

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

ISSUE 581
11 December 1981

20p

Labour
against
the
cuts

Pages 8-9



WHAT WE STAND FOR

Once again the Militant is under attack. The Tories are attacking us. Every day the bosses' press and television attacks us. And right-wing Labour MPs are attacking us too!

Why? They want to blame the swing to the left in the Labour party and the trade unions on a "conspiratorial plot" on the part of the 'Militant'.

But Labour activists and millions of workers are turning to socialist policies because of the crisis in society.

Three million are officially on the dole, over 4 million according to more realistic TUC calculations. The Thatcher government has ruthlessly cut workers' living standards and is destroying the "welfare state".

Democratise the press and television

More and more Labour Party members and trade unionists are turning to 'Militant' because we are determined to fight the Tories and big business with bold socialist policies.

Despite all the attacks on 'Militant', however, the media hardly ever report what we stand for. They are terrified of the powerful echo our policies will get among millions of working people.

- Militant stands for:
- The immediate introduction of a 35-hour week without loss in pay as a step towards the elimination of unemployment.
 - Reversal of all Tory cuts and a massive programme of public works on housing, education, the health service, etc.
 - A minimum wage of

By Peter
Taaffe
(Editor, Militant)

£90 a week, including for the pensioners, the sick and disabled.

● Opposition to the Tory government's threatened anti-union law and the reversal of all attacks on the trade unions.

Democratic workers' control and management

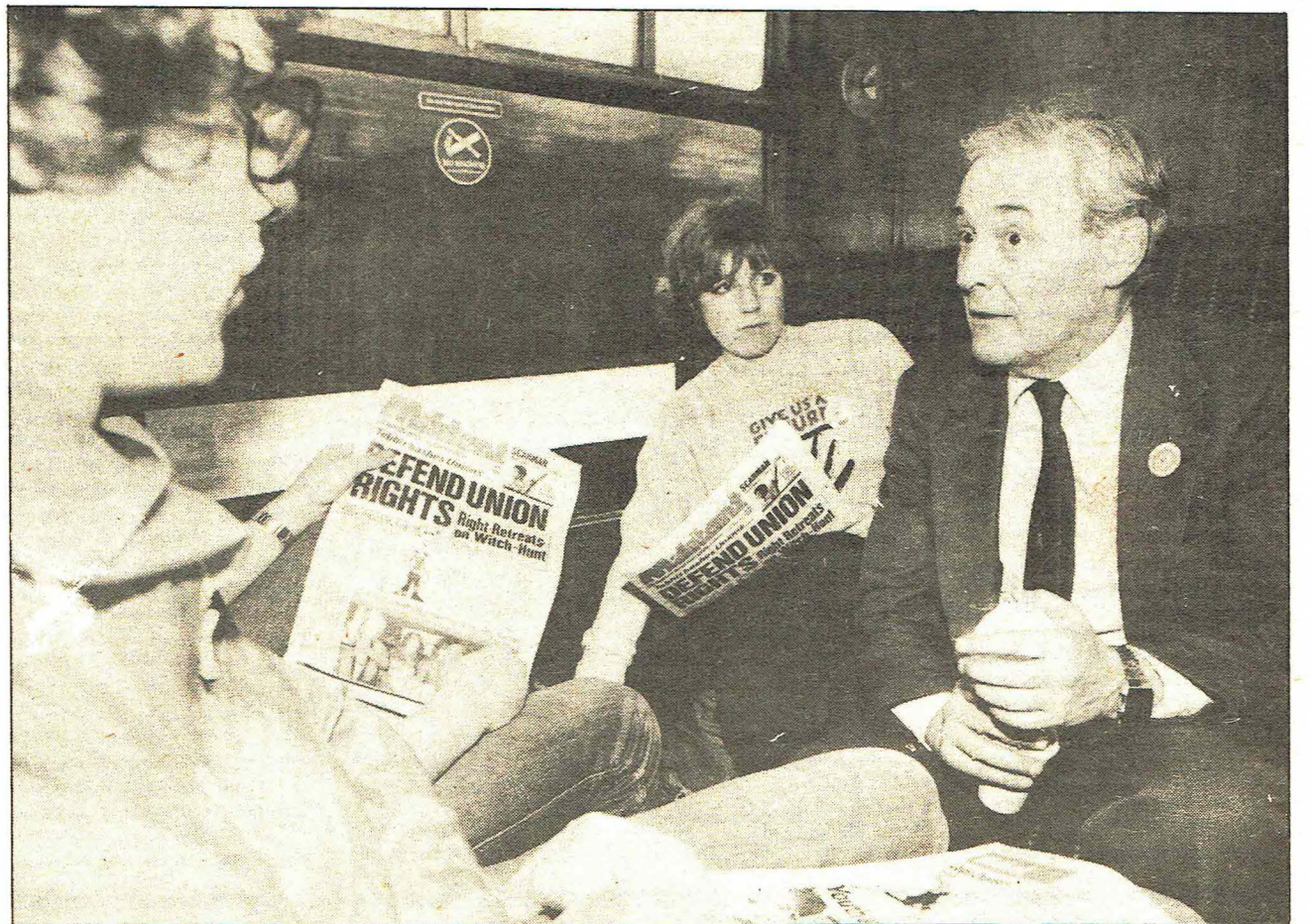
● Massive cuts in arms spending, now running at £12,500 million a year. Support for unilateral nuclear disarmament, but with the recognition that only a socialist change of society in Britain and internationally can eliminate the danger of a nuclear holocaust.

● Workers' management of the nationalised industries. These should be run on the basis of one third of the places on the management board coming from the unions in the industry, one third from the TUC representing the working class as a whole and one third from the government.

A socialist plan of production

● Total opposition to the dictatorship of the Fleet Street press who pour out their poison daily against the labour move-

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE



Tony Benn meets members of the Labour Party Young Socialists on the Jobs Express. The ideas of 'Militant' are finding an ever-deeper echo as the capitalist crisis deepens. Photo: Andrew Wiard (Report)

WITCH-HUNT AGAINST MILITANT Right out to wreck the Labour Party

Labour's right-wing MPs have succeeded in pushing through the initial stage of a witch-hunt against the Militant. This will be seen by the rank and file of the party as an attack on all the gains of the last few years—the radical policies adopted by conference and the democratic reforms in the party structure.

At Wednesday's meeting of the Organisational Sub-Committee of the National Executive, the

right wing used its majority to approve—by 10 votes to 9—a proposal from Michael Foot to instigate an investigation into Militant.

This followed Monday's decision not to endorse Peter Tatchell as Parliamentary candidate for Bermondsey, and the spokesmen of the right made it clear that their assault was not aimed just against the Militant but against the left in general.

By initiating this move, the party leader, Michael Foot, made it clear that he is now a prisoner of the right-wing majority of the Parliamentary Labour Party. His main argument was

CONTINUED ON
BACK PAGE

inside

When the right hounded Tribune Page 7

Militant

In refusing to endorse the candidature of Peter Tatchell and in demanding an investigation into the 'Militant', the right wing of the Labour Party seem to be doing their best to wreck the party.

Their own policies and methods have been found to be utterly bankrupt and, unable to face up to the growing criticism of the rank and file, they are turning to an Inquisition to beat their opponents.

There was no pretence at the NEC organisation sub-committee that the refusal to endorse Tatchell was anything other than a political decision. Foot himself was reported to have said that "it was solely a matter of political judgement."

In adopting this position, Foot has allowed himself to be pushed into the same position adopted by Gaitskell in the 1950s. In recent times, it is completely unprecedented that the NEC, on the urging of the party leader, should refuse to adopt a candidate solely because of his political views.

Constituency Labour Parties up and down the country will quite justifiably be outraged at this blatant attack on party democracy. Peter Tatchell has given a commitment that he would, if elected, live on an average wage of £8,000, donating the rest of his MP's salary—some £5,000—back to the Labour Party.

It may be that he has touched a nerve in raising this point. He would be setting a precedent that too many other Labour Parties would invite their MP to follow.

If the Bermondsey CLP decided to adopt the same candidate, as seems likely, then the NEC have the powers to disband the party

and impose a candidate of their own choice. Before it is too late, the NEC must be urged by the Labour Party and the trade union branches up and down the country to reverse the decision of the organisation sub-committee.

If Bermondsey Labour Party is disbanded for refusing to accept the diktat of the right wing, and if the NEC follows up with a broad attack on the Marxists in the Labour Party, then it will not be one, but dozens and perhaps hundreds of Constituency Labour Parties that will have to be disbanded.

The Tories and the SDP would be rubbing their hands with delight. The right wing will have inflicted more damage in the party than a thousand by-election defeats.

The right are fond of misrepresenting the views of 'Militant' and equating its views with Eastern Europe, but in fact the Marxists in the Labour Party while supporting state ownership of the economy and a plan of production have consistently opposed the one-party totalitarianism of Russia and Eastern Europe.

It is a sick irony that Peter Shore should exclaim that the Labour Party has well-defined "frontiers" that must be "guarded and manned" to prevent "infiltration"! Nothing could more appropriately describe the real Stalinist methods now being employed by the right wing—distortion of their opponents, fear of political debate and stifling their opposition.

The "frontier guards" of the right wing would be employed to keep out all ordinary workers from the Labour Party. Look at the facts. Those Labour Parties with the tiny cliques of members are almost in every case the ones dominated by the right wing, whereas it has been the left which has built up the membership.

Bermondsey Labour Party has doubled its member-

Right wing set out to stifle the left

ship in the last eighteen months and now has a regular newsletter. Brighton Kempton, where the parliamentary candidate is a supporter of 'Militant', has recruited over 500 members in campaigns in the last few months. The left are building the party up and down the country—filling out the wards, Young Socialists and women's sections with ordinary workers.

Meanwhile the right wing issue mealy-mouthed statements about "Frontier Guards".

The "frontier guards" have been all too active in the past trying to stop people joining the Labour Party. Yet these same watch-towers and pill-boxes have not prevented massive infiltration of the Labour Party from the right as all kinds of careerists, charlatans and place-seekers have found cosy niches.

Where were the "frontier guards" in the days of Dick Taverne, Richard Marsh, Alf Robens, Roy Jenkins, Reg Prentice, George Brown, Shirley Williams, Bill Rodgers, David Owen, etc. etc. etc?

The flimsy excuse that has been used to turn down

Peter Tatchell has been his attitude to "extra-Parliamentary" political activity. Militant supporters in the Labour Party and the left in general are not anti-democrats. On the contrary, we stand four-square with those traditions in the labour movement that have fought for the most consistent form of democracy.

The labour movement had to fight for workers to have the vote in the first place. Parliament has a vital importance. Labour must struggle for a majority as part of the struggle to change society.

But it has always been the case that the class struggle is reflected outside Parliament, in society at large, as well as in Parliament. The bosses think nothing of organising expensive campaigns of propaganda against policies followed by Labour governments or councils. Big business regularly threatens or carries through 'investment strikes' against Labour governments.

From their own class standpoint the labour movement has also used its strength to campaign outside of Parliament. Strikes, demonstrations, lobbies, pickets and so on have an

indispensable part to play in complementing the activities of Labour's spokesmen in Parliament.

For Michael Foot or any NEC member to deny this would be to fly in the face of the whole of Labour history, to fly in the face of reality.

It is the Labour Party's own official policy to abolish the House of Lords. Indeed, 'Labour Weekly' carried an editorial which said that that abolition should be a step towards the abolition of the monarchy as a whole. Only a few months ago, Emlyn Williams, leader of the south Wales NUM, declared that "We have a social responsibility to take extra-Parliamentary action against Mrs Thatcher's government."

Even the TUC are now discussing a one-hour protest strike against Tory policies. Yet there have been no steps taken by the NEC to close down 'Labour Weekly', to disaffiliate the South Wales NUM or to declare the policy document 'Jobs, Peace and Freedom' null and void.

Foot was also reported to have said at the NEC sub-committee, that he didn't want to "give a gift to the SDP", the implication being that left-wing ideas are an electoral liability. This has been hammered by the Tory press and Labour's right wing, and unfortunately, has even been echoed to a degree by the Left.

But in fact the policies and the programme of the Left—even the official policies agreed by the Labour Party conference—have never been put to the electorate. That the Shadow Cabinet elections produced a Front Bench team completely dominated by the right is proof by itself that the main spokesmen of the party will be fighting for the old discredited ideas of the right and not those of party conference.

While the Tories are slashing at the living standards of workers, the right wing are barn-storming the country in a vicious cam-

paign against the left of their own party.

If workers are disillusioned to a certain degree, it is because of the failed policies of 17 years of Labour governments, and especially the failed right wing policies of 1974-79 carried through by the right wing in the same cabinet as those now leading the SDP.

Where left wing ideas have been taken to the electorate, those ideas have found a response. New Labour Party members have been won and votes have been gained. Workers would respond to a nationally-based Labour campaign that really sought to answer the many social and economic problems that they face—unemployment, poor housing, low wages, high rents, mortgages and so on.

The only solution to the crisis in workers' lives is the socialist transformation of society. If the Labour Party nationally campaigned with the same energy and enthusiasm, and with the same policies as does the left wing at a local level, then there would be no question of the SDP gaining any votes or seats from Labour.

If the right wing persist in trying to bind the Constituency Labour Parties hand and foot, if they persist in their attempt to witch-hunt the Marxists then there will be virtual civil war in the party. But the right wing will find at the end of the day that no amount of bureaucratic organisational methods can block the growth of political ideas that have a social basis to them.

Marxist ideas are gaining ground fast because those ideas—real socialist ideas, in other words—correspond more and more to the situation that workers face. Those ideas are a reflection of the crisis of capitalism, a crisis that no longer allows the reforms of the 1950s-style right wing. In the long run the rank and file of the Labour Party will be victorious over those who are seeking to shackle and destroy Labour Party democracy.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST WITCH-HUNT

Labour's supporters throughout the country have been incensed at the decision to initiate a witch-hunt against the 'Militant' and its supporters. As we have reported hundreds of resolutions, letters and telegrams of protest have poured in to members of the NEC. This support can increase even further. Thousands of workers and their families who have not yet heard our case, will undoubtedly back us if they hear what 'Militant' is campaigning for.

All sellers and readers are urged to ensure that our case is heard. Militant readers' meetings should be organised in every city. Every factory, trade union branch, shop stewards' committee, constituency

and branch Labour Party must be approached for a speaker and urged to protest at this attempt to drive from Labour's ranks those who are helping to build the party and fight the Tories.

Every housing estate and shopping centre should be covered by sellers of 'Militant'. The press and media have had their say. Now it is the turn of the ranks of the labour movement and its supporters. If they are allowed to hear our case the Tory press and its spokesmen from Labour's right wing will be overwhelmingly defeated. Only 'Militant' sellers and supporters can ensure that our case will be heard.

See also reports on page 4.

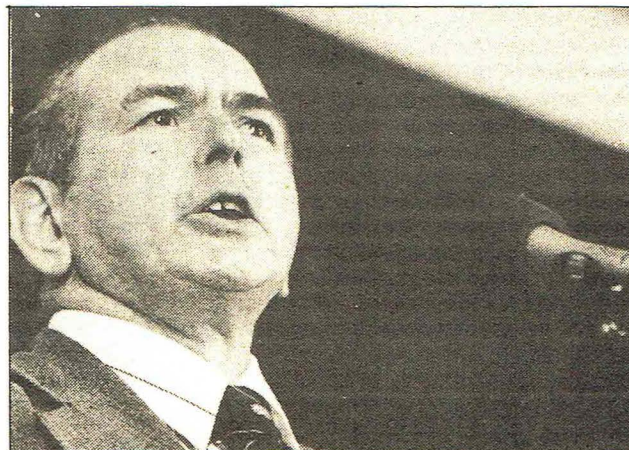
Emlyn Williams urges extra-parliamentary action

The following article quotes from a speech by Emlyn Williams, President of South Wales NUM reported in 'The Miner', May/June 1981.

The TUC should, in effect, be saying to the government the trade union movement will prevent the destruction of British industry and the erosion of British society through positive action.

But why should I be advocating extra-Parliamentary action when there is the Labour Party in Parliament to take up our case? We must, of course, use the Parliamentary Labour Party, but it is handicapped in two ways.

Firstly, it does not yet represent the interests of ordinary workers. It is not fill-



Emlyn Williams, President of S Wales NUM Photo: Militant

ed with anger at the impact of Tory policies. It acts as if reason can persuade Mrs Thatcher to change course when there is no evidence to support it.

Secondly, without a majority it acts purely as a plaintiff. It can never force the government to act

through its voting power. In between election it is powerless.

But the time in between elections is long and the damage done can be disastrous. Do the rules of democracy demand that we all sit suffering quietly while our industries are being

dismantled and our jobs are disappearing, waiting until the next time we can cast our votes? If that is the case, then democracy is not a means of active participation but a form of social control.

As real democrats we have a responsibility to stop an oppressive government just as in the early 1930s the German trade unions had a responsibility to prevent the spread of Nazism. We do not absolve the German people for the evil acts of the Nazi government. Nor should we absolve ourselves.

We have a social responsibility to take extra-Parliamentary action against Mrs Thatcher's government.

MASS CANVASS WINS SUPPORT FOR LABOUR

Mass canvasses recently held in Liverpool, Brighton, Bradford and Coventry, where 'Militant' supporters have been chosen as Labour Parliamentary candidates, show that if the Labour Party is seen to be an active, campaigning party it wins support.

Contrary to press reports when socialist ideas are explained they generate enthusiasm.

One 70-year-old pensioner told a canvasser in Bradford North there was no way she would be voting SDP or Tory in the next election. As far as she was concerned Labour lost the last election because Callaghan had sold the unions down the river.

Another LPYS comrade was asked to come in to join a political discussion then taking place in the living room. When he entered the room, a shop steward who was involved in the argument, turned round and asked if he was a 'Militant' supporter. When the YS member replied he was, the shop steward replied, "Good. You lads are doing a great job in the Labour Party."

In one small street six people applied to join the party. One Asian who was canvassed promised that he would become a recruiting sergeant for Labour.

Few people were concerned about attacks in the local and national press against 'Militant' supporters or Pat Wall, whom Bradford North Labour Party have chosen as their parliamentary candidate.

At first some said they were prepared to give the SDP a chance because neither Labour nor Tory had done anything for them. Yet when it was argued that only socialist policies could provide a way out many were convinced to switch back to Labour.

Over 120 people showed interest in joining the party and 100 papers were sold. One Labour Party branch should now double in size. The day ended with a successful rally on Thorpe Edge estate.

The day was marred only by an attack on a canvasser's car by fascists, which shows the need to create a fighting socialist Labour Party in the area after years of neglect.

In Brighton Rod Fitch (Labour's Prospective Parliamentary candidate for Kemptown and 'Militant' supporter) told a rally of 350 people last Sunday: "Today we are seeing the re-birth of the Labour Party away from just the election machine of the past, into a campaigning socialist party, that will fight for working people."

Reports by:
Pete Watson
Andy Boyd
Josie Aitman
Dave Nellist

Other speakers at the rally were Kevin Ramage, National Chairman of the LPYS, Ron Brown MP and Norman Atkinson MP.

Earlier in the day, Labour Party members and LPYS members from all over the South went out and canvassed much of Brighton Kemptown. In the week before over 20,000 leaflets were distributed to houses, factories, schools and shopping centres. On Thursday in two hours of leafletting at the dole, over sixty 'Militants' were sold and fifteen people joined the Labour Party Young Socialists.

SDP 'supporters won back

Councillor Nobbie Clarke, veteran secretary of Kemptown Party, commented, "We have recruited over 80 people to the party in one day. I cannot remember anything like this rate of growth."

Since Rod Fitch became Labour's candidate earlier in the year, party membership has virtually doubled—a clear vindication of what a fighting socialist approach can achieve.

Rod pointed out, "We have demonstrated today the reality behind the SDP bandwagon. With radical policies and a party campaigning nationally, as we have done locally, we will turn the tide."

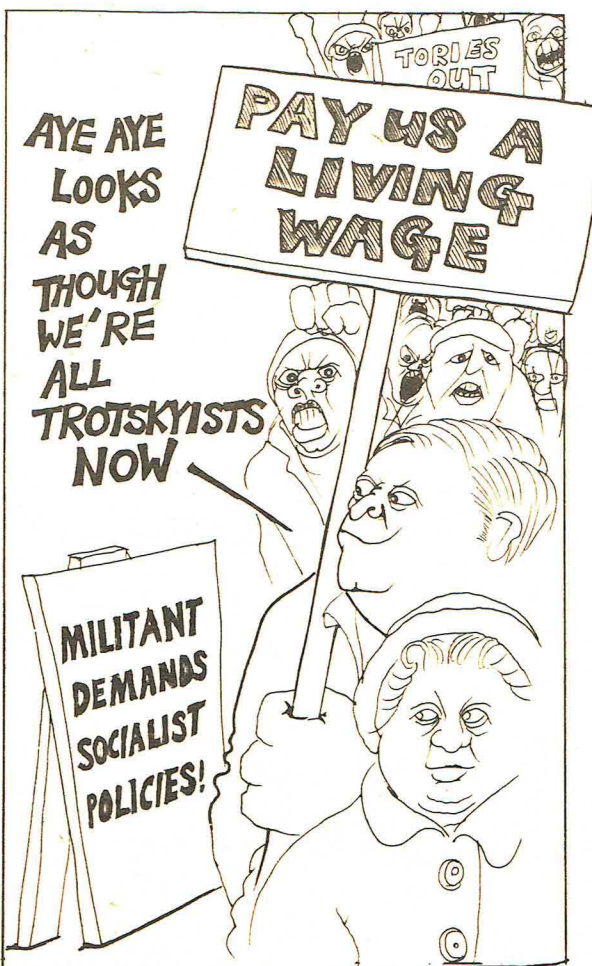
"We can win a massive majority in Parliament, put people back to work, and rebuild our shattered economy. Britain needs a Labour government, and a Labour government needs socialist policies."

It was a similar story in Dingle Ward of Liverpool Toxteth. Practically all the 2,000 people canvassed on Sunday had housing complaints. The majority felt that the MP, Richard Crawshaw, who deserted Labour for the SDP, had done nothing for them.

Although some were, at first, somewhat sceptical about a new candidate they were pleased that Tony Mulhearn (Labour's PPC) had pledged that he would only take the average wage of a skilled worker. This would help ensure that his lifestyle did not become remote from the workers he



Dave Nellist, Labour's Prospective Parliamentary Candidate in Coventry SE, canvassing last week. Photo: N Oates



was elected to represent.

Ten people agreed to join the Party immediately and a further thirty-three expressed interest. Sunday's canvass will be the first of many as support is built up for the Labour Party and Marxist ideas.

Forty-eight 'Militants' were sold on the canvass. At a meeting the next day a large number of new people, including Ford workers, and the chairman of the boiler-makers' branch at Cammell Laids came along.

The previous weekend in Coventry thirty people sign-

ed up for the Labour Party or the LPYS, and a further thirty-five took application forms. 160 'Militants' were sold and already the next canvass has been provisionally planned for 24 January.

The message from all these canvasses is clear. Socialist policies and a bold approach win members and support. While the right wing are quite prepared to destroy the party, Marxist candidates want to build it as an effective campaigning organisation for working people.

Defend Asian community

By Ed Bober
(Hendon South LP)

Seven members of Asian Youth Club Hounslow, and the Anglo Asian Family Circle will appear in Brentford Magistrates Court, High Street, Brentford on 14 December. The seven are charged with obstruction, and damaging police property.

This follows what eyewitnesses describe as a totally unprovoked attack by police on a party and musical evening on Saturday 21 November. This happened not when the several hundred guests were present at Hounslow Town Hall, but whilst the most hardworking members of the organisation were clearing up afterwards.

Members of the Asian community see this as another attempt by the police to make it difficult for them to organise their own cultural activities. The party was attended by many Asian families including young children. Clearly, if the community had been out to cause trouble they would not have brought babies along.

Seven club members were injured. Two had to have stitches and one 58-year-old person had severe injuries near the eyes and was badly bruised on the cheek. All seven were detained in the police station, where some claim they were badly beaten up again.

As is now the "normal practice," the police denied them the right to contact their own representatives, and lied to them that their

relatives had been informed.

Krishnan Bhatia, Secretary of the Anglo-Asian Family Circle, said: "Our youth are boiling up. It appears the day may not be very far when Hounslow may even surpass the memories of Brixton, Southall, and Notting Hill of 1976 or Liverpool of 1981, if these brutalities are not stopped and the guilty are not punished."

"So far our youth have shown respect for the police. But with the way the police behaved that Saturday night patience is running out and there is every sign of hatred and alienation against the police in Hounslow."

"The problem is going to be on a larger scale and there may be confrontation if the brutalities are swept under the carpet."

The local labour movement must not allow the Hounslow Asian community to stand alone. This must be taken up in local trade union branches and Labour Party meetings.

LPYS branches with banners should picket the court, and the labour movement must fight for proper community control over the police, and the weeding out of all racials from the police force.

IRELAND - Labour's youth turn to Marxism

By Ken Smith
(Visitor to conference)

Clear socialist ideas and determination to fight against the horrors of capitalism can build tremendous support amongst working class youth. This is as true in Southern Ireland as in Britain.

The conference of the Irish Labour Youth on 27-29 November saw a decisive shift to the left. The election of eleven supporters of Militant Irish Monthly to the National Youth Committee gives a substantial majority for the ideas of Marxism.

This was despite the machinations of some of the right wing, who brought in delegations from the rural areas for the Sunday voting only, ensuring they had no chance to discuss the ideas put forward.

Militant supporter Norma Prenderville standing for National Secretary of Labour Youth received 96 votes, compared to her nearest rival's 37 votes. All the incoming officers of the Youth are now supporters of Militant Irish Monthly.

These successes reflect clearly the relevance of Marxist ideas in a period of crisis for capitalism in Ireland. The Irish Labour Party, in the teeth of opposition from trade unionists and party activists is embroiled in a coalition with the Tory Fine Gael Party.

At present 127,000 are on the dole in Southern Ireland including 35,000 youth. There is an inflation rate of 20% or more. All these vicious attacks supported by the capitalist Fine Gael leaders have been agreed by Labour's leaders.



Members of the Labour Youth and older workers at the very successful 31 October rally in Dublin.

PHOTO: Derek Spiers (IFL)

A resolution calling for an end to Labour's coalition was passed by ten to one, despite sanctimonious appeals early in the debate by party leader Michael O'Leary for maintaining coalition. Delegates saw clearly the need for an independent class position separate from Fine Gael's policies which are disastrous both for the livelihood of the working class and Labour's electoral hopes.

The conference also passed a resolution calling for a party of labour in Northern Ireland.

The mood of the delegates can be seen from the reception given to the incoming Labour Youth officers who committed themselves to building Labour Youth along the same lines as the LPYS in Britain and to campaigning for an end to coalition and for a majority Labour government.

Students call for party of labour in N.I.

By Leo McDaid
(Trent Poly Labour Club)

How often do the press give the impression that political life in Northern Ireland never goes beyond sectarian violence? The exceptions, like John Pilger's article in the 'Daily Mirror' on 3 December show the poverty and grim conditions which could, as 'Militant' has always pointed out, be the focal point of united working class action by Protestant and Catholic workers alike.

The Labour Party's deci-

sion at the Brighton conference to aid the establishment of a Labour Party in the North is a big step to making this possible, by providing a socialist alternative to the miseries of the dole queue.

The National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS), the student wing of the Labour Party, could use its position in the National Union of Students to campaign for a Labour Party in NI, which would get a

real echo from students. But the last three NOLS conferences have rejected all policies on NI and have no policy at all on this subject!

The NOLS NC has committed itself to debate and discussion prior to the Easter NOLS conference, but at its June meeting rejected a proposal by a Militant supporter that "NOLS should organise a day school on Ireland in January or February of

1982" (NOLS NC minutes, 30.6.81).

Trent Poly Labour Club is launching a campaign in NOLS for a socialist solution for Northern Ireland. A discussion document (to be circulated to Labour Clubs) and a statement will be put to a one day conference on 13 February 1982. The NOLS leadership have been invited to debate with a Militant supporter and every Labour Club can send a delegate and visitors.

For details of speakers on the campaign and further details of the conference write to Trent Poly Labour Club c/o Trent Poly Students Union, Byron Building, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham NG1 4BU.

Everyone should get...

Militant

Sales of Militant in Ealing have increased by over 50% in just 6 weeks. How was this done? By having regular sales in every area where working people are.

There are now regular sales of 20-30 on the streets, 30-60 on local estates, 15-30 in local factories and over 15 a week on the dole queues. This is on top of the local sales of each seller. This level of response is being repeated up and down the country from Shepton Mallet to Edinburgh, Haverfordwest to Grimsby. Can you beat these sales in your area?

'Militant' sales in Gwent are pushing ahead. 28 sold outside a job centre in Blackwood and 75 sold in a march along the historic route taken by the Chartists in the last century. 70 papers were sold on a day of action in Newport and at the annual chartist rally in Bedwely over 50 were sold.

New readers are there to be picked up. Make sure you go out and get them! Bulk supplies available (sale or return) from Circulation Dept., 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Phone 01-986 3828.

When Harold Wilson's Huyton Constituency Labour Party recently passed a resolution calling for the expulsion of Militant supporters, it was given prominence in the press and was even mentioned on the television news.

But it is clear from the stream of reports received here that the overwhelming majority of Labour's rank and file are opposed to such a civil war inside the party.

Rutherglen CLP recently considered a resolution calling for the expulsion of 'all

revolutionary groups' within the party. Although the 'Militant' was not mentioned by name in the motion, it was clear that it was the main target of the attack. However, the resolution was soundly defeated.

In North Nottingham recently, the Constituency passed a resolution condemning "both the recent press attacks against the 'Militant' and the campaign launched by right-wing Labour Party members aimed at driving Militant supporters from the party."

Provan LPYS launched a campaign to counteract the lies of the capitalist media, by taking the policies of the LPYS and 'Militant' on to

the streets. Setting up a stall in Easterhouse, the YS got 500 signatures from shoppers on a petition and 30 names for the LPYS. They reported that "lots agreed that the right wing with their allies, the Tory press barons, were scared of 'Militant'—our ideas are catching on in the labour movement."

At the meeting of Deeside Trades Union Council on 2 December, a motion was passed expressing concern at statements made calling for a return to bans and proscriptions in the Labour Party, and certain statements (e.g. by Joe Ashton) calling for the LPYS to be disbanded.

The resolution stated that

the trades council believed that "Labour MPs should be encouraging young people to join the traditional organisations of the labour movement, the Labour Party and the trades council, rather than calling for those already in the Labour Party to be expelled."

Other bodies of the labour movement that have passed resolutions against witch-hunting include East Nottingham CLP, Paddington CLP, Hammersmith North CLP, ASTMS No 4 Regional Executive Committee.

In North West London, Hillingdon Co-op, Uxbridge UCATT and a branch of the TGWU also passed resolutions.

Turning the clock back — a century!



YOPs workers at Hebburn. Very low pay and petty humiliations are found in most YOP schemes

Photo: D Doran

In the 1880s women working at Bryant and May's match factory in Bow, East London, were kept under constant supervision by their overseers.

These people were watching to see if the women dropped matches or talked to each other. The fines imposed were usually one old penny for each "offence". This was quite a chunk out of any day's pay.

It's now the 1980s and you may wonder what the relevance of Victorian labour history might be. I'd have thought the same until recently when I came across a YOPster in Dagenham.

He told me he was late one day for his scheme because of the buses and the bosses stopped him half a day's pay. He had missed fifteen minutes. When you're on £23.50 per week, that's no laughing matter.

This YOPs worker has recently been sacked, after getting more threats and fines for such "crimes" as talking. The links between the petty humiliations of the 1880s and the 1980s get stronger.

YOPSTERS FIGHT

By Ian Wyborn
(Romford LPYS)

The working class in those days was far smaller and far weaker than it is today. But even then, the hundred or so match girls went out on strike and forced their bosses, Bryant and Mays, to give in to their demands for no fining, increased pay and separate places to eat their food.

Even before the government's disgraceful plan for compulsory youth slavery (to be announced 15 December) the Tories estimated there would be over half a million on YOPs schemes of one kind or another next year.

There's no time like the present to get organised into a union, build the links with the rest of the working class movement and go into action.

If a hundred workers a hundred years ago had the courage and the strength to do it, what can half a million YOPsters backed by nearly twelve million trade unionists do today?

MASS YOPS LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT
Thursday 25th February 1982



FIGHT BACK!

Joining a union will mean dismissal! For many workers on YOPs, such "Victorian" attitudes still exist today.

In Nottingham, the fight to unionise YOP workers often finds the supervisors of schemes the main obstacle. At the Sycamore Centre, we got the chance to speak to a group who although at first reluctant to express their opinions, soon outlined a whole number of grievances.

The worst was one lad who'd been stopped 30 minutes' pay for being one minute late! Unfortunately even some relatively sympathetic supervisors stopped us taking names for the union. It's apparently an "educational establishment".

We also visited the Victoria Workshop, the largest factory workshop in the East Midlands, and got a great response to our petition. On returning the next day some workers said they'd been told by their bosses that if they signed our petition it would cost them 75p a week (it's only

to be announced on 15 December, the Tories 25p to join the union).

They also took application forms from one lad who'd taken them to try and recruit his mates to NUPE. Once we've exposed the bosses' lies the response has been good. So far ten have joined the union and we're arranging to visit the scheme with the local NUPE divisional organiser.

More subtle opposition came from the Head of Adult Education at Newark Technical College. In reply to a letter asking to speak at their "Life and Social Skills" classes she said, "the introduction of outside speakers...may lead at present to the creation of false hopes among trainees."

Clearly any hope of decent pay or a permanent job after you finish on YOPs aren't to be encouraged, especially if it means joining a union to fight for these demands!

By Allan Stripp
(East Midlands LPYS
Regional Committee)



Sacrifice, directors' style...

The Board members of ICI and 100 senior managers have agreed to a pay freeze for themselves. Perhaps the directors feel embarrassed sharing £1,282,000. Perhaps the managers (poor compared to the directors) feel £30,000 a year is enough when the other 78,000 UK employees received £636 million (average approximately £8,154).

After all ICI had a bad year last year. It only made £284 million profit and in February the dividend was actually cut, for the first time in 40 years. 'The Times' was a bit cynical, they said that the "disclosure served to reinforce industrialists' campaigns to achieve single figure pay settlements throughout industry...if British industry is to restore its lost competitiveness."

At least things are looking up with forecasts for this year's profits of between £320 and £330 million. But how these directors must worry looking after Britain's largest private firm, with so many employees and so much money. The next Labour government should ease their worries by immediately nationalising ICI and offering all the directors and senior managers jobs working in the industry for the wages of a skilled worker.

What's £23.50 worth?...

There was quite a shindig at No 10 Downing Street on 3 November. Mrs Thatcher invited 93 of her ministers and hangers on for a pre-Queen's Speech dinner, consisting of avocado and roast chicken, pears poached in claret, followed by plenty of wine.

But before they staggered over to the Carlton Club for a follow up reception, they had to pay Mrs Thatcher for the grub. It cost them £23.50 each. To these bloated parasites, this was probably considered a cheap night out. But for a YOPs worker, this would be his entire weekly income for a 40-hour week.

Oh well, Mrs Thatcher says she is going to create even more poverty wage YOPS schemes. Perhaps she will use the money she raised from this binge to pay a YOPs worker for 3,720 hours' work!

Intelligent, experienced and modest...

When 'Militant' talks of the arrogance and self-importance displayed by some trade union leaders, it is not without reason. Sir John Boyd, CBE, and General Secretary of the engineers' union, the AUEW, gives in a press release (2 December) his reasons why he opposes democratic accountability of union leaders within the labour movement.

He says, "...because of my nature, convictions, intelligence and experience, I recognise the trade union leadership role as...serving the members as distinct from being a servant of the members." You see, this modest union leader could not stomach the thought of being looked upon as a 'servant'.

To do that, he says, "...reduces one's role to that of a postman, and causes you to lose personality, dignity and respect, and you become a 'nothing' in life." No doubt postmen and what Sir John calls "nobodies" in the Union of Communication Workers as a whole will be annoyed by his pompous insults. Meanwhile, engineering workers of course are losing 'respect and dignity' every day with each bout of redundancies and lowering of their living standards. Is this thanks to the ineptness of their "intelligent, experienced" union leadership?

YOP TRAINEES UNION RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

MASS LOBBY OF PARLIAMENT
25 February 1982

Rally Festival Hall, Belvedere Rd, 2-5 pm
Speakers include Tony Benn

All YOP trainees, Young Socialists, union branches, Labour Parties should begin NOW to organise for the mass lobby of Parliament. A petition and leaflet will be available in the next couple of weeks.
Further details contact: YOP TURC
c/o 150 Walworth Road, London SE17

Tax haven for the rich



Pensioners lobby last month for cheaper energy. Photo: N Oates.

How many people were beguiled into voting Tory by Mrs Thatcher's promise to cut tax?

"We shall cut income tax at all levels to reward hard work, responsibility and success," said the Tory election manifesto in 1979.

The Tories' measures would "tackle the poverty trap; encourage saving and the wider ownership of property; simplify taxes—like VAT; and reduce tax bureaucracy."

There is now a bitter disillusionment amongst those who swung to the Tories. Taxes are up and there is an even more blatant class bias in favour of the wealthy and against ordinary workers.

Recent figures from OECD (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development) show that between 1979 and 1980, tax revenues, including Social Security contributions, jumped two percentage points as a proportion of national output.

They increased from 34% of gross domestic product to 36%—higher than the 34.5% level during the last year of the Labour government.

According to some estimates, reports *The Times* (28 October), taxes as a proportion of GDP could rise to 40% this year, surpassing even the 37% peak under Labour in 1975.

Britain is still not at the top of the European taxation league. In countries with higher taxes, however, like the Scandinavian states, working people at least benefit from a higher level of public and social services.

Thatcher's monetarist policies have benefitted the rich. The distribution of income, even according to official statistics, show glaring inequalities.

In 1978/79 the top ten per cent of the population took over 26.1% of income "earned" and "unearned". The bottom half of the population received less

By Lynn Walsh

than a quarter of the total income.

These are pre-tax figures, but the latest figures show that the gap between rich and poor after taxation is actually increasing.

Between 1975/76 and 1978/79 the share of total after-tax income taken by the top ten per cent grew from 23.1% to 23.4%. At the same time the share of the bottom half fell from 26.8% to 26.3%.

These might seem like tiny percentages. However, when millions and millions of pounds are involved they add up to a lot of money.

Golden handshakes plus fringe benefits

The idea, moreover, that fabulous incomes are associated with hard work, responsibility and success is just a pernicious Tory myth. In 1978/79, for instance, there were 55 estates worth between £1 million and £2 million passed on after death. There were another 11 estates which were worth £2 million or more each.

This is not to mention another 97,629 estates worth £15,000 or more. This is still the way property is acquired by the wealthy elite, not through "hard work" or "enterprise".

However, for those members of the ruling class who do "work" in the City boardrooms and elsewhere the rewards are extremely high—and have no bearing on the success of British capitalism.

A recent survey by the Labour Research Depart-

ment showed that top directors are now often paid over £100,000 a year. The LRD found fifteen getting between £102,000 and £271,400 each.

This is just the salaries. The figures do not include income from shares—which are often bought on low interest or interest-free loans from their companies.

Directors also receive enormous "fringe benefits". In fact, this is the most common way of avoiding tax.

Such benefits include generous index-linked pension schemes, free company cars, free medical insurance contributions for the directors' family, low-interest loans, free meals, company flats at home and abroad and assistance with their children's private education.

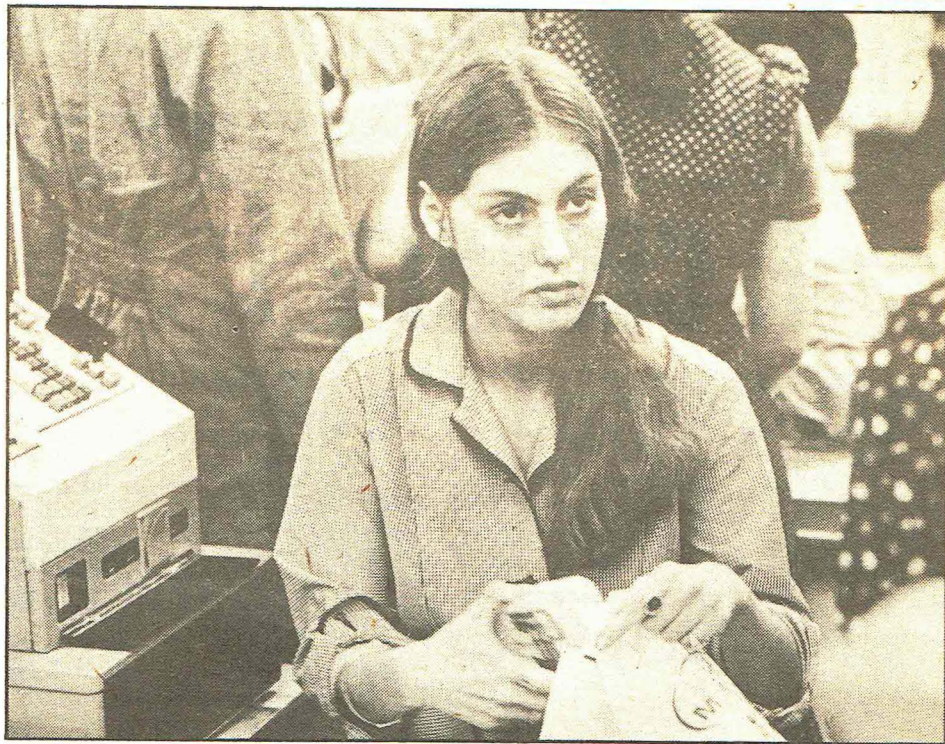
One of the biggest perks comes in the form of the "golden handshake". This is paid when a director leaves a firm...often to go to another well-paid company directorship. This year the LRD has published details of over £4 million going in golden handshakes to 37 men. These included one payment of £250,000.

Contrast these "golden handshakes" with the redundancy pay for workers, which averages £1,038 per employee—barely enough to keep the average family going for nine weeks.

Once upon a time, the super-rich used to become "tax exiles" in tax havens such as the Bahamas, Guernsey, Monte Carlo and so on. However, under the Tories, Britain "has introduced such bountiful tax and exchange control legislation that it has left all others far behind...Money can move in and out of the country without awkward questions being asked."

This is the conclusion of the Economist Intelligence Unit's recent report, "The UK as a Tax Haven".

Some British tax laws, commented the *Daily Telegraph* (19 March), "enable tax levels for its own residents to be kept below those in the traditional tax havens."



Shop assistants are well down the wage table. Photo: C Davies (Report III)

If the veil of hypocrisy and deceit is lifted from the Tory government, it is abundantly clear that it is their policy to batter down the wages of workers, using unemployment and Tebbit's union-bashing laws as the battering rams.

By John Pickard

... While workers earn only poverty

The Tories have increased the numbers of those inspectors whose job it is to investigate so-called "scroungers" on social security, the real intention being that workers who are unemployed should be too scared to make claims. The harassment and intimidation of genuine claimants has reached such a stage that civil servants in the West Midlands are now refusing to cooperate with investigators. But, on the other hand, those inspectors whose job it is to check up on the bosses are having their numbers reduced.

There are three million workers in industries like catering, retail, clothing, hairdressing and so on, whose wages are covered by the minimum levels set down by the Wages Councils. Although these rates are supposed to be enforceable in law, these workers are spread over 400,000 different workplaces and the number of inspectors—177—is pitifully inadequate.

The Wages Council rates are already miserably low—varying from £35.50 a week to £57.70, but there are many employers who flout the regulations. In 1980 37,000 establishments were visited by inspectors (which means, on average, that each workplace covered by a Wages Council would get an inspection every 11 years!) yet over 12,000 or 35 per cent were found to be paying below the legal minimum rates. What is even worse is that out of 12,000, only 9 (nine) were prosecuted!

Now the Tories are reducing the inspectorate still further—from 177 to 117 (as well as reducing supporting staff), ensuring that a lot more bosses will line their pockets illegally at the expense of their workers.

Trade unions involved in Wages Council industries—USDAW, TGWU, GMWU, NUTGWU, along with the civil servants unions, CPSA and SCPS, have launched a campaign to bring these horrifying facts to the attention of the public. Not surprisingly, there have been no banner

headlines coming from Fleet Street about low pay.

But the government are almost inciting employers to break the law and undermine the Wages Council rates in their new schemes for papering over youth unemployment. In January, the government begins its new scheme to pay employers £15 a week to keep the wages of young people below £40.

Inevitably this will put pressure on the Wages Councils to reduce the rates of pay even further over the coming years. The scheme is based upon the fallacy that young people "price themselves out of jobs." In fact, figures show that young people are paid less in relation to adult wages than they were in the past.

According to a recent parliamentary answer, males under 18 were earning 41 per cent of the adult rate in 1975, but by 1980 this had fallen to 39 per cent. For females under 18, the fall was from 58 per cent to 55 per cent.

According to a 1980 research paper by the Department of Employment itself, "variations in youth unemployment do not appear to have any

systematic relationship with changes in the relative earnings of young people." If these are the irrefutable conclusions of the government's own department, the conclusion must be drawn that the £15 subsidy scheme is purely and simply a means to increased sweated labour among youth, and through youth among workers in general.

The Labour Party must now take up the demand for a statutory national minimum wage of £85 for adults over 18, with pro rata rates for under 18s. There must be an automatic sliding scale that links the minimum wage to price rises. There must be a big expansion of the wages inspectorate under the control of the civil service and industry unions with the sanction of municipalisation or nationalisation for firms that fleece their workers.

Labour's programme should include these commitments to seriously tackle poverty wages, linking the issue to the need for the socialist transformation of society. If this was made a main plank in Labour's programme, then it would get massive support in any election.

The attacks launched on 'Militant' by the extreme right wing of the Labour Party would be a prelude, if they were successful, to moving the party away from all the democratic gains made over the last few years.

The right wing have made it plain that they are not just gunning for the Marxists—they want to throw out the re-selection of MPs, alter or abolish the electoral college for the party leadership and reverse conference policies.

In effect, a witch-hunt against the 'Militant' would begin a witch-hunt of the entire left.

All the accusations of the right—loudly repeated in the Tory press—about 'intolerance', 'personal ambitions' (Benn) are no more than a smokescreen to hide the fact that the ideas of the right are discredited. Their policies have failed and the party ranks have rejected them. So the right resort to calls for a purge, to stifle debate.

But it is interesting to note that while many on the right wing are fond of quoting Nye Bevan, in fact it was the same sort of right wingers—and in some cases even the same people—who tried might and main to expel Bevan and the Tribunitites in the 1950s, just as they try to expel 'Militant' supporters today.

In the early 1950s the left of the Labour Party was represented by Tribune, with Aneurin Bevan, at that time the bogeyman of British politics, at its head. As Benn is attacked and vilified by the press and his opponents now, so was Bevan at the time.

According to Michael Foot, in his biography of Aneurin Bevan, in 1951, because of left-wing criticisms, a number of right-wing trade union leaders came together to organise a 'stop Bevan' or rather 'expel Bevan' movement. Within three years Bevan was faced with expulsion—and the motion on this was defeated by only one vote.

In the defence debate of March 1952, Bevan led fifty-seven MPs in a vote against Tory defence pro-

By Dave Cotterill

posals when the Shadow Cabinet had proposed abstention. The result was that the left was charged with challenging the democratic decisions of the PLP and a special meeting was called at which every rebel was to be asked to sign an undertaking that he would never indulge in such disloyalty again—on pain of expulsion.

This proposal was not passed. But contrast this approach with the howls of outrage when Tony Benn proposed that MPs should sign a declaration committing themselves to Labour Party Conference policy! As today, discussions on party policy were avoided—instead organisational issues were pushed to the fore.

After the Morecambe Conference in 1952 the campaign by the right was stepped up. Gaitskell called for "new arrangements about the left-wing press". 'The Guardian' called for the crushing of the "Bevanite cabal" and Attlee, under pressure, said "no party could tolerate another party in its ranks". However, this was not sufficient for the right wing. A "party within a party" was not enough of a crime. To supplement these attacks, Gaitskell dragged in an old bogey:

"A most disturbing feature of the Conference was the number of resolutions and speeches which were Communist inspired, based not even on the 'Tribune' so much as the 'Daily Worker'...I was told by some observers that about a sixth of the constituency party delegates appear to be Communist or Communist inspired."

Sir William Lowther, leader of the mineworkers' union, went even further in scraping the barrel. In a statement reminiscent of Shirley Williams' "fascism of the left" speech, he accused the Bevanites of attempting "to undermine the

When the Right Wing



hounded the Tribunitites

leadership in the same way as Hitler and the Communists did."

Yet precisely at a time when the right were raising a hue and cry against parties within parties, they were organising their own lists for the elections to the Shadow Cabinet and according to Richard Crossman's Diaries, they succeeded in electing eleven out of twelve supporters.

On the other hand, Bevan supporters, under pressure of the right wing, had agreed to the abandonment of group organisations in Parliament.

In all the attacks, the right wing were backed to the hilt by the so-called 'democratic'—in reality Tory—press. Michael Foot points out that, "Almost every newspaper in the kingdom attacked Bevan and Bevanism except Tribune—so when Tribune spoke, that must be suppressed too and a totalitarian unanimity established."

And further, "Most of

the newspapers, 'The Times', the 'Manchester Guardian' and the 'News Chronicle' clamoured all the more strenuously for the expulsions to proceed...all these journals never wearied in exhorting the responsible leaders of the party to exorcise not only Bevan but Bevanism."

A poisonous atmosphere existed in the party. In the biography of Michael Foot (by Simon Hoggart and David Leigh) they point out that the attitude of the right wing to Foot was that he was "so violent, so...personal. He was a traitor, unstable and unreliable."

"One MP summed it up at a lunch, 'If there is one person who is intolerable in the party, it is Michael Foot'."

"Ian Mikardo, who had been voted on to the NEC in 1950, says these meetings were 'absolute torture' and describes his friend Driberg leaving them looking like a dish rag, absolutely shattered by the horrible atmosphere."

The right wing trade union leaders also brought pressure to bear. The threat was made that, "if Bevan was not expelled the unions would have to reconsider their relations with the party."

A Tribune article criticising Lincoln Evans, General Secretary of the ISTC, for accepting a knighthood at a time when the Tories were preparing de-nationalisation of the steel industry, led to the TUC demanding action against Tribune.

The NEC of the Labour Party agreed to this initially and a proposal was put to investigate the Tribune Brains Trust, "to see if they were a party within a party." But Edith Summerskill demanded that stronger measures were needed such as "expelling those who are suspected of fellow-travelling."

Gaitskell told Crossman that expulsion had to take place, because if not it "would utterly destroy the morale of the right"—or as he preferred to call it—"the

loyalists in the party..."

Gaitskell also said that "we must consider money and many of our big backers were asking why we hadn't acted three years ago...Bevanism is and only is a conspiracy to seize the leadership for Aneurin Bevan. It is only a conspiracy because it has three essentials, a leader in Bevan, an organisation run by Mikardo and a newspaper run by Foot."

Gaitskell was horrified by the influence of Tribune. When Crossman told him the circulation was only 18,000 and that this could have no serious potential, he replied, "It's read everywhere in the constituencies. It's the single most important factor which our people on the right complain of."

The conflicts in the party culminated in 1955 when sixty-two MPs, including Bevan, abstained on a Labour Party amendment which had stated that there was a need to have nuclear weapons as a deterrent to aggression.

The Shadow Cabinet subsequently voted nine to four on the advocacy of, amongst others, Hugh Gaitskell and Jim Callaghan to recommend to the meeting the withdrawal of the whip from Bevan; the clear inference followed that once the matter was referred to the NEC he would be expelled from the party altogether.

Throughout this time, the Labour Party and the major trade unions were under the control of the right wing. Their witch-hunting activities were designed, according to Crossman, to "first suppress the left-wing press, then forbid us all to speak, and get the sort of monolithic party which some people want."

Aneurin Bevan told a journalist in the 1959 election: "I am heartily sickened by the PLP. It is rotten through and through: corrupt, full of patronage and seeking after patronage; unprincipled..." He would "compel each MP to account for his actions and votes in the PLP by a discussion on which issues he supported or opposed and whom he supported or opposed. This would then be seen by his local party..."

"We must transform the PLP to make it more answerable to the constituency parties—every vote taken by MPs should be recorded on a ballot paper so that the rank and file know how they voted...At least half the present PLP is interested in perpetuating their own positions and the status quo."

It is for these reasons that Bevan and his supporters were attacked. The comments he made in 1959 are now finding their realisation in the current struggles within the Labour Party. Under pressure from the rank and file the party is gradually being transformed.

Certain sections of the PLP are desperate to maintain the status quo but the tide of history is against them. The right wing will get a rude shock if they imagine that they can purge Marxist ideas (i.e. socialist ideas) from the party. Whatever combinations, manoeuvres or smears they use, it will prove impossible to frustrate the will of the working class to fashion the Labour Party into an instrument that will genuinely represent their interests.

(Below) Aneurin Bevan, the main target of right-wingers Gaitskell and Bessie Braddock (above)



LABOUR COUNCILS MUST OPPOSE CUTS

Geoffrey Howe's mini-budget demand for a minimum 3% cut in council spending and an average £2.50 a week rent rise marks a new stage in the Tories' assault on local government.

Backed up by the sweeping new legal powers with which Heseltine is arming himself, the Tories are aiming to put Labour councils under tight government control to force through a savage cut in living standards.

The £2.50 rise will mean that council rents have increased by 117% since the Tories were elected in May 1979. Already in many inner London areas over 40% of council tenants are receiving rent rebates, which shows the growing number of people living in real poverty.

Yet at the same time as jacking up rents the Tories are continuing in their plan to cut by 53% the amount available for new council house building. Their cuts have already resulted in the scale of slum clearance falling from 41,799 in 1979 to 33,916 last year while the number of unfit homes has risen to 547,000 in England alone!

Since being elected the Tories have launched a whole series of assaults on local councils. The fundamental reason for this is that in its present crisis and with low profits British capitalism can no longer afford 'luxuries' like expanding social services.

The Tories have attempted to aid big business by reducing even further the amount of tax it pays. This year companies will pay only £4.6 billion in tax (after being given £11 billion in 'tax relief'), while workers will pay £28 billion in direct and £26 billion in indirect taxes. But while company taxes have been falling, the amount companies have been paying in rates has gone up.

This year, the Confederation of British Industry claims, companies will pay

percentage point reduction in this proportion the rates go up 2.5%.

Already for English councils the Tories have cut the proportion from 61% to 59.1%. Now Howe has announced that they plan to cut it to 56%, requiring an extra £1 a week on the rates to make up the loss. This is the biggest cut since Denis Healey reduced this proportion from 65.5% to 61% in 1977.

On top of this the Tories are demanding a 3% cut in real terms in council spending next year.

Councils which in the view of Heseltine 'overspend', i.e. spend 'too much' on services or charge 'too little', will be penalised by losing some or even all of their rate support grant, which would mean funding all their spending out of the rates and borrowing from the moneylenders.

Finally, the Tories have also been shifting resources away from the big cities towards the country shire counties. This means that this year the total rate support grant to Greater London authorities, for example, has been reduced by over 35% compared with 1980/81, a figure of between £345 and £500 million.

Tories closing the "loopholes"

Even though Heseltine has retreated over from trying to force councils to hold referendums on rate increases, it is still perfectly clear that the Tories are determined to go ahead and seek new legal powers to force Labour councils to cut their services and put charges up. This is the main challenge that Labour councils face today.

The measures in the mini-budget also mark a retreat from Heseltine's first target of a 9% cut in spending next year which the Tories realised would have been politically impossible to achieve, even by Tory councils. The Tories clearly hope that the plans for a 3% cut will prevent the formation

of a united front of Labour councils against them as the more right-wing Labour councillors try to make 'modest' cuts to avoid battle.

But even then Labour councils will be faced with the question of what wage increase they offer to their workers. The Tories are aiming to hold wage increases down to 4%, which means a further drop in real pay.

If Labour councils accept these Tory limits they will not only be paving the way for conflicts with their workers but will also be throwing away an opportunity to mobilise their workers behind the council in a struggle with the government for a higher rate support grant.

When the Tories started to build up these restrictions many Labour councils thought that they could out-manoeuvre them by increasing the rates to pay for council plans. Other councils argued that increased rates provided a breathing space during which support could be built up against the Tories.

At the time 'Militant' opposed these ideas, saying that it would be impossible to out-manoeuvre the Tories, that it was necessary to seriously prepare for a confrontation with the government and that rate increases would in fact undermine Labour councils' support and play into the government's hands. Unfortunately, in London and some other areas, Labour's relative unpopularity and the growth in SDP support is partly a result of the massive rate increases which have been levied by Labour councils.

Now, however, the Tories are moving to close off this 'loophole' of increasing rates and are imposing tight cash limits on individual councils. Now most Labour councils understand that it would be electoral suicide to make further massive rate increases.

Therefore the question is quite sharply posed, what should Labour councils do? The choice is clear, it is

either the road of attempting to co-operate with Heseltine or of outright opposition.

Any attempts to cut back in line with Heseltine's demands would not only lead to a substantial reduction in many people's living standards but would also split the labour movement down the middle, as Coventry has shown. The cuts imposed by the Labour-controlled Coventry council resulted in an official strike by 4,000 of its NUPE workers. Such a situation could also prepare the way for the defeat of Labour councils in next May's elections.

Already some right-wing Labour councillors are trying to pave the way for the implementation of cuts by the use of vague phrases, arguing the need for 'damage limitation policies' or by talking about the necessity of 'staying within the law'. The labour movement should be quite clear that these ideas are in fact a shamefaced attempt to prepare the way for Labour councils to make cuts.

It must be stated quite clearly that the fundamental job of Labour councils is to protect, and where possible improve, the living standards of the working people they represent. This is the first 'law' for the Labour Party.

George Lansbury, later the national Party leader, put the case quite simply during the struggle of Poplar council in 1921, "If we have to choose between contempt of the poor and contempt of court, it will be contempt of court."

It is this tradition of struggle which must be brought back to life again today inside the Labour Party.

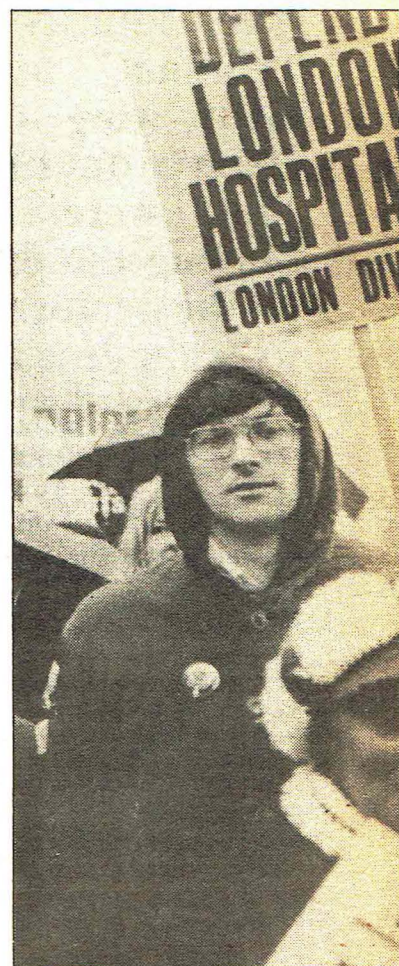
Build a mass movement of opposition

But it is not enough to merely state that these Tory attacks must be defeated, the key question is how? There can be no doubt that there is growing pressure within the labour movement for a resolute stand to be taken against the Tories.

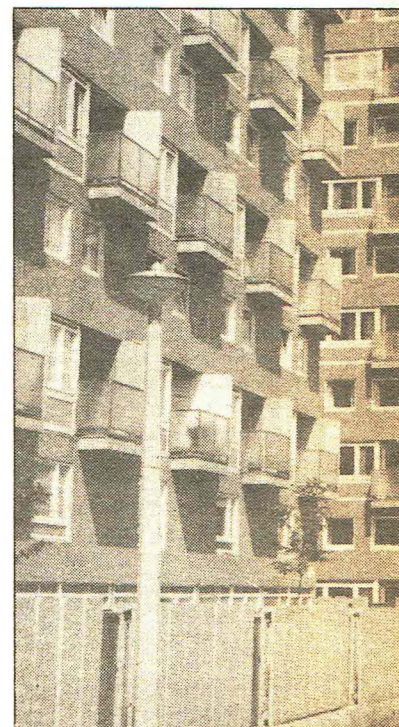
In South Yorkshire the call has gone out for a 24-hour general strike on 25 January. In London a 20,000 strong march against the education cuts was held on 1 December, and the pressure has even forced the TUC to consider calling a one-hour general strike against the new anti-union laws.

The solid four week strike of 4,000 Coventry council workers against cuts has shown beyond doubt the willingness to struggle once a clear lead is given. It answers the sceptics who questioned the response that any appeal for action would get. The tragedy is that the Coventry workers have been forced to strike against a Labour council. Imagine the response if they were fighting alongside Labour, against Tory Local Authority commissioners!

The rising demand within the labour movement is that the Tory cuts must not be implemented, that it is not enough for Labour councils to try to wash their hands of their responsibilities by attempting to get the govern-



By the time the new £2.50 increase in average council house rents will have risen the Tories came to power.



ment, local officials or the local Tories, Liberals or SDP to make cuts.

The entire lesson of the Tories' attacks on councils is that Heseltine will block off any loophole that appears and therefore the only alternative to retreat is for Labour councils to prepare for confrontation with the government. Labour's aim must be to force the government to back down and increase the rate support grant. It would be disastrous for Labour to campaign against the Tory measures on the grounds that they prevent councils making massive rate rises.

It must be recognised that rates cannot be used to try to replace the money withheld by the government because of the harsh impact rate rises have already had on many workers' living standards.

Fighting the government is not a question of whether or not councillors are willing to face a 'surcharge', because the surcharging and disqualification of councillors would not, on its own, stop the cuts. Only the building of a mass movement of opposition can force the Tories to retreat and would be the best guarantee against penalties and surcharges. The real issue facing the labour movement now is how to

COUNCIL WORKERS FIGHT PRIVATISATION

By Dennis English

(Wandsworth GMWU, Asst. Sec. Wandsworth Council JSSC)

Attempts by the Tory controlled council in Wandsworth to lure the 98 street cleaners that they presently employ into the clutches of private contractors have, so far, failed. At mass meetings these workers have voted to have nothing to do with the firms that have tendered for their jobs. And over the last couple of weeks, invites to attend interviews with the five remaining contractors have received the cold shoulder from the workforce.

Back in July of this year a report went to the Leisure and Amenities Committee of the council, which related dirtier streets in the borough to the refusal of the workers to come off their allocated beats and cover non-staffed beats. Also in the report was a timescale for the possible contracting out of the work.

The trade unions agree that the streets in the borough are getting dirtier. The amount of rubbish picked up off the streets in the area has increased from 5,000 tons in 1968 to 15,000 tons in 1973. This, coupled with the Tory cuts in the street cleansing section from 138 to the present establishment of 100 manual workers, is bound to bring these results.

On the day that this report went to committee over 1,000 manual workers took industrial action. This, with just 1½ days to organise a very dispersed workforce, shows the opposition to privatisation. The recommendation to seek tenders was only passed by the committee chairman using his casting vote.

While negotiations with the unions were going on, the council continued to collect tenders for this service. By the closing date, 13 firms had placed their bids, but of these, only five appeared cheaper than direct labour.

The council is presently engaged on the work of adding on to these five tenders the hidden extras to the council. Would the firms, for example, purchase all the council's vehicles? (Exclusive Cleaners didn't in Southend). Then there would be the cost of paying severance or early retirement to 100 workers (we have a no compulsory redundancy agreement).

When the council learned that none of the street cleaners would have anything to do with the contractors they extended the offer of severance payments to those prepared to go across, as well as to other workers in an attempt to make gaps to redeploy the cleaners into. Taking these elements into account the

cost of direct labour doing the work is less than Exclusive.

The attempts to get the staff to apply for interviews with these five firms were accompanied by details of the conditions of service being offered. While at the very first glance the basic pay might appear attractive, closer examination shows what sort of "philanthropic organisations" these are.

One contractor, Pritchards Ltd., offers a £4 a week increase (at the most) but this is linked to an 81% increase in workload, an 87% cut in sick pay, holidays reduced by 24% and no pensions. If these are the goodies offered in their recruitment attempts I would hate to think what the real conditions will be like!

At a recent mass meeting the picture of what conditions are like in Southend after the 'privatisation' of refuse and street cleaning was painted by two TGWU officials. They pointed out that no shop stewards had been taken on by Exclusive, and only two gangs earn more than before, the remaining 18 gangs earn less and work an extra five hours a week to achieve this.

Overtime is virtually compulsory, and "unsatisfactory" sickness or injury absence is listed as grounds for dismissal.

As far as the public is concerned the cost to them has gone up.

For the domestic household every extra bag will cost 30p and the charges for trade refuse have trebled, which of course they will try to pass on to the consumer by way of higher prices.

Unemployment nationally has increased by about 50% in the last 12 months, but in Wandsworth and the surrounding areas the increases in adult unemployment have been: Lambeth 62%, Battersea 65%, Wimbledon 66% and Mitcham 74%. With figures like this it is possible that firms could recruit on the terms being offered.

What is being demonstrated by the Tory council's drive towards "privatisation" is the attempt to drive down the workers' living standards, not just in the public sector, but in the private side as well.

The Clegg Comparability Report mentioned the "greater job security" of Local Authority workers. But who is kidding who? What is clearly shown is that under the capitalist system there are no safe jobs!

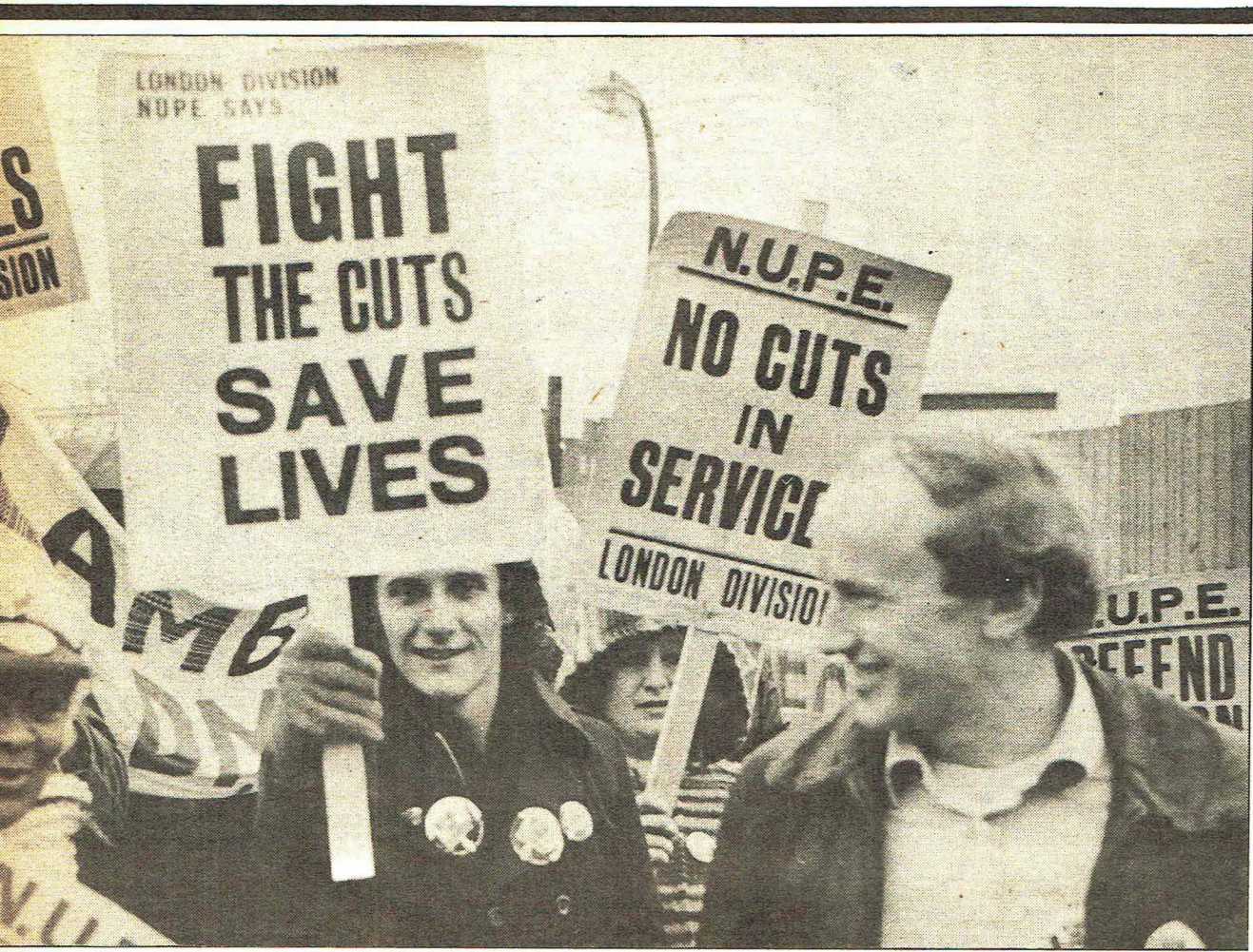


PHOTO: Chris Davies (Report) II

"Privatisation" is a method that the Tories hope to employ to cut jobs and increase charges for services.

has been added to, ... n by 117% since



build such mass support.

A mass movement will only be built if Labour councils take a principled stand against the Tories, stating that they will not implement cuts or increase rents, charges or rates. Labour councils must answer the Tories' propaganda about 'wasteful' spending by explaining the value of the services which they provide. In particular, they should highlight the fact that on average over 40% of council spending goes on paying debt charges to the money lenders on the £32 billion which councils have been forced to borrow.

Such a campaign would not only answer the Tories but would also rally support for the programme put forward in the Greater London Council elections this year for the nationalisation of the banks, for interest-free loans to councils and for the annulment of local authority debts with compensation being paid only on the basis of proven need.

Other means of campaigning have been suggested, like the idea of Labour councils organising anti-Heseltine referendums, or of majority Labour groups seeking to paralyse the council's work or refusing to pay interest charges. But these only have any real



PHOTO: Mark Risher (JFL) I

value within the context of preparing mass support for a confrontation with the Tories.

In building the support needed to back up Labour councils standing out against the Tories, a 24-hour general strike, even if organised only in one area, could draw together the separate struggles now taking place and would provide a focal point around which all the issues facing working people could be raised.

A properly prepared 24-hour strike, linked to the perspective of a developing struggle against the Tories, would have the effect of bringing together different sections of the labour movement, building the movement's self-confidence and serving as a warning to the Tories. It would be a concrete action, one for which the labour movement must prepare. It could act as the starting point of a drive to force an immediate general election.

Without such a stand the prospects for Labour in next May's council elections are not good. Past rate increases have undermined

Labour support in many areas, and the disillusionment caused by the last Labour government still exists.

Labour councils making cuts may split the movement like in Coventry, and the failure to expose the SDP could lead to them making gains. Labour has to show that it is prepared to fight the Tories and at the same time offer the radical alternative which some confused voters think they see in the SDP.

Labour has to turn its back on the failed right-wing policies of the past which resulted in a whole series of by-election defeats in the middle and late 1970s.

Labour must clearly explain that the rotting, diseased capitalist system can no longer afford the reforms of the 1950s and 1960s and that the only way forward is through socialist policies.

Only on the basis of preparing for a head-on fight with the government, at the same time as explaining that only a socialist economic plan of production can provide the means

to improve living standards, can the Tories' plans be defeated. Any other course will lead to defeat.

Now is the time for a clear lead to be given by the leadership of our movement which could unite the movement in the battles to come.

But even if the national leadership of the movement abdicates its responsibility to provide a clear lead in the fight against Heseltine, a single Labour council could provide the spark which could ignite a real fightback by declaring its intention of standing firm and, unlike Lothian, actually being prepared to enter into all-out battle with the Tories.

Obviously it would be best if there was a national struggle by a united front of Labour councils, but if this is not forthcoming then every single Labour council has to answer the question of whether it is prepared to be the Poplar of the 1980s and be first into battle. Such a stand by a single Labour council could transform the political situation and not only stop the cuts but prepared the way for the downfall of the Tory government.

SWEDEN SLIDING INTO CRISIS

Class divisions are opening wider in the Swedish 'welfare state' as the world crisis deepens. The working class will once again, as in the 1920's, be searching for a lead.

Sweden's predicament now is basically the same as any other capitalist economy sliding into crisis. Up to 1976 the Social Democrats, who held power often in coalition with other parties, allowed socialist principles to be obscured in the idyllic haven of the 'mixed economy'. During these years capitalism was able to hand out high standards of living while masking the fact that real control still lay in the hands of big business.

The world recession and economic instability since the mid-1970s has changed all that. The Swedish economy, heavily depen-

John N Powdrill
Member of Nottingham
North LP working at
present as an English
Language Teacher in
Sweden.

dent on exports, has been hard hit by the slow-down in world trade. The right-wing government elected in 1976 has chosen the road of public spending cuts and attacks on social services.

As the crisis deepens the previously well supported social welfare system will become subject to more and more crippling cuts. So called "solutions" include, not surprisingly, items such as teacherless lessons in schools, devaluation, 'buy Swedish' campaigns and an increase of the sick-pay qualifying period.

The latter of these measures has been supported by Social Democrats

in Gothenburg. In the face of the crisis of capitalism looming in the land of the midnight sun, we are seeing retreats by right-wing leaders of the workers' organisations and even counter-reforms being endorsed.

At the same time, the Social-Democratic leadership has resorted to panic expulsions of supporters of *Offensiv*, the Marxist journal in the Swedish socialist movement. Instead of a concerted campaign within the labour and trade union movement to ensure an end to capitalism, we find a retreat into protectionism and scapegoating. Members

of the party are expelled because they exercise their democratic right to fight for socialist policies.

It is clear that Sweden has not reached the same peak in economic crisis as has Britain. However the same pattern of right-wing Labour failures and Tory comebacks will arise.

Up until 1976 Sweden had had a continuous Social-Democratic government for 44 years. However, the SDPs majority had often been at the behest of other parties and their policies had become more and more watered down.

Lacking a clear socialist

lead, the electorate in times of crisis will swing from one government to another in a hopeless search for a way out. It is likely that in the next election the people will turn again to the Social Democrats but purely out of negative reaction to what has been done by the present government, not because positive solutions to society's problems are being offered by the SDP.

On the part of the leadership of the Social Democratic Party there is a **dangerous lack of specific socialist policies**. On the contrary, there is an increasing threat, if the latest expulsions mean anything,

that the labour movement may become entangled in anti-socialist, anti-democratic witch hunting.

However, in spite of this struggle the Marxists in the Swedish labour movement are undeterred. Morale is high and will increase in political sharpness to meet the difficulties ahead.

The seeds are being sown and the ensuing consciousness will open a way for the workers and youth. The solutions exist. It is a case of grasping them and helping others grasp them.



Swedish labour is rallying in the face of capitalist attacks.

USA - Mass potential for Labour Party

Ronald Reagan, President of the United States, is being cut down to size. His popularity rating is plummeting from 68% at the time of his brush with a would-be assassin to 35% now and falling.

In the cold light of reality ordinary Americans are balancing their sense of outrage at the murder attempt with a sharper sense of loss from their wallets. Like their British counterparts, US workers at all levels are seeing the monetarist chickens come home to roost.

Only 52% of Americans voted in the last Presidential elections; just over a quarter of those entitled to vote put Reagan into office. Support for his glib promises is now on the wane.

More and more US citizens are realising that the tax-cuts, 'inflation-free growth' and 'trimming of government red-tape' etc. promised by Reagan were intended not for them but for the huge business conglomerates which in reality, just like Big Business in Britain, have the effective shout in running the country.

Bob Stothard
T&GWU 8/33
and Durham CLP

But also sections of the US capitalists are now complaining about Reagan, just as the British CBI are whining about the effects of Thatcherism. Interest rates are 18%, higher than in Britain. Mortgages are virtually unobtainable, the car market is depressed because of the heavy HP charges, industry is increasingly forcing redundancies/applying "natural wastage" through a failure to invest because of premium interest rates.

Local authority borrowing is down for the same reason; sounds familiar doesn't it? Inflation in Reagan's first year in office levelled out at 12.5%. Unemployment, it need hardly be said, is on the up—past the mark where Carter left it.

Reagan's answer to this is cut and slash at social services. Unemployment benefits, housing aid, food stamps, certain education grants and job-creation schemes have all been pared to the bone or abolished. Clearly, that is why Reagan is held in such high esteem by Thatcher.

US workers, at present,



US labour's fighting traditions: the Boston general strike of 1919, where even the police joined in.

have no alternative other than the two main parties of Big Business: Democrat or Republican. Certain trade union leaders, notably Doug. Fraser of the car workers (UAW), have been calling for a party of labour founded upon the organised labour movement and embracing 'radical' groups.

The recent mammoth demonstration of 500,000 workers in Washington shows the potential such a party could rely upon. Re-

cent articles in "Militant" from as far afield as New York and Seattle sharply explain the frustration and bitterness of US workers—and the desperate need to seek alternatives.

The American working class has a tremendous and inspiring history of class struggle, in particular the period leading up to World War 2. To dismiss US workers as "bourgeoisified" and incapable of self-

advancement, as certain factions of the left have done both in the USA and elsewhere, is not only contemptuous but exhibits a glaring lack of understanding of the present crisis of capitalism.

"Militant" is almost alone in supporting and publicising the struggles of our brother workers in America. We have faith in them to carry through the historical task of the transformation of society

from capitalism to socialism. We can only imagine the effect such a development would have on the rest of the World and Central and South America in particular.

A word of warning though: don't blink. When the American workers are pushed enough by events and decide to move to socialism, they'll move so fast they'll meet themselves coming back.

UNREST GROWS AMONG FRENCH WORKERS

The Socialist government in France is approaching its first six months in office.

Week by week it has introduced a great many reforms. The minimum wage and family allowances have been raised and a series of reforms in relation to housing, education, health, social security, pensions and job creation schemes are planned.

The nationalisation of the 36 remaining private banks represents a great step forward. The capitalist banks, traditionally, were the most vicious enemy of the French working people, always urging the most ferocious repression in times of social unrest.

The capitalist parties are still reeling from their crushing defeat last June. Their lack of confidence in their future is shown by their crisis of leadership. Yesterday's "eminent statesmen" are today's scapegoats for the defeat.

But despite the reforms passed by the government, there is disquiet amongst the industrial workers. Unemployment, the main enemy, has actually risen since the government was elected.

Faced with this criticism, the Socialist and Communist leaders reply that the bosses "withheld redundancies deliberately until after the election so as to embarrass the government."

From
Marcel Coupeau
in Paris

But was this government, the "workers' own" government, not elected to take from the bosses their arbitrary power to dismiss thousands of workers and terrorise us with the threat of being put out of work?

The growing frustration of the factory workers is shown by the following lines from a leaflet produced by the CFDT in Lorraine (NE France), which is not exceptional:

"In spite of the change of the government, the bosses continue to act against the workers' interests. For action, let us impose our demands. The impression that dominates the factories is that, for us, nothing has changed."

The leaflet goes on to call for a mobilisation to achieve the 35-hour week, higher wages and better working conditions.

Already there has been a series of strikes. Renault car workers responded to a lockout at one factory with a national strike call. Engineering workers and railway workers followed in their wake.

The Communist Transport Minister, Fiterman, denounced these strikes and "other acts of the same type", declaring them "unacceptable":

"They are contrary to the spirit of co-operation of the



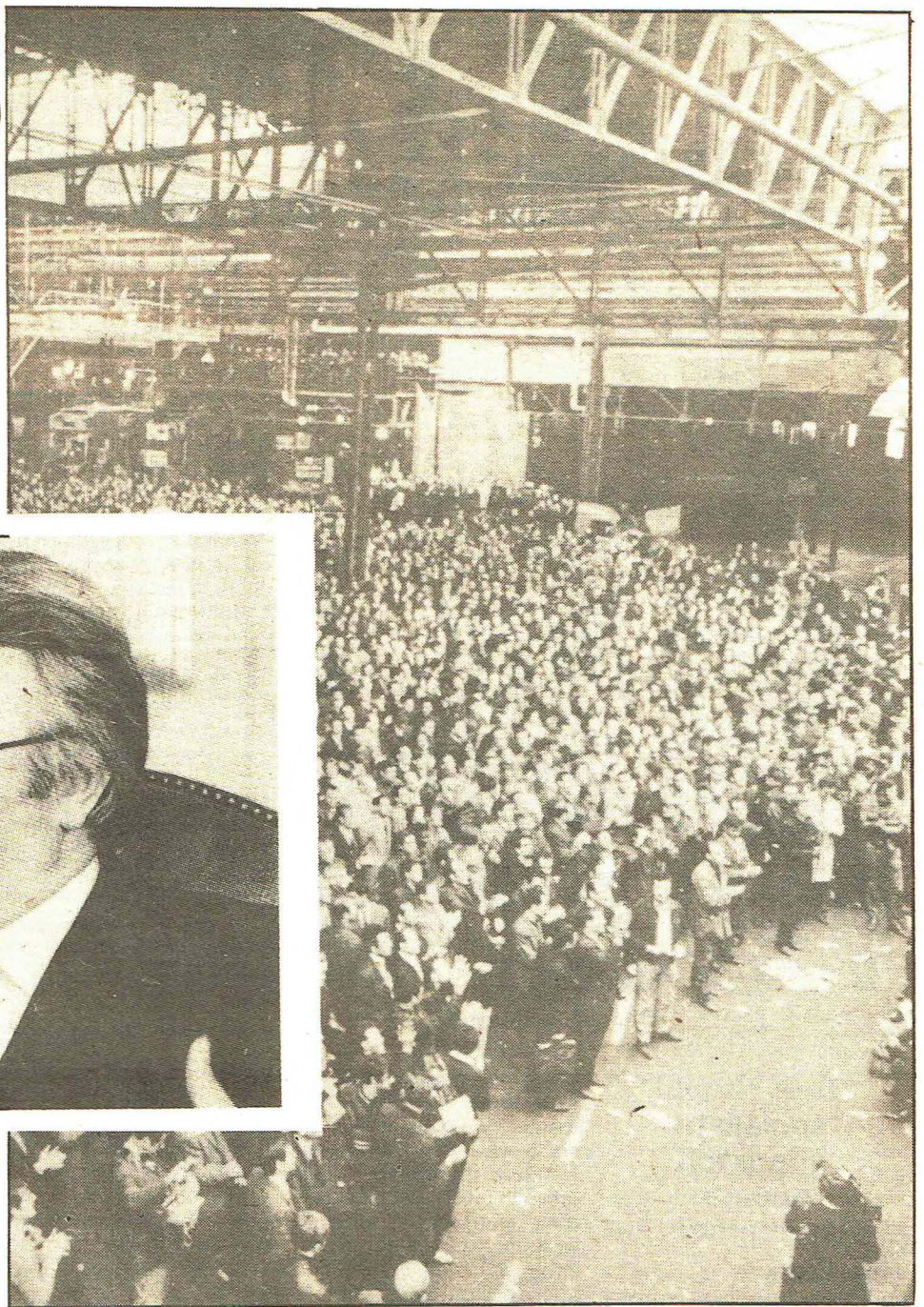
government and harmful to the discussions underway."

In reality the strikes and occupations reflect the workers' growing impatience with the government, whose repeated appeals for "calm" are not feeding anybody or keeping anyone's job.

In November, unemployment reached 2 million, from being less than 1.7 million in June. Inflation approaches 20%.

Faced with the absolute hostility of the CNPF (the French CBI), the government has retreated on several fundamental elements of its programme. The working week was only cut to 39 instead of 35 hours. The "right of veto" of workers' committees on company decisions has been dropped altogether.

Jaques Delors (Finance Minister), has introduced a plan to keep wages down "to beat inflation". Whilst



Left: Prime Minister Mauroy. Right: Occupation of Renault factory in 1968.

tax concessions have been made to the capitalists "to encourage investment", 1% has been added to national insurance deductions and tax increased for the workers.

Whilst the government imposed a "wealth tax" on the rich, this will bring in less than 0.7% of total government revenue. But 40,000 million francs will be paid out in compensation to former owners of nationalised companies!

None of Mitterand's attempts to allay the fears of the capitalists have helped resolve the crisis. The newly-elected leader of the

CNPF, Yvon Gattaz, declared, **"We will do everything in our power to show that socialism does not work."** That is to say, whilst sabotaging the reforms of the government, increasing unemployment and prices, the bosses' press daily pours out venom against "Socialism", holding the government responsible for the failure of their own system.

The danger is clear. In trying to please both sides the government will please neither.

Nothing it could do will reconcile the French ruling class to a Socialist-

Communist government. At the same time, the frustration and disappointment of the workers will increase and the middle class, which swung so decisively to the Socialist Party, will swing away again.

Either the government breaks with big business, bases itself on the working class and its legitimate demands, and smashes the power of the giant monopolies with a programme of nationalisation of the top 200 firms, or else the first workers' government for 23 years faces a certain defeat.

Greece — WORKERS LOOK TO PASOK FOR CHANGE

A flood of activity and enthusiasm swept Greek society after the landslide victory of the Panhellenic Socialist Party on 18 October.

A generation of reaction and bloody repression was buried. The anniversary of the Athens Polytechnic Massacre saw the biggest demonstration ever in the streets of the capital—**one million strong!**

The aspirations of every worker and peasant—even those in uniform—are now firmly pinned on the Papandreou government to transform conditions.

Workers did not wait for legislation. Strikes and occupations ensured the rapid reinstatement of victimised workers. Even prisoners won new rights by taking direct action. Soldiers sent letters to the press declaring that they would not be used

By Clare
Doyle

against workers.

At 9 o'clock on Sunday evening, 22 November, Andreas Papandreou started to unveil his programme at a specially convened session of Parliament. His speech was televised and took up nearly 2½ hours of peak viewing time. But of the radical measures announced, little has been reported in the British press.

Papandreou announced that there would be votes at 18, civil marriages and the separation of church and state. Army files would be destroyed and soldiers' pay immediately improved. Police would have trade union rights.

The government would abolish all anti-trade union laws and establish the right of all to be members of trade unions and to

reinstatement where they have lost their jobs through victimisation.

Talks would take place with a view to leaving NATO and the Common Market. America's military bases would have to go.

Papandreou gave a brief picture of the grim economic situation. Growth and production were down, investment was lower than in 1975. The balance of payments was in deficit by \$2,000 million. The "levers of the economy" must be brought under social control but, he said, "the important role of private enterprise must be recognised."

This first hint of a concession to big business was followed by an evasion on the issue of a minimum wage. No figure was given but there would be an automatic (sliding) scale of wages and four-monthly reviews.

Then came one of the most revolutionary

measures of the programme. For the first time, peasant women would be entitled to a pension in their own right, separate from men. Pensions would go up from 1,400 drachmas per month for a single person to 4,000—and for a couple from 4,500 drachmas to 8,000 plus holiday supplements.

There would be continued control over prices. (In the face of 25% inflation the government had already implemented an immediate freeze on prices.) The middleman would be "abolished" and the government would control all major trade—internal and external.

"Control by workers" in public industries was mentioned, but not specified. Nationalisations would be "anti-imperialist and anti-monopolist", but the government would pay "full compensation" in order not to "harm the private sector".

Industries to be nationalised are shipping, cement, steel, mining, pharmaceuticals and foreign investments. (This in a situation where 60% of industry is already run by the state.)

Church land and estates would be taken over and used by peasants. The peasants' councils that have arisen in the countryside would be recognised as trade unions. All workers would have a maximum 40-hour week and four weeks' paid holiday.

The PASOK government has enormous responsibilities. Many parts of

Papandreou's programme are revolutionary in any capitalist country, but especially in a country as economically underdeveloped as Greece, where the army has ruled supreme for decades, and the heroic struggles of the workers and peasants have many times been drowned in blood.

A new period is beginning in Greek politics. PASOK will be under enormous pressure to carry through its full programme. Workers in Britain and other parts of the world will watch its progress with keen interest.

"Southern Africa—a challenge to Labour"

Joint Labour Party/Anti-Apartheid conference

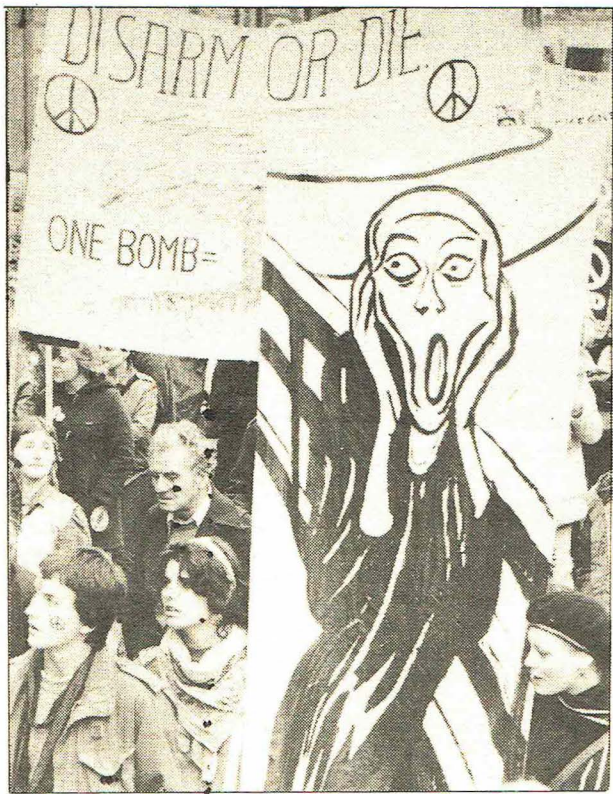
on Saturday 30 January 1982

Details from: Martin Plaut,
Labour Party, 150 Walworth Road,
London SE17

Letters

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

MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Hundreds of thousands joined the CND march in London on October 24. Photo: Militant.

Rank and file must discuss all issues

Dear Comrades
Being an active member of my union I was shocked to see the stand taken by the TGWU during the Labour Party deputy leadership elections. At my branch the instructions read 'please take a general consensus of union members.' Being on holiday at this time I learned that at least half the membership were not consulted. And the press and media constantly reminded us about "democracy".
May I remind the active officials that any T&G debates, no matter of what nature, must be taken to branch meetings where, in this case, the two candidates policies could have been discussed and debated free from pressure of press and media propaganda. It is clear to see that Tony Benn

was the only candidate who stood on TUC policy and TGWU policy. The T&G executive should have had no choice but to vote for Benn.

Having not been pleased with the T&G so called democratic position on this issue and the way it was carried out at branch level, with no leadership being given, activists in the T&G and other unions can rest assured that I will be conducting a campaign to make sure that policies of the TUC and TGWU are democratically discussed and debated at branch level. It is at rank and file level that the Labour Party was founded by our forefathers, to take working people forward to true socialist future.

Yours fraternally
Brian Muller
Shop steward 4/226
branch TGWU.

Support for PASOK—even on those dreamy holiday islands!

Dear Comrades

I have just returned from a holiday in Greece, which coincided with the General Election. For the two weeks of my visit, I heard the Greeks talk of little else. Having only just arrived, the taxi driver at the airport, before even driving off, smiled and said "Tomorrow election. Oli Oli PASOK" which though difficult to translate, literally means 'All, all for PASOK.'

Although I was staying on a small island, which until now had been fairly conservative in its political views, the effects of the PASOK campaign and victory were enormous. The young fishermen were the party workers, and the older Greeks seemed to have also been inspired by the campaign.

At a meeting held by the right-wing New Democracy Party, some Greeks stood up and shouted "stop telling us what PASOK won't do, and tell us what you think you're going to do" to which the speaker had no

reply! It seems as though only PASOK was seen as offering a way forward.

Equality for women was a major issue, and after the results were announced, women were embracing each other, and joining in the celebrations. The press had large photos of the National Police head quarters and the Secret Police building with black smoke belching from the window, as the police celebrated the victory by burning the secret files kept on so many Greek civilians!

The thing that most struck me was the unity, hope and optimism of the working people. In this the second election since the military rule of the colonels, many of the Greeks I talked to had consciously voted for the socialist transformation of society. It remains to be seen whether the Papan-dreou government will live up to their expectations or follow the sorry road of Mitterand in France.

One thing however was obvious, and that was the immense potential for the rapid growth of Marxist ideas, even in the traditional backward and isolated islands.

Yours fraternally
Elena Winch
Yeovil LPYS

A good suggestion from an old class fighter

Dear Comrade Editor

I have been a socialist for all my life, and I'm now 68 years old. During the course of all those years I have seen, and visited many parts of the world. As a youth, I learnt my socialism from the real old timers of the movement. Some of them, had participated in many of the great industrial struggles, of the later part of the nineteenth century, and the early years of the present century. I was privileged to hear the great Tom Mann speak at a mass rally against Fascism. As a boy I vividly remember the 1926 General Strike. For six years I fought against Hitler, worked with the Italian partisans, and saw the Italian workers betrayed by reformism, in 1943-44.

I'm a regular reader of "Militant" and I would like to put forward the following suggestion. Perhaps once a month the "Militant" could feature a column, telling the great story of the long history of the working class movement. The column could be devoted to informing the young people, who with thirsting minds, are now flooding into the labour movement, in ever increasing numbers. Inform them of the great class battles, which many of those struggles were won by the workers.

It could take the form of notes, which could go back into our past, starting with the struggle to form the first Town Guilds. The London Apprentices, the weavers, bakers and other artisans fights for the recognition for their crafts. The London match girls' strike. The many peasant risings. The English Revolution, when

the people cut off a king's head. The story of the Levellers, Diggers. The Chartist movement for a shorter working day. Again, things like the two day armed uprising in Barry in 1327.

How all this activity helped to form the class consciousness of our forefathers. Implant in them a feeling of pride, as a member of the class that has been in the vanguard of those struggles. Create, and build an inner feeling of the glories of our class, whom, after all, make everything of value, usefulness and beauty.

In this way show our class, that we are the rightful inheritors of the future. We have the will, the confidence and the ability, as the only class with a future. Make them fully aware and understand the class content of our past history.

Help the young, and the not so young to a deeper recognition of the importance of all our past, so that we can better understand the position of what is happening today.

With comradely greetings
Austin J Barnett.
Littlehampton, Sussex.

We couldn't agree more, Austin. Only recently the editors were discussing such a column. But to be honest with the present escalation of events, 'Militant' increasingly has a crisis of space every week as it tries to cover all the latest developments within the labour movement, and in addition, detailed historical articles obviously take up much time and resources; eg research etc. Still, we agree in principle and are moving towards this idea. In the meantime we will continue to carry regular historical features. And we appeal to older readers to keep us supplied with material.

How should socialists approach nuclear disarmament?

Dear Comrades

Once again I have to take issue with Rob Sewell on the subject of CND.

Of course the only guarantee of permanent peace is the establishment of an international socialist society; but this is not likely to happen in the immediate future. In the meantime, we are threatened with a nuclear holocaust, which may erupt any day; I do not accept that the "pre-

conditions" laid down by Rob Sewell and other writers in "Militant" are really necessary. Therefore I believe in common with other members of CND that if we can't get rid of nuclear weapons altogether right away, it would be a good start to clear them out of Britain and Western Europe—and Eastern Europe too.

The development of the anti-nuclear campaign is a serious threat to Anglo-American imperialism; this is shown by the vicious attacks on CND which are being made by the government, the media, and NATO-financed bodies like the "Labour Committee for Transatlantic Understan-

ding"; it can also have serious repercussions in the East, too.

Under such circumstances, I would have expected "Militant" comrades to have given wholehearted support to CND; and I appeal to them to do just that.

It may be that "Militant" comrades are somewhat suspicious of CND because they are suspicious of anything which resembles a "popular front". But if I find myself rubbing shoulders with CND members who are Liberals, or even Tories, does this mean that I have to "soft pedal" on my socialist views? Do comrades think

that those people might influence me, but that I can't influence them? There is no reason whatsoever why socialists who belong to CND should be diverted from the fight for socialism.

Incidentally, in recent weeks, our local paper has printed a number of letters attacking CND, in the name of "British Atlantic Committee". I would be glad of any information about this organisation; especially about any NATO connections, if such exist.

Yours fraternally
Jim Parkes
Walsall

The issue of war must be explained in class terms

Rob Sewell replies;

Comrade Jim Parkes' letter about disarmament enables us to clarify some of the real issues involved. Jim states that a nuclear holocaust "may erupt any day", and rejects the preconditions laid down by 'Militant' for such a war. Here Jim makes a fatal error. If no preconditions are necessary for world war, then why haven't we experienced annihilation over the last 20 years or so? Have we just been very lucky?

We must be very

clear—'Militant' provides a very thorough analysis of events. It explained in class terms the developments and contradictions that are developing in society. We repeat it is superficial nonsense to explain the cause of war as being due to the nasty character of individuals, or as starting by chance or by mistake. World war has not broken out because of the presence of a class balance of forces.

What do we mean by the 'balance of class forces'? The only regimes that would initiate and engage in nuclear warfare would be totalitarian military police dictatorships, emerging from the crisis-ridden capitalist systems of the United States and Western Europe. Of course, at pre-

sent the capitalists are unable to establish such regimes, because of the strength of the working class. The balance of class forces is unfavourable to the capitalists—there are no open military dictatorships in Western Europe.

However, that situation will never last indefinitely. In the 1930s capitalism turned to fascism to solve its problems, which paved the way for the second world war. Over the next ten years or so, again the capitalists will be forced by the crisis to attack the democratic rights won by the working class. If the working class fail to carry through the socialist transformation, due to misleadership, then the way will be open to reaction.

The balance of class forces will have changed to the advantage of the capitalists, who in turn will attempt to bring totalitarian (more likely military dictatorships rather than fascist states) regimes to power, with the consequences that has for the prospect of nuclear annihilation.

Our duty is to tell those in CND the truth about the situation. We must explain the real causes of war and link it to the need for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of socialism. Only then, as comrade Jim agrees, will peace be guaranteed and the threat of nuclear war be removed once and for all.

Yours fraternally
Rob Sewell.

How a Labour council should NOT act

Dear comrades

While a Knowsley family describe themselves as 'having to live like pigs' without a wall between their kitchen and bathroom, the office of the Chief Executive of Knowsley has had £56 a roll spent on wallpaper, during redecoration costing £21,000.

This is the Labour council which suggested taking away puddings from school meals as an economy measure, although this was

not carried out due to a storm of protest.

No one will take responsibility for the office suite which has caused, not surprisingly, resentment from local authority workers and local people who have had to suffer the bad housing and living conditions. Instead of the council having £21,000's worth of redecoration done to their executive's office, they should be looking for ways to fight back against Tory cuts, and improving the living conditions of the people who they were elected to represent.

Ian Morris
Ormskirk LPYS.

Militant Calendar

'YOUTH AGAINST THE TORIES'

Price £1.30 (inc. p&pp) from Militant Calendar, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN



Build

Militant

ads

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

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target for year
Eastern	5155		7100
East Midlands	3775		5500
Hants & Dorset	2977		5200
Humberside	1934		3500
London East	5636		7600
London West	2914		4800
London South	4389		5500
Manchester & Lancs	3010		5800
Merseyside	3898		6600
Northern	4606		8600
Scotland East	2428		4400
Scotland West	4410		7500
Southern	5533		7100
South West	2291		3500
Wales East	1384		2600
Wales West	2881		4600
West Midlands	5153		8600
Yorkshire	5076		9000
Others	19776		12500
Total received	87,226		120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR-£120,000

KEEP IT ROLLING IN!

All the press headlines about Labour's left, and in particular 'Militant' imply that the working class and socialist ideas are "disrupting" Britain.

Our readers and supporters know that it is the Tories and their system which are ruining the lives of millions. Their latest plan for compulsory youth slavery shows how they put our interests a very poor second to reviving their slumping profits.

Two of our readers have shown us what they think of this and other Tory 'solutions': a Midlothian Militant supporter sent us £150 from his redundancy payment, and an East London LPYS member £100 from back pay. They know that far from being "destructive" our Marxist ideas are real solutions.

Thanks also to TGWU 5,909 Branch (£20), POEU Conference delegate (£30 from expenses), Bootle CLP £25, Mersey printworkers £7, Austin & Pickersgill workers (Sunderland) £7.50, Universal Grinding Wheels supporters (Staffs) £4, Perth supporters £21, Eastwood and Kimberley LPYS (Notts) £5, Blackley LPYS (Lancs) £10, and Neath LPYS £1.75.

Militant readers' meetings in Wakefield, Reading, Chester-le-Street, Cwmbran, and the Medway towns, raised over £80. There were numerous discussion groups in places like Margate and Wolverhampton, and in Stafford, a Militant rally

By Steve Cawley

together with the proceeds of a jumble sale and £3 from Stafford LPYS's unbeaten football team, brought us £150.

The bulk of this week's total of £2,396.78 was made up from a very large number of relatively small individual donations. Two of the larger ones, however, were fees passed on by TV companies who wanted to interview our supporters. Thanks to Jeremy Birch (Birmingham) and Peter Taaffe for £47 and 120 West German Deutschmarks respectively.

Other contributors include R Crawford (Wanstead & Woodford CLP) £20, J P Brown (Manchester) and A White (Aberdeen) both £15, C Cawley (Bridgend), C East (Croydon) and J Cummins (Stevenage) (all tenners), M Harris (Cardiff), J Castle (Waltham Forest), K O'Connor (Stepney), S Hunter (Burnley) and B Fee (Hull AUEW) for amounts between £5 and £10 and fivers from amongst others W Haynes and R King (Birmingham TGWU), J Atkinson (Hull), S Evered (Bath), and B Dixon (Bermondsey).

Of course the majority of our contributions are less than £5, but we can't mention everyone because of space. Those whose donations ranged from 55p to £4 included J May (Jobs Express), A Mclean (Plymouth), A Glen (Stirling), B Laverick (Hull) and M Sewell (Ayrshire).

This Week
£2,396

Fund raising can be fun: £181 so far from the Southampton Militant bazaar, £31 from Swindon's Maggie Bonfire Party, and over £130 from Brighton's Xmas bazaar are evidence of that. Over £70 has come in from the West of Scotland's social evening in Ealing, £5.80 from a raffle at Richard Barnett's 25th birthday (as he says, any excuse), £15 from an Edinburgh 'home brew' session and an excellent £50.50 from Liverpool's sponsored runners J Thomas, M Douglas and B Hughes and the rest.

With £87,226 already col-



SOCIALIST XMAS CARDS. Set of 4 original Hardman cartoons. 60p per set (inc. envelopes) + 14p post & packing. 5 sets—£2 + 30p post & packing 10 sets—£3.50 + 60p post & packing. Order bulk sets and boost your area's fighting fund. All proceeds to Militant Fighting Fund. Send cash with order to Eddie McParland, 81 Troughton Road, Charlton, London SE7.

Build Militant Winter Draw

(Promoter: D Smith, 73 Armond Road, Witham, Essex)
1st Prize Video System (including camera, etc) or £1,000. 2nd Prize Portable TV/Radio/Cassette (or £100) Plus 8 other prizes!! To be drawn 9th January, 1982. Get you tickets now from your Militant seller! Don't miss out!

lected a big effort of about £8,000 each week for just the last four weeks of our Fighting Fund year (which ends on 10 January 1982) will get us to our target of £120,000. It seems from the chart that a number of areas are moving quite rapidly now, and will move even faster as the Christmas socialising gets really under way.

The ideas of 'Militant' worry the moneybags who own and control the bosses' press. Worry them even more with Christmas donations and collections to make 'Militant' an even bigger and better paper. Keep the money rolling!

Hull Militant Readers Meeting 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Pat Wall. Wed 16 December, 7.30pm, Gainsboro' Restaurant, (2nd floor), Anlaby Road, Hull.

NORTHAMPTON Militant Readers Meeting. 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Dave Nellist (Prospective Parliamentary Candidate, Coventry SE). Angel Hotel, Bridge Street, Thursday 17 December, 7.30 pm.

Militant Marxist discussion groups, every fortnight in Waltham Forest. For details contact: Janice Dale or Mike Cleverley (01) 519 0961.

Poole Labour Party Young Socialists Public Meeting, 'Give us a future'—Youth demand jobs! Wednesday 16 December, 8.00pm. Speaker: Dave Beckwith (Poole LPYS), who travelled on Jobs Express. At the Central Hotel, Ashley Cross, Parkstone. ALL WELCOME.

KARL MARX T-SHIRTS AND SWEATSHIRTS. Sizes and colours for small—32-34; medium—34-36; large—38-40; extra large—42-44. Red motif on white, yellow, sky blue, bottle green, navy, black (+ sweatshirt grey and mid-blue). Cost: T-shirts £3.25; sweatshirts £6.75 (both prices include postage and packing). Plain T-shirts and sweatshirts also available, deduct 25p from price. Send cheques and postal orders to R Harris, 35 Westminster Court, Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 1UR.

Hackney North LPYS Yuletide Pop. Live Bands: 'The Badges' and 'Walking Wounded'. Friday 11 December 7.30pm. At 'Crown and Castle', Kingsland Road, Dalston Junction, Hackney. Admission £1.50 (75p unwaged).

TROTSKY 'MILITANT' PAMPHLETS

In the Middle of the Road 60p
Against the Stream 30p
The Class, the Party and Leadership 20p
or £1 for all three (price includes p&tp)
from World Books, 1 Mentmore Terrace,
London E8 3PN

CELEBRATE XMAS AND NEW YEAR WITH 'MILITANT'

Essential for all supporters. 1982 'Militant' Year Planner, 60p each; 50p 10 and over. Orders M. Tansey, 10 Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone, Kent. Phone 0303 55514

New Years Greetings in MILITANT

Get your LPYS, Labour Party or trade union branch to put New Years greetings in Militant. Greet the labour movement and help to build Militant at the same time! But hurry—closing date for copy is Saturday 19th December.

Rates:
SEMI DISPLAY; 3col cms (up to 15 words) £3
6 col cms (up to 25 words) £6
DISPLAY; 1/16th page £10

Send greetings or write for forms to Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Looking for a gift for the socialist with everything? Give the ideal Christmas present...A SUBSCRIPTION TO 'MILITANT'!

£4 for 13 weeks, £8 for 26 weeks, £16 for 52 weeks. Take one out now as the rates go up in February.

NEW MILITANT LEAFLET now available. 'What we stand for' leaflet. Size A5 (13cm x 20cm). Duplicate details of your local Militant Public Meeting on the back. Phone orders to Circulation Dept. 01-986 3828.

Ashton-under-Lyne CLP Day of Action Saturday 12 December 10am Droylsden, Ashton, and Mossley town centres. 1pm Rally: Ashton Town Hall. Speakers include: Robert Sheldon MP, Doug Hoyle MP, Lawrence Coates LPYS, trade unionists from Laurence Scotts.

Heeley Constituency Labour Party are currently involved in re-selection procedure for this Labour held seat. Applications to secretary Mrs. C Bartholomew, 14 Overland Way, Sheffield S14 1JF.

London LPYS Weekend School. Friday 15th January 1982-Sunday 17th January in Canterbury. Lots of discussion around topics like the development of mankind and Marxist economics.

Club night, excellent food, total cost £12 includes a meal on Friday night and all meals and transport (from London) for the weekend. For more details, send deposit of £2 to Anne Beales, Chairman London LPYS, c/o 150 Walworth Rd., London SE 17.

Southend Labour Party Young socialists present: 'The Trial of Thatcher'. 50p admission—25p for the unwaged. Wednesday 16th December, 8.30pm. The Labour Hall, Lionel Road, Canvey Island.

Industrial Reports

● Support SA workers.

Workers in South Africa are under attack from the Telephone Manufacturers of SA company, a subsidiary of the GEC group. The bosses there have refused to deal with the Metal and Allied Workers Union, dismissing all 1600 workers. The full force of the police has been used against the locked out workers. The South African MAWU are appealing to the British labour movement for support—already a joint meeting by the Trades Council, LPYS and Anti-Apartheid in York has been held to raise the issue. For further information contact: MAWU, 7 Fine's building, 28 Voortrekker Street, Benoni, Transvaal, South Africa.

● Steward victimised

After a two month strike at Evershed and Vignoles in Chiswick, management were forced to back down and re-instate Frank Curtis, a senior shop steward threatened with redundancy. However, it was on company's terms and they have now been able to force Frank out on the grounds of him being unable to complete a training programme, which management made impossible for him to do. This incident is a warning to all trade unionists, especially those employed by the parent company, Thorns.

● Bournemouth CNALP

Delegates from the Southern District Youth Conference of NALGO were among the audience of a Campaign for NALGO Affiliation to the Labour Party (CNALP) meeting in Bournemouth. Chris Harpum, a delegate to the conference, explained the need for NALGO—the fourth largest union in the country—to involve itself in the Labour Party, the party of the labour movement. After the meeting there were many inquiries about the activities of CNALP and the LPYS.

● Lakes CNALP

CNALP held another successful meeting in the Lakes area. Over 50 members of the South Lakeland District Council branch attended—an excellent turnout considering the branch has 250 members spread over 300 square miles! They heard a debate between Roger Bannister for CNALP, and Jim Gregson who was against affiliation to the Labour Party. While Roger declared himself as a socialist, Mr Gregson attempted to remain 'non-political'—until Roger pointed out he was in fact a card carrying Tory Party member!

● Tees dock strike

"That's solidarity in action" was the comment of one Tees docker on learning that dockers in Sweden had decided to block a container ship bound for the Tees. This magnificent example of international solidarity was a great boost to the morale of the dockers on the picket line. One battle has already been won — management withdrew demands for manning reductions and in-

creases in work targets, but replaced it with a derisory 3% pay offer. This was overwhelmingly rejected at a mass meeting. The strike is now into the fourth week and beginning to bite.

● Birmingham buses

'If I won the pools, I'd set up my own paper, so no working man would have to read the lies they print in the Mail'. That was the reaction of one driver to the Birmingham Evening Mail's 'coverage' of a dispute over the West Midlands Transport's 5% pay offer (£4 a week) to bus drivers. Birmingham's only evening paper attacked the busmen for 'disruptive' one day strikes. The drivers want a 12% rise and parity with other bus drivers throughout the country. The 'Mail' has run scare stories about drivers earning £150 a week, but they fail to mention that a driver would have to work over 70 hours a week to earn 150 gross, since their basic rate of pay is only £1.6688 per hour! Also, as one bus worker put it, the 5% offer has got more strings attached to it than 'Brains in Thunderbirds'!

● EETPU lobby

A lobby of up to eighty electricians from branches as far away as Glasgow converged on Hayes Court, the national EETPU headquarters near Bromley on 7 December to protest at the closure of at least 14 branches by the National Executive.

To the anger of the delegation National Executive members refused to open the gates, which had been padlocked! Mounted police were on the gates! When some members got over the gates, the delegation were allowed into the grounds but were still denied access to full timers, and most NE members barged their way past the lobbies.

Members retaliated by constantly tapping on the windows. When the NE meeting went upstairs the lobbies climbed up a ladder and continued to tap on the windows, but still they refused to meet the delegation. The delegation met and decided on the need to keep up pressure against closure of branches and for democratisation of the union.

● Miners' pay

At an Edinburgh Trades Council meeting, Jocky Thompson of Bilston Glen NUM reported that his branch executive recommended rejection of the NCB's 9.1% pay deal.

In the last year miners achieved a 6% increase in productivity and saved the NCB £50 million through the loss of 10,000 jobs. The 1982 coal price increase would bring in £200 million extra, yet the offer was worth £99 million and that includes money for the basic rate and all bonus payments.

Jocky gave the miners' answer to the Board's offer; "Miners dinnae eat percentages, they eat mince and tatties!" Bilston Glen will throw out this offer and call for industrial action to get a fair deal for miners, and to get rid of Thatcher and her crew of wreckers.

'THEY TREAT US LIKE ROBOTS'

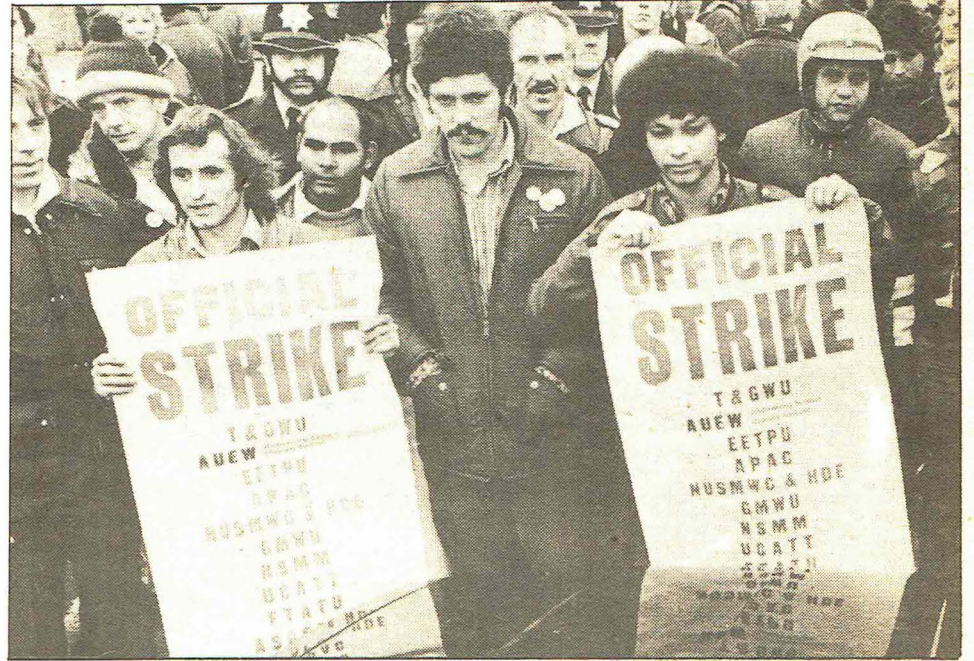
British Leyland workers on the mass picket at the Coventry plant on 2 November. Photo: Militant

Although workers at British Leyland's Longbridge plant have returned to work, the situation remains volatile.

There were understandable scenes of anger at the mass meeting on Friday, especially from the night shift workers who have had an hour added to their shift. Also, track speeds will be increased. Yet the only 'concession' from the management is an extra six minutes for relaxation periods! The vote of acceptance for this 'agreement' was very narrow—with only a majority of 46, which shows the situation could easily swing back to a dispute.

Before the mass meeting on Friday, a Metro production worker told 'Militant' how the dispute erupted after the BL workers had gone back to work after November's pay claim battle:

"The company told us to accept the 3.8% or lose your job so we accepted reluctantly. As soon as we got back to work we worked half a shift and in the dinner time, they said, we're putting in this 39 hour week—if you don't like it



that's it.

"We wanted to talk about it but the management put us in dispute, took us off the clock at dinner time, stopped the tracks; some men went home since the management weren't paying them. Half way through the afternoon they decided to run the tracks again but there weren't enough men left to run them and it snowballed from there.

"They want us to finish at 4 o'clock on Friday; they want 40 hours' production in 39 hours! Productivity has increased even more than management expected. We were doing 16 cars an hour on the Allegro. When the Metro first started we were on 24 an hour, that went up to 26, then 28. Now we're up to 32. We've got no regulation on our tracks, they can speed them up when they like.

"The only way to get the management to talk is to stop the whole lot, we've found that going back to work and talking has been a waste of time. It's not really a 'tea break' that's the issue; it's relaxation time, because when you're working on the track you're working like a robot and you're treated like a robot. There's nothing human about working on a production line."

Democracy - bosses style

Waiters at Luigi's restaurant in Covent Garden face the sack for daring to join the Transport and General Workers' Union.

Thousands of catering workers in London's West End are now looking to these mainly Italian workers to break out of the ghetto of low wages and long hours, subservience, fear and exploitation suffered by immigrant workers in the entertainment capital of Britain.

The response of the

forces of law and order has been to bully these workers back into line. The Tory "code of conduct" on picketing now limits unions to only 6 pickets; but last week police from Bow Street gave an "instruction" that only two pickets would be allowed to stand outside Luigi's to give leaflets to customers!

Picketing began last month after the victimisation of waiters for joining the union. Three of the six sacked workers have taken their case of unfair dismissal to an industrial tribunal, but the other three cannot because they had been there less than a year.

In August a majority of the workers had joined the

union—20 out of 24—and elected Gianni Palermio as their shop steward. But when the padrone, Luigi Primavera, arbitrarily sacked a union member he refused to even speak to Gianni. The workers immediately held a demo, and this fine "entrepreneur" declared war on the union.

The boss has refused to sign an agreement on conditions of employment, saying "I don't want a union in my house—this is democracy!" He has refused to settle through ACAS, writing them off as trade unionists and his own workers as "a bunch of communists".

Finally he sacked the shop steward and hired a

lawyer to get the remaining staff to sign a legal document stating that they are not union members—the classical method of bosses back in the industrial revolution!

The bosses can only get away with such ruthless methods because of the difficulties of organising strong unions in the catering industry. That's why other union branches, particularly the TGWU, must give their weight to these brothers. Messages of support to: Gianni Palermio, INCA-CIGL, 152 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2.

By B.K.

FORDS

As we go to press, workers at Ford plants throughout the country are voting on whether to reject the company's pay offer.

Voting has already taken place at Halewood, Merseyside, and the workers are in favour of strike action from 5 January. The workers are fighting for a £20 a week increase and a 35-hour week. Yet the Ford bosses are only offering a 7.4% 'rise' with numerous strings attached.

Besides a derisory offer, the workers at Ford Halewood were further angered by management's two-faced attitude.

The stewards' committee at the Halewood Trans-

mission Plant was told that throughout November and up to 14 December, there would have to be 350 redundancies made from the workforce of 2,000.

The reasons for this callous move? They were told that they could not make the gear box cheap enough so they were inefficient, and they could not produce the same quality as that attained by Fords of Germany and France.

The workers backed down before these claims and 350 jobs were lost through voluntary redundancies and early retirement.

But at the end of November the workforce received letters from the company stating that the best manual gear boxes are

now being produced, that they can hold their own with the best and that they are now "a team that can boast mutual loyalty with impressive skills and a will to succeed." What a U-turn!

Two days later, however, they were informed that there will be lay-offs in December, of between two and six days per worker. The callous Ford bosses must be taught a lesson.

By Lynne Harrison

Schweppes

Workers at the Schweppes drinks depot in Dunkirk Nottingham, went on strike on Monday 7th December as part of a national strike by Schweppes workers in reply to management's

derisory offer of 6% with a new productivity deal.

Shop steward for the warehousemen Frank Tomlinson said, "I've worked here for 31 years, and I have never known a mood like this among the blokes. They are unanimous in rejecting this offer. This lot made £66 million profits last year, and we feel that some of this should come to this place.

Frank laid it on the line; "These aren't the days of cloth caps anymore. We have blokes who can read share charts and stocks returns."

The workers at Schweppes in Nottingham are rock solid in their determination to win a living wage. Their battle will be the first of many in a winter of discontent against the Tories.

By John Fahey (North Nottingham LPYS)

Activist threatened with 'Conspiracy' law — *Industrial Reports*

Defend Ted Eelsey

An activist with the Inland Revenue Staff Federation faces a possible three month prison sentence under the archaic 'conspiracy' laws.

Ted Eelsey, an assistant secretary with the IRSF will appear in court on December 17 charged under the 1875 Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, arising from his role as a full time official co-ordinating industrial action during the civil service strike this year.

Ted covered the West of Scotland area, including Cumberland where workers

By an IRSF member

at the Inland Revenue Accounts Office were out on strike during the dispute.

Management at Cumberland attempted to strike break by transferring mail to other centres. When the strikers traced where the mail was being diverted to, they reported the fact to the people working in these centres, who as fellow trade unionists staged walkouts in protest.

Ted was then charged under this 106 year old act 'that he did persistently follow Mr McMaster (the man in charge of the accounts office) in a disorderly manner and that he hindered him carrying out his official duties.' However, in court in July the charges against him were dismissed as 'irrelevant' by the sheriff. Yet after the dispute had ended, the charges were revived in August with more detailed charges.

Since the end of the dispute, civil service union members have faced harsher working conditions, threatened imposition of changes in facilities for union reps and further job losses. Is it coincidental that the charges against Ted Eelsey have been revived?

The law has repeatedly been used against the labour movement since the days of

the Tolpuddle martyrs, when a group of farm labourers were transported to Australia for joining the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union. The section of the act which Ted is charged with was itself last used in 1890 when a picket was charged after calling out 'knobsticks' at a scab during a dispute!

More recently, in 1972 five dockers were jailed for picketing in defiance of the 1971 Industrial Relations Act, but were released after the TUC threatened a one day general strike. Again in 1972, three Shrewsbury building workers were jailed under the same act used against Ted, for 'conspiracy' and 'causing an affray' (ie picketing).

As in Teds case, the Shrewsbury building workers were charged after the dispute was over, and the Tories are no doubt

again hoping that the unity and resolve stoked up during the dispute has now dissipated.

They must be answered by massive trade union pressure. Attacks on the labour movement in the past have often brought out its strength. When Ted was first charged there were spontaneous walkouts by IRSF members and the Scottish Air Traffic controllers shut every Scottish airport for a day.

Similar action will be held on December 17. The IRSF have called a half day strike with local rallies and protest marches, and a demonstration will be held outside the Sheriffs court in Edinburgh when Ted appears in court. It is essential all trade unionists support the civil service unions in this struggle—the Tories' anti-labour laws must not go unchallenged.

CPSA election results

The right wing in the CPSA have retained their hold on the posts of General Secretary and General Treasurer.

The voting in the elections was as follows:-

General Secretary; Graham J A 44,447, Macreadie J 28,009, Brandstatter K 7,199.

General Treasurer; Raywood J 32,374, Ainsworth T 29,233, Thomason Mrs J 12,478, Sewell J 5,599.

The Broad Left candidate for General Secretary, John Macreadie, who fought a bold and enthusiastic campaign said after the results were announced; "I wish to thank all those union members and branch officials who supported and worked for me in the General Secretary election.

"Although I have not been elected General Secretary on this occasion I am not disappointed with the result. The Broad Left has had to overcome the right wing majority on the National Executive Committee openly recommending their favourite candidate to members in the official election material.

Broad Left had to overcome smears by the right wing

"Once again we have had to overcome the usual campaign of smears from the Tory controlled press. We were also treated to numerous hysterical allegations of electoral irregularity. It is now obvious that these allegations were worthless. Members have seen these attacks on the good name of our union branches and branch officials, for what they were—a cynical and blatant attempt to drum up support for the right wing's favourite candidates. Against all these obstacles the Broad Left can be pleased with our votes.

"The election is for a 5 year period. During that time the attacks on our members living standards and jobs will increase as private enterprise declines even further. The fight to implement our conference policies to defend living standards jobs and conditions will therefore continue.

"The General Secretary and General Treasurer result show the wide reservoir of support in the union for the policies of the Broad Left. The Broad Left of the union is much stronger today than before. We can look forward to the future with confidence."

By Pat Byrne
(DHSS Section Executive, personal capacity)

Kirkstall Forge

Nurses from St James, engineers, Labour Parties and Joe Dean, the local AUEW sponsored MP, have all found their way to the picket lines to express support to the strike at Kirkstall Forge.

Inside the factory it would seem that senior management are now totally isolated; the strike fund has received £253 from the main staff union, along with a further £100 from the foremen and £36 from the managers' ASTMS branch. The bosses have offered a miserly wage rise (see Militant 580) and a profit sharing bonus scheme. Profit sharing and productivity strings are separate to these negotiations. A steward said that if profit sharing was introduced he would be having to pay for the work's manager's company car; top management could afford to go abroad 3 times a year, while he could not afford to take the family to Bridlington for a holiday. Profit sharing means nothing to the 600 workers who were made redundant from the Forge in the past when profits had been low, and would disappear if the company were to launch an investment programme. Recently £17 million has been invested and will be taken off before profit sharing is calculated.

Similarly in the propaganda war before the strike, workers were told to accept the money on offer in favour of job security. When this was questioned on one section, the local management said talk of job security in this climate could mean as much as for only 12 months.

Engineers have found out in past struggles that only the power of a united workforce, with support from the wider trade union movement, can provide any form of job security.

By John Ingham



Strikers on the picket line at Chamberlain Phipps, Bishop Auckland. At a recent Arthur Scargill meeting in Spennymoor, Durham, one of the strikers explained why he was at the meeting. "I am 51 now. I've worked since I was 14. Always been a good worker. A few weeks ago we went on a one day token strike over a wage cut. The next day we were sacked. How will I get a job now? We've got to fight for our jobs back. On my record will be 'finished for taking part in industrial action'. No gaffer will start me with that. Now I'm branded as a trouble maker. "Before, I was Labour but against the left. Now I can see why Scargill and Benn get support. It is you young people (LPYS and Militant) who have given us the help." Photo: Denis Doran

P&O victory

The sit-in for jobs on board the Ulster Queen and Ulster Prince has ended in victory.

After 4 weeks the crews of both P&O ferries which ran between Liverpool and Belfast decided to call off their action. The Action Committee recieved a standing ovation from the rank and file NUS members when they were told that the new Liverpool to Belfast

By Joe Anderson
(P&O Action Committee, NUS)

service resumes in the new year with guaranteed jobs for all the crews with the exception of 6 crew members over 60 years old who recieved payments of between £11,000 and £20,000.

The Action Committee and NUS officials have also negotiated a payment of

£2,500 for the rest of the crew as a service payment which means that the P&O were pressed to pay wages to the crews until the service starts again.

This great victory was achieved by the determination of the workers sit-in backed up by an Action Committee who had campaigned for and received official support from the NUS executive.

The response of the crews of the rest of the P&O fleet has been magnificent. So effective was the supportive action that it was only 13 hours old when the NUS achieved the breakthrough which led to the present agreement.

The NUS along with the other unions party to the agreement will be ensuring that the terms of the agreement are adhered to.

Liverpool Typists

On Monday at a mass meeting of 3,500 Liverpool NALGO members, over 3,200 voted in favour of escalation of the 7 month long typist dispute, including all-out indefinite strike action should the City

Council sack any member.

The result left Sir Trevor Jones, Liberal Leader of the city council, totally bemused. He had followed the Edwards book of management to the last letter.

Over the weekend he had sent every employee a three page letter telling us how reasonable he was; his faithful managers had called section meetings to impress on members the need

to vote the right way—Sir Trevor even granted time off with pay to attend the meeting!

The mass meeting followed the defeat only two days earlier of left winger Pete Creswell, the NALGO branch secretary, along with the assistant secretary.

However, the strike vote makes Sir Trevor look ridiculous. In Saturday's 'Guardian' he said, "we are

having to defend the members against their own branch executive, which is connected with the Militant tendency". However the members have decided they must fight to defend themselves from Sir Trevor (who is connected with the 'cut and sack tendency').

By Andy Pink
(NALGO Liverpool branch)

SCARGILL LANDSLIDE

Mineworkers want a fighting left-wing leadership. That is the clear message from Arthur Scargill's landslide victory in the National Union of Mineworkers' presidential election.

By Stan Pearce
 (NUM,
 Monkwearmouth
 Colliery, Durham)

In an 80% poll, Arthur Scargill received 70.3% of the total votes, over 100,000 ahead of his nearest rival. So much for all the media attacks, and the insinuations that left policies

would be rejected by the working class! Mineworkers are not

surprised at the result. In the ballot at our pit, the men did not want to use the single transferrable vote system where you voted for first, second and third preference. This scheme was introduced by the union's right wing to try to get a "moderate" candidate elected on second preferences.

The miners wanted Scargill and fighting policies. His campaign throughout the coalfields nationally has brought home clearly the need for the union to fight and his election will be seen as

the green light to get conference decisions implemented, especially early retirement and a four-day week.

The first big battle will be for rejection of the National Coal Board's pay offer. Now the NUM leadership are to recommend industrial action, which is shortly to be put to a special delegate conference.

The NCB offer of 9.1% means a cut in living standards and miners are in no mood to accept that.

In Durham, Scargill spoke to mass meetings

on two visits, and the same was true in every coalfield even in old moderate areas.

In Durham, two of the speakers for the Gala next year are chosen by the NUM lodges. The last four names in the final round of balloting are all left wingers, Jimmy Reid, Dennis Skinner, Tony Benn and Eric Clarke.

The members of the NUM realise our union needs a fighting leadership, and increasingly they see the need for bold socialist policies.



Right out to wreck Party

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

that moves against Militant were necessary to prevent further defections from the party—i.e. to appease the back-stabbing deserters who are ready to go over to the SDP.

Labour Party members, however, will be particularly angry to learn that the committee's majority of one in favour of a witch-hunt depended on the shameful vote of "left-winger" Neil Kinnock. This decision represented a watershed for Michael Foot, and also shows that Kinnock has now allied himself with the right of the PLP.

The millionaires' press, the Tory-dominated television, and Labour's right are cock-a-hoop at the decision. To preserve their monopoly of the Labour Party's parliamentary representation, the right-wingers are prepared to tear the Labour Party apart. But left-wingers on the sub-committee, particularly Tony Benn, Dennis Skinner, and Frank Allaun made it clear that there would be a storm of opposition from the rank and file of the party.

Tony Benn promised that he and other left-winger who opposed a witch-hunt would "fight like tigers" to defend the democratic right of all party members and groups to propagate their views within the party.

Taking up Healey's allegation that the activities of Militant were damaging the party, Tony Benn said that by writing regularly for Express newspapers like the 'Evening Standard' Denis Healey was himself contributing to the reactionary, right-wing propaganda against Labour.

Constituency Parties, said Tony Benn, were extremely disturbed at the dangerous atmosphere the right were trying to whip up. Attempts to panic the party with stories about "subversives at work" could only play into the hands of Labour's enemies.

Dennis Skinner, who vigorously opposed the proposal for an investigation, said that Michael Foot was bending under pressure from right-wing newspapers like the 'Sun' in moving against the 'Militant'. He would oppose an inquiry "all the way".

However, if there was to be an inquiry, said Dennis Skinner, there should be an inquiry into the connections of Labour's right-wing MPs. The links of some right wingers with organisations like the Bilderberg group, a secret body of big businessmen, financiers, generals, and capitalist politicians, should be exposed to the party membership.

Foot argued that action against the Militant was necessary to prevent further defections to the SDP. What the right were proposing, said Tony Benn, was a cleaning-up of the party—to make it fit for the SDP defectors to re-join.

The extent to which the right would go, if allowed by the Party's ranks, is indicated by the challenge to George Galloway, chairman of the Scottish Labour Party. Healey, supported by John Golding, opposed his inclusion (despite his backing from the Transport and General Workers' Union) on the "A List" of parliamentary candidates. Five right wingers on the sub-committee unsuccessfully voted to block his approval!

Arguing forcefully against a witch-hunt, Lawrence Coates, Labour Party Young Socialists' representative on the NEC, said that Labour's ranks would never forgive the right for plunging the Party into a civil war when it should be fighting the Tories. Their votes on this issue would not be forgotten.

There can be no mistake that the investigation is seen by the right as the prelude to a purge of the left—with the possible proscription of

Militant and the expulsion of Militant supporters.

But if the right wing get away with this, where would it end? Other papers would be liable to proscription. Anyone on the left who opposed the right of the PLP would be liable to expulsion.

The truth is, the right want to return to the "thought control" which was used by the Gaitskellite right when they dominated the party. The right say they want an investigation in the name of "democracy". Really they want to return the Labour Party back into a tame—and none too efficient—election machine to do the donkey work to keep right-wing MPs in parliament for life.

This will not succeed. The failure of successive right-wing dominated Labour governments to bring about real change has convinced Labour workers of the need for radical policies—and for party democracy to make sure that Labour governments implement those policies.

If they go ahead and try to purge Militant from the Labour Party the right will face the prospect of disbanding scores, if not hundreds, of constituency parties. Many on the right would not flinch from inflicting this damage on the party. While clamouring for investigations into the Militant, many of the right MPs are already making plans to join the SDP traitors who have already defected.

If the inquiry goes ahead in spite of rank and file protest, Militant will cooperate with the NEC's investigation. We will provide full details of our policies, activities, resources and our finances.

We have already given the National Executive full details of our finances. The right have not been able to produce any evidence whatsoever to substantiate their smears of "sinister sources" of money. As Frank Allaun said at the sub-committee meeting, anyone who thinks that the Militant is subsidised by Moscow or any foreign government must be mad.

At the same time, however, we will renew our demand throughout the labour movement for a full investigation of the business

links of Labour MPs, and the association of some right-wing MPs with bodies financed by the CIA and other sinister organisations.

How many Labour MPs are acting as, in effect, the paid spokesmen of big business? How many have consultancies, directorships, and other connections with big business?

How many right-wing MPs have been connected with organisations like the Bilderberg group and with journals and organisations financed secretly by the CIA or other American government organisations?

Labour's ranks will want answers on these questions.

Militant has nothing to fear from the rank and file of the Labour Party and the trade unions. We have grown in strength because of support for our policies from Labour Party members and active trade unionists. They have been prepared to back their political support with financial donations to strengthen the voice of Marxism in the movement.

Labour's right wing, on the contrary, has lost the argument over policy in the party. They have lost their support amongst the rank and file. That is why they are now resorting to organisational manoeuvres and witch-hunts.

But the ranks of the party, who have fought hard for the democratic gains of recent years, will not stand aside and allow the democratic traditions of the labour movement to be buried by the right.

Militant will not be intimidated by the threat of a witch-hunt. We are confident that we will emerge with honour from any investigation conducted openly and democratically before the ranks of the movement.

But we will not stand aside and allow the right to wreck the party. We will redouble our energies to defend the democratic gains of recent years. We will continue to fight for our right to put forward Marxist ideas within the Labour Party.

We will continue to build the Labour Party, and we will continue to fight for the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

What we stand for

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE



minimum compensation on the basis of proven need.

● A socialist plan of production, democratically drawn up and implemented by committees involving the trade unions, shop stewards, housewives and small businessmen.

● Opposition to the capitalist Common Market, the EEC. For a Socialist United States of Europe as a step towards a World Socialist Federation.

If these policies were taken up and campaigned for by the Labour Party and the trade unions they would win overwhelming support.

Mobilisation of the labour movement on these policies would bring down the Tory government and return a Labour government committed to the implementation of a thorough-going socialist programme in the interests of working people.

ment. We propose that a Labour government should nationalise the newspaper printing plant facilities, with access to these facilities being given to political parties in proportion to their votes at elections.

● Nationalisation of the top 200 monopolies, including the banks and insurance companies which control 80% to 85% of the economy. This should be through an Enabling Bill in Parliament with

Subscribe Now!

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

EUROPE (by air) REST OF WORLD (by air)
 26 issues.... £9.00 26 issues...£14.00
 52 issues...£18.00 52 issues...£28.00

Name
 Address
 Phone no.

Make cheques payable to MILITANT and return to MILITANT, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. Phone: 01-986 3828.