

Militant

THE MARXIST PAPER FOR LABOUR & YOUTH

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1982: TORIES MUST GO !!!

Labour can hammer Tories and SDP -With Socialist Policies

Unemployment up to nearly 3.5 million, inflation still in double figures, and industrial output down.

This is the devastation the Tories will wreak if they are allowed to continue in office throughout 1982.

Ordinary working people will continue to pay for the bosses' crisis by losing their jobs, suffering cutbacks in services and lower living standards. The rich will get fatter while workers tighten their belts another notch.

In his New Year message from fantasyland, Tory Chancellor Howe talks of "clouds lifting" and claims he was right to predict that in 1981 British industry

By Glyn James

would 'more than hold its own'. Did he mean its own funeral?

Last year manufacturing investment, the seed-corn for the future, fell by 13% and is now 18% below the 1979 figure. The most prosperous sector of industry in Howe's madhouse is advertising.

And this year it will get worse. Using the government's own Treasury model, one group of economists forecast that none of Howe's monetary or

spending targets will be met. Inflation will run at 12% this year and not fall below 10% until next year. Unemployment will go above 3m and gradually rise to 3.5m (excluding youth on training schemes) by the end of 1983!

Output will fall by 2% and the Tories will not be able to escape their domestic recession by clinging to the coat-tails of an international boom.

Economic stagnation

The OECD, which groups together the main capitalist powers, predicts that this year there will be less than a 1% growth in the world economy. Stagnation and recession is all that capitalism offers.

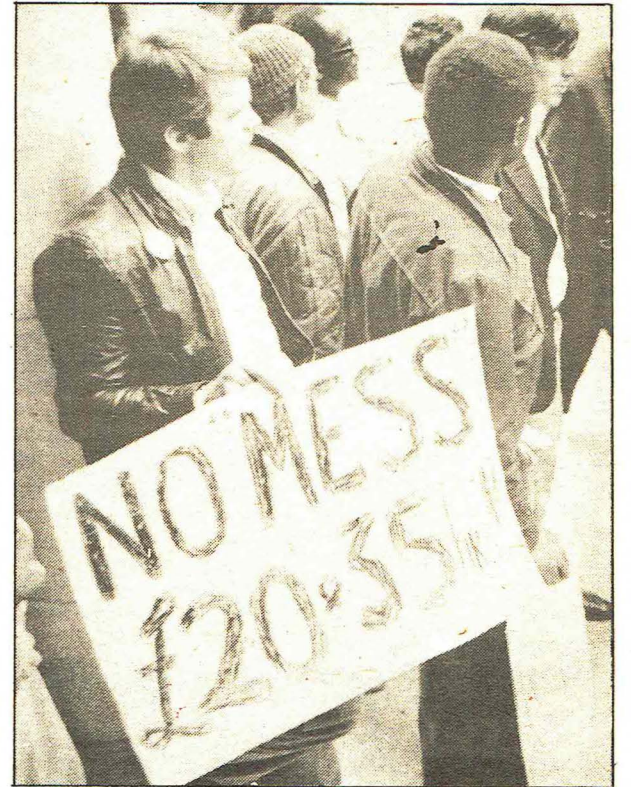
Apologists for Thatcher

have tried to claim that this catastrophic is beneficial for British industry.

Writing in the Sunday Times, 3 January, Ronald Butt argues: 'Mrs Thatcher's policy bears some comparison with the Allies bombing of the Ruhr which forced the Germans to rebuild from scratch. There is nothing like the challenge of incipient ruin to encourage a fight back.'

Although the comparison with war is apt, Butt omits to mention the casualties. The latest research from the Child Poverty Action Group shows that there are at least 2½ million children below the poverty line. Over one in eight families with children now live in poverty. And this government, which has savaged social security, child benefits, and unemployment pay is now proposing to slash a further 2% from supplementary benefit.

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Ford strikers in 1978, fighting for a 35-hour week and a £20 rise

BOSSSES CAN BE BEATEN

There has been a tidal wave of opposition from Ford workers against the recommendation from their leadership to accept the bosses' latest offer.

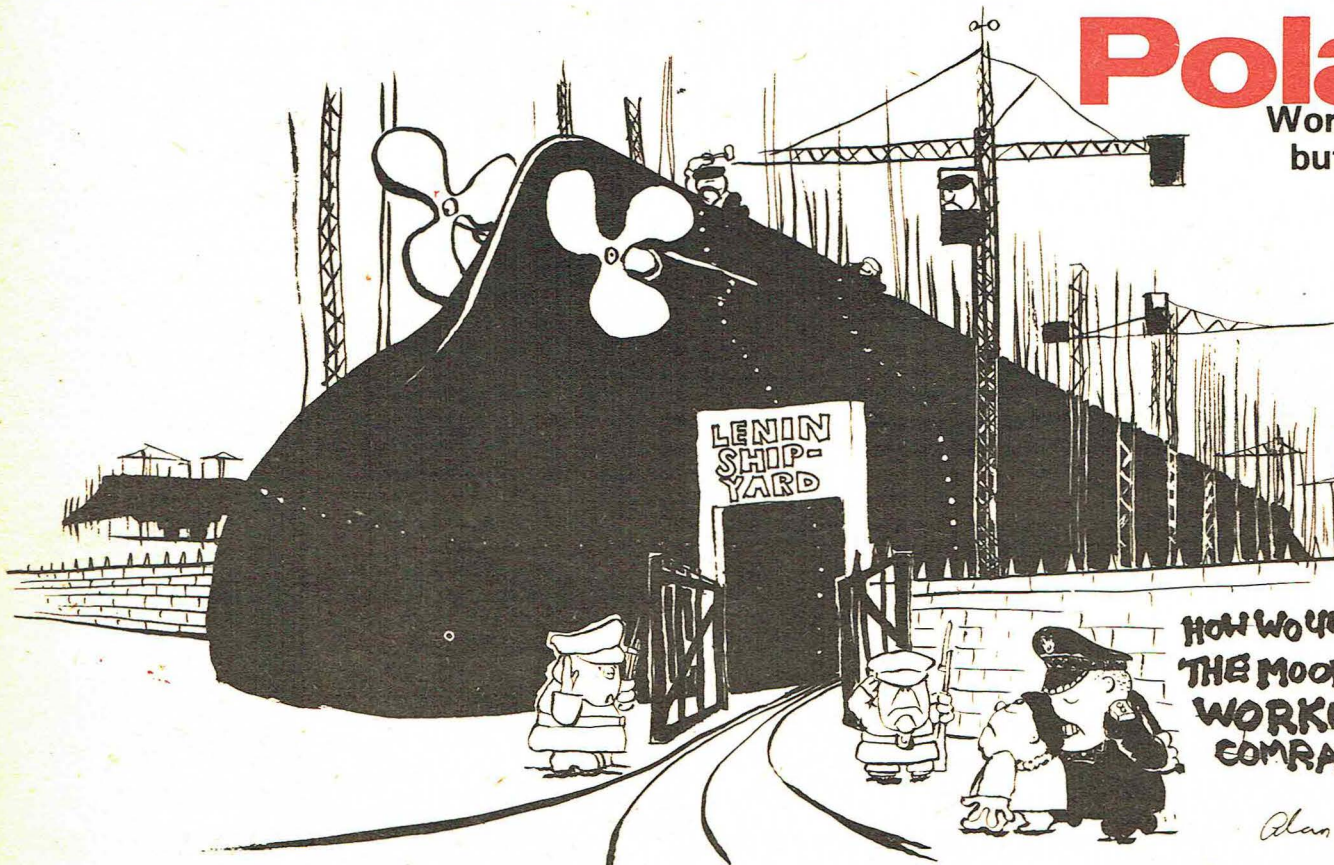
The voting was very finely balanced with a seemingly slight majority in favour of acceptance. But a small majority means that the situation will remain volatile.

As we go to press (January 6) already 12,000 Ford workers are actually out on strike.

By Militant
reporters

Ford workers were outraged when the union leadership said they were to recommend acceptance of the 7.4% pay offer tied to

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Poland

Workers defeated—
but military can't
solve crisis

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Back the Paper that backs You

There are only a few days left to reach the £120,000 target for the 1981 Militant fighting fund.

Support the paper that supports you in your struggles. Help us produce an even better, bigger paper in the future. Rush your donations now.

All raffle ticket stubs and cash must be sent in to reach us by Saturday (9 January). Any donations posted to us over the weekend can be "phoned through" before mid day on Sunday (10 January).

Help the fight against the Tories! Help the fight against the witch-hunt! Donate to 'Militant'. See page 13.

Fighters for Socialism

John Cullen

We regret to announce the death of John Cullen of Liverpool Wavertree Labour Party at the age of 56. John was a tireless worker for the movement and a staunch Labour Party member of 25 years' standing. He was an ardent supporter of 'Militant', working quietly and without flamboyance to produce results in fund raising and paper sales.

The building of a socialist society will need more comrades like John who will be sadly missed. We send our deepest sympathy to his wife, his two daughters and his son.

Where else, but at an election meeting heckling Sir Keith Joseph, would you expect to first bump into Wilf Idle? That was in early 1974.

Our friendship has sadly come to an end as we have to inform 'Militant' readers that Wilf passed away, through cancer, at the age of 38. He went in his sleep on 13 December 1981.

Before Wilf came to Leeds he had already built up a record as an activist. Blacklisted for trade union work in Doncaster, he organised a claimants' service under the authority of the Trades Council.

Doncaster was still a growing town and one of the new plants to move into the area was Coalite. The TGWU moved into discus-

sion with the management and before the plant opened had won a closed shop. Further, because of his claimants' work with striking T&G members the union demanded that Wilf was first on the books.

The 1970s saw the real growth of unemployment and Coalite closed forcing Wilf to come to Leeds, where he gained employment on the railways.

Wilf worked on track-laying for some six years before taking a job portering at St James Hospital, where he worked for the last three years and became the COHSE branch chairman and a steward.

Many union activities over this period were best summed up at the funeral itself. There, a bus load of workers came from St James hospital to pay their last respects and a yellow

British Rail bus found itself parked outside as Wilf's Permanent Way gang came to say goodbye to their old workmate.

In political activity there is only one word for Wilf's manner and that was sharp. As a worker driven into political activity by his life's experiences Wilf's favourite pastime was toppling right-

wing academics.

Many had suffered from crossing swords with him as Wilf fought for socialist ideas as the rough diamond he was. His style was unbelievably popular. Even those who lost votes through Wilf's arguments and examples, clearly understood that the ideas

came from the heart. Through his work in the Labour Party Wilf encouraged all the workers he could come across. He spoke at many Young Socialists meetings throughout the area including an LPYS regional weekend school. Although older right-wing academics were seen as fair game, Wilf always had time for young people at college, whom he understood could be fired with the ideas of socialism, a message that he took through speeches to the university and the polytechnic.

Even while off work sick Wilf managed to top the poll and win a place in the COHSE delegation to the regional Labour Party conference of 1982. Therefore right from the word go the

movement will miss a character and a fighter for the working class.

Heart felt sympathy goes out to all Wilf's family and especially to Maureen, as it was together that they brought so much to our local 'Militant' readers' meetings and meetings of the Leeds movement. Maureen's own words express a full life: "He fought everyone else's battles, but his own he could not win".

These words express so much, yet they manage to hide the warmth of the most genuine couple you could ever know. For my part only one fault of Wilf's comes to mind. He would never admit to being beaten at snooker. But then again who does.

By Jon Ingham

Wilf Idle

wing academics.

Many had suffered from crossing swords with him as Wilf fought for socialist ideas as the rough diamond he was. His style was unbelievably popular. Even those who lost votes through Wilf's arguments and examples, clearly understood that the ideas



SOLIDARITY WITH WHOM? On the "Solidarity with Poland" march to the Polish embassy, 20 December, David Ennals and Peter Shore of the Parliamentary Labour Party's right-wing

"Solidarity" group just happened to bump into Shirley Williams and John Roper of the SDP. PHOTO: ANDREW WIARD (REPORT).

Unite around conference policies

Predictably the capitalist press have given little space to the barrage of resolutions sent by constituency Labour Parties, trade union branches and other labour movement organisations opposing the witch-hunt against 'Militant'.

But when just one constituency party, in Huyton, passed a resolution calling for action against 'Militant' and issued a press statement it achieved front page status in many papers.

One ward in Huyton were so concerned at the constituency party's declaration that they issued their own statement, which is given below.

"We, the Cantril Farm Labour Party Members' Branch disassociate ourselves completely with the statement which was signed by all the major figures in the Huyton Constituency Labour Party, which was published in the 'Liverpool Evening Echo' on Thursday 10 December.

"We express our concern over this deplorable statement, and believe that such irresponsible statements threaten to plunge the Labour Party into renewed turmoil and conflict, and can only result in mass expulsions and purges, and a campaign of intimidation against the whole left wing inside the party.

"We, the Cantril Farm Labour Party Members' Branch, are determined to fight all expulsions and proscriptions within the Labour Party, and reaffirm the belief that unity is our strength, and will endeavour to unite the party around party conference decisions and policies, so as to bring about united policies and action to defeat our political opponents."

PURGE TORIES NOT US

The following letter was sent to Labour's National Executive by Daisy Rawling a longstanding member of the Labour Party in Newcastle.

It shows the burning anger of Party activists at the witch-hunting moves of the party's right wing.

"It sickens me when I see the right once more trying to get rid of the left in the Labour party.

For 'left' read militant working class who are moving left because of their experience over the past few years.

Cuts in everything, less work, dearer housing etc., and it could not be otherwise, since life in capitalist society has only benefitted them very temporarily.

They want a socialist government that will not betray them like the last Labour government did.

The suggested coalition of the right wing with the Social Democracy, which includes in their ranks Liberals and Tories, smells to me like the sort of betrayal perpetrated by Ramsay McDonald in the Thirties.

The ordinary members stayed loyal to the Labour Party, and worked to build it once again, sometimes at great sacrifice, as I know from my own family's ex-

periences.

The Militant Tendency represents the best traditions of the Labour Party, as I have known it myself, and have heard of it from my parents who were in the labour movement before 1900.

The best traditions of labour

the working class. They seem quite happy to do the work of the ruling class through the press and television.

I am writing to you as a member of Newcastle East Constituency Labour Party (Mike Thomas's constituency). It is no good out-moderating the so-called moderates to win support for Labour.

We want a socialist programme to give jobs and houses, a shorter working week and a good wage in line with the cost of living.

I passed a building the other day, and on it was written, 'The unemployed is an army'. You won't get them fighting on your side by playing the capitalist game, and having a cosy party composed of pussy-footed liberals."

Militant party workers do not wear £200 suits or wine and dine with the upper class. They know what is going on at the grass roots because they are the grass roots.

Some of the leadership today have a contempt for

NUR right-wing attack activists

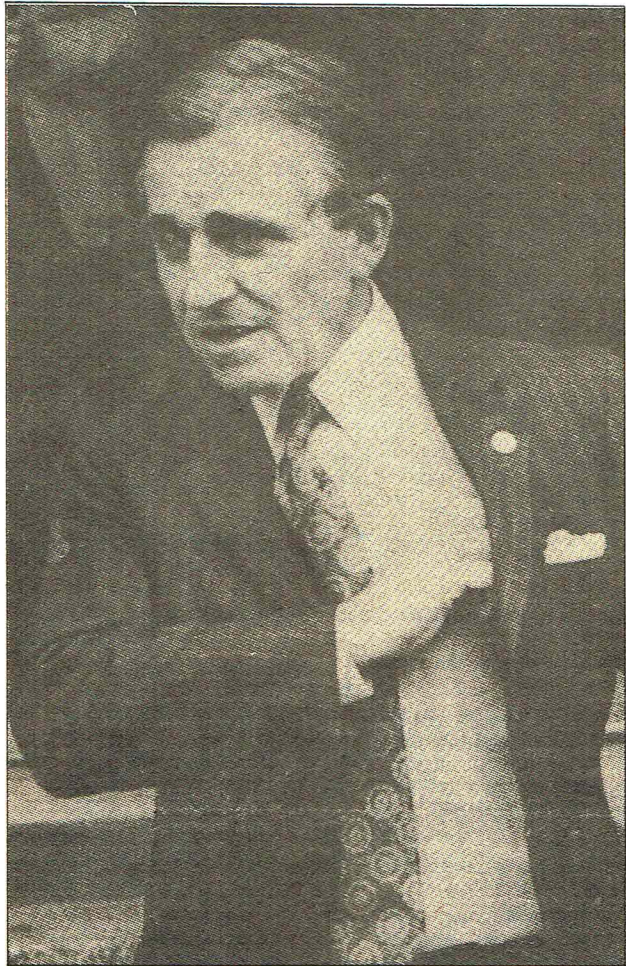
In the railworkers' union the right-wing have been trying to whip up a campaign against left-wing activists.

In August last year, a special meeting of the NUR National Executive Committee was convened to discuss a resolution from Plymouth NUR District council calling on the NEC to take steps to "stop the circulation of *Militant* and other unauthorised literature to Branches and District Councils."

Where NUR members are involved it demanded that the NEC should apply the rule book against them. It has been claimed that fifty other branches have also complained.

A special sub-committee was set up to investigate the alleged rule abuses. Its terms of reference included firstly the *Militant* newspaper, the *Militant* pamphlet *A Fighting Programme for the NUR*, and a letter from *Militant* editor, Peter Taaffe, circulated to all NUR branches.

Secondly the sub-committee was to investigate the Broad Left in the NUR, specifically the role of NUR members involved, brothers Geoff Hensby of Paddington



NUR General Secretary, Sid Weighell.

No.1 Branch, Tom Doyle, Tinsley Branch and Ian Williams, NEC member. Others to be investigated were the 'FORUM—for Unity of the Left in the Rail Industry' and the 'Railworker' group.

This witch-hunt against NUR activists came just when the right wing were attempting to instigate a similar witch-hunt in the Labour Party. Over a period of two months,

many letters passed between Unity House (NUR Headquarters) and those NUR members named.

In June 1981, the founding conference of the Broad Left was held in London and brothers Hensby, Doyle and Williams were billed to speak. The proposed policy statements for discussion which accompanied the leaflet, called for a national minimum wage of £90, a 35-hour week, the building of a 'triple alliance' (between miners, steel and rail workers), election of all top officials, a fight against all rail closures and redundancies, and full support for the democratic gains in the Labour Party.

Silencing political ideas

The decision to set up a special sub-committee was an attempt by the right wing to use the rule book in a bureaucratic manner to defeat the ideas being put forward by *Militant*, and *Militant* supporters in the rail industry. After three months' deliberation, the sub-committee finally submitted two reports to the December meeting of the National Executive Committee.

The first report, signed by the President, the General Secretary, an assistant General Secretary and three NEC members, said that while *Militant* was not under the control of the NUR rule book, they (the signatories) would be failing in their responsibilities not to condemn their interference in the affairs of

the union.

Branches should again be advised by the General Secretary that union affairs should be discussed in the branch and not in meetings organised by unofficial bodies, and further, that circulars not authorised by head office should have no place on any branch agenda.

The first report also stated that:

(1) Tom Doyle was guilty of a breach of rule (10, section 1, clause 10,) and that he be given a warning and asked for a written assurance that he would refrain from issuing unofficial circulars in the future.

(2) Geoff Hensby, should be reminded of his special responsibilities as a branch secretary and national grades conference secretary.

(3) That Ian Williams was in breach of four rules and should be asked for written assurances for the future.

The second report was signed by five NEC members. This rejected the action being proposed against brothers Doyle, Hensby and Williams, on the basis that the rules had been applied in a manner which could be construed as constricting members' political rights.

On the full NEC the first report was defeated by 17 votes to 7. The President ruled, however, that, as he was convinced there was breach of rule and he had signed the first report, the second report could not be accepted.

However, even though rejected by the NUR executive itself, attempts are being made to highlight this first report as definite proof of 'Militant infiltration'. A recent article in *The Guardian* attempted to give credence to the conspiracy theory. The General Secretary is reported (*Guardian* 4 January) to have said that the investigation made it evident that several NUR members were openly involved in the 'Militant Tendency.'

Members will be angry at the fact that Sid Weighell has made such statements to the capitalist press just after the NEC had rejected the report. However, the 17-7 vote on the NEC will be seen by railway workers as a victory for democracy within the union and a further advance in bringing to the attention of the NUR membership the need for action around policies advocated by the Broad Left.

But the right wing will not be satisfied. Attempts will be made to resurrect the first report at the National Conference in June through appeal of an NEC decision.

No doubt branches will oppose these tactics of the right wing and will insist through resolutions and pressure on the leadership that all members' political rights be upheld.

By a NUR member

YOPS CONFERENCE

23rd January

By Willie Griffin
(Sec., YOP Trainees
Union Rights Campaign)

Christmas Day brought the sack for a 17-year-old girl on the youth opportunities programme at West Wales Hospital, Glangwili. The six months of her course had run out and the Manpower Services Commission refused her application for a 3-month extension in the hospital's physiotherapy department.

The YOP Trainees Union Rights Campaign was launched last year to end these abuses.

The successful founding conference last November has helped the drive to unionise YOP workers. In Strathclyde, where a successful half day strike and picket was organised over 400 have joined unions. In Manchester over 200 have joined and a campaign led by YOP workers, the LPYS and local busmen have won agreement in principle from the local council that YOP trainees should have free bus passes.

In Liverpool and in London shop stewards' commit-

tees are being formed and in South Wales, Coventry, Bristol the first recruits are joining the unions.

But the campaign to unionise YOPS has many problems. How do you organise schemes where supervisors are anti-union?

Should YOPsters organise when they are isolated working in small non-union factories, offices or shops? How do you ensure YOPsters are properly represented within the union to make sure their grievances are taken up?

The YOP-TURC activists' conference will be invaluable for those involved in the struggle to unionise YOPS. Activists can draw on the experiences (good and bad) of comrades all over the country in organising YOPS.

It will be invaluable in stepping up the struggle to organise youth. It is important that all areas of the country are well represented. Has a delegation been organised from your town? If not then start organising now.

The conference will also prepare in detail the build up to the YOPS mass lobby of parliament on 25 February. Leaflets, posters, petitions and letters are now available. Has a train or coaches been booked from your town? If not, transport should be booked now. For further details contact YOP/TURC, c/o LPYS, 150 Walworth Road, London SE17.

YOPS Trainees Union Rights Campaign Activists Conference.

Saturday 23 January,
Manchester Town Hall,
Albert Street, 12-5.30pm.

No benefits from six months work

If you get injured at work you'd think you'd get sick pay not the sack. Well, recently the son of a Havant Labour Party member was injured on a YOP scheme.

He was working for the Forestry Commission when he badly injured his knee. The injury of course made him unfit for work for a while, but they didn't give him sick leave. They sacked him.

Since YOP workers don't pay insurance stamps—presumably to keep down the amount of pay they get and so that the boss doesn't need to pay the employer's contribution—they are not entitled to industrial injuries benefit, nor sickness benefit nor proper

unemployment benefit when the scheme ends, nor maternity benefit if you get pregnant.

All you can get is supplementary benefit. Any other person who has worked for six months will have paid up insurance stamps and is entitled to all these benefits. What a con—to work six months or more as cheap labour, risk injury or even death and not even be entitled to sick benefit or proper dole at the end of it—and that may come from an immediate dismissal because you've been injured at work and it's easier for the boss to sack you and take on yet another lamb for the slaughter.

Militant
What we stand for



New pamphlet

Obtainable 20p from local 'Militant' seller, or from 'Militant', 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN. (Add 10p p&p, orders more than 10 post free).

WORKERS AGAINST THE WITCH-HUNT



“The crisis in the Labour Party is caused by small minded (and narrow minded) groups which are operating inside it.” So said Jim Callaghan in the Daily Mirror recently.

At a *Militant* Readers' Meeting in Bristol on 10 December, the main speaker, Bryan Beckingham agreed with him. “Yes it's true, they're called the Parliamentary Labour Party”!

Bryan pointed out the effect that the right wing ideas of people like Healey, Callaghan, Wilson, Ben Ford and so on had had on the Party. Bryan called for nationalisation under workers' control and management of the printing presses which at the moment only allow the rich to produce daily papers. “We don't think the mass of people want the *Western Daily Press* (the big paper in this region) printed in great numbers. But we would allow them to print, provided we could print a Bristol *Militant*... Why should only the wealthy have the right to use these presses? There is nothing more democratic than giving every group in society a voice.”

The meeting also showed where *Militant's* money comes from when Paul Moorhouse's appeal for cash for the fighting fund raised £66—from people

just like Paul, who as a student nurse got £56 that week, with the landlord due round for his monthly rent of £58 on Friday. “I'll be a 'bedsit infiltrator' who can't afford a bedsit!” he said.

Jim Walker was warmly applauded when he announced that he had just come from his TGWU branch which had carried resolutions against a witch-hunt and in support of Peter Tatchell in Bermondsey.

Similarly the NUPE Home Helps Branch has passed a resolution against the witch-hunt. There was overwhelming support for the statement read by Councillor Pete Hammond calling for a mass campaign against the witch-hunt and for defending Labour Party democracy. As Bryan Beckingham concluded “We will succeed, for any one *Militant* supporter expelled from the Labour Party we will find 20 new supporters for *Militant*.”

When Peter Taaffe spoke at a readers' meeting in Crosby it was inevitable that the by-election victory of the SDP was the main topic of discussion. Peter explained how partially Shirley Williams' vote was a vote to kick the Tories out.

But the lost Labour votes have to be seen in the context of years of right wing Labour governments while the SDP who were precisely the same right wing Labour politicians appeared to be fresh, new and radical.

Peter Taaffe outlined the socialist policies which *Militant* was fighting for; policies which could cut the ground from beneath the

feet of the SDP Tories.

After the disappointment for Labour activists in the by-election, all agreed that the support for *Militant's* approach at the meeting was very encouraging. The hall was packed and over £70 collected for the fighting fund.

Crosby is traditionally thought to have little basis for socialism, but tradition can be illusory. Marxism can penetrate even these former strongholds of Toryism.

On 12 December Blyth Labour Party overwhelmingly carried a resolution rejecting witch-hunts of supporters of the newspaper *Militant*.

The mover of this motion expressed disgust at the recent slanders and distortions appearing in the capitalist media.

What hypocrisy for right wing MPs such as Callaghan to call for party unity and at the same time indulge in vicious attacks through the Tory press against the left.

The mover outlined how *Militant* supporters had a consistent record of struggle in the interests of working people.

The meeting recognised that this wasn't simply an attack on the paper *Militant* but threatened the important gains in party democracy over the last few years.

Blyth MP John Ryman made the point that this threatened to lay the basis for the closing down of LPYS branches up and down the country. The constituency clearly accepted that the ideas of Marxism have a role to play within the Labour Party.

The party also agreed to invite a speaker from *Militant* to outline what the paper stands for.

At a ward meeting in Bethnal Green & Bow, when asked about Bermondsey Labour Party and the attacks on *Militant*, sitting MP Ian Mikardo



Forget the press distortions—read *Militant* and decide for yourself!

pointed out that seven years ago, Labour's NEC had decided that so long as the selection process complied with the rule book, the NEC would not intervene in a party's choice of candidate.

He had given an undertaking to that effect to the party's Annual Conference. “Of course” Ian Mikardo said “the NEC is entitled to change its mind, but that requires a proper motion moved and carried.”

While raising his own political differences with *Militant* and the LPYS, he condemned all witch-hunting ‘investigations’ and attacked all suggestions that the Labour Party Young Socialists should be closed down. “That would be saying the Party didn't know how to recruit young people.”

The anger at the right's attack is not confined to constituency parties. East London's Stratford branch of ASLEF have sent a resolution to their union's Annual Conference condemning moves towards bans and proscriptions in the Party.

By Peter Marsden and Eileen Short

Gaining an echo

In the Fife mining town of Lochgelly the ideas of *Militant* are finding a real echo amongst local workers.

A demonstration was organised recently by the National Union of Mineworkers to commemorate the centenary of the birth of William Gallagher the former Communist MP for West Fife.

Unfortunately the leaders of the demonstration would not allow any literature other than that of the Communist Party to be sold in the centre where the Rally was held.

But it was *Militant* that the miners and their sisters and brothers on the demo will remember and it was *Militant* that they bought. Six sellers sold 81 papers to a demo of about a thousand.

People standing in their doorways, in shops, outside pubs, joining the march—all were approached for sales and we got a great response.

The press claim *Militant* are ‘secretive’. The people of Lochgelly, and the people who saw us selling as the TV cameras covered the demo know what rubbish this is.

“Oh no, this is the one I want to see” said one man coming out of the rally through a mass of sellers of other papers.

“Here's 50p. Keep the change and keep it up” said another. So far this week we've sold over 100 papers and with a door to door sale to come and a sale in the High Street of the next town along. This is only the beginning.

A hard time lies ahead for the Tories, the press and their puppets on the right, who have infiltrated the movement on behalf of capitalism. These types are afraid that if they don't attack *Militant*, support for Marxism will grow because

of the crisis which faces their society.

On the other hand, the support we have received here shows what the effect will be of any witch-hunt or attack.

We know from experience that *Militant* has won respect and support amongst the working class and this support is destined to expand by leaps and bounds in the months that lie ahead.

By Paul Cunningham
(Dunfermline LPYS)

Michael Foot's fear that the support for *Militant's* policies is rapidly growing was confirmed recently at a Labour Party demonstration in Milford Haven.

This Pembroke constituency is on the very tip of the West Wales coast and is held by Tory Nicholas Edwards.

While the demonstration was relatively small in comparison with the Labour Party demos in the industrial areas, the anti-Tory mood was just as strong and the eagerness for a fighting socialist programme for Labour was indicated by a sale of over 70 *Militants* which meant that almost half of the demonstrators had bought the paper.

This was all the more gratifying when you consider that *Tribune* and *Labour Weekly* were being distributed free.

Michael Foot's face said it all when he arrived to head the demo and saw every other demonstrator with a copy of *Militant* and our sellers lining the march.

Even on the rural Pembrokeshire coast the capitalist class is affecting workers who are turning to the Labour Party and to the ideas put forward by *Militant* to solve their problems.

South Wales miners

Emlyn Williams spoke to Rob Sewell

“I would say on behalf of the South Wales Miners that we deplore the decision by the Organisational Committee of the Labour Party to now again initiate the witch-hunt of the *Militant* Tendency and other young peoples' action groups that have been traditional within the Labour Movement.

“This is obviously being motivated by people who are concerned about retaining the identity of the Establishment and not pursuing the aspirations of the Labour Party itself which was a Party of protest, and a Party which was built in order to serve one class, the working class.

“Obviously this is tied up with the Bermondsey Constituency Party and I deplore the fact that Michael Foot has now changed from poacher to gamekeeper and is doing the work of the right-wing, particularly Denis Healey.

“I think all the Trade Unions should now positively oppose any further extension of this so-called witch-hunt, which is in fact another means in order to destroy the youth of the Party and also to destroy any progressive policies that may be initiated by any section represented within the Labour Party.”

Fords: It's your paper

By Alex Thraves

Shop stewards and workers at Fords, Bridgend recently distributed the following leaflet to other workers at the plant following management attempts to intimidate *Militant* sellers.

They reproduced items concerning the struggles of car workers from *Militant* on one side of the leaflet and this message on the other.

“On Friday 13 November two of our brothers turned up at the pedestrian gate with a view to selling copies of *Militant*. They were immediately approached by a

security guard (on the orders of management) and told that if they did not leave the police would be called and other dire consequences were hinted at.

“The Company will allow the Fords News to be distributed but not the *Militant* as they feel that only ‘their’ view should be given to you. They are determined to keep the Bridgend employees ignorant as to what is happening in Ford and in the rest of industry.

“But this will not stop us. We will find a way to get YOUR PAPER to you.”



YOUNG SOCIALISTS BUILD LABOUR PARTY

By Eddie
Donaghy
(Scottish Regional
Committee, LPYS)

In their attacks against supporters of *Militant*, right wingers like Denis Healey and John Golding have accused *Militant* and the LPYS of ruining the Labour Party and turning it away from its traditions.

Far from ruining the Labour Party supporters of the *Militant* in Central Scotland have been doing exactly the opposite.

We have been campaigning against the Tories, against unemployment and for people joining the Labour Party, and the LPYS.

To protest against local unemployment in Denny, which has an unemployment level of about 30%, Denny LPYS organised a demonstration on 21st November.

In the run up to the demo all housing schemes were leafleted, factories in Denny and the surrounding area were visited and our material given to shop stewards. On the Thursday before the demo LPYS members went round the doors of one of the housing schemes with a petition against unemployment.

Nearly everybody signed the petition and supported what we were doing, most people also bought a *Militant* and in less than an hour we had sold 60 papers.

On the day of the demo despite the rain and cold wind 200 people turned up and marched through the town; on the demo 80 *Militants* were sold and names were collected for the



Photo: Militant

LPYS members on the march in Glasgow last February

LPYS and Labour Party.

At the rally after the march Denis Canavan the local MP congratulated the LPYS on the work done for the demonstration. The following day the MP spoke

at a local Labour Party meeting in Cowie, a village in Stirlingshire.

YS members were prominent in organising and leafleting for the meeting, the biggest LP meeting

there for a long time.

The activity for the demonstration ie. leafleting and flyposting took place in absolutely terrible weather, pouring rain and high winds, in fact that week saw the strongest gales in Central Scotland in years! Come snow, hail or storm, socialism marches on!

Militant supporters have been prominent in building the Labour Party. Last April West Stirling CLP organised a conference against unemployment, and *Militant* supporters spearheaded the campaign. Over 70 people turned up to hear local and national labour movement speakers including Ted Grant, the political editor of *Militant*.

We will continue to fight for socialism and build the Labour Party so that it goes back to its real traditions, that is reflecting and fighting for the aspiration of working class people.

The right wing who say we are 'ruining' the Labour Party should take account of what is going on. It is not *Militant*, the LPYS or any other socialists in the Labour Party who threaten to ruin it.

Remember Labour's right were the people who went to the people in 1979 with their programme in the general election, and were defeated, with the result that the Tories got in and plunged hundreds of thousands into unemployment.

Our record speaks for itself. We will continue to build the Labour Party, at the same time fighting to get rid of the Tories and return a Labour government committed to socialist policies.

Capitalist priorities

Capitalism is inhuman and crazy all over the world. In the USA, with unemployment higher than for forty years, the Salvation Army are considering reopening the soup kitchens they ran in the pre-war depression. But in order to maintain the high price (and profit) of dairy goods, 1,900 million pounds of 'surplus' butter, milk and cheese are being stored in cool places like worked-out limestone mines in Missouri. It is, say the government, "waiting for a buyer".

Texpayers are paying \$1 million a day to store food which could, for instance, provide 35lb each for every person in Poland. Forty-four million pounds of cheese has now gone mouldy. Now the government, as a gesture, is releasing just thirty million pounds of cheddar to the 'needy'. The rest stays stored.

Meanwhile back on the brighter side of things, if you can afford to go to swish jewellers like Tifanys or Bucherers in New York, you can join the queue for watches costing from £1,000 to £54,000. "Watches over £3,000 know no sales resistance" say Bucherers. But then smart watches for the rich are so much more important than food for the unemployed.

Marketing the unmarketable

"I don't see this as an awful lot different from marketing anything. It's a question of assessing consumer needs and going out to meet these needs." Christopher Lawson was telling the press his plans as marketing consultant—for the Tory Party. The Tories have given up Saatchi and Saatchi, who gave us 'Labour isn't working'. They have turned to Mr Lawson, who has marketed fly sprays, which should give him some ideas (Thatcher kills all known jobs) and has recently worked for Mars Bars (surely not 'Tories help you work rest and play?').

But how can you market someone like Sir Keith Joseph? He recently admitted he had made some mistakes—high rise flats and bureaucratic bungling of the NHS reorganisation were part of his handiwork. As Education minister, only the pressure of the civil servants stopped him re-introducing fees into state schools and charging for nursery education.

As for his spell as Industry Secretary, he recently told an ex-steelworker who accused him of stealing jobs, "No, the customers did that. The customer had found it was cheaper and better to buy steel elsewhere. It wasn't my fault." This from the man who claimed he could put industry back on its feet again. If any reader can think of an advertising slogan for Sir Keith, write to the Conservative Party.

50 years ago

Then as now the bosses were trying to make ordinary people pay for their crisis. As 1932 began there were 1,999,262 classified as being wholly unemployed and a further 507,457 being 'temporarily' out of work (for many that 'temporary' was to last the decade).

The bosses' answer, as today, was to cut wages. But in the 1930s inflation was low, so they made more direct cuts. In the textile mills at Royton the bosses tried to increase the length of the working day, the new hours being from 6am till 5.30pm or 7am till 7pm. Workers resisted this with strike action. The private companies who ran London's transport called for reductions in wages and redundancies. But it was not all gloom for the labour movement. Then as now there were workers' leaders who were prepared to accept the plaudits of the ruling class. In the 1932 New Years honours list, Clifford Allen (ex-chairman of the Independent Labour Party) was given a baronetcy.

Labour women make socialist policies

By Alison Hill
(Gosport Labour Party)

"If Margaret Thatcher believes so much in the family why doesn't she push back off home to them now!"

That was just part of the lively debate at the first meeting of Gosport Labour Party Womens' Section.

Everyone at the meeting blamed the Tories for the increasing problems faced by working class women—nobody made the mistake of blaming it all on men!

One comrade pointed out that working class women

have to work until they give birth and are then back to work 24 hours later, trying to cope with the burdens of capitalist society. There's not much similarity between that and Lady Diana's pregnancy.

Another comrade explained that at her workplace, the management allow women to bring their kids to the factory if they are sick, so they don't have to take time off work.

The snag is the pay is dreadful, yet many women are trapped there because they have no other option if they have young children.

Another comrade advised her to join a union and organise her workmates to improve their pay and conditions—like she herself had to in the '30s, when she had to keep her union membership a secret from the boss.

Tory attacks on women

As many people said, if the bosses needed women in the factories like they did in the last war, they would provide nurseries for the kids.

When we were discussing what the Tories were doing to the health service a comrade said she had recently asked for a Cervical Smear Test and had been told she could have one this time for a £5 laboratory fee, but in future she would have to see a gynaecologist at a cost of over £30!

Smear Tests should be available, free, at least once a year, but you can only get them every three years at the local Family Planning Clinic, and that's going up to five years soon, because of the Tories' cuts.

There were numerous other examples of the blows heaped upon the working class in general and working class women in particular, but all the comrades were optimistic about the future.

The Tories won't be able to get away with their attacks forever, the working class are organising to boot them out in favour of a Labour government committed to providing a decent life for working class families.

The meeting reflected the changes taking place in Labour Parties throughout the country.

The old Gosport Womens Section fizzled out a few years back. It was then just a fund raising organisation whose members worked very hard, but mainly at organising jumble sales and making the sandwiches for Party AGMs.

That's changed, not because of some 'conspiracy' but because working class women are facing big problems and Labour women now have to make policies, and socialist policies at that, not just the tea and sandwiches.

Times have changed, as was shown by the fact that I sold out of copies of the *Militant* pamphlet *Women and the struggle for socialism* and received orders for many more.

ASTMS WARNING:

A Tory government can seriously damage your health.
 Help stamp out Thatcheritis—join ASTMS
 Greetings from NE London Medical Branch

Fraternal greetings to all socialists from Chester-le-Street Militant supporters
 Kick out the Tories Labour to power on a socialist programme

Sunderland 'Militant' supporters send socialist greetings to the labour movement. Save jobs, sack the Tories. Forward to a socialist Labour government

Not just peace at Christmas, peace at all times
COHSE Bangour 906

Teesside Poly Labour Club
 For a Marxist leadership of NOLS. NUS affiliation to the TUC

Middlesbrough LPYS
 keeps activity in politics! SDP are welcome to keep politics out of politics.

Fraternal greetings from **Washington LPYS**
 Labour to power on a socialist programme

UXBRIDGE LPYS

Fraternal Greetings to 'Militant' supporters everywhere
 Forward to socialism!
 Smash the Tories and the witch-hunt

CPSA East Mids and East Anglia Broad Left
 Greet 1982—the year of the left
 100% unity beats 4%!

Militant readers in **Fords Dagenham and Basildon** send fraternal new year's greetings to the labour movement
 Support our fight—for the full claim—victory to the Ford workers

Uxbridge South Labour Party sends fraternal new year greetings to 'Militant'
**Socialism—yes
 Witch-hunts—no**



New Year Greetings

Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union

It will take extra-parliamentary activity to defeat Tebbit's law
 Defend the democratic gains
 No to witch-hunts in the party
J MARINO General Secretary
T O'NEILL National President

Paddington No 1 branch NUR convey new year greetings to 'Militant' supporters.
DOWN WITH THATCHER AND THE TORIES. FORWARD TO THE "SUPERCESSION OF THE CAPITALIST SYSTEM BY A SOCIALISTIC ORDER OF SOCIETY"

Socialist greetings to the labour movement—
 Canvey Island Combined Labour Party

LUTON LABOUR PARTY YOUNG SOCIALISTS

Anne, Paul, Sunniuca, Clive, Helen, Mick, Wanda, Dave, Jacky, Phil, Simon, Ann, Laurence, Rem, Robin, Nicole and Jim
GREET MILITANT

Fraternal Greetings from **Brimrod and Deeplich Branch (Rochdale CLP)**
 No witch-hunts Forward to socialism
 Fraternal Greetings from **Macclesfield Town East Ward Members branch.**
 Forward with socialism and peace

Rochdale Women's Council
 Fight Tory dismantling of NHS
 Reverse the cuts Nationalise the pharmaceutical industry under workers' control
 For a free expanded NHS

Macclesfield LPYS send fraternal New Year Greetings
Forward to socialism
 Wythenshawe LPYS say:
 1982—No witch-hunt, no Tories, no capitalism.
 Socialist seasonal greetings

Macclesfield 'Militant' supporters send fraternal new year's greetings to all workers throughout the world
 Unite and fight!
 Forward to socialism!

The Murray Branch of East Kilbride CLP sends fraternal greetings to you and all our comrades in the Labour and Trades Union Movement

Central Edinburgh LPYS:
 Youth the key to the future, build on socialist policies, not witch-hunts

North Edinburgh CLP
 expresses its fraternal greetings and hopes for a proscriptio free new year

No to witch-hunts!
 Yes to socialism!
Midlothian and East Lothian Trades Council

End unemployment in 1982
 ★ A 35-hour week for all workers
 ★ Early retirement for the Tories
Deptford Labour Party Young Socialists

DULWICH LPYS
 End slave labour Full pay on YOPS
 For a massive programme of useful public works
 Socialist policies for Labour

For socialist progress in 1982—solidarity with Labour comrades, from **DULWICH CLP**

Waverley Ward, Dulwich Labour Party
 Kick the Tories out in 1982. Forward to socialism
 Solidarity with all Labour comrades, from **Lyndhurst Branch (Dulwich CLP)** we stand against purges, and support 'Militant'

Labour Committee for the Defence of Brixton

sends new year greetings to readers of 'Militant'
SUPPORT THE BRIXTON DEFENDANTS!
 Campaign for democratic control over the police!
 For a massive programme of useful public works!
 Socialist policies to defeat the Tories!
 Please SEND donations, messages of support, and requests for speakers to:
 LCDB, c/o M Boyle,
 167 Railton Road, London SE24

New years greetings from Brentford and Isleworth LPYS

No redundancies! Nationalisation under workers' control and management

Tower Hamlets Labour Party Young Socialists say:
**No to cheap labour!
 Full pay on YOPS!**

KICK OUT THE TORIES IN '82

LPYS NATIONAL COMMITTEE



- Andy Bevan (Sec.)
- Ken Smith (Wales)
- Les Kuriata (W Mids)
- Derek Hilling (E Mids)
- John Goodby (Yorks)
- Willie Griffin (Scottish)
- Mick Whale (S West)
- Linda Clarke (Ed Soc Youth)
- Kevin Ramage (Chairman)
- Sue Kohn (London)
- M Clark (N West)
- D Harris (Northern)
- N Toms (Eastern)
- A Huyton (Southern)

SAVE LONDON TRANSPORT!

"We have three months left to save London Transport (LT)." This was GLC leader Ken Livingstone's response to the Law Lords' decision to outlaw cheap, subsidised fares.

Between now and the end of March, when LT say they will introduce new higher fares, a massive campaign must be mounted to ensure that London has cheap fares. Otherwise it will lead to the devastation of the city's transport.

Masefield, the head of LT, has predicted that fares would have to rise by at least 150% (with the minimum bus fare being 25p), although he acknowledges this would result in a drop of passenger traffic of between 30% and 50%. Up to 15,000 jobs would be threatened, 3% of tube stations closed and bus routes cut by 15%.

Tory Transport Minister David Howell has claimed that fares would have to rise by only (!) 60% but this could only be achieved by even greater redundancies, closures and more fare increases later.

But even these are conservative estimates. The GLC's legal advisers have pointed out that a tripling of all fares would still not balance the books and the Law Lords' ruling against subsidy could threaten free travel for OAPs and subsidised fares for LT workers, the police and even children.

Cheap fares help most people

Although Marxists oppose rate rises when they are a substitute for resisting cuts, subsidised fares through the rates is a reform which is of considerable benefit to workers and their families.

Labour's 32% cut in fares has been a big success in the limited time of its operation. There has been a 7% rise in the numbers using the Tube and a higher than forecast 11% rise in the numbers using the buses. This compares with a fall of 78m passenger journeys on the Tube from 1970 to 1979 and a corresponding decline on the buses.

For the five Law Lords these arguments were irrelevant. They declared the cheap fare policy to be illegal firstly because it was not covered by the 1969 (London) Transport Act, and secondly, because even if it were covered by this Act a 'high' subsidy was unfair to the ratepayer.

Although the Law Lords have claimed that they were non-political, in reality their judgements were directly concerned with public transport policy.

Lord Scarman declared, "The GLC's view that, if transport needs require it, it

By Kevin Ramage
(LPYS Chairman and representative on London Labour Party Executive)

could deliberately choose an operating loss to be made good from the rates, would, if correct, make mincemeat of the Council's duty to its ratepayers." That is a clear political judgement.

Although the 1969 Act established a body to provide 'integrated, effective and economic transport facilities for Greater London,' the Law Lords ignored the questions of integration and efficiency and narrowly defined "economic" as "breaking even". They ignored the statement made by Richard Marsh, then Labour's Transport Minister, during the second reading of the Bill in December 1968: "The Council might wish the (LT) Executive to run a series of services at a loss for social or planning reasons. It is free to do so."

The class orientation of the Law Lords was clearly shown by Lord Wilberforce's declaration that it did not matter if the cheap fare had been approved by the electorate. Ratepayers were being asked to pay too much.

He tried to show that they were a persecuted minority. Using the misleading statistic that rate demands only go out to 40% of the electorate, he went on to declare that 62% of rates came from commercial ratepayers. In this clash between the interests of the vast majority of Londoners and the bosses the Law Lords' judgement favoured the latter.

Their Lordships seemed to have even redefined the purpose of elections. Lord Brandon declared it was "entirely wrong for the majority on the GLC to regard themselves as bound by their election promises, whatever the cost and other countervailing considerations might turn out to be."

Even the *Mirror* asked on 18 December, "When 939,451 votes for Labour in May count for less than five votes in the Lords in December where does that leave local democracy?"

The Tories had emergency legislation ready to impose limits on subsidies which councils could give to transport if the Lords' decision had gone the other way. In addition Transport Minister Howell has announced that this year there will be a cut of £180m in the money given to transport.

The Tories are gloating that the Lords' decision can now pave the way to attack other local authorities who subsidise public transport. In the firing line will pro-



15% of transport services in London are under threat after Law Lords ruling. Photo: MILITANT.

bably be: W Midlands (who introduced a 24% fare cut), Merseyside (cut fares by 10p), Greater Manchester, S Yorkshire (frozen fares), S Yorkshire (frozen fares since 1975) and Tyne Wear (paying £10m a year towards the cost of the new Metro).

But one important aspect of the Lords' judgement affects all Labour authorities. They ruled that the GLC was at fault because it went ahead knowing that the government would cut its rate support grant. This judgement, if applied throughout the country, would prevent any Labour authority from defying the government by raising the rates.

That means for Labour councils that the only alternative to capitulation on cuts is confrontation with the Tory government.

cheap fares and for a restoration of all the rate support grant taken from London in recent years.

The 1981 election manifesto of the London Labour Party recognised the kind of struggle that the GLC faced. It stated: "As long as the Tory government remains in power the GLC will be under continuous pressure to cut back its plans, services and staff. This pressure will only be successfully resisted if a Labour GLC is able to draw the majority of Londoners behind a determined stand against the Tories."

"Therefore a Labour GLC and ILEA will refuse to make any cuts and demand that the government provides the necessary finance to maintain and improve all council services."

"Understanding that the Tory government does not



Up to 15,000 jobs are under threat.

The London labour movement and the GLC must now give a lead in the fight. The cheap fares policy has widespread support. Now is the time to strike back.

Talking and pleading with this government will get nowhere. Action is needed. A massive campaign must be mounted, involving public meetings, leaflets, lobbies and crucially, industrial action.

This campaign must not be around the demand of 'raising the rates' as a substitute for cuts, but must be for the continuation of

listen to pleas and only responds to pressure a Labour GLC and ILEA will appeal to the labour and trade union movement to take action, including industrial action, to support its stand. Mass opposition to the Tories' policies led by a Labour GLC could become the focal point of a national campaign, involving other Labour councils, against the cuts and for an immediate general election and the election of a Labour government."

That is now the way forward for Labour in London.

Busmen support cheap fares

Bob Faulkes asked Trade Union representatives in Clapton Bus Garage for their reaction to the Law Lords ruling:

"There will be reduction in buses with some routes withdrawn on weekday and weekends. All late turns could be cut. I reckon about 7,000 jobs could go in the next 12 months. For example there will be 1,000 open rotas not filled by London Transport and there's about 350 workers retiring in June."

The OAP concession pass could go as they are subsidised from the rates (£29). The underground will probably come off worse. There could be 25-30 stations closed on the weekends. No matter how you look at it we will be cut to shreds and the public will suffer."

Pat Caughlin (TGWU rep.)

"The people who kicked up the fuss are business people (Bromley Tory Council). You've got to decide whether LT is a social service or not. The UK has the lowest subsidy for transport in Europe."

Norman Richardson (Branch Chairman)

"20% of the service is run by rest day and overtime working. We want more staff not just working more hours. But once this is cut the staff will start to leave if they can't earn a decent wage and the general public will really feel it."

This fare reduction was the best thing that ever happened to LT. In the past it was cuts, cuts, cuts. But now it's going to be backwards."

K Tarbutt (Branch Secretary, 1981) and C Dunton (former Branch Chairman).

Subsidies needed

London Underground has not paid for itself since the early part of this century. Under both private and public ownership bus fares have subsidised the Tube.

Subsidising public transport because of wider social needs has been policy for nearly twenty years.

Throughout the world subsidies are used to cover costs. Before Labour took over the GLC in 1981, 25% of LT's costs were subsidised. Compare this to the subsidies given in other major cities: Rome 81%, Rotterdam 78%, Brussels 70%, W Berlin 61%, Paris 56%, New York 45%. The cheap fares scheme introduced by Labour only took London up to the international average of 46% subsidy.

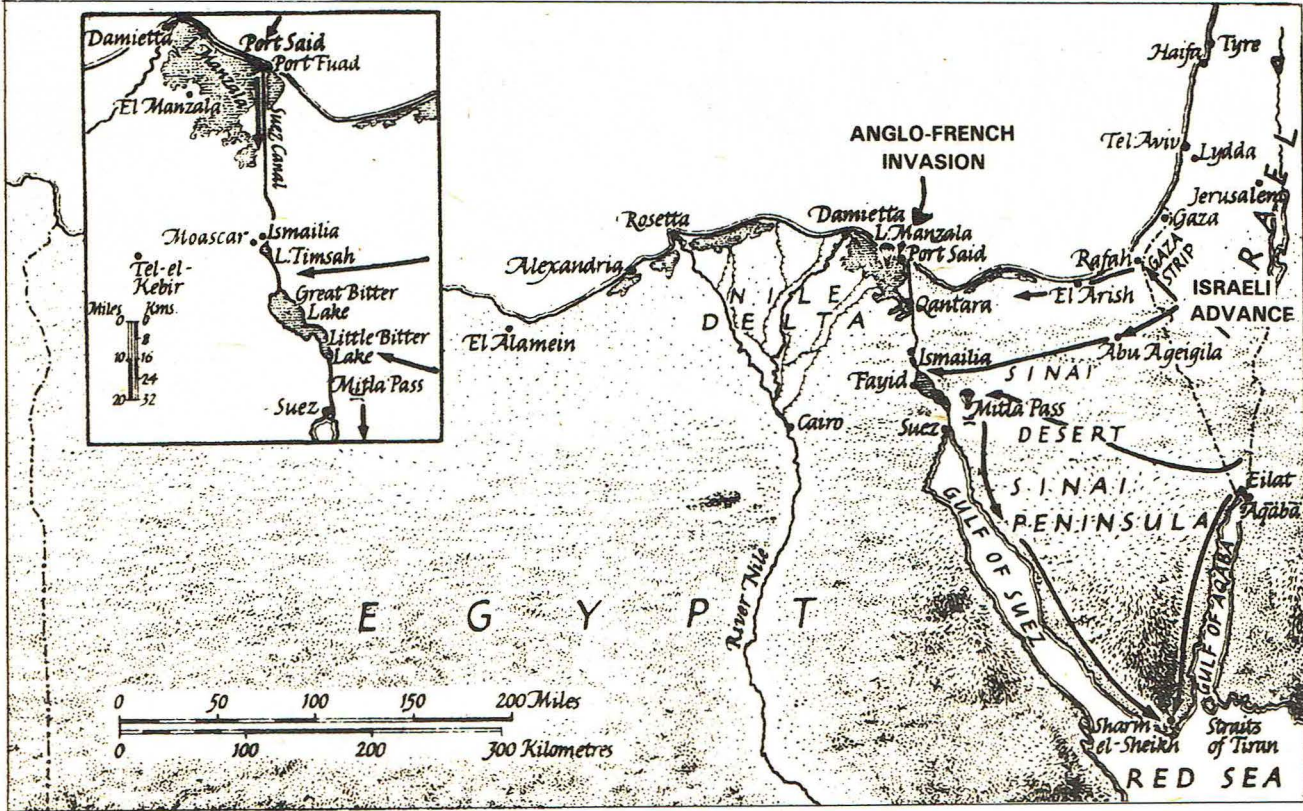
A LT survey showed that whereas in 1971 eight out of 34 public transport systems in Europe and North America could operate without subsidy, by 1979

none of them could. The benefits of such a system can be seen in Paris, which 'The Times' transport correspondent declares, 18 December, to be the result of "many years of high capital investment, consistent policy, dedicated management as well as cheap fares." In Paris the central government pays two-thirds of the loss (£264m this year) and local authorities the rest.

But whereas elsewhere in Europe the level of subsidies rose during 1975-79, in Britain it declined. Before May 1981, the subsidy of £149m to LT was 26% lower than in 1975.

The consequences of such a policy were clear. From 1975-79 use of urban public transport rose by 6% in W Germany, 17% in France, 5% in Scandinavia, 5% in the Netherlands, 7% in Belgium, whereas it fell by 10% in Britain.

SUEZ 1956



End of Britain's gunboat era

Twenty-five years ago this week Tory Prime Minister Eden resigned, following the humiliating defeat for Anglo-French imperialism over their invasion of the Suez canal zone.

Ten weeks before they had landed in Egypt in an attempt to bring down the Nasser government. Yet within 24 hours they had been forced to drop all military operations.

By Jim Christie

dollar reserves only covered three months' imports.

This fundamental weakness of British imperialism was to be cruelly utilised by the American ruling class when they fell out with their European partners ten months later.

The British and French capitalists invaded Egypt in 1956 to shore up their crumbling position in the Middle East. Between the two world wars they had been the dominant imperial powers in the region. But in 1945 France was forced to quit Syria and Lebanon, and ten years later, despite having 250,000 troops in Algeria, it was losing a vicious colonialist war against the FLN nationalist movement.

The whole region was volatile as the mass of the population searched for an end to a life of misery. Capitalist politicians had no answer. Syria in the late 1940s and early 1950s had four coups and eleven changes in government.

In 1952 the 100-strong Free Officers' Movement seized power in Egypt and Nasser emerged as its leader. This military clique wanted to modernise society and end imperialist control, and it denounced economic exploitation. But they had no clear programme of how to achieve this and were determined to have no rivals for power.

Balancing between the classes they dealt out blows against imperialism, against the old ruling class and against the workers. They re-distributed land, ending a situation whereby 6% of the population owned 65% of the land, but allowed the capitalist system to continue. At the same time they crushed any independent workers' movement.

Whilst the corrupt ex-King Feisal was allowed to smuggle his wealth into exile, the first people to be killed by the new regime were textile workers at Kafr-el Dawr. When they occupied their factory, the police and army were sent

Nasser and Sadat in 1954.



in. Nine people died, and later two workers were publicly hanged.

The new regime gave help to anti-imperialist struggles in the Middle East and Africa. Cairo Radio, 'the voice of the Arabs', called for the overthrow of the pro-Western Iraqi, Syrian and Lebanese governments and beamed a special Swahili service to East Africa in support of the Mau-Mau uprising in Kenya against British rule.

"Destroy Nasser"

When Jordan expelled its British Army Commander-in-Chief, Eden was convinced it was all a Nasserite plot. He told the Foreign Office: "I want him (Nasser) destroyed, can't you understand I want him removed...I don't give a damn if there is anarchy and chaos in Egypt."

In July 1956, in a

devastating blow against Egyptian development plans, the United States and Britain withdrew financial support for the projected Aswan Dam. This dam would have increased by one-sixth the usable agricultural land in Egypt.

On 26 July Nasser announced that he was nationalising the Anglo-French Suez Canal Company and would be using its revenue to finance the dam. This won widespread support throughout the Arab world, except among pro-imperialist rulers.

News of the nationalisation came while Nuri, the Prime Minister of Iraq (where Britain had extensive oil interests) was dining with Eden. Nuri advised Eden to hit Nasser hard and quickly.

That was Eden's intention, but two factors prevented him. Firstly, British forces were stretched so thinly throughout the world that it would take time to mount an attack. Secondly, although US imperialism wanted Nasser defeated, they did not want to do so by force as that would create further unrest.

US imperialism was keen to supplant British and French economic interests in the Middle East. But it preferred indirect, neo-colonial domination to direct colonial rule, and was therefore prepared to use anti-colonialist rhetoric. And as US President Eisenhower was facing reelection, he did not want a Middle Eastern war in the months before polling day.

Britain and France privately decided they would go it alone. Unbeknown to the Americans, plans were drawn up for an invasion and seizure of the Canal.

But as the weeks went by, no pretext for a war could be found. The Canal continued to operate normally. Egypt offered full compensation and international negotiations took place on the future running of the canal.

Then in mid-October an opportunity for war arose. The Israeli government had long wanted to crush Palestinian guerrilla operations from the Gaza strip in the northern Sinai and capture the strategically important town of Sharm-al-Sheikh—both in Egypt.

But Israel was concerned that Egyptian bombers could knock out Israeli cities. So in return for a promise from Britain to wipe out the Egyptian airforce, Israel agreed to attack Egypt and included in its plans a move towards the canal. On 24 October a secret protocol was signed by the British, French and Israeli governments, while British ministers lied to Parliament that there was no collusion with Israel.

Today the Tory press is trying to whip up a hue and cry against Marxism over Parliamentary democracy. Yet they draw a veil over the way their representatives ignored Parliament when it was in their class interests.

The plan was that Israel would invade Egypt on 29 October and get to the canal by the next day. The British and French would issue an ultimatum to each side ordering them to withdraw ten miles from the Canal, which would then be occupied by Britain and France. If Egypt refused, as it undoubtedly would, the British and French would destroy the Egyptian air-

force and invade.

The plan was put into effect almost to the letter, except that Israel did not defeat Egypt quickly enough. Thus, when the Anglo-French ultimatum was issued, it meant that the Israelis would have had to advance up to 115 miles, and the Egyptians withdraw 135 miles, so they would both be ten miles from the Canal.

It was not Parliamentary action which defeated Anglo-French imperialism in 1956. It was the massive unrest which their invasion sparked off in the Arab world. There were strikes and demonstrations in every Arab capital from Morocco on the Atlantic to Bahrain on the Arabian Gulf.

In Syria the British oil pipeline was blown up. The regional capitalist military alliance, the Baghdad Pact, was forced to exclude Britain from its normal meeting and denounced the invasion.

The American government had been kept totally in the dark about the Anglo-French-Israeli plan. Fearful of the consequences for their interests, they moved into action.

In the month of November Britain lost 15% of its gold and currency reserves. On 7 November, the morning of the landings, the British government appealed to the Americans for financial support to bolster their reserves and purchase oil from North and South America, now that supplies had been blocked from the Middle East.

The American government agreed to help, but only if a ceasefire was agreed immediately. Britain and France were forced to bow to such pressure although they had only managed to occupy a small part of the canal.

The realities of post-war economies and political power continued to be brutally spelt out when in the following month Britain became the first country to call up the full dollar aid available from the IMF.

Britain also had to get US permission to delay payment of £29 million interest owed on a 1945 loan.

But like the Bourbons of old who learnt nothing and forgot nothing, the British ruling class still did not realise why they had lost at Suez. They did not plough back investment in manufacturing industry and the economic decline of Britain accelerated.

Even today they think they can ignore Britain's economic weakness. Thatcher and the Tories cling to the supposed grandeur of Britain's nuclear deterrent, even though the cost of the new Trident system has doubled to £10,000 million in the last month.

In the Middle East, the defeat of Anglo-French imperialism aroused great expectations amongst Arab workers and peasants. They looked towards Nasser for leadership.

But on the basis of a dictatorial military regime which failed to break with capitalism, no progress could be made. Moves towards uniting Arab countries broke down and the mass of the population in the region still live in dire poverty.

It will take an international socialist transformation to realise the aspirations for a decent life of all the people of the Middle East.

POLAND: Defeat for workers..

but military can't solve crisis

With brutal efficiency General Jaruzelski's military council has consolidated the reaction of Poland's ruling bureaucracy.

Thousands of Solidarity leaders have been arrested and interned or thrown into jail. Military trials, for the "crime" of fighting for trade union rights and political freedoms for the working class, are already under way, with vicious sentences being imposed on workers' leaders.

All the gains of the last 18 months have been wiped out in a few days. Solidarity is illegal, strikes are banned. The bureaucracy has re-established its iron control of the factories, local administration, and the media.

Polish workers were shocked and stunned by the military coup on 12 December. There were spontaneous strikes, factory occupations, and demonstrations on the streets. Miners in Katowice occupied the pit for more than a week.

Jaruzelski was biding his time

Throughout Poland, particularly in the industrial centres, hundreds of workers have been injured in clashes, with scores probably being killed by the army or the police.

Jaruzelski's forces ruthlessly smashed the workers' resistance, which was a desperate response to the military takeover.

Solidarity's call for a general strike in protest against the coup, however, was a failure. Jaruzelski had correctly judged that the workers' movement was already ebbing. There was already confusion, disillusionment, and despair among sections of the workers. Solidarity had no clear alternative on which to call a general strike. The only alternative would be the complete overthrow of the bureaucracy.

Above all, the police, the militia, and even the predominantly conscript army acquiesced to the bureaucracy.

At the time of the general strike Jaruzelski, arguing against the hard-line Stalinists, had understood that to use the army would lead to its disintegration. Then, force would have provoked a political revolution, with the complete overthrow of the

By Lynn Walsh

bureaucracy and the establishment of genuine workers' democracy.

Power was in the hands of the working class, in reality, for a year or more. The demands that were advanced and fought for by the workers added up to the programme of the political revolution. But the working class was not conscious of its power. And the Solidarity leadership around Walesa, misled by the intellectuals and the Catholic advisers, far from drawing the necessary conclusions, argued against going "too far".

Days before Jaruzelski's coup, Walesa and Co. were still trying to compromise with the bureaucracy, even agreeing to plans to incorporate Solidarity within the bureaucracy. Some of the Solidarity leaders had already rejected Walesa's policy, demanding an all-out struggle with the regime. But it was too late.

Sections of the workers had become exhausted through struggles that produced no tangible results. Checked by the workers' power, the bureaucracy was afraid to take decisions. Yet without control of the economy and a democratic plan of production, the workers could not overcome the crisis in the economy, which went from bad to worse.

Our prediction, that Jaruzelski was preparing for a reaction when the time was ripe has now been borne out.

The take-over by the military leadership is unprecedented in a Stalinist state (apart from the peculiar deformed workers' states which have appeared in a number of countries in the under-developed lands).

It is therefore a measure of the depth of the crisis in Stalinism that the generals have taken over in Poland.

Ironically, following the Gdansk general strike the Polish bureaucrats attacked Solidarity for refusing to recognise "the leading role of the Communist Party". But Jaruzelski has unceremoniously pushed the party aside, and power is now being exercised through the Military Council.

The "Communist Party" was not, of course, a genuine workers' party—it was an instrument, as in the other Stalinist states, of the bureaucracy's rule. But in the events of the last eigh-

teen months whatever basis it had was shattered. The party lost the best part of half a million members, either through mass resignations or expulsions. The lower ranks of the bureaucracy, and even some of the middle and upper ranks, were affected by the movement of the workers. After this collapse, only the army's officer caste remained a reliable instrument for the bureaucracy.

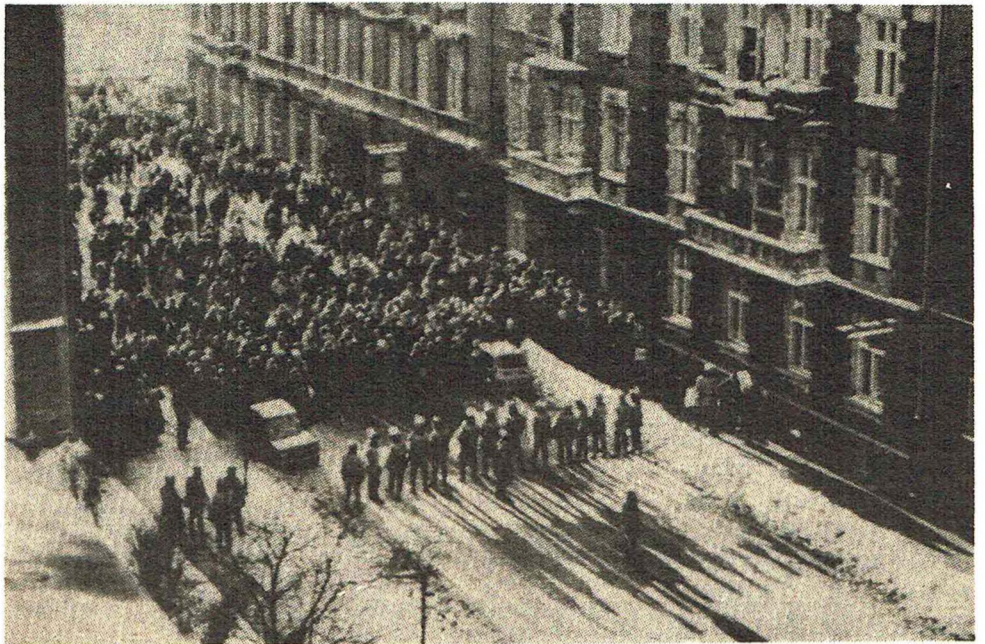
The military takeover, moreover, underlines the failure of successive party leaderships to stabilise the regime through "reforms" and "liberalisation"—Gomulka after 1956, Gierek after 1970 and 1976, and Kania's brief and ill-fated attempt to head off the workers' demands after August 1980.

The failure of these leaders is rooted in the fundamental crisis of Stalinism, which is being expressed in an especially acute form in Poland.

Bureaucracy can no longer develop economy

Firstly, as Trotsky explained in the 1930s, the Stalinist bureaucracy is fundamentally incapable of allowing independent workers' organisations. Under capitalism, the ruling class, because it owns and controls the means of production and therefore the decisive levers of economic power, can afford to grant democratic concessions to the working class. But under Stalinism the ruling, bureaucratic elite retains power only by virtue of the fact that it has usurped the workers' political control over the nationalised, planned economy. Any element of genuine workers' democracy poses a dire threat to the bureaucracy's power and privileges. That is why the Polish regime could not possibly tolerate, for more than a very brief period, the democratic rights they were forced to concede to the workers following the events of August 1980.

Secondly, crisis has followed crisis in Poland because the bureaucracy has now outlived its relatively progressive role in developing production through the planned economy. Although at enormous cost, the bureaucracy transformed Poland from a backward economy into a modern industrial state. But the waste, inefficiency, privileges and corruption of bureaucratic planning can no longer cope with the needs of a more sophisticated, economy. In their effort to buy acceptance of the workers with more and higher quality consumer goods the bureaucracy was forced to turn to the capitalist west, thus incurring the crippling foreign debts which now



Warsaw after the coup: army confront workers

amount to \$27,000 million.

And the gains of the planned economy have produced a socially preponderant, overwhelmingly youthful working class no longer prepared silently to carry the bureaucracy on its back.

Thus the bureaucratic reaction in Poland has revealed Stalinist totalitarianism in its most naked and brutal form—that of open military dictatorship.

No bureaucracy, however, can rule indefinitely by force alone. The mass arrests of workers' leaders have already made it clear that there will be brutal and systematic repression of all opposition. Apart from jail—and possibly exile—a bureaucracy which controls the factories, education, housing, and all aspects of cultural life has a thousand and one ways of intimidating, harassing and victimising its opponents.

Preparing for the next time

Nevertheless, Jaruzelski will in the next period almost certainly attempt to refurbish the Communist Party, attempting once again to penetrate the working class in order to secure a base for the regime. Jaruzelski apparently intends to continue with the trials for corruption and mis-management of members of the old Gierek leadership. This is aimed at giving the impression that there will be a "new start", although Jaruzelski may well, for the time being, curb some of the worst excesses of corrupt officials.

Jaruzelski has also promised that trade union and other rights will be restored later. These are completely hollow promises, which cannot be fulfilled by the bureaucracy, though they may try to refurbish the official state "trade unions".

Commentators have suggested that Jaruzelski will attempt a policy of "Kadarization", that is an approach similar to that of

the Hungarian leader Kadar who attempted to restore the bureaucratic regime after the workers' uprising of 1956. This was based on economic reforms aimed at buying the acquiescence of the workers through improved living standards, more consumer goods, etc.

Jaruzelski no doubt intends to attempt such a policy. But the conditions are entirely changed from the late 1950s and 1960s. Since then, growth of production in the Stalinist states, 10% or even 15% in the former period, has fallen to 3% or 4% percent or less, lower than some of the countries of the capitalist west. In the era of sophisticated technology, computers, etc., the bureaucracy can no longer take the economy forward.

In the short term, Jaruzelski's regime will probably stabilise the economy. Some of the shortages of previous months were due to the deliberate sabotage of the bureaucracy, who were deliberately trying to undermine the morale of the workers. Within hours of the military takeover, according to some reports, food and essential goods appeared on the shelves of many shops. The message was that the military could deliver the goods.

In the coming months, go-slows, non-co-operation and even sabotage by the workers will continue in many of the factories, shipyards, and mines. But with no alternative, there will gradually be a return to "normal". With the help of the foreign banks, who fear a collapse of the regime in Poland, the bureaucracy will be able to some extent to restore the economy. In time, Jaruzelski may well take off his uniform, or even hand over to a civilian replacement.

But Jaruzelski's new "normalcy" will be built on the crushed hopes of millions of workers who have been involved in an active struggle against the bureaucracy and who have had a taste of workers' democracy. Repression may smash all

opposition for the time being, but beneath the surface the bitter anger of the workers will continue to smoulder. The military will not expunge the hatred of the working class for the privileges of the bureaucrats and their ruthless defence of their dictatorial powers.

As Jaruzelski consolidates the bureaucratic reaction, there will be moods of despair amongst sections of the workers. Many will turn to religion or vodka for consolation and "escape". Some workers, inevitably, will be bought off by positions and perks.

But the experience of the last eighteen months can never be wiped out. The advanced layers of the workers, particularly the youth, will be pondering the lessons—and waiting for the next time.

They will be drawing the conclusion that next time their aim from the outset must be the overthrow of the bureaucracy as the only path to workers' democracy.

And there will be a next time. Of that there can be no doubt.

The Polish workers have suffered a crushing defeat, and for the time being reaction will prevail. But the underlying crisis in Stalinism, both in Poland and Russia, the rest of Eastern Europe, makes a new upheaval absolutely inevitable. The wounds inflicted on the Polish workers will slowly but surely heal—and they will assimilate the lessons of the last eighteen months.

The bureaucracy, even through military rule, will not break the will of the working class to struggle to overthrow the bureaucracy and establish workers' democracy. The next upheaval, of course, may come in another Stalinist state—but the Polish workers, whose courage, determination, and tenacity in struggle has been established beyond all doubt, will not be lagging far behind in the struggle for the political revolution.

INDIA

Where British bosses drop the mask



Throughout India workers are moving into struggle.

The Karnataka unit of the Macmillan Company of India was inaugurated in Bangalore in 1976 by Mr Harold Macmillan, former British prime minister and chairman of the Macmillan Group. It is an export oriented unit, and from a turnover of 250,000 Rupees in the first year it has taken giant strides, reaching a turnover of more than ten million Rupees during the last financial year.

The employees' strength in the first year was thirty-five, of whom only seven

have survived. At present the total strength is 109 plus 45 probationers.

Total recruitment during these five years has, however, been about 400. The difference of about 250 is accounted for by the heavy labour turnover due to harassment, humiliation, ruthless exploitation and low salary levels.

The production and administrative employees are without exception graduates or post-graduates and some even possess double degrees. Mr M Abraham, the vice president of the Company, who virtually controls the establishment, is the only non-graduate, holding a diploma in printing technology.

The Company flouts all labour laws. For example, everyone is forced to do unlimited overtime but no overtime is paid. Instead, a paltry fixed amount is paid as lunch and conveyance

allowance.

In respect of statutory Provident Funds and employees' insurance, the vice president had deceitfully failed to deposit the statutory contribution on the Company's behalf. Due to the efforts of the union, an inspection squad from the PF office have raided the Bangalore office and seized the account books and records. ESI contributions have not been made in certain cases and employees are dismissed even when they are under ESI treatment.

Though the Macmillan's Employees' Union enjoys the support of the vast majority of employees, the management has refused to recognise it and instead runs a management union in order to meet certain trade union conditions imposed by the International Graphics Federation.

Of the oppressive labour

practices the management resorts to, the most outstanding is the extension of probation periods followed by the termination of service of a large number of employees. The aim is to get work done at a cheap rate without having to pay for PF, gratuities etc.

The unlawful and one-sided contract extracted from employees requires them to pay a compensation of Rs.4,000 to the Company even if it is the Company that terminates the contract period. To enforce this unlawful and unjust condition, Mr Abraham illegally keeps the original certificates of the employees relating to qualifications etc. and refuses to return them until the so-called compensation is extorted.

Many young men and women have been prevented from seeking employment following the loss of their jobs due to harassment,

humiliation etc. at the hands of Mr Abraham.

Mr Abraham also forcibly obtains from the employees an undated resignation letter in advance, and blackmails the employees into abject surrender to his unscrupulous and unjust dictates.

Even women employees are not spared. He forcibly obtained a letter of resignation from the union from one lady employee, confronting her with the choice of dismissal or a letter going to her parents about her association with the Naxalites (Maoist guerrillas).

Presently the management has dismissed fifteen workers, including union office-bearers and union activists—all but two of them without enquiry and without giving reasons, but obviously for their union activities. The management brings the police into the office and even tried un-

successfully to prevent a gate meeting being held on 17 November 1981.

In one instance management even engaged private detectives, at a cost of Rs 85,000, to spy on some employees agitating for payment according to law for overtime work forcibly extracted.

The employees of Macmillans will not submit to this gross exploitation and abuse. Through their union they will fight to break management's oppressive power and in doing so they will find themselves in the company of hundreds of thousands of workers moving into action throughout Bangalore and India as a whole.

From a correspondent in Bangalore

SENEGAL

Book review by John Pickard

"God's bits of wood" by Sembene Ousmane (African Writers Series HEB paperback, £1.40)

Senegal 1947. French colonialism had all but swept away the old societies of Africa, but without roviding any social or economy stability in its place. Senegal's only function was to provide profits for French and international capitalism, irrespective of the cost to African workers in poverty, squalor, racial prejudice and repression. One of the key instruments for the exploitation of Senegal and 'French West Africa' was the Dakar-Niger railway line, almost a thousand miles long, linking together a million square miles of Africa.

This excellent book describes the 1947-48 strike on the railway, principally through the eyes of the workers. This is no simple narrative, but, standing in the very best traditions of socialist realism, it describes vividly and authentically the life and conditions of the workers; their fears, their passions, their illusions and above all, their enormous resilience and strength.

Early in the book, Ousmane describes the workers' district in the town of Thiès:

"Hovels. A few rickety shacks, some upturned tombs, walls of bamboo or millet stalks, iron barbs, and rotting fences. Thiès: a vast uncertain plain where all the rot of the city has gathered—stakes and cross-ties, locomotive wheels, rusty shafts, knocked-in jerrycans, old mattress springs, bruised and lacerated sheets of steel. And then, a little further on, on the goat path that leads to the Bambara quarter, piles of old tin cans, heaps of excrement, little mountains of broken pottery and cooking oils, dismantled railway cars, skeletons of motors buried in the dust, and the tiny remains of cars, of rats, of chickens, disputed by the birds. Thiès: in the midst of this corruption, a few meagre bushes—wild tomato, dwarf peppers, and okra—whose pitiful fruits were harvested by the women. Bald-sided goats and sheep, clothed with filth,

came here to graze—to graze on what?—the air? Constantly hungry, naked children, with sunken chests and swollen bellies, argued with the vultures. Thiès: a place where everyone—man, woman and child—had a face the colour of the earth."

Throughout the book, the quality of writing stays as good.

The story moves from one point to another along the length of the railway line and views the strike through a variety of characters. The strike leader is Bakayoko, one who clearly understands the situation: tribal language and customs may remain, but by being mixed together in the factories and workshops of French capitalists, the workers were becoming solidly welded together.

Bakayoko did not nostalgically look to the past, but accepting industry, railways, and all other things modern, believed in a future without exploitation, and was prepared to fight for it.

But apart from at the

end, Bakayoko is not at the centre of the stage. Above all, the book describes the hardship and the suffering of the workers' families, especially through the eyes of the women. Everything is thrown at the workers—they have no food, they have their piped water turned off, they are beaten, shot, bribed, interned and humiliated.

"Real misfortune is not just a matter of being hungry and thirsty; it is a matter of knowing that there are people who want you to be hungry and thirsty."

The railway workers stand their ground. They learn solidarity, they tap seemingly limitless reserves of resilience and strength. Months and months pass. Eventually, a general strike in Dakar seals their victory—they are a class, awakened and a head taller! This is an excellent book, easily comparable to the best novels for the American and European socialist writers with which we are all more familiar.

"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

NEW YEAR GREETINGS FROM:

- Martyn Daley (NUPE Branch Secretary, and Leicester South CLP)
- Don Finlay (Leicester South LPYS)
- Pauline Maniscalco (Leicester West LPYS)
- Peter Mason (Leicester West LPYS)
- John Merrell (NALGO Assistant Branch Secretary and Leicester West CLP)
- Margaret Oldfield (Leicester West CLP)
- Gordhan Parmar (District and County Councillor, and Leicester West CLP)
- Lalita Parmar (Leicester West CLP)
- Keith Pattenden (USDAW Branch Secretary and Loughborough CLP)
- Nick Ramsell (AUEW shop steward and Leicester West CLP)
- Alison Rhodes (Leicester West CLP)
- Andy Rhodes (Leicester West CLP)
- Steve Score (Leicester West CLP)
- Carol Spooner (Branch Secretary, Birstall LP, Melton CLP)
- Trevor Spooner (GMWU shop steward and Melton CLP)
- Di Walters (Secretary, Leicester South LPYS)
- Gerry Webster (TGWU shop steward and Leicester West CLP)
- Judith Wood (Leicester South LPYS)
- Steven Wood (Leicester South LPYS)

**No to the witch-hunt!
Unite and fight the Tories!
Labour to power on a socialist programme!**

Ellesmere Port LPYS
Fraternal greetings
Defend Militant
No witch-hunt

Socialist greetings from
Bootle CLP

Feltham and Heston Labour Party Young Socialists wish all *Militant's* readers a happy (witch-hunt-free) new year. Onward to socialism!

Thatcher's cabinet selection are a rich nutty cluster
Bromsgrove and Redditch LPYS,
Frankley Labour Party

**New year greetings from
Southampton Ford workers
Sincere wishes for peace
and socialism in 1982**

Jim Cavanagh
Branch Chairman

Steve Stamford
Branch Secretary

BOGNOR LPYS
say
Give youth a future
with bold socialist
policies—not
witch-hunts

Littlehampton Branch, Arundel CLP
No witch-hunts—
Victory for socialists, and
socialist policies in 1982

GOSPORT CLP
No to Ministry of
Defence job losses
Forward to socialism

EASTLEIGH LPYS
Sweep out the old,
bring in the new
We want socialism
in 1982

Take us out of the
Blue in '82.
Bring down the
Tories
Unity on socialist
policies for the
workers, not the
bosses
Littlehampton
LPYS

**Gravesend
LPYS** wishes all
comrades a happy
socialist New Year

**BROCKHURST
WARD, GOSPORT**
No witch-hunts! Bring
down the Tories and
fight for socialism

New year
greetings to all our
comrades from
Coxford Branch,
Southampton
Labour Party

**New Year
Greetings to all
your readers from
Oxford COHSE
Branch**

Poole LPYS
Kick out the Tories—
not the Trots!
Forward to socialism
in 1982

Socialist greetings
for the New Year
from Reigate LPYS
**Forward to
socialism!**

**Millbrook Ward
Labour Party,
Southampton**

sends new year's
greetings. Nice one
Arthur—up yours
Maggie

Socialist greetings
Fight the Tories
and SDP
Labour to power
on a socialist
programme
Southampton LPYS

**Littlehampton
Branch TGWU
1/0874**
● This branch will
have no truck with
witch-hunts
● This party has
nothing in common
with McCarthyism,
Hitlerism or
Stalinism
● The choice is
socialism or
barbarism

**New year
greetings from
'Militant' readers
in Dorset NALGO**
Vote "yes" for Labour
Party affiliation in
1982



**New Year
Greetings**

**ISLE OF WIGHT CONSTITUENCY
LABOUR PARTY EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

No more lies! Nationalise the press!
Support Bermondsey! Support Militant!

Forward to a year
of unity and a
socialist
programme
Swansea LPYS

Save jobs—
Tories out in
1982!
Socialist greetings
from
Llandeyrn/Pentwyn
Branch Labour
Party (Cardiff)

Fraternal greetings
from Llanelli
Trades Council!
Labour to power
on a socialist
programme!
Thatcher out!

**CARDIFF NORTH
LPYS** sends new
year greetings to
the labour and
trade union
movement

Defend rights of all CLPs to select
candidates of their choice
COVENTRY SOUTH EAST CLP

**Birmingham and
Black Country
LPYS branches**
send fraternal
new year
greetings to all
comrades
Forward to
socialism in
1982! Tories on
yer bike!

**New Year
greetings from
Kidderminster
CLP**
For nationalisation
under democratic
workers' control and
management of the
Labour Party
Leicester W LPYS

**CPSA NSB MILITANT
SUPPORTERS
send new year's
greetings to workers
everywhere**

D Williamson
E Phillips
D Young
R Mitchell
G MacAlear
I Forsyth
R Patterson

L Wark
J Taylor
J Neal
J Campbell
J Forde
J Edwards
N McCabe
E McGeachan
J McMeeking
D Lyon
A Graham
A Smith
T Hestor
C Thompson
A Fullerton
D Shaylor
G Jardine
K McKay
K Woods
R Phelan

**North Fylde
LPYS**
sends new year
greetings to the
labour movement
Smash the 4% and
kick the Tories out!

**BLACKPOOL
TRADES
COUNCIL**
sends fraternal new
year greetings to all
trade unionists
Forward to socialism

**CPSA DHSS North
Fylde Central
Office Branch**
sends new year
greetings to all trade
unionists

**Fraternal New Year
greetings from
USDAW Blackpool
Woolworth Branch**
'Labour to power
on a socialist
programme'

**Greetings from LIVERPOOL
INTERNAL POEU BRANCH to all
fellow trades unionists
UNITE AND FIGHT TO DEFEND OUR
JOBS**

**New years
greetings to all
fellow witches
NGA Liverpool
Branch**

Fraternal greetings
for a socialist new
year—Labour to
power—united on
socialist
conference policies
from all the
comrades of Valley
Ward Labour
Party, Wavertree

Wavertree LPYS
New year
greetings to all
revolutionary
comrades, world
wide!

**Wavertree CLP
Women's
Section**
Revolutionary new
year greetings to all
comrades

**Church Ward
Labour Party
greet fellow
socialists for unity
built on
DISCUSSION, not
witch-hunts**

**ASTMS Liverpool Shipping
and Freight branch**
sends fraternal new year greetings
to the labour movement.
Support the decisions of 1981
Wembley conference
Forward to socialism!

**Leicester South
LPYS**
Start '82 with
socialist policies!
No to witch-hunts!
Put the Tories on
the dole!

**GODIVA WARD
Coventry South
East CLP**
sends fraternal
greetings to all
friends

**Clowne Branch
of Bolsover CLP**
wishes everyone fighting to get
the Tories out in 1982 a
successful year
No witch-hunt!
Build a mass socialist Labour Party



Letters

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

MILITANT 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN

Hounded by the police

Dear comrades

I am writing to 'Militant' to relate an incident which illustrates how the police treat young people in Brighton.

A friend of mine has an 18 year old son who is mentally retarded whom I shall name 'Peter' (that is not his real name). Peter and one of his friends were recently arrested by the police on 'suspicion of handling stolen goods' in a Brighton antique shop. Peter has a collection of ivory elephants which he has collected over the years and he was attempting to sell one to raise spare cash. The owner of the shop became suspicious and telephoned the police. They responded by sending 11 policemen and 4 trucks to arrest these 'highly dangerous' teenagers!

After the arrest, the boys were held in a police cell for several hours, during which time they were thoroughly searched for drugs and man-handled in a brutal fashion. The police refused to believe that the elephant belonged to Peter and tried to extort confessions from both the boys; they were also denied access to a solicitor or to their parents. Eventually they were released and the parting words of the police to the boys were:

"we hope to see you back in here again, soon."

Peter's mother received a subsequent visit from the police and she confirmed Peter's story. Nevertheless, they were abusive towards her and insisted on searching Peter's room (without a search warrant). Naturally they found nothing.

The following day, Peter's friend was stopped in the street by the police and searched again for drugs. Peter's house was also being watched by four policemen parked outside in a panda car. When my friend telephoned the police station and spoke to the person in charge of the case to demand an explanation for this continued harassment, he was again quite abusive and told her that if Peter "didn't stop living the way he does" (ie he dresses as a punk), the police would continue to "watch him". One might ask, since when has it been a crime to dress in the clothes that one wishes to wear?

I don't know how other readers feel but I for one object to having my taxes squandered by the police in this kind of pursuit of hounding innocent youngsters—obviously, they haven't got enough work to do. It is yet another example of how the police state moves nearer every day.

Yours fraternally
Maureen Boyd
Brighton
Kempton CLP.



Protesting against unemployment during the People's March for Jobs last year. Photo: MILITANT

The truth about unemployment

Dear Comrades

A friend of mine was approached by his 15 year old son. 'Dad, I don't want to be on the dole when I leave school' he said, and went on to tell his father that a letter from the local Training Pit had been posted on the school notice board.

My friend who is a miner explained that although mining was a dangerous job it is also one of the most

secure jobs. The following week the lad and some friends went to Moor Green Training Pit for an interview. To their dismay on arrival they found no less than 700 applicants for the 200 jobs available.

But that isn't the whole horror of the story. This was the first interview of many which were to go on once a week from October 1 to February 25, 1982. On the assumption that at every interview there are 700 applicants this means 14,000 youths for 200 jobs; and to cap it all these jobs are not available until 1983! This is

the full quota for NUM Nottinghamshire Area No.6.

The Tories tell us unemployment is on the wane, when we know full well that true unemployment is rising all the time. The only answer for these kids is to put all their energy into the YS and put pressure on the Labour Party to commit itself to bold socialist policies. Forward to socialism.

Yours comradely
A.E. Jones
Carlton West LP

Tables turned as history repeats itself

Dear Comrades

History plays some funny tricks. I had the chance to re-read the section of Michael Foot's biography of Aneurin Bevan last week. The section on the 1950s makes interesting reading.

The period 1951-55 in Labour's history, in some ways seems like a re-run of recent events. Bevan was slandered and smeared in the kept press as only out for his own career, determined to usurp Atlee as the leader. Sounds familiar, doesn't it.

At the 1952 conference the seven constituency party places on the NEC were taken by Bevanites whilst the subsequent parliamentary Labour Party shadow cabinet elections were completely dominated by the right wing.

In 1953 Arthur Deakin, leader of the T&GWU, attempted to have Michael Foot expelled, because of an article he wrote with Jennie Lee in *Tribune*, criticising Deakin's failure to support a strike.

In the same year the NEC passed a resolution in favour of an enquiry into the *Tribune* 'Brainstrusts' in the country, to determine to what extent they were "a party within a party"!

Two years later Bevan himself missed expulsion from the Labour Party by only two votes and had to appear before a committee of enquiry to explain "the organisation behind the newspaper that supports his

views." Michael Foot was one of the leading editors of *Tribune* at that time.

Now Foot declares that Bermondsey Labour Party cannot select its candidates, unless their style and politics suit his views, and has agreed to an enquiry into *Militant* which may result in expulsions. The hunted becomes the hunter!

Fraternally
Bob Wylie
East Kilbride LP

Confessions of a Marxist infiltrator

Dear Comrades

As we have been hearing a lot recently about Marxist 'infiltration' into the Labour Party, I would like to describe just how one particular Marxist was 'infiltrated.'

During 1973, after a long period of inactivity, I started writing letters to the local press. I expressed out-and-out socialist views, and frequently attacked the Labour leadership as well as the Tories. Eventually, I received a letter, written on behalf of three local councillors (including one who has since defected to the SDP, inviting me to join the Labour Party: in spite of certain misgivings, I accepted.

At about the same time, I came into contact with supporters of *Militant*. Upon joining the Labour Party, I was almost immediately selected as a delegate to the General Management Committee; but then it was

realised that I wasn't eligible, as I hadn't been in the Party twelve months. During the next twelve months, I made absolutely no secret of my views; I sold *Militant* at ward meetings, and nobody ever objected. At the end of the twelve-month period, I was once again chosen as a delegate to the GMC; nobody objected to that, either. I was also offered a place on the shortlist for candidates for local elections, which I declined.

So that was 'infiltration,' was it? So far from cunningly 'infiltrating' the Party, I was almost 'press-ganged' into it, and on to the GMC! Perhaps all of the other people who attended ward meetings were 'Marxist infiltrators' too—including the later defector!

Yours fraternally
Jim Parkes
Walsall

Luncheon Vouchers make millions

Dear Comrades

"The idea that fabulous incomes are associated with hard work, responsibility and success is just a pernicious Tory myth." (*Militant*, 11/12/81) To prove this point look no further than Britain's most profitable company—Luncheon Vouchers.

Each week 5 million new luncheon vouchers are issued, four tons of old ones shredded and £1 million banked, a good part kept in profits. The money is made from investment income on

cash paid for the vouchers during the eight weeks they are in circulation. It is a "financial and paper processing operation equal to anything in the more rarified areas of the City (making) profits of £1.8 million last year on capital employed of just £340,000." (*Sunday Times Business Section* 1/12/81).

This is the "abnormally developed intellect, in a business sense" (as the socialist writer Jack London referred to in *What life means to me*) of capitalism in decline.

Let's follow Jack's advice and get "a few more hands and crowbars to work" and topple this edifice of paper wealth. Then we can set about organising real production whose benefits will be equally shared by all.

Fraternally yours
Leon Kaplan
Ardwick LPYS

Why socialists should read 'Militant'

Dear comrades

If anybody claims to be a socialist they should read *Militant*. It is a sincere socialist paper, and its articles are very illuminating. It is unashamedly Marxist but then many of our early stalwart founders were. Our half-baked 'socialists' who have held sway for so long, and failed us, should depart—they have for many years only be-deviled us.

Genuine socialists welcome the *Militant* as a great arm of socialist thought. By its rapidly increased sales in recent years it is now being recognised

by young and old party members alike. The well entrenched financially powerful capitalists and their 'hangers on', have shown by their vicious attacks on *Militant* and its readers that they know all too well where their real socialist opposition is.

Yours fraternally
Cllr. Fred Bailey
Devon

Let your fingers do the walking, and walking, and walking...

Dear comrades

The *Daily Mirror* (November 14) told how redundant chemical worker, Kevin Beaumont, failed to get a job after visiting 200 local firms. So he began phoning all firms in the Yellow Pages directory, and by the time he reached 'D', he was offered a job as a milkman.

In our Yellow Pages the dairies are on page 124 and there are, on average, 64 entries per page. So, as well as the 200 firms this man wrote to at first, he must have tried over 8000 firms before he got a job. This goes to prove to the unemployed that there are jobs to be had if they try hard enough. Mr. Beaumont has proved that there is at least one job per 8000 plus firms.

What a wonderful tribute to capitalism!
Fraternally
Jean Leigh, Wigan

Strumpet city

Dear Militant

I was interested to read in 'Militant' that Evelyn Waugh was allowed months off at the height of the war to write 'Brideshead Revisited'.

Personally, I am sick of this type of series. No matter how well 'Brideshead', 'Love in a cold climate', 'Upstairs, Downstairs' (the list is endless) are done, one grows a little tired of middle/upper class antics between the wars. I would like to see more series like 'Days of Hope' and 'When the boat comes in'.

So I was very pleased when I read that ITV had bought the RTE series 'Strumpet City', adapted from the book by James Plunkett.

This book was a real best seller a few years ago, recommended by both 'glossy' and left-wing book clubs alike. It tells the story of ordinary people in Dublin at the turn of the century, taking in the great strikes organised by James Larkin.

Unfortunately, ITV have not networked the series and are only showing it at 2.45 pm and 11.45 pm in some regions. It seems that only the 'leisured' classes, i.e. the housewives and the unemployed, will get a chance to see this series.

ITV only shows programmes about Ireland when few people are likely to be watching. Perhaps they prefer us to think of the Irish as a nation of drunken bombers, and not as a people like ourselves with a history of trade unionism and struggle.

Yours fraternally
April Field
Dorset

Unionise YOPs!

Dear Comrades,

Having just read of the government's proposals (to begin in Autumn 1983) to put the young unemployed into some kind of youth training scheme for at least a year on the scandalously low "wage" of £15 a week,—£8.50 less than those on YOPs get at present, I feel that the youth of the nation just will not accept being taken for granted any longer. The summer riots bear this out. As Frank Allaun MP warned: "These young people may riot and will regard this like the Hitler Youth."

The LPYS are campaigning nationally for a significant improvement in the conditions and wages that YOPsters receive, and must totally condemn any lowering of the living standards of young workers.

We must now fight all the harder for the unionisation of all YOP trainees, and to end once and for all the exploitation of young workers. We must also bring the youth into the ranks of the LPYS as it is only through socialism that they will ever gain anything.

Yours fraternally
Tam Hickey
Springburn LPYS.

Build Militant

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

ads

Area	Received	% of target achieved	Target for year
Eastern	5415		7100
East Midlands	4224		5500
Hants & Dorset	3242		5200
Humberside	2198		3500
London East	6493		7600
London West	3363		4800
London South	5642		5500
Manchester & Lancs	3334		5800
Merseyside	4540		6600
Northern	5048		8600
Scotland East	2821		4400
Scotland West	4827		7500
Southern	6114		7100
South West	2491		3500
Wales East	1752		2600
Wales West	3137		4600
West Midlands	6039		8600
Yorkshire	5408		9000
Others	19847		12500
Total received	95,935		120,000

TARGET FOR YEAR - £120,000

Make 1982

A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Getting on for £6,000 has come in for the fighting fund since the last issue of Militant! This is the answer to press smears about the source of our finance!

Militant meetings as far apart as South Wales (where £264 was raised), Bermondsey, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Hull, and Kirkcaldy raised several hundred pounds.

We've also had a stream of letters in from trade union branches and officials, Labour Party members who've collected for us at meetings, LPYS branches, and individual readers who've sent us a pound or two, sometimes more. And then on top of all that, there's the usual seasonal festivities and gifts.

Thanks to the following S Wales readers for fivers: E Williams (NUM President), S Hastings and P Elliot (NUPE officers), R Davies (USDAW) and J Davies (SCPS), and to Hull readers for £23 in all: the Cawkwells, M Davbrey (NUT), S Hirst (AUEW), A Moon (TGWU), Mr and Mrs B Owen, and T Taylor (AUEW).

£6.75 came from Austin and Pickersgill workers, £15 from ASTMS Branch 616 (Dagenham), £19 from Merseyside NGA supporters, and nearly £30 in all from Newcastle North, Nottingham North, Gillingham, Enfield North, and Nuneaton and Bedworth LPYS branches.

The West Midlands Winter 400 Club Draw made £191, including a substantial donation from Lesley Hughes, the first prize winner. A meeting in Hounslow raised £57, and Luton readers sent us £14.50. Thanks also to 15

SINCE LAST ISSUE: £5,755

Just one more week to go!

£24,000 more!

readers, members of Rochdale CLP/GMWU, for their contributions and to a member of Romford LPYS for £24.

Revolution Graphics have sent us a gift of £420 proceeds from the sale of Christmas cards. No shortage of socialist enterprise here!

To show how Militant's ideas and coverage appeal to large numbers of workers, a Merseyside seller found that when he called at the station to collect his papers, a railway workers was reading one of them, and he donated 50p to our funds.

A meeting in Birmingham on 10th December netted us £187 after expenses, and £107 has come from a Brighton party. A Bristol comrade, C Toogood, has been sponsored to have his long hair cut back, and we are told that almost £70 has been pledged! Manchester readers have sent in the first of their own appeal sheets—Santa reading our centre pages—thanks to the comrades from Wythen-

shawe LPYS.

From Perth (Scotland) to the Isle of Wight, it seems that a large proportion of our readers have sent us money in the last three weeks. Unfortunately, we just don't have the room this week to mention as many people as usual. But that doesn't mean we want you to stop raising money for us—on the contrary!

There's quite clearly going to be a Spring Offensive against the gains of the Labour rank-and-file over the past decade, and Militant is the front line! We appeal to all our readers to turn sympathy votes into concrete support.

We are printing lists of labour movement organisations which have passed resolutions against witch-hunts, bans and proscriptions. We ask any readers of

Militant who are members of these organisations to draw this column to their attention! Any donations of whatever size will be of assistance, and a receipt sent on request.

We want a last effort on the part of our readership. This must include putting in the post ALL COUNTERFOILS FROM OUR WINTER DRAW TODAY, with cheque or postal order to cover. If there's someone who's promised to but some, see them today!

Finally, thanks to all who contributed in 1981. With a Tory government and a capitalist crisis a prosperous 1982 is not likely for many of our readers. But if you want to get rid of the Tories and their evil system, make sure its a prosperous New Year for Militant!

LEEDS MILITANT RALLY/ FOLK NIGHT

Sunday 17 January 1982
Guilford Hotel, The Headrow, Leeds
"WHAT WE STAND FOR"
Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor of Militant) 6.15pm-8.15pm
Exhibition on "Marxist traditions of the Labour Party"
Photographic display; book stall
FOLK NIGHT WITH "WHISKY GROG" 8.30-10.30pm
Tickets £1 (50p for unemployed)
from Jane Ingham. Tel: Leeds 741961

LEWISHAM Readers Meeting. 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Wayne Jones. 7.30 pm, Monday 25 January. Deptford Town Hall, New Cross Road, London SE14

HAVANT Militant Readers Meeting: 'What Militant stands for'. Speaker: Nick Brooks (Militant Editorial Board). 8.00 pm, 18 January 1982, Focus, Lea Park, Havant

BISHOP AUCKLAND Readers Meeting. 'No witch-hunt. Defeat the Tories with socialist policies.' Speakers: Dave Cotterill (Militant); a Chamberlain Phipps striker. 7.30 pm, Thursday 14 January, Two Blues Pub (Woodcuse Close Estate), Bishop Auckland.

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY Militant Supporters Society. Monday 18 January: 'What future for Poland?' Debate between Ralph Simons (Area Secretary, Communist Party) and Gerry Lerner (Eccles Labour Party).

Monday 25 January: 'What is Trotskyism?' Speaker: Tony Aitman (Liverpool Kirkdale Labour Party)

The complete Alan Hardman! All three books of Alan Hardman cartoons, 'Need not profit', 'More', and 'Plunder Woman must go' for £1.50 (+ 50p post and package) from Militant, 1 Mentmore Terrace, London E8 3PN.

NAVA SAMA SAMAJA PARTY (NSSP) public meeting: 'Sri Lanka—future for democracy and socialism.' Main speaker: Vasudeva Nanayakkara (NSSP) and speakers from British Labour Party. 7.00pm Friday 8 January Camden Centre (behind Camden Town Hall), Bidborough Street, London WC1.

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.

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

SWANSEA Militant Public Meeting 'Fight the Witch-hunt!' Hear: Peter Taaffe (Editor), Emlyn Williams (President, S Wales NUM). Monday 18 January, 7.30pm Main Hall, Dynevor School, Swansea

LANCASTER Militant Readers Meeting: 'What Militant really stands for'. Friday 15 January, 7.30 pm, (back room), 'Ring of Bells' pub, Lancaster. Speaker: Gerry Lerner.

HARTLEPOOL Readers Meeting. 'No witch-hunt. Defeat the Tories with socialist policies.' Speaker: Tony Saunois (Labour Party NEC 1978-81). 7.30 pm, Monday 11 January, Room 2, Town Hall, Lauder St, Hartlepool.

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.

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.

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Industrial Reports

LIVERPOOL TYPISTS BEAT BACK LIBERALS

Liverpool City Council typists, secretaries and machine operators can consider the outcome of their six month strike to be a victory.

An unlikely group of workers for such a lengthy dispute, they took on the might of the Liberal/Tory led council, which adopted a ruthless, intransigent approach throughout the struggle.

The typists first sought a regrading in October, 1980 having been officially classified as 'low paid'. The council ignored their claim for six months and the eventual offer gave nothing to over 80% of the typists.

When a work to rule was introduced over sixty workers were suspended within a week. They typists then voted by a massive majority for an all out strike, but even the most experienced trade unionists could not have anticipated the extent of the struggle to follow.

During the dispute the council was run by a seven strong emergency committee for the first time since the war, and the authority's services were torn apart. Yet the leader of the council, Sir Trevor Jones, was prepared to see all this and a lot more disruption con-

By Barry Caldwell
(Liverpool NALGO)

tinue. He eagerly cuts services and was prepared to see the people of Liverpool suffer as he was actually saving money on various budgets as a result of the industrial action.

NALGO reviewed the industrial action being taken. Selective strike action was then taken, aimed at the authority's income, which had been proposed by 'Militant' supporters some two months earlier, but not supported.

The eventual outcome of the dispute was not negotiations but arbitration—a local independent panel with three nominees for each side, together with independent technical advisers, a chairman selected from an ACAS shortlist and an ACAS secretariat. This is by no means an ideal solution but taken in context with the nature of the dispute it is still a victory particularly as Jones had constantly ruled out arbitration and stated an abhorrence of anything to do with ACAS.

The conclusion of the dispute was nothing short of traumatic for the branch leadership. The left-wing branch secretary was defeated in the 1982 ballot, as was the assistant branch secretary.



Liverpool typists lobby for support at last year's TUC during their dispute.

At the same time Jones jeopardised any hopes of an agreement by instructing NALGO to change the union's rule book to enable expelled scabs to rejoin the union as a condition of the return to work. This was clearly an attempt by Jones to 'break' the Liverpool branch of NALGO.

So confident was he of the rank and file feeling being against the branch leadership that he granted time off to all 5,500

NALGO members to attend the rally considering this issue. But the move which would have given way to Jones was stopped. The outgoing secretary who was against Jones' plans received the support of over 3,000 of the 3,500 members present. Similar support was given for a detailed programme of escalation. Jones had no alternative but to back down faced with such mass opposition. The new branch secretary went

on to openly attack the typists' claim in the media—he received a vote of no confidence at the annual general meeting within minutes of taking office!

It is quite apparent that extensive politicisation has been achieved through the dispute and the final proof of the strength of Liverpool NALGO will serve city council workers well in the future. Numerous lessons have also been learnt not least the value of working

with the city council's Labour group which provided tremendous support.

It is essential that NALGO's strategy for future industrial action is developed now as all the local authority unions will very soon face the attacks of the Liberals' latest policies which include redundancies, privatisation, new technology, changes in working practices and a moratorium on recruitment.

No return to the dark days

With the overwhelming majority Arthur Scargill received in the Presidential election, the miners have shown the way that the time is right for left-wing policies.

I recently sat with some old miners the other day reflecting on old times and it is hard to believe how they were humiliated and kicked in the teeth in the past.

My father told me how when a man was off work sick he had to take his sick note to management.

He would scrutinise the note and interrogate the miner on his illness and right to benefit, which at the time was 5 shillings per week. He would then decide if the miner was entitled to benefit. Also, any man reported to the 'Mafia' (as he was called in our district) for going out even for a pint of beer at dinner time or any other time during sick leave lost his sickness benefit.

Another system used was for injury benefit. Claimants who were receiving a little extra from the owners were called in every two weeks to be examined by the compensation doctor, who was employed by the owners.

An uncle told how after losing a finger at work he was called in to see such a doctor after two weeks off work. The finger stump was still red raw and sore. He

was told by the doctor to 'keep tapping it on the wall or something hard; this would harden it up in time to start work after another two or three days!' Losing his temper he told the doctor what to do with his finger tapping.

The chief wages clerk—who would attend the procedure—reported this to management, and he was reprimanded and told to start work on Monday.

The intimidation was effective as men were afraid of losing their jobs; we must see that such practices never come again. The Tories are bringing back the conditions of poverty and unemployment. Let us not forget what their aims are.

By Paul Darby
(Highmoor NUM, Derby)

Nuclear walk-out

The frustration of workers at the Chatham dockyard boiled over just before Christmas. Over 200 key workers in the nuclear complex walked out.

The dispute started with electricians blacking the undocking of the nuclear submarine 'Warspite' in protest at the lack of positive action by the official campaign to

save the dockyard.

Shop Stewards of several unions met after hearing of a proposed closure plan by the Ministry of Defence. This plan meant the sacking of over 1,500 men within the next 15 months and the ending of all production work by early 1983. An EETPU steward said "there must be no sell-outs, we must not lose sight of the campaign to save jobs".

Twelve electricians were sent home for refusing to undock the Warspite, and approximately 200 workers walked out in support.

It is hoped that this will be the start of a real fight back by the dockyard workers using the only real weapon they have.

Break-through at Kirkstall Forge

Workers at Kirkstall Forge again found themselves in the posh surroundings of Leeds Town Hall.

On the last occasion the meeting had been called over the heads of the shop stewards committee by the AUEW national executive (see Militant 582).

The EC recommendation was to accept the original offer from management of little more than 5%. However, the mass meeting supported their own shop stewards who by 19 to 3 were recommended to con-

tinue the strike.

The continued action brought management to fresh negotiations and this last visit to the town hall saw the shop stewards in charge and no recommending a £14.50 pay increase over 18 months and a 39-hour week.

This breakthrough stands as a victory for Leeds Engineers and Militant will be carrying a full report in a future issue.

By Jon Ingham

Fight the cuts!

Recently shoppers in Durham City saw an unusual sight; 500 people marching against cuts in education, in an area not known for its militancy.

The march was jointly organised by the AUT, ASTMS, NUPE, G&MWU and NUS, in recognition that the cuts in public services can only be fought through joint trade union action.

Recognising that Durham City wasn't the poorest of cities, Dr Clark (secretary, Durham University AUT) explained that the march was one of solidarity with other areas fighting the cuts. His members weren't just protesting at the effects on their jobs, but also at reductions in cleaning services, technical facilities

and student numbers.

There were plans to restrict student services such as the Library and Careers Advisory Service, said Sian Hiett (deputy president, Durham University Students Union).

Mr Lincoln (chairman, Durham Colleges ASTMS) explained how a restriction in student numbers and services meant a reduction in jobs.

Cleaning and canteen work would also be cut back if student numbers dropped. The majority of these jobs were done by women whose families relied on their wage since many men in the area faced unemployment.

Most didn't work full time; they may not lose their jobs, but their hours may be slashed until they find it's not worth working after they've paid bus fares and meals.

London Hospital

Porters at The London Hospital in East London returned to work before Christmas after being locked out for 5 weeks.

They had refused to accept a unilateral package for revision of the bonus scheme with inadequate protection of earnings. It would have meant up to 24 job losses, and lost earnings of some £20-30 per week.

However, management blundered in thinking that belligerent tactics would intimidate porters into buckling under. They underestimated the strength of unity and perseverance

that was shown through this struggle, and were forced back to using proper negotiating channels.

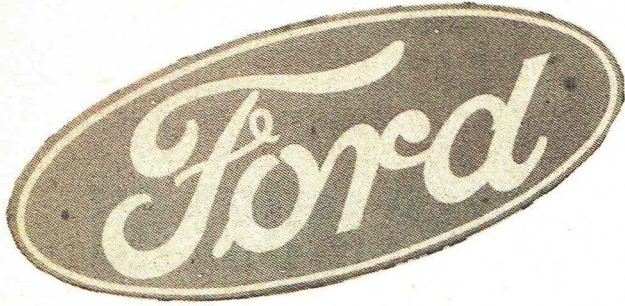
Through this we won a new deal which meant no jobs lost, and thus services could be maintained at current levels. Furthermore, no earnings will now be lost in the coming year, and this will be ensured through joint management-worker committees to be set up to allocate overtime, and monitor service provision. Only minimal earnings may be lost after the first year, but this will be eradicated by future wage rises.

Although this was primarily a fight to maintain living standards and services, we recognise that it represented more than this. Management see that to carry out government policies of cutting the health service, they first have to break union strength.

This time, through maintaining a strong picket line, and by getting the support of other sections of workers, we managed to fight off their concerted attack.

We thank other trade unionists in the hospital who gave valuable support, by refusing to do portering work, and their presence on the picket line. Nevertheless, the most effective measures were undertaken by porters at Barts Hospital, and Mile End, who undertook supportive action, by ambulance drivers who played a vital role in taking patients to other hospitals, and by transport workers who refused to deliver supplies.

By Paul McAuliffe
(porter, London Hospital)



WHY WE'RE ANGRY

The new offer announced by Fords at the beginning of the New Year comes nowhere near the unions' demands.

The Fords bosses like to make out they are being fair and reasonable — but let's get their talk of 'new increases' and 'improved offers' in their true context.

In 1980 Ford's directors received about £1,026 a week, not including two free cars and free petrol. The highest paid director pockets around £1,412 a week.

The previous chairman/managing director of Ford's, Sir Terence Beckett (now of CBI fame) received a 71% increase in his take-home pay when the Tories took office, compared with 4.2% increase for the average worker!

Profits were down 41% this year—yet Ford still manages to maintain an embarrassingly high level of profitability. Between 1970 and 1978 the average profit was about £50.6m a year. That average rocketed to £275.5m between 1978-80!

Fords maintain a public relations department which produces material that proves profits are not as high as they seem—because one must consider inflation, of course. It would be nice to think that Fords had finally discovered inflation and realised what it does to workers' wages.

The government say inflation is around 12% yet Ford's management offered only 7.4% complete with strings.

Double standards apply fairly rigidly throughout the company. A few times a year all Ford employees are treated to a film show telling us how lazy we are—'Saarlouis produces more Escorts than Halewood' etc.

But a comparison with wages and conditions with our brothers and sisters overseas points to other factors.

In December 1979, the International Metalworkers' Federation carried out a survey on wages and conditions in Fords throughout seven different countries.

By Mike Waddington (AUEW-TASS site rep., Ford, Basildon)

Their findings were of great interest:

Average monthly pay	
Denmark	£540
Germany	£500
Netherlands	£460
France	£386
UK	£373
Spain	£250

Holidays	
	Days
Germany	42
France	34
Netherlands	32
UK	28

Even 'breaks' are longer elsewhere:

Mins per 8-hour shift	
Germany	28
Netherlands	28
Spain	19
UK	10

and bonuses:

Total number of weeks' equivalent pay of special bonuses received in a single year	
Germany	9
France	6
Netherlands	5
UK	3

And so it goes on!

It is not surprising to hear, therefore, that in 1979 Ford UK, although accounting for only 16.3% of group sales actually created 57% of pre-tax profits (AUEW-TASS report on Merseyside car industry).

It must be remembered Ford only came to Britain in 1931 in the first place because of cheap labour. The Dagenham site cost only £5m.

Workers built Ford's factories and cars, and created the profits that the bosses waste. So yet again Ford workers are bracing themselves for the picket lines once more.



Workers at Fords Dagenham, voting against company offer during the 1978 dispute. Photo: MILITANT.

'Resolution passed'

I arrived at the canteen at 7.25am so was a bit late to help with dishing out union literature concerning the offer.

This was the meeting at the Fords Foundry in Dagenham before Christmas to discuss the management's original offer. Already men were pouring in, talking with an excited urgency, no doubt discussing the matter at hand, trying to convince their fellow brothers of their own personal beliefs.

The canteen soon became packed. People were reading the union's leaflet, having already read many from the management. A

company man was busily setting up the PA system.

When that had been done, the convenor of the plant called everyone's attention to the meeting by welcoming them. An immediate hush fell in the canteen.

The convenor then began to outline the events which had led to this stage in the negotiations. Here and there, were rumblings of discontent as he stated various facts from the meetings the unions had gone through with management. At some points there was laughter because of some ridiculous things the company were implying.

At the end of his report, the convenor then stated the

resolution (backed by the stewards), which rejected the company's pay offer.

The meeting was then 'put to the floor' for questions, which were promptly and satisfactorily answered. But, as the questions continued, people started to get restless. They began yelling, 'put it to a vote'. The atmosphere was charged.

'All those in favour of the resolution—a mass of hands raised in unison. 'All those against'—about 20! Of about 1,800, only 20 against! A great cheer went up. You could just make out the convenor saying, "resolution carried, thank you for your attendance."

I found it quite amazing

that the vote in the Foundry was so much in favour of industrial action, because of the threat of closure hanging over us. The management here are the only ones who believe the Foundry will stay open, whilst everyone around (including to management in Britain) believe it is finished.

To me, this illustrates that even when there is this type of threat hanging over the men's heads, they are still prepared to fight for their basic rights of a decent wage and better conditions.

By Bob Neal (Sheet Metal workers, Fords Dagenham personal capacity)

Rail drivers -

DEFEND THE EIGHT HOUR DAY

As part of the 1981 pay deal, a separate 'Understanding on Productivity' committed the rail unions to discussions—and discussions alone—on productivity with BR's management, the British Rail Board.

However, as many railworkers feared, and indeed pointed out to their own union leaders at the time of the settlement, British Rail management have interpreted the agreement in their own way, attempting to tie the 3% rise to productivity.

These talks were to include the 'Open Station

By Stuart Hammond (Stratford ASLEF, personal capacity)

Concept', manning of passenger and freight trains, the 'Trainman Concept', including one man operation, easing of conditions of singlemannings on locos, and 'variable rosterings'—in other words, flexible rosterings.

Basically flex-rostering would mean the elimination of the eight-hour guaranteed day won by railwaymen back in 1919 (see front page). To their credit after lengthy discussions, the ASLEF Executive felt that in now way could they agree to this.

The guaranteed eight-hour day is a fundamental condition of service for all railway workers. Even now many workers, even in well

organised industries, do not have that guarantee. With the capitalist crisis today, with mass unemployment, and short time working in industry, this gain is more important than ever.

Initially, the BRB's proposals to end the eight-hour day would mean turns of duty between seven and nine hours. However, it is important to point out that originally the BRB wanted turns of duty between four and twelve hours in length! Once the principle of the eight-hour day is lost management will inevitably begin to work towards that goal.

Flexible rosterings will have a devastating effect upon the social life and conditions of all railway workers, many of whom already work many hours of overtime, shift work and weekends. The effects, however, will be particularly severe for train crews—guards, drivers and drivers' assistants—who already work some of the most unsocial shifts in British industry. Shifts starting or indeed finishing any time from 1 am to 3 am are commonplace.

12,000 rail jobs were lost in 1981 alone—the BR bosses' plans will mean more jobs to go

One of the saving graces of this job is the ability mutually to change turns of duty with others. With flex-rostering this will become impossible.

Once again the effect jobs will be devastating!

Already over the past 10 years footplate staff have contributed massively to productivity gains throughout BR. Since 1970 footplate staff have decreased in numbers by over 22%. Over the same period management have increased in number by 32%!

In fact, Cliff Rose, BR member for Personnel admitted that a staggering 12,000 jobs were lost on the railways in 1981 alone! So they demand more!

Meanwhile, the value our wages has plummeted while conditions of service have remained poor.

The action now being taken by ASLEF member a defensive reply to onslaught by British Rail management, backed up the Tory government.

There is now an excellent opportunity to raise demands to improve dreadful conditions of service rather than work them. The crisis of British capitalism and disastrous policies of the Tory government, has resulted in massive losses of freight traffic and whole run down of the industry.

Where there are surplus men in some depots, it is result of these policies.

Flexi-rostering will have a disastrous effect on railworkers' conditions—mean heavy redundancy. It must be fought, with struggle begun for 35-hour week with no lay pay, linked to a campaign for proper investment in the rail industry which will remove the threat of redundancy and ensure an ending transport system.

RAIL DISPUTE



PHOTO: John Sturrock (Report).

Low pay and attacks on working condition are stoking up anger amongst railmen.

BOSSSES TRY TO TURN CLOCK BACK

The threat of going back to pre-1919 working conditions has been angrily rejected by train drivers throughout Britain.

With the usual hypocrisy the Fleet street Tory rags have launched a tirade of abuse and half truths against the train drivers union, ASLEF.

The media accuse the

By Stuart Hammond
 (Stratford ASLEF, personal capacity)

drivers and footplate staff of being 'luddite' and refusing to 'accept modern change'.

But the British Rail bosses are the ones who are

attempting to turn the clock back. Through their demands for flexi-rostering as part of the productivity measures they want to end the guaranteed eight hour day, linked to the forty hour week (see page 15).

The eight hour day was won in 1919 after years of hard struggle. This fight represented a tremendous breakthrough for all workers at the time—the BR management cannot be allowed to roll back this important gain.

The ASLEF members have been incensed by BR management's renegeing of the 1981 pay settlement. They are refusing to pay a 3% increase and the implementation of a 39 hour week, both due from January 4, 1982.

See also page 15

The cut in the working week by one miserable hour should in fact have been implemented in October last year. The workers agreed to postpone this because of BR's serious financial situation—ASLEF have been rewarded with management withholding it altogether!

In the 1981 pay deal, the rail unions won an 8% rise, with a further 3% to be paid this January—the unions accepted these two stages because, once again, of BR's cash problems.

Separate to the pay issue there was also an 'understanding on productivity' committing the unions to talks with management. But the

unions were committed to talks, not acceptance of BR's proposals. The issues of pay and productivity were separate, and it was made clear that the additional 3% for this January was not dependent to productivity deals!

This explains the anger of ASLEF. This has been reflected by the union executive who have called the dispute. From last Monday, January 4, a total ban on Rest Day working and overtime was called. And if the management (the British Rail Board) refuse to move there will be a 48 hour strike on 13 and 14 January. The executive will consider stiffer action if need be, and already calls for greater action are being made by members.

The determination of ASLEF to defend their jobs will be an inspiration to the membership of the National Union of Railwaymen.

Scandalously, the leadership of the NUR flying in the face of their members, have accepted flexi-rostering. Not surprisingly there is a growing mood of anger amongst NUR members at this shabby agreement. There is already talk in some areas of NUR members joining the strike.

As many railmen understood at the time, the 1981 pay settlement was only a postponement of the battle now opening up. The battle lines have been drawn—the steps needed to fight back must be activated.

TORIES MUST GO

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

A vast reservoir of bitterness has been created against this Tory government and it is only waiting for an opportunity to burst forth.

Organised workers have begun to show their anger and determination as more and more sections now prepare to fight for their living standards. ASLEF workers have begun action this week. Next week the miners are balloting on a strike.

The labour movement must support all those groups of workers fighting to defend their living standards against the Tory onslaught.

In an atmosphere of growing class confrontation and polarisation, the role of the SDP/Liberal Alliance as the bosses reserve team, would be exposed and their apparent support amongst

sections of the working class wiped out—but only if the leadership of the labour movement took a clear class stand.

Neither the 'wets' in the Tory Party, nor their shadows in the SDP/Liberal Alliance have any answer to the fundamental crisis gripping British capitalism. The message that Labour must hammer home is that only fundamental socialist change can provide a future for workers.

It is vital that the labour movement acts speedily to put the bosses system out of its misery.

1982 need not be a year of further economic decay and destruction, if all the power of the labour movement is wielded to bring down the Tories, force an election and secure the return of a Labour government committed to socialist policies.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

relaxing of protective working practices which may lead to compulsory overtime.

Pensions have been slightly improved and a 39 hour week promised. But this is nowhere near the workers' original demands for £20 a week rise and a 35-hour week.

At the unions' National Joint Negotiating Committee, 27 voted to recommend acceptance, with 17 against and two abstentions.

Significantly all the 'lay' members—convenors from the plants—voted against, whereas it was the full time officials who helped make the majority for. It shows who is in touch with the membership.

Anger greeted this decision. At the Swansea plant, the workers voted to go out on strike by 8 to 1, and a vote of no confidence in Ron Todd, the unions' leading negotiator, was passed.

Also in Wales, at the Brigend plant, only 40 voted against taking strike action from next Monday, in solidarity with Swansea. At Halewood in Merseyside the workers immediately took strike action from the previously agreed date of January 4, and backed that up on Wednesday by a vote of 4 to 1.

At the Industrial products plant in Aveley, Essex, the workers voted for strike action, and at the Knock Down plant at Dagenham, 600 men walked out. A mass meeting is to be held at Fords, Langley, on Thursday, and there is much anger at the offer.

As one pipe fitter told *Militant*: "I'm the worst paid bloke in my street. I don't know anybody less

paid than me. And there's the increases in rent, rates and National Insurance—financially, I'd be better off on the dole."

At the Foundry and Forge meeting at Dagenham, Doug Cornwall, one of the main negotiators, was jeered when he came to address a mass meeting. However, the vote for acceptance was carried but was very close—about 60/40.

Shop steward Bob Neal told *Militant*: "After the meeting about half the blokes stayed behind, they were so angry and fed up with the negotiators. Even if the final outcome is to return to work, it has to be said if Swansea or Halewood come and picket Dagenham, there'll be a lot of men who won't cross the line."

It is clear that had the union leadership made a decisive stand they would have got the support of the membership to win their full claim.

Fords claim they can't afford anymore than offered—a plea which has unfortunately been echoed by the union leadership—yet they have made massive profits (see page 15). Also the 7.4% 'increase' is no rise at all. As the miners explained when they were offered 9%, this rise was wiped out by the recent mini-budget alone.

If the leadership had taken up the willingness of the shop floor to struggle for a realistic offer, making a firm call for all out strike action and giving clear direction to their membership, it would have been entirely possible to win the full claim.

More Ford reports page 15

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