invariably reverted to their own national capitalist interests. This has particularly been so over agriculture, from French objections to cheap Italian wines to the current British objections to cheap French poultry.

A "siege economy"

The long post-war boom has now exhausted itself. In the period of general decline and crisis which we have now entered, the international rivalry and trend towards protectionism will also reveal itself in "beggar thy neighbour" policies within the Common Market.

In the event of new, deeper slumps, and even periods of limited upswing, in which rival states compete for markets, the EEC will be shattered.

The document rejects "both...the philosophy of the free market economy and of the supra-national state that is so central to the Treaty of Rome". But the very fact

that it is based on the "free market economy", which means essentially on rival national states, rules out the development of a "supranational state".

In relation to this, the statement's scrupulous regard for the legality of withdrawal shows an exaggerated concern for formalities, to say the least. Incidentally, the "de-entry" steps proposed would embroil a Labour government in months, if not years, of complex, obscure legislation.

The statement also argues that withdrawal is necessary because of the EEC's "restraint on determining our own economic policy, the loss of sovereignty, the undermining of our democratic processes..."

The EEC, it is true, has spawned an enormously expensive, cumbersome, and parasitic bureaucracy, which appalls ordinary people. But are the main obstacles to socialist policies really located in Brussels, Strasbourg, and other EEC centres?

The ranks of the labour movement have not lost sight of the fact that the real opposition to radical reforms, let alone thoroughgoing socialist policies, will come from much nearer at home: from the banks and financial institutions in the City of London, from the millionaires who run the big monopolies—in short, from Britain's own ruling class, which also controls the apparatus of the civil service, the army, the judiciary, and the police.

The capitalists would, of course, combine with their European cohorts, using among other things the EEC bodies to try to block and undermine a Labour government. But the main enemy is

at home.

Throughout, the statement hammers away at the idea that it is the EEC which is the main limitation to the implementation of socialist policies. In doing so, it loses sight of the real issue: it is the confines of this rotten capitalist framework which are the fundamental limitation as far as radical reforms and socialist policies are concerned.

The policies proposed in the document, in line with "the Socialist Alternative", would not break through these limitations.

The measures mentioned—price controls, selected aid to industry, control of capital investment and overseas investment—make it clear that the majority of the banks, finance institutions, and the big monopolies would remain in the hands of big business.

Production cannot be planned while the "commanding heights" remain in private hands. Nor can trade be planned.

The document talks of "planned trade" and "managed trade". It argues that an expansion of the British economy, through the alternative economic strategy, would provide an increased market. This, it says, would create favourable conditions for re-negotiating trade patterns with the present EEC states and establishing new trade with non-EEC countries, including under-developed countries.

The document, however, does not really come to grips with the catastrophic scale of Britain's industrial decline.

The EEC has meant "the development of a massive deficit in our balance of trade in manufactured goods with the EEC, which has inflicted,

NO TO BOSSES CLUB!

Fight for a workers' Europe!

By Lynn
Walsh

and is inflicting, immense and lasting damage on British industry" (p.64).

This deficit is indeed a burning indictment of British capitalism's failure to invest and modernise.

Britain's external deficits, however, cannot be blamed entirely on the EEC. In 1979/80 the UK's biggest trading deficit was with North America, £1,700 million. The UK also had a small trade deficit with the non-EEC countries of Western Europe.

On the other hand, while the UK has a deficit in manufactured goods with the EEC, last year it managed to turn the previous year's overall deficit of £26,000 million into a surplus of £700 million, largely through the net export (worth £2,651 million) of petroleum and petroleum products.

In some key industries, moreover, the UK had significant trade surplus; for instance, £175 million in chemicals and related products, and a £50 million surplus in textiles.

Without tariff-free access to the EEC market, such surpluses would undoubtedly change into deficits. Would markets in the EEC be replaced by equivalent or even larger markets elsewhere, as the document suggests?

On the basis of big business, with an extremely poor rate of profit and consequently chronic underinvestment in new processes and techniques, this is ruled out.

If a Labour government were to erect a tariff wall around the UK economy, whether by general import controls or selective import controls in various forms, there would be inevitably retaliation, both from Britain's former EEC partners and from capitalist rivals throughout the world.

The idea that Britain's rivals on the world market would temporarily tolerate British tariffs for the sake of expansion, with the promise of British markets for them at a later stage—even assuming that the policies proposed would produce this expansion—is utopian thinking.

In reality, the document is proposing that with EEC withdrawal Britain should be transformed into a "siege economy". British capitalism would be managed and revived by a Labour government being protective walls.

Such a strategy, however, would rebound on the work-

CONTINUED ON
PAGE FOURTEEN

**Whitehawk Branch,
Kemptown Labour Party**

welcomes all delegates to Brighton
No bans and proscriptions
No witch-hunt of 'Militant'

Supporters and readers of 'Militant' in
Brighton Kemp Town, Brighton Pavilion
and Hove Labour Parties greet Labour
Party Conference.

Rod Fitch
Andrès
Maureen Boyd
Jeff Mesic
Sandy Sebbage
Keith Newell
Beth Miller
Briony Hassett
Jim Watson
Mike Akehurst
Kate Packham
Geoff Jones
Ann Jones
Bill North
Dudley Edwards
Clive Walder
Peter Lindey
Ray Apps
Dave Horne
Jean Horne
Alex Ingram
Ernie King
Jan King
Debbie Wilde
J. Grant
Eddie Shaw
Adrian John

Alan Huyton
Garry Hammond
Les Hammond
Colin Baker
Norman Page
Betty Hatchard
John Scrase
Neil Farrow
Nicky Giles
Charlie Monaghan
Mr & Mrs Doug Wootton
Steve Rabson
Trevor Hopper
Debbie Wilde
Paul Moran
Bob Skelton
Gwenda Beisham
Andy Durr
Colin Avey
P. Gorman
Fay Gellis
Joe Gellis
Jackie Robson
Ian Nicholls
Eric Nicholls
Angela Akehurst

**Forward to a fully democratic and
socialist Labour Party!!!**

Fraternal greetings
to our comrades
and delegates
attending the
Labour conference
from
ROTTINGDEAN
ward, Brighton.

Drumoyne Labour
Party
SUPPORT BENN!
SMASH THE
TORIES!
LABOUR TO
POWER ON A
SOCIALIST
PROGRAMME!

HAVANT AND
WATERLOO greet
the delegates who
have come to con-
ference to fight for
socialism

Cammell Laird
'Militant' sup-
porters say 'Labour
to power on a
socialist programme'

**LITTLEHAMPTON LABOUR PARTY
calls for the return of a Labour
government committed to bold
socialist policies and the
implementation of Clause IV of the
Labour Party constitution**

LITTLEHAMPTON LPYS
send fraternal greetings to all
delegates and calls on conference
to adopt socialist policies—turn
despair into hope for today's
youth

LITTLEHAMPTON TGWU
BRANCH 1/874
sends fraternal greetings
to delegates. "For
workers' unity and
socialism"

**LIVERPOOL
DISTRICT LABOUR
PARTY**

Sends fraternal
greetings to
conference

Fraternal greetings
to delegates 1981
Labour Party
conference from
CHILDWALL
WARD.
LIVERPOOL

Fraternal greetings to all
delegates to 80th annual
conference of the Labour
Party from
Wavertree CLP, Liverpool

The new WEM LPYS extends
fraternal greetings to
all comrades in the labour
and trade union movement

**Greetings for
LABOUR PARTY
CONFERENCE 81**

Fraternal greetings
to all sisters and
brothers. Forward
to workers' unity
and socialism.
AUEW ECCLESHILL
No. 4 BRADFORD



Vote Benn for
Deputy Leader.
Tories out. Fight
for socialism!
Coventry South
East CLP.
Dave Nellist,
Chairman.
Mohammed Iqbal,
Secretary.
30 Coundon Road,
Coventry.

For a fighting
leadership!
MPs on workers'
wages!
Coventry South
East LPYS.

Kick the
Tories out!
24 hour
general strike!
Coventry South
West LPYS.

Socialist greetings
to Labour's
conference from
'Militant' readers
at:-
Coventry City
Council, Building
Services Division.
British Leyland,
Self Changing
Gears.
Coventry Careers
Centre.
Torrington's,
U.J. Division.
West Midlands
Probation Service.
Workers of the
world unite!

For a socialist
Labour Party,
For a mass youth
section!
Nuneaton and
Bedworth LPYS.

End cheap labour!
Unions organise
YOPs now!
Coventry North
West LPYS

**Fraternal greetings to
conference from all
comrades in VALLEY
WARD WAVERTREE**

A socialist programme based on
conference decisions is the only
way forward to return a Labour
government at the next election
and so return the country to sanity
after years of Tory mis-rule
**Labour to power on a
socialist programme**

No compromise—
No careerists
Employment—not bombs
People—not figures on
balance sheets

**NETHERLEY WARD,
GARSTON CLP,
LIVERPOOL**

sends fraternal greetings
to all socialist delegates at
the Labour party
conference
TONY BENN FOR DEPUTY
LEADER AND SOCIALIST
POLICIES FOR THE
LABOUR PARTY

**BOOTLE KIRKBY
ST HELENS
SOUTHPORT
and HUYTON
LPYS**

Militant supporters
send fraternal
greetings to all
delegates attending
1981 Labour Party
conference

Fraternal greetings to all socialists
at Labour's 1981 conference.
Newport, West Wight, Ryde LP
branches—West Wight & IW
LPYS.

Please support Isle of Wight CLP
resolution and amendment on
youth unemployment & economy.

Canvey Island and Benfleet
readers say:
Reds flood South East
Essex. SDs and Tories
watch out—socialist ideas
spreading!

Leicester South
LPYS sends
socialist greetings
to all delegates
and visitors.
Forward
to socialism.

**Socialist
Greetings from
Bootle CLP**

LABOUR PARTY

CONFERENCE 81

BOLD SOCIALIST CHANGE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE SEVEN

tant industrial groups.

But already, only 100 days into office, the familiar attempt to reassure the industrialists is in full swing. *The Financial Times* reported (8 September 1981):

"The French government has embarked on a campaign to soothe employers' fears over a socialist administration and to try to urge industry to boost investment... The prime minister...sought to reassure employers on two accounts.

"There was no question, he said, of interfering with the decision-making powers of the heads of companies or imposing on them a veto over dismissals. Trade unions have been claiming consultative powers over both management and dismissals that have frightened employers.

"He also said that it was necessary to halt the rise in social security costs payable by industry...

"M Francois Ceyrac, head of the employers' federation, queried last week some of the contradictions in the government's policy. How was it possible, he asked, both to woo industry and to saddle it with new taxes, higher social security charges, restrictions

on employers' powers and now nationalisation?"

The previous week the *Financial Times* reported that the Minister of the Economy was resisting union demands for a freezing of some consumer prices. The likelihood is of inflation of 18% this year, and there is strong pressure to devalue against the D-Mark to restore French competitiveness (i.e. profitability).

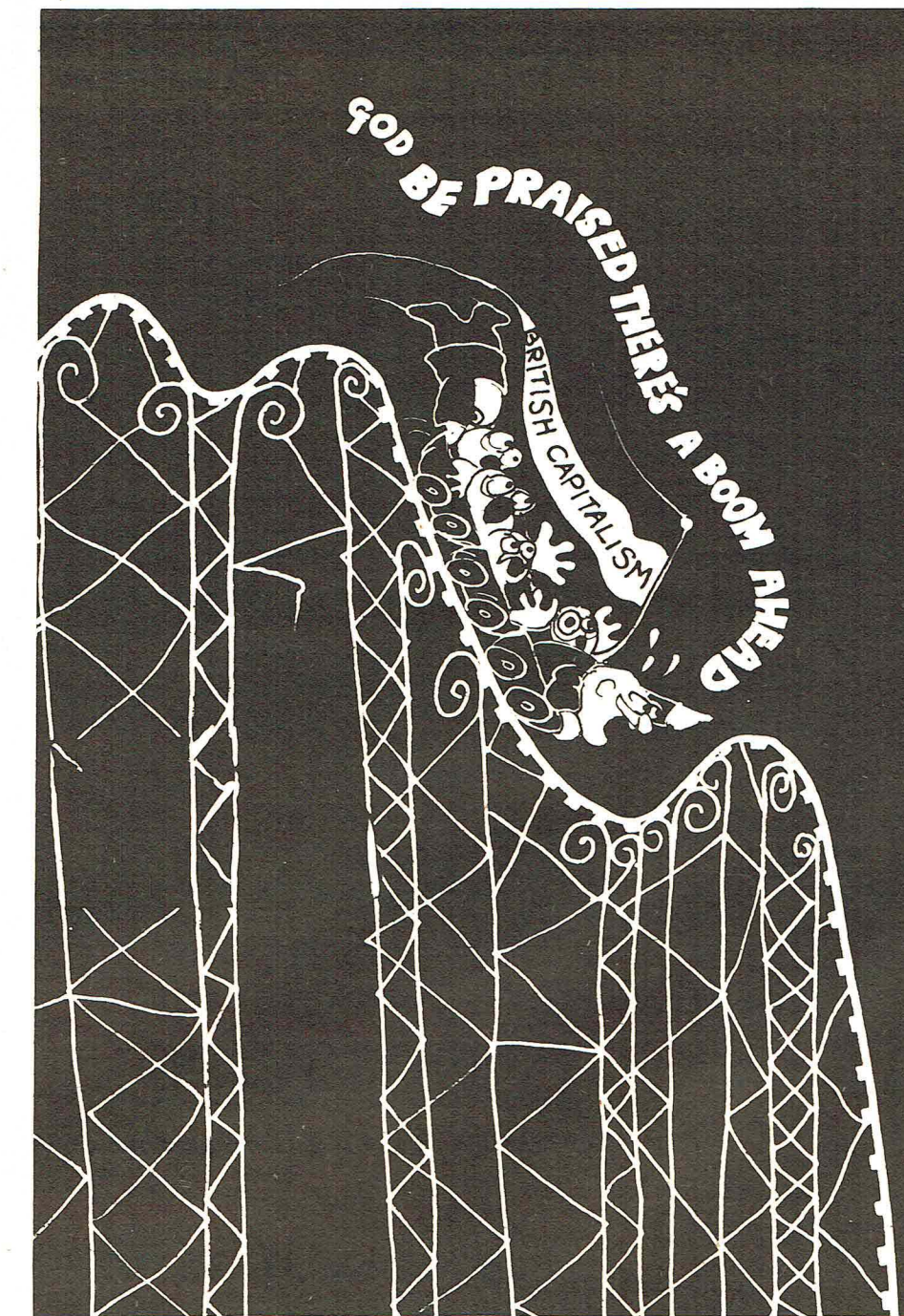
Despite the government's expansionary programmes, growth is expected to be only 3¼% next year, which would certainly not prevent unemployment staying above the 2 million mark.

If Mitterand has these problems in implementing his programme, despite his huge popular support and parliamentary majority, imagine the situation faced by the next Labour government with a crisis even more severe than in France.

British Business (4 September 1981) reported that the rate of profit was twice as high in France as in Britain according to the most recent figures.

The NEC's Socialist Alternative warns that it would be dishonest to pretend that full employment could be quickly restored.

Yet the post-war experience to which they refer was that in two years, between 1945 and 1947, 2½



million jobs were created outside the armed forces, and unemployment in 1947 was less than 2% despite the demobilisation. Investment rose from 5% to 16% of total production, and consumption per head of the population rose by 13%, as the burden of military expenditure was reduced.

A crucial difference between then and now, however, is that profits were high in

1945—12% of domestic product. So the employers were quite ready to raise production and boost investment.

With profits a fraction of that level, and their position threatened by price controls, future nationalisation, etc. there is no way the next Labour government could get the same response whilst the economy remains dominated by private capital.

Yet just as rapid an expansion is needed now.

ion is needed now.

The document does state clearly that it believes that common ownership should be substituted for private ownership of the means of production. But this is said to be a "long-term goal".

It cannot be relegated to the misty future in this way.

The NEC says: "Transformation of the economy in a socialist direction is not (our emphasis) to be postponed

until we have achieved a reconstruction of industry."

But not even the reforms proposed in the document will be implemented in a lasting way within the rotten framework of capitalism. They could be achieved only through a fundamental socialist transformation, not through 'half-way' measures "in a socialist direction."

To give reality to the social improvements outlined, therefore, the next Labour government must link them to a programme for the nationalisation of the banks, finance houses, and the 200 or so big monopolies which dominate the economy.

Nationalisation should not be with exorbitant compensation, as in the past, but minimum compensation on the basis of proven need. If the financiers and big investors are incapable of working and can prove they are hard up, they could be paid decent social security under a socialist government.

Nationalised industry should not be run by massive bureaucracies composed of ex-owners, ex-private managers, retired civil servants and super-annuated politicians, as they have been up until now.

Industry should be run under democratic workers' control and management, under boards composed of a third from trade unions in the industry, a third from the TUC, and a third from the government.

Then there could be a socialist plan of production. Under a plan, there would be an enormous growth of production, science and technique, creating the conditions for rapid cuts in the working day and working year, and for immeasurable improvements in workers' living standards.

Without a socialist plan, the irreversible decline of British industry will continue, with untold suffering for working people.

Transformation of the economy cannot be postponed. But transformation is possible only through the working class being mobilised to implement thorough-going socialist measures.

EEC—No to bosses club

CONTINUED FROM PAGE TWELVE

ing class. Far from reviving British capitalism and stimulating massive new investment, protectionism would feather-bed the backwardness of British big business. A Labour government, by raising tariff walls, would be giving the backward British capitalists a free hand to exploit the working class of Britain, pushing up domestic prices, pushing down wages, allowing them to reap the maximum profit from clapped-out and antiquated plant and machinery.

This is a completely nationalistic approach, which conflicts with the internationalist outlook of the working class. The NEC statement makes several attempts to refute this criticism, claiming that the policies proposed are internationalist, not "Little England" solutions.

But what in practice does the document propose? It says a Labour government would work for expansionist policies, in line with their domestic strategy, through bodies such as the OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and

Development), EFTA (the EEC's rival European trading zone), and the United Nations Commission on Europe, which supposedly involves policy planning between both Western and Eastern Europe.

It also suggests that there would be more trade with the under-developed countries of the "Third World".

These institutions are all based on existing capitalist states, or in the UN case capitalist and Stalinist states. Inevitably, they reflect the approach and also the rivalries and conflicts of the different national states.

How can it be possible to develop "socialist" policies through bodies set up by the capitalist class for their own purposes? How could trade be developed with the under-developed countries, when the Third World is more than ever exploited and dominated by the Imperialist powers and their multi-national corporations?

Such an approach is not genuine internationalism based on the common class interests of the working class and exploited peasantry throughout the world.

When British big business, the Tories and their shadows

within the labour movement proposed entry into the EEC, the "Militant" warned that the Common Market was a bosses' club which would not solve the problems of British capitalism and would place additional burdens on the working class.

But our opposition had nothing in common with the nationalistic approach adopted by some on the left, like the Communist Party and some of the "Tribune" left who found themselves sharing platforms with right-wing Tories and other Little Englanders.

Socialist united states of Europe

We opposed EEC entry on the basis of a call for the European labour movement to come together to discuss a campaign for a Socialist United States of Europe. Only such a federation, based on socialist democracy and plan-

ned production in Britain and the other European states, with the perspective of world socialist planning, could provide an internationalist way forward for the working class.

As a first step towards realising this, the next Labour government should mobilise the working class behind a programme for the socialist transformation of Britain.

The NEC statement rightly points out that international co-operation with the labour movement of other countries does not depend on the EEC or any other capitalist institutions. The links should be forged between the workers' organisations themselves, on a class basis.

Ultimately effective international unity must be forged on the basis of a clear socialist programme.

The workers of Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, and other countries of Europe all face similar problems. The relative pace of events in different countries cannot be predicted accurately.

But it is clear that the workers of all the European states all have a common interest in the socialist transformation of society.

Socialism or nuclear war



CONTINUED FROM PAGE NINE

tions which ensure the carrying out of agreements.

Moreover, such rights and conditions are never guaranteed on the basis of capitalism. In the final analysis, the working class will have to change society in order to guarantee its past conquests, never mind substantially improve its

situation.

No trust should be placed in lying capitalist politicians or the gangsters who head the Russian state.

Lenin described the idea that the capitalists could be persuaded to "disarm" as a "pernicious fairy tale". He pointed out that unless the first world war was followed by a series of successful socialist revolutions it would be followed by a second, third world war etc. until mankind was destroyed.

The Labour Party should point out to those who have been moved into action by the threat of nuclear annihilation that the only way the working class and its organisations can avoid this nightmare is through the socialist transformation of society.

The capitalists and the Stalinist bureaucracy will never voluntarily "disarm".

Control over arms and of society as a whole will have to be taken out of their hands, through the establishment of a world socialist federation.

Before the nuclear age the alternative before mankind was "socialism or barbarism". Now the issue is socialism or nuclear annihilation!

INDIA - STRUGGLE FOR TRADE UNION RIGHTS

"The conditions of the workers in the area where I come from are very bad. Minimum wages are 512 Rupees (£30.72) per month for a 48-hour week. The workers are harassed by the officials who run the state-owned mines and cheated of wages and promotion. Rules for the benefit of the workers exist only on paper.

Inflation is 30%. Rising

Nathu Lal Pandey, General Secretary of the Madhya-Pradesh Coal Miners' organisation spoke to a Militant reporter.

prices, low wages and numberless unemployment—these are the main problems of the workers.

The officials of INTUC, the pro-government trade union, join management in oppressing the workers. They support Mrs Gandhi in every way, even in banning strikes. They suck the blood of the downtrodden people. They try to force the workers to join their union. Those who refuse are threatened with victimisation and even suspension.

Members of my union are harassed and transferred, while INTUC members get preference from management.

Despite all this my union has the support of 12 to 15 thousand workers out of 35,000 workers in the area. We have the respect of the workers because we have fought for their interests in the past.

We led big strikes in 1968 (52 days) and 1972 (67 days). In October 1980 we were on strike for eight days, and again in April this year.

The April strike demanded an end to corruption and favouritism by management and INTUC bureaucrats in providing jobs. More than 300 unemployed youth and workers were arrested, including myself.

The struggle was partly successful—some people got regular jobs, but others were victimised.

I was in prison from 16 April to the beginning of June on charges of instigating a strike and preparing riots. Eventually, after protests by the workers and a hunger strike by Yamuna Prasad Shastri, the President of my union, I was released.

The government of Mrs Gandhi is an instrument of the capitalist class and also friendly to the USSR. It is opposed to the trade union movement, it doesn't want free trade unionism. That is why it has now banned strikes.

But we are going to struggle against the new

laws. We are not demoralised.

I came to Europe to attend the ICFTU rally in Spain from 22 to 29 August. I, and other comrades, explained about the repressive conditions facing trade unions in India and about Mrs Gandhi's 'National Security Act' by which the government can arrest any person for six months without a trial.

The INTUC bureaucrats at the rally made it clear that they have nothing to do with free trade unionism, they are loyal only to Mrs Gandhi.

During discussions of vital issues such as youth unemployment and international solidarity, they spent their time drinking.

They were drinking wine all night, while villages in India cannot even get enough water. They spoke up only to shout "Long live Mrs Gandhi," and threatened my comrades and myself that they would have us sent to jail when we return to India.

I am going back to India soon. The Indian workers' movement needs a real socialist leadership and proper training of cadres. We are struggling on a number of fronts—against the employers, against the government, against so-called trade union leaders who think trade unionism is a business.

We will continue fighting for free trade unionism and socialism."

USA - Labour on the march



'Labour Day' march in New York. Reagan wasn't invited.

On Monday 7 September, organised labour held its first Labour Day marches in 13 years. Marches took place from coast to coast. In New York the parade lasted for seven hours!

As usual, as in England, the police count was exactly half the real number that took part. But no-one can tell me that it takes 100,000 people 7 hours to cover the route they took.

The early morning TV count was that 200,000 were collecting in the side streets prior to entering Fifth Avenue for the parade.

The slogans carried by the workers on the march showed their militancy. PATCO [the striking air traffic controllers' union] and the danger to the trade union movement was upper-

From Betty Traun in New York

most in their minds. Reagan was not invited to the demonstration—a departure from past custom reflecting the mood of the workers.

When 4,000 PATCO workers marched by, a roar of 'PATCO PATCO', 'Reagon No, PATCO Yes!' resounded again and again throughout the entire march. They were the heroes of the celebration, and it must have been a real shot in the arm for them in this time of trial and tribulation.

Mayor Kock, who broke the transit workers' strike last year, inserted himself into the parade and was soundly booed all along Fifth Avenue. The labour movement is alive and well and kicking and will come

back swinging.

It was a beautiful 7-hour parade and it was obvious that the workers felt proud of their identity as workers. As each float went by the workers on it demonstrated their skill in the crafts which keep this city going.

The smelters, the workers who keep the lights of New York blazing, the machine workers, the arts, the crane operators, the entire life of the city was portrayed up there on those floats, and it was awesome to the public who watched them. You saw there that nothing could run without those hands of the workers.

Lane Kirkland, head of the AFL-CIO, told reporters not to mention the name of the President to him, he'd had it with Reagan. Let's see whether this militancy continues in the labour bureaucracy as the struggle sharpens.

Britain/South Africa — CALL FOR WORKER-TO-WORKER LINKS

By a Militant reporter

"We didn't have any money either," was the response of workers when a speaker of the South African Labour Education Project (SALEP), explained the title of SALEP's latest publication 'Asinamali' ('Zulu for 'we have no money') to shop stewards' meetings during a tour of the North East.

The tour, arranged on the initiative of Newcastle Trades Council, was to publicise the black workers' struggle in South Africa. Although in 1980, 175,000 days were lost due to industrial action and this figure is almost certain to be exceeded this year, there has been relative silence from the media about this aspect of the struggle.

The discussions were permeated with the spirit of workers' internationalism and an understanding that the question of apartheid is not a question of abstract morality—but is a class issue. The apartheid system provides the bosses with a cheap labour force which ensures a good return on their investments. This is why British companies have £7,000 million invested in South Africa.

This understanding was clearly shown in a discussion with shop stewards at Swan

Hunters shipyards on the Tyne. The stewards raised some very practical questions, e.g.: "What forms of industrial action are used?" "What links are there between black and white workers?" "How much overtime is worked and at what rates?"

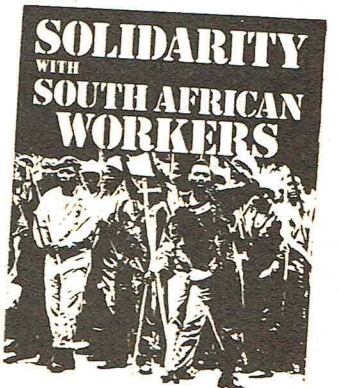
Suggestions were offered on how to take the workers' struggle further. Comparisons were made between what is happening in South Africa and what the Tories and big business would like to see in Britain.

One steward made the comment that "if the labour movement didn't watch out there would be a Botha here."

The meeting at Swans finished with the chairman of the meeting presenting the South African comrade with a gold tie pin—which he had received from a Japanese trade unionist a few years earlier, as a symbol of workers internationalism.

At a meeting with the Convenor of C.A. Parsons (part of Northern Engineering Industries) it was explained that workers in South Africa were getting only £20 per week for doing the same type of jobs being done on Tyneside. It is little wonder that NEI take advantage of the cheap labour in South Africa while laying off workers on Tyneside, and has been exporting its older machines to South Africa where it can still be run at a profit.

A special appeal was made by SALEP for finance to print Asinamali in Xhosa and Zulu, two of the main African languages in South Africa. Donations of £20 and £30 were made by Austin and Pickersgill and Vickers shop stewards respectively, with promises to raise the question of dona-



tions on their full commitments.

The tour once again underlined the fact that workers in different countries have more in common with each other than with the bosses of their own countries, and that the old labour movement slogan "an injury to one is an injury to all" applies not just to workers in the same factory but internationally. Many shop stewards saw the need for direct links between trade unionists in Britain and South Africa as a practical means of translating common interests into common struggle.

government cuts of over £1 million.

Poly students should join the Polytechnic Labour Club and the local LPYS. Only by students joining the fight in the labour movement for democratic control over Labour Councillors and MPs, and by arguing for socialist policies to meet the Tories head-on can the interests of students be defended.

By Dave Curtis
(Teesside Poly Labour Club)



Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

SELL MILITANT

In Wythenshawe we have been taking full advantage of the unemployment of our YS members to spread our ideas.

Wythenshawe is one of the largest council estates in Europe and therefore a vast area ripe for widespread activity and recruiting.

On the morning of September 8th in just 35 minutes we sold 15 'Militants'. We retired for lunch flushed with this response. We returned in the afternoon and four of us sold a staggering 40 copies of 'Socialist Youth'. Needless to say we were absolutely delighted!

Talking to people and selling papers in the shopping centres, dole queues and trading estates we have

found to be an enormously rewarding and successful task.

Many YS members up and down the country are unemployed and therefore should walk to their nearest shopping centre or dole queue and spread our ideas. We, in Wythenshawe YS are determined to increase our order, increase our members, increase our credibility and thereby increase the prospect of the people of Wythenshawe to vote for and be convinced of the merits of socialism.

By Michael Lee
Paul Quigley
Chris Hadfield
Andy Holmes
Martin Lee



State clamps down

Dear Comrades

If there was ever any doubt of the way in which the forces of the state are quick to clamp down on anti-establishment actions in a hysterical manner, then the two recent cases of Marcus Sarjeant and the unemployed youth who threw a chocolate egg at Margaret Thatcher's car erase that doubt.

In the first case, whilst obviously assassination is unacceptable, there is little indication that Sarjeant's was a serious attempt. If he had wanted to he would have at the very least obtained an air-pistol—certainly the last thing he would have fired would have

been blanks.

The state, in giving Sarjeant five years [under a century old Treason Act] is only just refraining from putting him in the Tower and having him hung, drawn and quartered!

In the second case the youth in question was given a punishing three months in one of Thatcher's "hard labour" detention centres for merely dirtying her chauffeured limousine at one of her hypocritical grand openings of capital-intensive factories. Certainly these two cases of hysterical state reaction are to be borne in mind by those in the labour movement seeking a socialist transformation of society.

Yours fraternally
Ian Shaw
Maidstone LPYS

YS stop BM attack

Dear Comrades

For two consecutive weeks youths, claiming to be British Movement members, came to our YS meetings. While not being violent they disrupted the discussions and their pressure made us unable to discuss forthcoming events.

We were then told that they planned to attack the Labour Hall during our next meeting and injure our members. We were able to call upon the support of the Labour Party and nearby branches of the YS. We vastly outnumbered the dozen or so skinheads who then called off their attack.

Several weeks later a BM march was held in Southend but, in spite of the Peterborough march arranged for that day being banned, the Essex Police did not ban this march.

Youths unconnected with any political groups, attacked the march and there was much violence which would have been averted had the police taken notice of the general views of the public.

The British Movement has few genuine supporters and fewer still who actually understand the history and politics of the Nazi movement. Most are just unemployed youngsters or those discontented with school; many are under sixteen. They are from working class backgrounds and, to them, it is a cause through which they can channel the resentment they feel against the system.

In many ways we could blame ourselves for not recruiting these youth to the socialist alternative, leaving them to fall into the Nazis' hands.

However, the worst offender is our capitalist society; with its contempt of the working class, and unemployment, bad housing and education cuts which it produces. It provides a breeding ground for fascism. This should give us all the more incentive to smash the capitalist class system and establish a socialist society.

Yours fraternally
Mandy Thorley
Southend LPYS

A wrong demand?

Comrades

While comrade Brian Ingham is to be complimented on his article "a socialist strategy to save the pits" ('Militant' 555), there is one aspect which I feel rather confusing.

If miners in Britain were to support the demand for import controls, he writes, "the idea will be spread that British miners are trying to shut foreign mining companies out of established British markets, thus threatening the jobs of foreign miners". As a result "miners abroad will be urged to retaliate..."—i.e. international solidarity would be jeopardised. All this makes sense.

However, the situation is solidary members show the enthusiastic and socialist mood of the movement:

"There are so many books I want to read now. A year ago many of these books were hard to get, and you could get into real trouble if you were caught with them. But now there's no trouble."

"People are particularly interested in the details of the 1939 Nazi-Soviet pact. At school they only tell us that the Russians came to fight the Germans as they captured Polish soil. No men-

from the problem of which nation we try to equal in the amount we pay in subsidies (they all give varying amounts), subsidies also embody a threat to the jobs of our brothers and sisters in other nations. Just as miners in other countries would see that British import controls would threaten their livelihoods, it would be unlikely that they wouldn't view increased British coal subsidies in a similar light.

With increased subsidies on British coal the NCB would be able to export at lower prices thereby threatening the markets of foreign firms (and therefore jobs). Moreover, if British coal is to be heavily subsidised, British coal consumers (e.g. BSC) would no longer wish to import coal which would then be relatively more expensive. Thus mining jobs in nations which once exported coal to Britain would be threatened. Subsidies would thus also enable "The idea (to) be spread that British miners are trying to shut (out) foreign mining companies."

In short, comrades, isn't the demand for increased coal subsidies just as dangerous for workers as the demand for import controls?

Fraternally
Stephen Foster
Wem-Whitchurch-
Shawbury Labour Party

Letter from America

Dear Comrades

I have been hearing a lot about the riots in England over here. The American media has been giving extensive coverage to those "acts of hooliganism," although they do point out, quite correctly, that they are not racial riots but due to high unemployment, police harassment, etc.

America, while having the capacity to stay afloat for a longer period, is following the same path as Britain. There is high unemployment here, especially amongst the minorities, but with little social welfare—even that is being withdrawn now.

I stayed for a couple of days in New York and there are people that sleep at night on the same streets as the big banks—this is the richest country in the world!

This place is very conservative in its attitudes. Talk about 'Soviet indoctrination' of its children—the kids here have American patriotism drummed into them right from day one. The

stories here are the same as

in England; demands for import controls—stop the Japanese bogeyman. Take the American car industry for example. Like all the lies about lazy BL workers similar lies are told about the American workers. It just shows the manner in which the media can be used to whip up a frenzy against certain sections of the working class.

Here, public employees (those paid by the Federal Government) are forbidden to strike. But recently, the postal workers nearly went on strike—and they would have defied the law! Right now, there is the Air Traffic Controllers' strike—and this is illegal too.

The TV stations in the USA have 'editorial opinions' after the major evening news. In one of these 'opinions', the guy had the classic right-wing attitude towards the strikers: "If you don't like the work, you are free to leave."

It is a very important battle for if the controllers are successful, it would make a major breakthrough. Either way, this strike will be a milestone in the American labor movement.

From a worker
in Colorado, USA.

Whose side is Schmidt on?

Dear Comrades

Of all the nonsense, rubbish and media propaganda concerning the French presidential elections, one item angered me—Schmidt, the leader of the German Socialist Party, was openly canvassing for the return of the reactionary Giscard to the Elysee Palace against the socialist Mitterand!

This was so that German capitalism could continue to exploit the Common Market along with the French capitalists. Now it is speculated that Schmidt will attempt to reach 'an understanding' with the reactionary Thatcher to do the same, presumably at the expense of the French workers and poor farmers.

The British Labour Party should pledge itself to withdraw from the bosses' club for the Enrichment of European Capitalists and appeal, over the heads of the parliamentary leaders to the rank and file of the European workers' parties and trade unions for a united socialist movement: for a united socialist Europe based on the abolition of capitalism and the international solidarity of the working class.

Yours fraternally
Dave Brown
Bridlington LPYS and
USDW

Campaign for NALGO affiliation to the Labour Party

Dear Comrades,

The decision taken at this year's Conference of NALGO to ballot the membership on the question of affiliation to the Labour Party marks a watershed in the history of our union.

At a time when our members' jobs, living standards and the services they provide are under direct Tory attack, this issue is one of paramount importance, not only to NALGO, but also to the labour and trade union movement and working people in general.

Over the past period, NALGO has played a significant role in organising and participating in, demonstrations of opposition to the government's policies. Our Union has been at the forefront of many struggles, both local and national, and is quite clearly looking for a political expression to compliment its increasing industrial strength.

The Campaign for NALGO Affiliation to the Labour Party was formed in 1976, at a time when a Labour government was in power. The CNALP is a national body representing many NALGO members who are also members of the Labour Party. Our main policy, which was adopted at the 1976 Conference inaugural meeting is to "secure at the earliest possible date the affiliation of NALGO to the Labour Party."

Since the decision was taken to ballot the membership, organisational meetings have been held in the twelve District Councils

of the Union and also a national delegate conference was held recently in Liverpool. This meeting was addressed by Eric Heffer MP, on behalf of the NEC of the Labour Party. The national officers, who are all Labour Party members have met with Ron Hayward, the General Secretary of the Party, and David Hughes, the National Agent, and they have given a clear commitment to support our activities in campaigning for a 'Yes' vote.

We seek through the pages of the 'Militant' the support of every GMC and every ward for our campaign. We intend producing literature relevant to every section of the Union and as many Party members will appreciate, NALGO has members not only concentrated in Council offices in the cities but also spread out through the different service industries, eg Gas Showrooms, Electricity Boards, Universities, throughout the country.

We are confident that with the organisational and financial backing of every GMC and ward, we can conduct a lively and enthusiastic campaign, which would result in the fourth largest trade union in the country taking its rightful place within the Labour Party.

If any of the 'Militant's' readers require further information concerning the campaign, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours fraternally,
David Churchley
National Treasurer,
CNALP

Womens rights

Dear Comrades

Thanks to Lesley Holt for an excellent article on 'Workers Unity for Womens Rights'. I was also glad to read about the Bootle Labour Party Womens section meeting. I feel it is important that we all understand and act on the fight for womens rights. It is no good merely 'expecting' that we will be equal in the fight.

Lesley so well explained why we are not equal as women; how lack of childcare facilities, burden of housework and the resulting lack of confidence make it difficult.

I am encouraged to hear NUPE and T&GWU have begun to organise special training courses for women. I would like to hear more information on such moves. Women must be given the opportunity to be militant rather than self sacrificing. Women need to organise separately in the party, as they know the problems all too well and can give the necessary support and encouragement to womens' issues.

This is realistic and hopeful and must be seen as positive by all sections. However, it is not an excuse for men not to educate themselves, but rather fight with us on womens rights issues. If we are all involved we will be stronger and truly equal in the socialist struggle to change society.

Yours fraternally
Wendy Madden
Shepton Mallet LP

Build

Militant

ads

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target 10 Oct	Target for year
Eastern	3808		4970	7100
East Midlands	2820		3850	5500
Hants & Dorset	2009		3640	5200
Humberside	1411		2450	3500
London East	3948		5320	7600
London West	2275		3360	4800
London South	3372		3850	5500
Manchester & Lancs	2387		4060	5800
Merseyside	2827		4620	6600
Northern	3212		6020	8600
Scotland East	1641		3080	4400
Scotland West	3077		5250	7500
Southern	4237		4970	7100
South West	1753		2450	3500
Wales East	1114		1820	2600
Wales West	1616		3220	4600
West Midlands	3812		6020	8600
Yorkshire	4020		6300	9000
Others	10337		8750	12500
Total received	59676		84,000	120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

NO RUSSIAN GOLD - ONLY WORKERS CASH

Contrary to certain rumours, not one ounce of 'Soviet gold'—now being recovered from the Barents Sea—will come into the Militant Fighting Fund!

We do need £24,000 by October 10th but every penny will have to come, as always, from workers and activists in the labour movement. We appeal to all those attending Labour's conference and all who want it to launch a new socialist offensive against the Tories, to make a special donation this week.

By Clare Doyle

Here is the latest 'score' for each area of Militant's supporters:-

South London's line is furthest along the chart with £478 left to raise by October 10th.

Southern follows closely with 85% of the ¼ year target achieved. To get that area's remaining £733, follow the examples of a £50 donation from a Brighton activist, £90 from a jumble sale there, £14 from M. Barry and £10 from Abingdon BIFU member, Ian Davidson.

Eastern region supporters—in Basildon, Southend, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Harlow and Peterborough—have shown how being constantly aware of Militant's need for cash has got them into 3rd place on our chart.

The extra pences they collect on top of the price of the Militant amounted to as

much as £16.12½ this week. Anne Pickersgill saved 90p bus fares by walking and other readers collected for cups of tea, coffee and refreshments.

£9.30 was donated at a Discussion Group on 'The State', £6.35 was 'proceeds from a stall at a Labour Party fete' and £7.60 was raised by a raffle at a 'People's Picnic'. All this added up to £92 in a week but more than 10 times that amount is still needed by October 10th!

£168 from East London this week includes an excellent donation of £25 from R. Allen, £2s from T. Polydorou, J. Ong, £1s from J. Jones (NALGO) and L. Thompson.

All these efforts still leave nearly £1,500 to raise in 2 weeks

East Midlands readers have to raise over £1,000 to reach their ¼ year target, even though they are in 5th place this week. Special thanks this week to A. Dudley (NUM, Markham Pit) for his £10, G. Bramall (Chesterfield LPYS and GMWU) for £1 and the Leicester NUHKW branch for their first donation.

The South West line stands still this week with £697 to go. West London needs £1,085 and many more readers to follow the example of K. Langley

(Brentford LPYS) who gave £13. 'Uxbridge trade unionists' gave us £4, R. Saunders (UCATT) £2, L. Stenson (Uxbridge CLP) £2 and from others we got smaller amounts which nevertheless all mount up!

This is proved by the £117 from all over Yorkshire this week:— Huddersfield, Batley, Dewsbury, Morley, Leeds, Barnsley (including 'bike ride' and 'Militant Tuck Shop!'), Sheffield (2 'fivers'), Doncaster (including V. Northacre's £10 sponsorship for someone's abstemiousness, and J&M Needham's £4).

But a massive £2,280 is needed to get back on target.

A similar amount must be raised in the whole of the West Midlands. This week we have had a donation of £2.40 from T. Walsh of Wolverhampton plus a few other contributions from that area and from Handsworth. The sources seem to have dried up during the campaign for the 19th demo against unemployment.

But now is the time to tap every organisation for cash to help Militant

Caerphilly readers are using the Militant's collectors cards. The £27 they sent this week included donations from M. Ballard (Blackwood), S. Davey (Senghnydd YS) and J. Cuthbert. Other parts of East Wales will have to follow suit to raise the next £700 in a matter of a couple of weeks!

Merseyside's line is at the same position on the chart as E. Wales but now needs contributions totalling £1,793 to reach the end! Their total this week?—£63.50—Wavertree (NGA supporters £6), St. helens LPYS (£2.50) and Crosby (S. Evans' social £55), for which many thanks.

Manchester (with Lancs.) and West Scotland came

THIS WEEK
£973

next in the 'League' with 59% of ¼ target reached.

The sums to raise in two weeks are enormous but every source must be tapped. Special thanks to Tracy Pandolfo for £1 from her 6th birthday money and the 10 CPSA members from Scotland who gave £26.90 from their 'back-pay'—one of them giving £10. Other CPSA members, please do likewise! Militant is with you in every battle—help build up our fighting capacity.

A dance in Driffield added £40 to Humberside's total but over £1,000 is needed to catch up! Nothing arrived this week from Hampshire or Dorset. Where is that badly needed £1,600 going to come from?

Northern and East Scotland are neck and neck on the chart but almost standing still! and West Wales has stopped completely! Between them they have nearly £6,000 to raise.

But if every reader displays the same spirit as those who have contributed this week it could be done. 20p is a drop in the ocean of Militant's expenditure but Craid Walsh, who is unemployed in Stockton, wanted to show in some way that he supported the ideas of the Militant.

If every reader gave a similar proportion of their 'disposable' income, we would go way over our target and build a paper worthy of the enormous tasks ahead.

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

BLACKPOOL Militant supporters limited draw. Prize £50.00 worth of books from World Books. Tickets 50p each. Send for yours quickly, before we sell out. All proceeds to 'Militant Fighting Fund'.
Tickets available from J. England, 7 Claremont Road, Blackpool. Draw to take place 10 November 1981.

HASTINGS CLP
We are in the process of selecting our Parliamentary candidate.

Applications please to:
The Secretary, Hastings CLP
25 Wellington Sq., Hastings
E. Sussex

Pleased to announce the marriage of Christine Bingham and Les Kuriata on Friday 25 September. United for Socialism.

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, 7.30pm, AUEW Hall, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool.

CANVEY ISLAND Militant Readers Meeting: 'Poland' Speaker: A recent visitor to Poland.

Wednesday 30 September 8.00pm, Labour Hall, Lionel Road, Canvey Island. ALL WELCOME!

Militant supporters record £1.00 'The Workers United'. Only a few copies left. Can't be repeated. A collectors item. Profit for F/F.

Ring Nick Brookes, Southampton 788965.

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: Dounans Centre, Aberfoyle. For further details contact: Francis 041-771 8961 or Jackie East Kilbride 23371

OUT NOW!

Import controls or socialist planning? New 'Militant' pamphlet. Price 25p (+ 15p p&p) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

Trotsky on the Communist Manifesto To-day

Leon Trotsky on 'The Communist Manifesto today'

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

MILITANT PAMPHLET "The Marxist theory of the state" by Ted Grant.

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Industrial Reports

Robb Caledon— OCCUPIED!

'Occupation' announces the sign on the gate of the Robb Caledon shipyard in Dundee.

By Pat Craven

After more than two years of meetings, negotiation and talks, the time has come for action. At 4.45pm on Friday September 18, the 150 hourly paid workers took over the yard, which British Shipbuilders had declared closed.

Technical staff and 35 apprentices will still be working in the yard but it is the workers who are now in control. Bob Barty, the yard convenor, explained how the occupation is being organised on a three shift system.

He confirmed they were receiving "a massive amount of support from as far south as Liverpool and as far north as Peterhead." The Labour Lord Provost of Dundee and the leader of the District Council were present as the occupation began. And the leaders of the famous Upper Clyde Shipbuilders 'work-in' of ten years ago have offered their support.

Bob stressed that they were "looking to keep the yard open and get work." Referring to the bid for the yard by Kestral Marine, a firm which produces equipment for the North Sea Oil Industry in an adjacent site, the workers opposed privatisation and at yard level had not been involved in any of the talks.

The Shipbuilding Negotiating Committee of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions

have advised all unions with members in the Caledon to make the workers' action official. One of them, the G&MWU, had already done so before the occupation even started.

In addition, all 70,000 workers in shipbuilding are banning overtime and will be staging a series of one day strikes in solidarity.

British Shipbuilders (BS) are refusing to make any concessions. They say all the workers have a job available for them at the other Robb Caledon Yard at Leith—60 miles away!

It is the workers refusal to accept transfers and voluntary redundancies, that lead BS to implementing compulsory redundancies, in contravention of the 1979 Blackpool agreement. The BS makes it quite clear that the Dundee Yard was selected for the axe; not only because of its so-called 'low-productivity', which the unions have proved to be a lie, but because of its record of militancy in defence of conditions and jobs.

The re-opening of the Robb Caledon as a shipyard is a demand that has to be won. Messages of support, deputations, visits by LPYS branches and other labour movement organisations and financial donations are all needed; send to Combined Shop Stewards Committee, Robb Caledon Shipyard, Stannergate, Dundee.

LIVERPOOL TYPISTS

The hardline attitude of the Liberal and Tory councillors in Liverpool towards the council's 400 striking NALGO typists is now poised to become a massive confrontation with all the council workers.

On Monday afternoon the council rejected a move by the Labour Group to open up immediate negotiations with NALGO, to secure a settlement of the 17 week dispute. They probably thought previous refusals of NALGO members to escalate the action meant the council could stick it out.

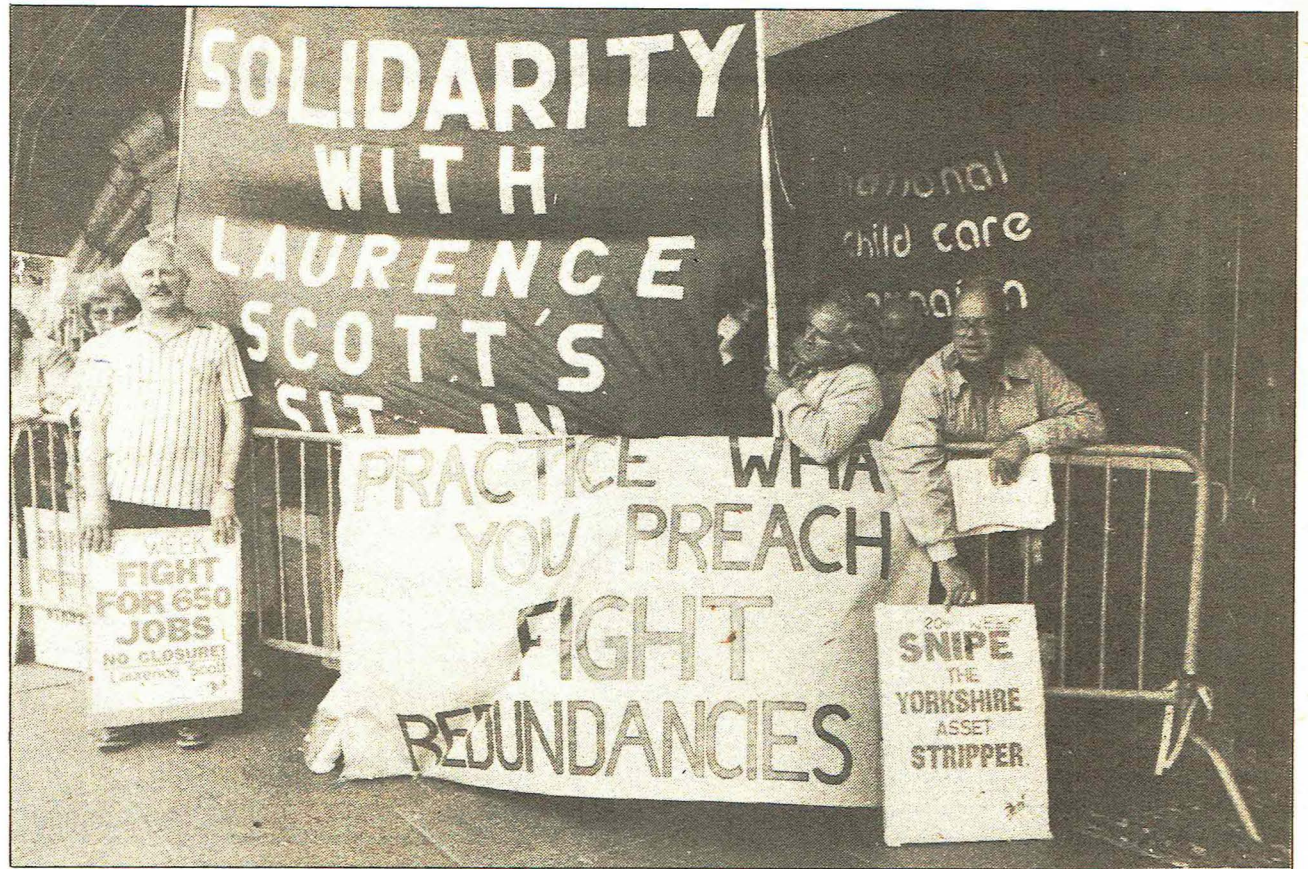
But on Monday evening the Liberal/Tory alliance received an unexpected answer; a mass meeting of 13,000 NALGO members voted to escalate the action by hitting the collection of rates, rents, fines and service charges. There would be no cooperation with blacklegs, and disciplinary action for those who refuse union instructions.

However, this is subject to a branch ballot so it is

absolutely vital that an effective campaign is mounted to ensure a 'yes' vote. It is certain that the ballot will be subject to immense pressure from the Liberal and Tory councillors, officials, with the aid of the local press, as has been experienced already.

At the mass meeting itself, NALGO deputy General Secretary John Daly attempted to present a 'balanced view' of the dispute, virtually telling members it did not matter if we lost! Thankfully, this sort of 'leadership' was not accepted by the membership present.

The determination and sacrifice of the typists is finding greater support amongst other NALGO members and if the ballots on industrial action can be won, then the scene would be set for a confrontation with the City council involving not just NALGO members but all the other local authority unions as well.



Workers from the occupation of the Manchester Laurence Scott plant Lobby the 1981 TUC for support.

LAURENCE SCOTT

Laurence Scott are to make a further 436 workers redundant at their Norwich plants.

Since Mining Supplies took over the Laurence Scott group in November 1980, the Manchester plant has been closed with the loss of 650 jobs—which the workers are fighting through occupation—and 150 jobs

have been lost at Norwich.

In the latest cutback 224 staff and 212 hourly paid are to go. This time the management are prepared to consider volunteers. Last March when nearly 100 workers were made redundant many had only two hours notice in which to be off the premises! This episode stunned the whole

city and Snipe, chairman of Mining Supplies became the most hated man in Norwich.

Although there is an ongoing list of volunteers, shop stewards doubt if sufficient numbers of workers will volunteer and fear compulsory redundancies.

Laurence Scott employ over 2,000 workers in Norwich, over 900 are staff with

1100 manual. Most workers are highly skilled and the firm is the city's biggest employer of male labour.

If Snipe gets away with compulsory redundancies again, how long before the whole Laurence Scott group is asset stripped?

By John Sillet

(AUEW-TASS, Norwich branch sec.)

GLENCROFT

Fifteen women workers from the Glencroft knitwear factory in Glasgow are now in their 7th week of picket duty.

The dispute followed the women's supervisor being made redundant on a Friday at 4pm, just as she had finished work. She was given no notice.

The women were told there was no work for her. However, someone else started working for the same job on the Monday! Obviously the women asked for an explanation.

The women demanded a group meeting with management, but management said it would only see them on an individual basis. As a result no agreement was reached. Seven days later, they unexpectedly received their P45s through the post, meaning they were sacked.

Not surprisingly, the 15 women are the only unionised labour in the factory which employs around 60 workers. Their trade union, NUHKW, have taken the case to tribunal, but in the

meantime the sacked workers are picketing the factory.

One day mass pickets have been arranged on Tuesdays, bringing together local unionised workers to persuade the women still working to join the pickets.

All the women in the factory are in need of trade union protection; present working conditions mean a 40 hour week, a 10 minute tea break in the morning, a ½ hour lunch break, and afternoon tea taken at the workbench. Frequent scaremongering campaigns with threats of a fall in wages has prevented many of the workers from joining the union.

The women on the picket are more determined than ever to win the fight but they need help.

Support to Mr M. Humphrey, NUHKW, 44 Kelvin-grove Street, Glasgow G11.

By

Francis Curran

(Glasgow Provan LPYS)

EVANS LIFTS

Approximately 70 members of AUEW-TASS were locked out at Evans Lifts, Leicester on September 11, after two weeks of sanctions by workers over pay.

Management had offered 10%, but were not willing to discuss a union membership agreement or a 35 hour week. The offer was complicated by a parity issue.

Staff were delivered letters by hand informing them that unless they worked normally the next day on September 11, and disclaimer notice, they would be sacked.

The TASS members unanimously agreed to work normally and seek a formal works conference to resolve outstanding issues. But management did not accept this. So on September 14 the TASS members occupied the canteen, but left the next day after a court injunction was served by management.

Picketing is taking place and a rota has been drawn up. The morale of the members is high and pickets are turning up when it is not even their shift!

Scandalously, the AUEW convenor is willing to talk to suppliers to convince them to continue their deliveries, through supplies have still been turned away.

The management have told blatant lies to the shop floor workers that the dispute is unofficial. This is not true.

The dispute has been complicated by the fact that OTIS-elevators Ltd recently took over the firm.

Messages of support and financial contributions to: Evans Lifts Ltd AUEW-TASS Staff Fund c/o S. Goddard, 19 Blakesley Walk, Leicester LE4 0QN.

By a 'Militant' reporter

MARCONI

Last June, before the government had announced its cuts in defence expenditure, Sir Philip Watson (Chairman of Marconi) said these cuts would mean the loss of 2,000 jobs.

In Leicester where Marconi Radar Systems have 2 factories providing 2,500 jobs, the workers were very worried by this statement. There, union representatives obtained assurances from management that jobs at

Leicester were "safe at present."

However, within a matter of days, John Nott, the Tory Minister of Defence announced cuts in the Naval forces. Marconi threatened to close the New Parks factory with the loss of over a thousand jobs. Understandably the workforce were stunned.

The closure threat was withdrawn in July, but Marconi still gave notice of

600 redundancies.

Despite many meetings between union and management, Marconi still went ahead (in August) with issuing redundancy notices.

Frank Hyde, TASS district official attacked GEC, the parent company, who have made massive profits out of the arms industry, but "did not intend to put money into the plant and had adopted a 'no profit, no job' attitude."

To add insult to injury, the local Job Centre advised skilled workers to leave

Leicester to find a job! In the 1920s and 30s Leicester was the 'centre of the universe' for those looking for jobs; now in the 1980s Leicester we are being told is just another 'spent star'.

The Leicester West YS have called a public meeting to discuss this vital issue, and as their leaflet states: Labour must fight to save every job.

By John Merrell

(vice chairman Leicester West CLP)

Members of the TGWU demonstrate against cuts.
Photo: Militant.

Break vicious circle of cuts

STOP TORY CUTS

Coventry's Labour Council is now set to impose drastic cuts in local services at its meeting on September 29. Cuts of over £2 million in essential social and education services will provoke fierce resistance from the unions involved, the T&GWU, NUPE and NALGO.

'Militant' supporters within the Coventry Labour Parties have consistently argued about the council's stark choice under this Tory government: either do the dirty work for Thatcher; or begin the fight to stop the cuts, oppose enormous rate rises and campaign to bring down the government.

For the 3,800 elderly and disabled people in Coventry, the September 29 meeting will confirm a minimum charge of £1 per week for home helps—for some the service will disappear.

Mentally handicapped adults will now be charged 55p per day for lunch at training centres.

School meals will cost 5p more, and at 50p per day is 6.5p above the national average. The council's 'consumer reviews will prevail. Some families will not be able to afford school meals, less meals will be eaten, more jobs will go and the price will rise again—the cuts complete their own vicious circle!

Unfilled vacancies and job losses will cut employment of 200 people, in a city where already 42,000 chase 700 jobs. Also a 10% wage cut is being imposed on 12,000 school cleaners.

The Tories' chief hatchet man Heseltine issued orders in the summer that all local councils cut spending by 5.5% below 1978/79 levels. For Coventry this means spending cuts of £2.36 million.

Against the advice of the local Labour Party, Coventry Labour Council organised a 'rate rise or cuts' referendum. Faced with a



campaign which is necessary to defeat the cuts.

The lack of leadership so far offered by the Labour Council, coupled with attacks planned by the Tories, means that Public service workers are faced with a series of guerrilla actions to defend jobs. The 12 Coventry Labour councillors expelled from the majority Labour Group are voting against cuts and rent increases are bound to be reinstated by the Party's National Executive. Pressure must be increased by the Labour Party and the trade union branches for the whole Council Labour Group to declare a policy of resistance to Tory cuts.

An appeal to other Labour councils backed up by city wide action could lay the basis for a national campaign of opposition to the Tory cuts.

The success of such a campaign would depend on the explanations put forward by the workers leaders. Working peoples' anger at Coventry's deteriorating housing problems has reflected in the growth of tenants association. This could be channelled in to positive political expression by a clear statement from the council on the leeching by the financial institutions.

The 'cuts or rates' referendum cost £88,000. How much more valuable it would have been to use resources such as these to mount a propaganda campaign, to explain the facts. That 70% of housing expenditure goes on debt charges! That debt interest is £12.9 million, which is six times the amount that was spent on housing workers' wages in 1980! That £9.3 million raised in rents last year was swallowed up to make profits for the banks! That in 1980/81 Coventry council paid £31.5 million in debt interests!

If the next Labour government nationalises the banks and finance houses, it could release local councils from the burden of debt interests. In Coventry this could mean halving all rents and domestic rates, leaving £16 million for expenditure on nurseries and schools.

Public service workers meeting to discuss the defence of jobs must take up the socialist alternative, fighting to remove the Tories and committing the next Labour government to public ownership of the finance institutions in order to expand local services.

By Dave Nellist
(Chairman, Coventry SE Labour Party)

choice of a theoretical 35% rates rise, or the uncertainty of whether the cuts will fall on family or friends, those workers who voted (only 25% voted after an active 'boycott' campaign) opposed the certainty of a cut in living standards through a rate increase.

Thatcher gloatingly seized on the result to justify the argument for further cuts.

The referendum solved nothing. Next April Heseltine intends to cut a further £180 million from housing alone. This will result in higher rates and more job losses; higher unemployment means more dole payments and therefore increases public expenditure. Along will come the Tories and the CBI and demand further cuts in public expenditure. It's a vicious circle.

Labour councils and public service trade unions will only break out of this when the Tories are removed and a massive expansion of public services is carried out on the basis of a socialist planned economy.

Already, 50 cleaners, members of NUPE, walked out of Coventry technical college on September 18 in protest at attempts at wage cut imposed by the council. Mass meetings of NUPE, TGWU, NALGO are being held between Sept 24 and Oct 1 to discuss firm action needed to resist the steady encroachment of jobs and conditions.

Coventry South East Labour Party will issue leaflets at these meetings giving support to any action to preserve jobs and services, pointing out the need for workers to take up political

FIGHT BACK AT HOOVER

Hoover workers reaction to the recent "recovery plan" put forward by the management [reported last week] has changed from disbelief to rage.

At the Cambuslang factory, a mass meeting last week heard a detailed report from Eddie McAvoy, factory convenor, and the shop stewards committee. It agreed unanimously to take whatever action is necessary to protect their jobs and wages.

"There is no way," Eddie

By Jim Cameron

(Sutherland CLP, personal capacity)

said "that Hoover workers at Cambuslang are going to accept compulsory redundancies or wage cuts. If necessary, we will prevent plant or machinery being removed from the factory if the company attempts to close us down."

The fightback goes beyond individual factories and

Eddie McAvoy has already been down to the Perivale plant in West London to discuss joint tactics. Also, convenors from all three factories [Cambuslang, Perivale and Merthyr Tydfil] are to meet with the AUEW executive to co-ordinate a campaign of resistance.

It is essential that the union leadership now give the workers, who have shown their willingness to fight, the backing that they need for the fight to be successful.

STRIKE STEPPED UP



The picket line at St. Stephens Hospital.

The united strike action at St. Stephens hospital, London, now enters its second week.

At a mass meeting, of over 150 workers a unanimous vote was again taken to "stay out".

The 300 or so Porters, domestics, maintenance men and engineers, who struck over an assault on a porter (see last week's Militant) are adamant that until their demands are met, there can be no return to work.

Their determination has been strengthened by sympathetic strike action, taken at a supplies office, and at St. Mary Abbots hospital, who were out for nearly a week. Westminster hospital ancillary staff also voted last week to take strike action.

A mass meeting this week will decide on a programme

By Sue Pearce

(NUPE North West London District Cttee. personal capacity)

of more supporting action. The need is clearly shown here for building the links between different hospitals, so that stronger united action may be taken by workers facing the same conditions.

The strike has now been made official by the unions concerned.

Militancy on the picket line is being stepped up. No union members involved in the running of hospitals have crossed the picket. Only emergency supplies of blood and food are being allowed through.

Emergency cover which was offered by the strikers from the start has been refused. Yet Mr. Lyons, the deputy house governor, has consistently told the press

that the unions had refused—yet another lie!

When pay was handed out at the picket line, management tried the usual tactic of handing out untruthful letters saying that no "assault had ever taken place" etc.

They also made many 'mistakes' in the contents of wage packets, hoping to force the workers back to work because of lack of money. But this had the reverse effect, even though the workers are very low paid as it is, and desperately short of money.

The strike continues to go well and more and more are taking their turn on picket duty.

Most workers on the picket have bought copies of 'Militant', and already some have joined the LPYS in the realisation that the strike at this hospital is part of a wider political struggle being waged by workers everywhere.

FIGHTING ON ALL FRONTS

Last year I transferred from British Rail where I worked as a guard, to a brand new transport system 'Tyne and Wear Metro' which is under the control of the County Council.

By Bill Dodds

(Chairman NUR Metro personal capacity)

When I was undergoing training as a train driver I was told that the Metro was one big happy family where the bosses called the workers by their first names, and we all sat down together to eat our meals in the canteen. Also if we had any problems, just to pop in to see our bosses anytime we liked as their doors were always open.

That was last year, this year we are no longer a happy little family. The reason for this is that our pay dispute is now in its 29th week.

Of course, our bosses say that they would love to pay us more than the present offer, but the Labour controlled County Council (that I canvassed for in the May elections) won't allow it. The County Council, elected by me, my workmates and our families, say they would love to pay us more but the Tories won't allow it, and we all know they have to comply with the Tories' decisions, don't we!

So not wanting to hurt the public in our pay dispute our union reps decided that we would cease working on the next section of the Metro to open, which crosses a new bridge.

But now that our action is

starting to bite the unions involved on Metro have unbelievably decided to accept what was virtually the first offer made 7 months ago.

Not only that, but instead of every one getting the same percentage rise all grades are now to get different percentages, ranging from 8.3 to 9.6 with the lowest paid getting the least! This has now set the workers at each others throats where once we had unity.

The last straw came when our Divisional Officer announced details of the settlement and its confirmation to the press before the branch!

This has taught me the following lessons. To hell with the bosses and their 'happy family', what we need is workers' control and management. The County Council should defy the Tory Government and their cash limits and fight for us for a change. And all union officials should be elected every three years, and be subject to recall.

And of course, kick the Tories out!

SUPPORT BENN

HELP US FIGHT THE TORIES

Militant's "gold" comes from workers. It's valuable pence and pounds, essential to fight the Tories and their system with Marxist ideas.

Step up the fight by making your donation—today! There are only two weeks to our October target date. See our Fighting Fund report, page 17.

Militant Meeting

Tuesday 29 September, 6.30 pm at Wagner Hall Regency Road (off West Street), Brighton. Speakers: Ted Grant (Militant Editorial Board), Tony Mulhearn (PPC Liverpool Toxteth), Rod Fitch (PPC Brighton Kemptown), Chairman: Tony Saunio (Labour Party NEC, personal capacity)

Vote Farrar

'Militant' supporter Roy Farrar, the delegate from Liverpool Walton is standing for Conference Arrangements Committee, to "ensure that annual conference is run democratically. I believe it is essential all opinions are allowed to be debated on the floor of conference."



PHOTO: MILITANT

The bosses' press has whipped itself up into a fury over the decision of the executive of the Transport and General Workers Union to recommend support for Tony Benn in the Deputy Leadership election.

'The Times', the voice of the ruling class, could hardly conceal its anger.

They were furious that such a momentous decision should be taken by a lay, elected body made up of bus drivers, dockers, and other workers representing their members.

The T&GWU Executive's decision is completely in line with the Union's own Conference decisions over several years. To have come out in support of Healey would have meant backing a right-winger whose policies the Union has consistently fought against.

The T&GWU's consultative vote was not a full ballot of members, but a count of branches on a regional basis. Given the

By Roy Farrar
 (delegate Liverpool Walton CLP)

concentration of the Union's membership in a number of the larger regions, London and parts of the South East, and the Scottish and Merseyside regions, the vote in any case reflects a majority for Benn.

Fleet Street has furiously denounced the Executive's decision: "Bending it for Benn!" (Daily Mirror); "Benn's Boys Hijack Vital Vote" (The Sun). But all along, these and other capitalist papers have vehemently opposed steps to democratise the Labour Party.

What incenses the bosses'

media is that they have now lost the ability to determine the leadership of the Labour Party, as well as that of their own Party, the Tories.

The press has made no comment on the fact that the AUEW, the EETPU, and the G&MWU have not held ballots or rank and file consultations at all. They are usually full of praise for Duffy, Chapple, and David Basnett. Yet there is no outcry about the lack of democracy in their unions on the deputy leadership issue.

In one union, however, where there has been a full ballot, the National Union of Miners, the vote looks (as we go to press) as though it will go overwhelmingly to Tony Benn. There is reportedly a big majority for Benn even in traditional 'moderate' areas like Nottinghamshire and Lancashire.

It is also notable, that in NATSOPA, while the ballot on the Deputy Leadership went in favour of Healey (12,948 votes to 4,496, with 2,129 for Silkin), in a ballot on unilateral nuclear disarmament, a majority of 10,535 voted 'yes' as against 9,976 'no's. In other words, a majority oppose a military policy with which Healey is strongly identified!

On Sunday we will know the result of the Deputy Leadership contest.

If Healey, backed by the capitalist press who regard him as 'their' candidate, wins it will be a temporary setback for the Labour Party. But it would by no means end the battle in the Party. Neither Labour Party members nor the ranks of the trade unions will accept for long a Parliamentary

leadership which contradicts all the main policies fought for and adopted by Conference.

A victory for Tony Benn would be a great step forward for the Labour Party, confirming the movement's commitment to democratisation of the Party and its enthusiastic support for the radical policies outlined in the National Executive's 'Socialist Alternative'.

MASS PARTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

also bought £10,000 million in foreign currency.

Despite the Tory cuts, despite the unemployment, despite cut living standards, the profit-seekers are boycotting investment in British industry.

The rate of profit in British industry is too low for the city speculators. This, of course, does not mean that the boardroom moguls have to suffer personally.

Recently released company reports show that 27 directors of top companies paid themselves a total of £2,258,728. Seven directors got over £100,000 each.

One firm, an advertising agency, Greers Gross, handed its top executive a salary of £103,000.

In Caxton Hall last week, the magistrates' hearing on the Playboy Club's gambling license, gave a glimpse

of the millionaires' lifestyle in Thatcher's Britain.

While British industry goes to rack and ruin, wealthy punters squander millions at the gambling tables. The Playboy Club is accused of writing off bad debts for regular punters of £10,000s, in some cases £millions, each.

There were also massive losses in another London gambling house last week—the Stock Exchange. A small increase in interest rates triggered the biggest one-day drop on the market for five years.

Under the profit system, which operates through the blind anarchy of the market, the jobs and living standards of millions of workers are gambled away as if at the roulette table.

Mr Tebbit's advice to workers is that they must "work harder and better"

to avoid losing their jobs.

But even "The Times" (17 September) had to admit: "when it comes to length of working hours, the British worker is amongst the most industrious". Workers in Britain have longer hours, fewer holidays, and generally lower pay than their counterparts in Europe or North America.

The system is rotten! Far from curing diseased British capitalism, the Tories are bleeding their patient to death.

In the process, workers are currently being thrown on to the scrap heap at the rate of 58,000 a month. More and more low-paid workers and their children are being forced into poverty and misery.

Labour's Annual Conference in Brighton must respond to this situation. Conference must adopt bold, socialist policies—not only to oust the Tories but get rid of the corrupt system they are trying to defend. Conference must also lay

down the lines of a campaign, involving the trade unions and the whole labour movement, for mass action to force a general election and prepare the way for the return of a Labour government on socialist policies.

The capitalist press will hysterically denounce the Brighton Conference as a symptom of the "chaos" and "anarchy" in the Labour Party. Feigning concern for Labour's electoral prospects, they will hypocritically claim that the conference is damaging the chances of a Labour victory in the next general election.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Millions of workers will be looking to the Conference for a real alternative to the Tories. They will be attracted, not repelled, by bold socialist policies.

The ranks of the labour movement, as well as workers outside it, are impatiently waiting for action to bring down Thatcher's government.

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